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Send submissions, inquiries, and comments to OldRadioTimes @yahoo.com Murder at Midnight: Killing the Competition Pt. 2

By Karl Schadow ©2019

In Part 1 of this series, (*The Old Radio Times*, Winter 2019) a brief profile of *Murder at Midnight* was presented which included executives of the producing firm, Louis G. Cowan, Inc. and also principal crew members of the series. Additionally, a timeline of the program's tenure on the etherwaves was delineated with highlights of radio station and sponsor involvement along with selected comments from the critics.

This concluding part cites key features of all fifty-two episodes which was compiled by research of extant audio (thirty-four episodes) and analysis of scripts of all fiftytwo dramas. A complete collection of these scripts was examined at the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. Additionally, several scripts were also scrutinized that were held in the Robert Newman Papers, Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston University. The information as outlined for each episode is as follows: episode number, title, author, recording date, copyright details, audio status, plot, and cast. Also included if applicable, are additional uses of the script.



Louis G. Cowan

#1 "The Dead Hand" by Robert Newman, recorded April 19, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received April 30, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU2897. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Following an accident in which he lost a hand, a concert pianist will not settle for a mere artificial limb as a replacement. Cast: Berry Kroeger (Roger), Betty Caine (Lona), Barry Hopkins (Dr. Martin) and Frank Readick (Hook). The script was previously broadcast as "The Hand" on Inner Sanctum Mystery (January 30, 1945).

#2 "The Man Who Was Death" by Robert Newman, recorded April 26, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received April 30, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU2898. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: In order to capture the true essence of his subject matter, a demented sculptor employs devious means to obtain his models. Cast: Frank Behrens (Jan Rolfe), Agnes Young (Aline, Mrs. Dolan), Lawson Zerbe (Detective Jordan), Amzie Strickland (Nancy), Robert Lynn (Peters, Sgt. Hanrahan). The script was previously broadcast as "The Mask of Death" on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (March 15, 1942).

#3 "The Secret of XR-3" by Max Ehrlich, recorded May 6, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received May 9, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3023. Extant Audio: Yes. Plot: The life of a circus midget longing to become normal



takes a drastic turn when he meets a prominent physician. Cast: Karl Swenson (Gargo), Charles Webster (chaplin, pool player #2), Martin Wolfson (Petroff, pool player #1), Ruth Gilbert (Rhoda) and Roger De Koven (Dr. Mead, pool player #3).

Ruth Gilbert

#4 "Wherever I Go" by William Morwood, recorded May 10, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received May 12, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3046. Extant Audio: Yes. Plot: After killing his wife, a husband is constantly in the presence of an unusual stranger. Cast: Berry Kroeger (Gordon), Adele Ronson (Ellen, operator), John Gibson (The Stranger, hotel clerk) and Barry Hopkins (trooper).

#5 "Trigger Man" by Max Ehrlich, recorded May 13, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received May 12, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3047. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Previously known for being a coward, a hoodlum suddenly becomes a ruthless gunman. Cast: William Quinn



Alice Yourman

(Charlie), Spencer Bentley (Reilly, Mike), Alice Yourman (Mrs. Reilly, superintendent), Frank Behrens (Donelli), Ted Jewett (Doc Leonard, cop), and Mandel Kramer (Bummy, doctor). The script was previously broadcast as "Death Keeps a

Deadline" on *The Shadow* (November 1, 1942).

#6 "Death's Goblet" by Sigmund Miller, recorded May 17, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received May 23, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3271. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Does a non-descript wineglass exert special powers over those who drink from it? Cast: Eric Dressler (Harvey) and John Griggs (Arthur).

#7 "The Heavy Death" by Robert Newman, recorded May 20, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received May 23, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3272. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A nuclear physicist is able to transform himself and his experiments into instruments of death. Cast: Frank Readick



Charles Webster

(Shill Sullivan), Charles Webster (Dr. Cardan), Lon Clark (Sgt. Roe, Matson) and Roger De Koven (Dr. Vance).

#8 "Nightmare" by Joseph Ruscoll, recorded May 24, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received May 28, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3320. Extant

audio: Yes. Plot: A woman's bizarre dream wanders from hamburgers, to an unfinished novel to a murder perpetrated by her husband. Cast: Elspeth Eric (Helen), Walter Vaughn (Ernie), Eleanor Phelps (Betty), Jack MacBryde (policeman, cook) and Nat Cantor (Joe). The script was subsequently broadcast as "I Dreamt I Died" on both *The Mollé Mystery Theatre* (November 14, 1946) and *Murder By Experts* (September 12, 1949).

#9 "The Dead Come Back" by William Morwood, recorded May 27, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received May 28, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3321. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: An escaped convict is haunted by a tune he first heard while committing a previous crime. Cast: Joseph Julian (Lefty), Ed Jerome (Doc Padgett, Charlie), Wendell Holmes (superintendent), Paul Mann (George, Tom) and Barbara Anderson (Ruth).

#10 "Terror Out of Space" by Robert Newman, recorded June 3, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received June 4, 1946, assigned Registration No. Du3395. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: In attempting to establish radio contact with the moon, astronomers encounter unconventional

aliens. Cast: George Petrie (Lt. Larkin) and Peter Capell (Prof. Martell).

#11 "The Creeper" by Joseph Ruscoll, recorded June 6, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received June 11, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3503. Extant audio: yes. Plot: A policeman's wife is terrified that she



John Gibson

will be the next victim of a serial killer. Cast: Ann Shepherd (Georgia), Carl Frank (Steve), John Gibson (Perley), Kermit Murdock (newscaster, doorman), Martin Wolfson (druggist, Jimmy), Elsie Mae Gordon (Mrs. Stone). The script was previously

broadcast under the same title on *The Molle Mystery Theatre* (March 29, 1946) and subsequently aired on several other programs.

#12 "The Man Who Died Yesterday" by Robert Newman, recorded June 7, 1946.
Script Copyright Claim received June 11, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3504.
Plot: A hitchhiker preoccupied with reaching an important destination, has the uncanny ability to foretell the future. Cast: Stuart Brody (David), Mandel Kramer (Walt, policeman), Frances Heflin (waitress, Hazel) Joseph De Santis (newscaster, doctor) and Don Hirst (cashier, attendant).

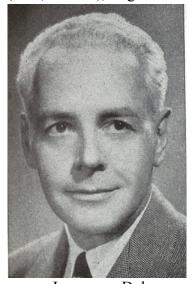
#13 "Till Death Do Us Part" by Joseph Ruscoll, recorded June 10, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received June 11, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3505. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Is it the wife who wants to kill her husband, or is he the one who wishes to dissolve their marriage in a fiendish manner? Cast: Elspeth Eric (Ruth), Eric Dressler (Frank) and Maurice Tarplin (cab driver, Inspector Wade).

#14 "Murder Is A Lonely Business" by William Morwood, recorded June 13, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received June 16, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3641. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A couple resorting to unsavory means in acquiring a wealthy uncle's estate is thwarted by a mysterious laugh. Cast: Helen Shields (Grace), Wendell Holmes (Fred), Carl Emory (minister, Ronnie) and Cameron Prud'homme (Uncle Edward).

#15 "The House Where Death Lived" by Robert Newman, recorded June 14, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received June 16, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU3642. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A researcher of psychic phenomena is obsessed with his investigations in a haunted house. Cast: Berry Kroeger (Dr. Goff), Abby Lewis (Jean, woman), Edgar

Stehli (Calhoun) and George Tiplady (Sanders, cop). The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (June 6, 1943).

#16 "The Kabbala" by Robert Newman, recorded July 30, 1946. Script



James van Dyk

Copyright Claim received July 28, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU4314. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: An ancient Arab scroll provides unexpected results for those who exploit it. Cast: James Van Dyk (Dr. Rudd), Martin Blaine (Dale), Ellen Fenwick (Barbara), Kermit Murdock (Arab, attendant), Harald Dyrenforth (Prof. La Forde). The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (June 8, 1941).

#17 "The Ace of Death" by Max Ehrlich, recording date unknown. Script Copyright Claim received July 28, 1946, assigned Registration No. 4315. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A passerby prevents a man from committing suicide by convincing the



Ted De Corsia.

despondent person that there is a more dignified manner in which to die. Cast: Karl Swenson (John Evans), John Griggs (President). Ted Jewett (Frederick Whitney), Cameron Prud'homme (Mr. Thompson, Mr.

Benedict) and Ted De Corsia (Mr. Dennison).

#18 "The House That Time Forgot" by Sigmund Miller, recording date unknown. Script Copyright Claim received August 7, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU4485. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: In purchasing their dream house, a newlywed couple discovers that it contains a peculiar time-keeping piece. Cast: Vinton Hayworth (Fred), Elsie Hitz (Eva), Rod Hendrickson (Mr. Smith), James Monks (Richard Holloway), Marion Shockley (Mrs. Holloway) and Neil Fitzgerald (Gabriel). The script was previously broadcast as "The House By The Sea" on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (June 27, 1943).

#19 "Death Tolls A Requiem" by Max Ehrlich, recording date unknown. Script Copyright Claim received August 7, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU4486. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A man resorts to dire means to obtain the wealth he believes is rightfully his. Cast:



Michael Fitzmaurice

Michael Fitzmaurice (Arthur), Arthur Maitland (Mr. Brooks). Ed Begley (Peter, foreman), Maurice Tarplin (Frank, Prof. Alvin) and Burford Hampden (Dr. Williams). The script was previously broadcast as "The Bells Toll Death" on The Shadow (December 13, 1942) and repeated on that

same program as "Death Rings a Requiem" (August 30, 1953).

#20 "The Thirteen Floor" by Winifred Wolfe, recording date unknown. Script Copyright Claim received August 16, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU4550. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A conniving woman desperately attempts to escape the clutches of the boyfriend she sent to jail. Cast: Ann Shepherd (Kitty) and Paul Mann (Nickie).

#21 "The Mark of Cain" by A. S. Ginnes, recorded August 22, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received August 24, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU4698. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Has the recent killing spree been committed by an escaped lunatic or his sly twin brother - a newspaper reporter? Cast: Berry Kroeger (the Brothers Sturgess), Maurice Tarplin (Dr. Portman, Lt. Rogan), Carl Emory (Stillman) and Earl George.

#22 "Red Wheels" by Jack Gordun, recording date unknown. Script Copyright Claim received August 28, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU4729. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Is it conceivable that the wheels of a bus in which a superstitious hoodlum is



Craig McDonnell

riding will lead to his doom? Cast: John Sylvester (Freddy), Craig McDonnell (Smolley, bus passenger #2), Frank Behrens (Joe. dispatcher), Floyd Buckley (cop, bus passenger #3), Agnes Young (clerk, bus passenger #1),

Bill Zuckert (bus driver) and Alen Drake (truck driver, desert rat).

#23 "The Line is Dead" by Bafe Blau, recorded September 5, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received September 8, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU4851. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: An eccentric man with a condition that often mimics death is determined not to be buried alive. Cast: Mr. & Mrs. [Betty Caine] Raymond Edward

Johnson (Mr. & Mrs. Albert Lockridge), Will



Geer (minister, Mr. Burton), Maurice Franklin (Dr. George), Alney Alba (nurse) and Lon Clark (Oliver Wentworth).

by Robert Newman, recorded September 12, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received

September 18,

Across the Board"

#24 "Death

Alney Alba

1946, assigned Registration No. DU4973. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A psychotic chess fancier plays his latest match with the highest possible stakes. Cast: Eric Dressler (Dr. Strand), Luis van Rooten (Raphael, Valenti), Roland Winters (Chief Adams, Felix), Norma Chambers (Alice) and Eda Reiss Merin (lady in black). The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (June 5, 1945).

#25 "Murder Out of Mind" by Sigmund Miller, recorded September 19, 1946. Script Copyright Claim (citing Miller as correct author) received November 6, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6086. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Via a most unusual method, a husband attempts to drive his wife insane. Cast: Alan Hewitt (Carl), Charlotte Holland (Mary), Joseph Holland (Dr. Heller, mailman), Edward Kalish (The Voice, Detective) and Fay Baker (Irene).

#26 "Death's Worshipper" by Jay Williams, recorded September 26, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received September 25, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5035. Extant audio: Yes.

Plot: A woman fears for her life when her archeologist husband performs ceremonies honoring Hindu gods. Cast: Bess Johnson (Kate) and Carl Emory (Quentin).

#27 "We Who Are About To Die" by A. S. Ginnes, recorded October 1, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 11, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5275. Extant audio: Part 1 of 2. Plot: The reading of a poem amongst a group of friends has a profound effect upon their individual lives. Cast: Gregory Morton (Dr. Boyd), Stefan Schnabel (Aram Hiller), Peggy Sanford (Fritzi), Frank Behrens (Paul, truck driver), Eleanor Phelps (Edith) and Lamont Johnson (Harry Jordan).

#28 "The Black Curtain" by Max Ehrlich, recorded October 5, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 11, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5276. Extant audio: Part 1 of 2. Plot: A variation of the proverbial love triangle between a patient, his physician and the physician's wife results in unintended consequences. Cast: Eric Dressler (Don), Santos Ortega (Dr. Fortescu), Winston O'Keefe (Dr. Radcliff) and Norma Chambers (Annette).



Ruth Yorke

#29 "The Ape Song" by Peter Martin, recorded October 8, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 11. 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5277. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: An African biggame hunter has special plans for his prize creature that go

far beyond zoological study. Cast: Raymond Edward Johnson (Crane Folliot), Ruth Yorke (Cecily, woman on street), Alfred Shirley (Dr. Murchison), Joseph Boland (program vendor, guard) and Maurice Franklin (Sam. Jake).

#30 "The Man With the Black Beard" by Sigmund Miller, recorded October 10, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 11, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5278. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A beleaguered woman's dream turns to reality when she meets a man sporting unique facial features. Cast: Mercedes McCambridge (Evelyn), Lamont Johnson (Charles), Joseph De Santis (Dr. Lieber, morgue attendant), Cameron Prud'homme (cemetery attendant, Mr. Blakely) and Earl George (cab driver, elevator operator).

#31 "Death Ship" by William Morwood, recorded October 15, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 18, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6039. Extant audio: No. Plot: A jinxed sailor and a cursed ship find one another most compatible company. Cast: Jimmy Tansey (Shorty), John Sylvester (Frank), Ann Shepherd (Mable), Alan Hewitt (Jim), Julian Noa (man, Mr. Creel) and

Abby Lewis

Margaret Burlen (Mrs. Creel).

#32 "Outcast" by Max Ehrlich. recorded October 17, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 18, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6040. Extant audio: No. Plot: What is the reason experimentation with a new plant species leads a

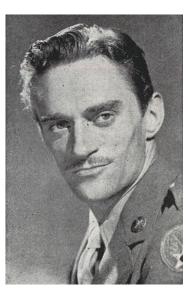
Meadow, recorded October 29, 1946. Script Copyright October 31, audio: Yes.

botanist to sequester himself from society? Cast: James Monks (Philip), Martin Wolfson (Franz, Hanley), Abby Lewis (flower vendor, Rhoda), John Griggs (Lt. Dolan) and Donald Bain (dog, mouse). The script was previously broadcast as "Touch of Death" on The Shadow (February 28, 1943) and repeated on that program May 19, 1946.

#33 "Fatal Interruption" by Bafe Blau, recorded October 22, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 18, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6041. Extant audio: No. Plot: A biochemist unknowingly circumvents the plans of someone who wishes to murder his boss. Cast: Dick Nelson (Collins) and Betty Winkler (Andrea).

#34 "The Dispossessed" by Jack Gordun, recorded October 24, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received October 24, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5593. Extant audio: No. Plot: How is a pianist able to perform at Carnegie Hall after he was murdered? Cast: Lamont Johnson (John Bradley), Jack Hartley (Stake Burns), Sandy Strouse (Joe Gruber), Alun B. Williams (Crandall, Paine), Ralph Camargo (Mr. Gray, doctor).

#35 "The Black Swan" by Leon Claim received 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5720. Extant Plot: A ship that is blamed for the murder of



Jim Boles

7

several people is finally thwarted during its last voyage. Cast: Lawson Zerbe (Amos Bradley, Fred), James Boles (Philip and Henderson), Joseph Latham (Capt. Caleb), Gen Phillips (Sarah) and Joan Copeland (Miss Brewster, Abby).

#36 "Island of the Dead" by Robert Newman, recording date unknown. Script Copyright Claim received November 6, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5853. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: A parolee concocts the ideal revenge for the trio who had previously framed him. Cast: Clyde North (Simon Sloan), Maurice Tarplin (Harrity), Charles Webster (Richards) and Sandy Strouse. The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (March 13, 1945).

#37 "The Dark Chamber" by Robert Newman, recorded October 31, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received November 6, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5854. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Brought together as an experiment by a fanatical psychiatrist, two strangers together must outwit their torturer in order to survive. Cast: William Quinn (Joe Watson), Ruth Last (Betty Grant), Harold Young (Dr. Helming), Maurice Brenner (Ben) and Tom Hoier (Ryan). The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (December 11, 1945).



Luis van Rooten

#38 "Death Is No End" by A. S. Ginnes, recorded November 5, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received November 13, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5930. Extant audio: Yes. Plot: Longtime tellers at a bank, a husband and wife while on vacation enjoying their

employer's money soon begin to hear a strange beating sound. Cast: Elspeth Eric (Phyllis), Luis van Rooten (Mitchell), Cameron Prud'homme (Mike, Indian, Joe), Craig McDonnell (Mr. Whalen, motorcycle cop) and John Randolph (radio announcer, garage attendant).

#39 "The Dark Cellar" by Max Ehrlich, recorded November 7, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received November 13, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5931. Extant audio: No. Plot: A man's childhood



Stuart Brody

nightmare continues to plague him even during his life as a hardened criminal. Cast: Stuart Brody and Paul Nugent. The script was previously broadcast as "A Date With Death" on The Shadow (April 9, 1944) and repeated on

that program as "The Dark Cellar" (March 22, 1953).

#40 "Murder Is Not Enough" by Bafe Blau, recorded November 12, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received November 13, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU5932. Extant audio: No. Plot: A police detective forced to retire from the department exacts his revenge by committing the perfect crime. Cast: Ed Begley, Ed Jerome and Amzie Strickland.

#41 "The Face of the Dragon" by Jack Gordun, recorded November 14, 1946.

Script Copyright Claim received November 20, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6055. Extant audio: No. Plot: A small object constantly taunts a man who has avoided punishment for murdering his wife. Cast: Karl Swenson (Ralph Storm) and Elsie Mae Gordon (Cora Storm).

#42 "The Man Who Died Again" by Robert Newman, recorded November 19, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received November 20, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6054. Extant audio: No. Plot: Shot by the police while making a jailbreak and now on the operating table, a convict experiences a most baffling nightmare. Cast: Alan Baxter (Mitch Maynard). The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (April 26, 1942).

#43 "City Morgue" by Winifred Wolfe, recorded November 21, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received November 27, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6252. Extant audio: No. Plot: A woman desperately attempting to telephone her boyfriend continues to reach the wrong number. Cast: Helen Shields (Laurie), Berry Kroeger (Chris) and Harry Clark. The script was subsequently broadcast as "Around the Corner from Nowhere" on *Theatre 5* (May 12, 1965).

#44 "Terror" by Joseph Ruscoll, recorded November 26, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received November 27, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6253. Extant audio: No. Plot: A man is unable to convince anyone that he's going to be killed at the witching hour. Cast: John Harvey, Stephen Chase, Grace Keddy and George Tiplady. The script was subsequently broadcast as "A Study in Terror" on *The Mollé Mystery Theatre* (January 3, 1947).

#45 "The Corridor of Doom" by Robert

Newman. recorded December 3, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received December 4, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6704. Extant audio: No. Plot: Is a man only dreaming, or did he actually take repeated walks down a lonely hallway?



Ethel Everett

Cast: Eric Dressler (John Clay), Santos Ortega (Dr. Stone), Ethel Everett (nurse, Jane), Alen Drake (Martin) and William Keene (Alec, cop). The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (October 23, 1945).

#46 "Appointment" by Winifred Wolfe, recorded December 5, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received December 4, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6705. Extant audio: No. Plot: On their first wedding anniversary, a couple's plans for a quiet time are shattered by the husband's former partner. Cast: Ann Shepherd (Ada), Frank Behrens (Gene), Will Hare, (airport PA announcer, boy), Norman Rose (Stormy, newscaster), Humphrey Davis (Weezel, man) and Charlotte Holland (Franzy, woman).

#47 "Glory Train" by Robert Newman, recorded December 10, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received December 11, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6523. Extant audio: No. Plot: After robbing a

freight office, a gang of hoodlums continue to escape by switching trains until they enter one which has a only one stop. Cast: Frank Behrens (Ben), Frank Readick (Dink), William Quinn (Casey, man) and Ted Osborn (Wabash, chef). The script was previously broadcast as "The Train to Glory" on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (January 1, 1944).

#48 "A Week Ago Wednesday" by Winifred Wolfe, recorded December 12, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received December 11, 1946. assigned Registration No. DU6524. Extant audio: No. Plot: Did a woman actually travel forward in time to commit a murder? Cast: unknown. The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Suspense* (November 29, 1945) and repeated on that program January 5, 1958.

#49 "The Living Dead" by Robert Newman, recorded December 17, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received December 20, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6603. Extant audio: No. Plot: Experiments with a new drug go awry forcing its creator to quickly develop an antidote. Cast: Eric Dressler, Bill Griffis, Eleanor Sherman, Merrill E. Joles and Marguerite Morrissey. The script was previously broadcast under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (November 9, 1941).

#50 "The Face" by Paul Monash, recorded December 19, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received December 20, 1946, assigned Registration No. DU6604. Extant audio: No. Plot: How are two rivals able to stake a claim as "the most ugliest man in the world?" Cast: Hester Sondergaard, Lawson Zerbe and George Tiplady.

#51 "Dead Man's Turn" by Robert Newman, recorded December 23, 1946. Script Copyright Claim received January 2, 1947, assigned

Registration No. DU6773 Plot: How will a man who has been unmercifully followed day and night confront his adversary? Cast:



Eleanor Phelps

Bill Smith (Andy), Roland Winters (Judson, clerk), Eleanor Phelps (Anna, landlady), Ed Fuller (foreman, cop) and Martin Wolfson (morgue attendant, pawn broker). The script was previously broadcast

under the same title on *Inner Sanctum Mystery* (April 30, 1946).

#52 "Memory of the Dead" by A. S. Ginnes, recording date unknown. Script Copyright Claim received January 2, 1947, assigned Registration No. DU6774. Extant audio: No. Plot: What would cause a man to believe that people shouldn't possess legs? Cast: unknown.

The chronicling of transcribed, syndicated programs often presents problems for the radio historian. As such series may be offered to broadcasters over a period of years and thus aired by stations at various times and days, the use of a specific broadcast date for each episode should be discouraged. For *Murder at Midnight*, Harry Wilson has instituted a log based on copyright dates, see link:

https://archive.org/details/murderatmidnightbycopyrightdate

The current study takes this classification much farther as all available audio and each

script of the series has now been scrutinized. The recording of *Murder at Midnight* episodes commenced April 19, 1946 and concluded in December of the same year. The April date has been misinterpreted by many chroniclers as the initial broadcast of the series. Coupled with the program's history, specifically on station KFI (see Part 1), this error has now been corrected. Scripts were submitted for copyright claim either singly or in batches and note that a given episode may have been recorded before or after the copyright date.

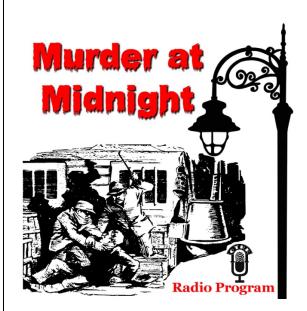
Many scripts contained a title page which included cast and production crew. Additional cast members were identified via press releases and also by voice recognition conducted by this author. It is a tribute to the production staff that many radioites were utilized throughout the series including stalwarts Ann Shepherd and Eric Dressler who were joined by newcomers to the medium, Don Hirst and Gen Phillips. Anton M. Leader and Raymond Morgan were director and narrator respectively for all fiftytwo episodes. Albert Buhrman was at the organ console subbing for Charles Paul in Episodes #16 through #19. Though animal imitators Brad Barker and Don Bain were included in cast sheets or press releases, the identity of the sound effects artists remain unknown. It is most probable that these individuals were employees of the World Broadcasting System in a similar capacity as the program's studio booth engineer Alvin Butow.

Though distinctly a "Blood and Thunder" series, *Murder at Midnight* did have its moments of inside humor. For example, in "Terror Out of Space" (Episode #10), two of the main character names were John Larkin and Roy Shields (a tribute to Chicagoans, radio actor Larkin and musical composer/conductor Shields). Many of the scripts were utilized not only for other radio programs, but also for television. This aspect of the program warrants additional study along with the search for audio of the remaining "lost" installments. As noted by Bill Nadel in the program guide of the 2011

Radio Spirits release, *Murder at Midnight*, two episodes "The Dark Chamber" (#37) and "Death Is No End" (#38) were previously uncirculated. Moreover, the literary foundation of selected episodes needs to be explored (a Walt Whitman poem was the basis for "We Who Are About To Die" [Episode #27]). It is anticipated that the material presented in this two-part narrative will inspire additional studies of this series.

Acknowledgements: This author thanks the following for their encouragement and assistance with this project: Geoffrey Cowan, Holly Cowan Shulman and Liza Cowan; Jerry Haendiges (Jerry Haendiges Productions), Patrick Kerwin and Chelsea Fairley (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress) and JC Johnson, Howard Gotleib Archival Research Center, Boston University.

You can contact Mr. Schadow at bluecar91@hotmail.com



Look for the updated *Murder at Midnight*Maintained Set soon!

Smiley Burnette: From the Panhandle to Petticoat Junction

Trav S.D.

(Originally published March 18, 2019, and is reprinted with permission)

Smiley Burnette (Lester Alvin Burnett) was born in rural Summum, Illinois, not far from the Illinois River, and raised in Ravenwood, Missouri. He was only a teenager when he began entertaining people with his music in vaudeville and on WDZ radio. He is said to have gotten his nickname from Mark Twain's The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, which he read aloud on a local children's program.

Burnette could play several different musical instruments. In 1933 he got a job backing <u>Gene Autry</u> on a WLS (Chicago) show called the *National Barn Dance*. The following year, they were hired to perform in the Ken Maynard western *In Old Santa Fe*, which led to film careers for both of them. Smiley was sidekick to Autry in 62 westerns, to Charles Starrett in 56, and to <u>Roy Rogers</u> in 10. Others he was paired with included Jock Mohoney, Bob Livingston,



Country musician and western sidekick Smiley Burnette.

Eddie Dew, and Sunset Carson. He also wrote and recorded some 400 songs, many of which he performed in his films. His last western film was *Last of the Pony Riders*, with Autry in 1953.

When B movie westerns passed from the scene, Burnett turned for a time to performing music on radio and local television. In 1963 he was cast in the role of Charlie Pratt in <u>Petticoat</u> <u>Junction</u>, a role which he also played from time to time on <u>Green Acres</u>. He was on <u>Petticoat Junction</u> for five seasons, 110 episodes, until he passed away in 1967.

To find out more about the history of show business, please see Trav S.D. 's book No Applause, Just Throw Money: The Book That Made Vaudeville Famous.

NEW VARIETY SHOW

RADIOZARK Enterprises, Springfield, Mo., sending advertisers and trade small corncob pipe in announcing new Smiley Burnette Show. Copy gives all facts on show, selling power and extras it offers. It also has roundup of Mr. Burnette's accomplishments as motion picture star and songwriter. Container pipe is inclosed in is headed "Let Up! Lite Up! and Listen!"



The Smiley Burnette Show record picture was originally published on Randy Riddle's outstanding blog, rand's esoteric otr.

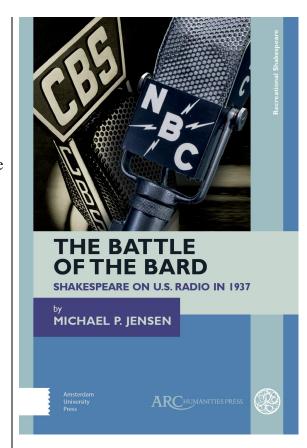
Book Review: The Battle of the Bard by Michael P. Jensen Martin Grams

In the *Recreational Shakespeare* series from Amsterdam University Press, the Bard's stage plays as presented in all forms of mass media are examined by a variety of authors. Michael P. Jensen's study of Shakespeare on radio (especially in 1937 when CBS and NBC both competed with a similar series) is as in-depth a treatment as you will find on this subject. While Shakespeare plays were adapted for *Radio* Guild, Suspense, The Family Theatre and The Chase and Sanborn Hour, to name a few, it was during the summer of 1937 that both CBS and NBC deployed their best resources to appropriate Shakespeare's prestige and the print media quickly described the two networks attempts with the nomenclature of boxing.

"These fourteen broadcasts are among the more remarkable recreations of Shakespeare of their time," Jensen writes. His lengthy essay, defending that statement, is clear and concise.

As is often the case, every book about oldtime radio comes across my desk at one time or another and I manage to find time to read them – and such books as this become delights to read after I dig into a few pages. Much like sitting in on a slide show presentation at a convention where the subject matter was only casually interesting, the material provided to the masses is extremely fascinating and attention-grabbing. Michael P. Jensen's book accomplishes the same feat

The first chapter of this book, following an introduction to the history of radio broadcasting, surveys Shakespeare broadcasts in the United States prior to the 1937 competition and why the networks presented heavily abridged adaptations in brief time slots. The second and third chapters introduce the network battle and why the two rivals were so angry that each wanted to lord Shakespeare's prestige over the other, how



they put the series together with top-notch talent, and both critical reception and analysis for each radio broadcast.

NBC's Streamlined Shakespeare starred John Barrymore and was later recycled for use on a summer 1950 run titled John Barrymore and Shakespeare, often creating confusion among collectors who sought the original network broadcasts. This series was also used for commercial release on records. (Many schools played these recordings for students in the classroom.) CBS's Columbia Shakespeare Cycle attempted to combat the signing of John Barrymore with NBC by hiring stars from Hollywood – so many stars that newspapers of the time had more press releases than they could use.

Chapters four and five provide closure to the 1937 battle and a fascinating story of how all the hoopla did not bring the prestige the combatants craved. Jensen also digs into other radio adaptations for comparison. As with many books about old-time radio, even if you are not into the 1937 Shakespeare adaptations, the history of the network battle is equally fascinating and kudos for Michael P. Jensen for digging into the story.

My only complaint is the retail price. At a list price of \$69 for a book totaling 89 pages (and that includes index), I fear this book will only make the rounds through college and university libraries. You can buy the book at \$59 on Amazon through the link below:

https://www.amazon.com/Battle-Bard-Shakespeare-Radio-

Recreational/dp/1641890770/ref=sr 1 fkmr0 1?keywords=battle+of+the+bad+michael+p.+ jensen&qid=1555676266&s=gateway&sr=8-1fkmr0

Blog Profile



Martin Grams' self-titled blog is one of the longest-running blogs that I'm aware of that regularly features significant old-time radio content. Grams has been posting a new entry approximately every week going all the way back to 2011.

As massive as Grams' books are, believe it or not there's material that gets omitted for various reasons. Fortunately, this history is not just left in the shadows; frequently this information gets crafted into both articles that grace the pages of OTR publications and entries to his blog. So if you're especially interested in one of his books, check Grams' blog because there's very likely related content somewhere on his site.

Visit his site here: http://martingrams.blogspot.com

Wistful Vistas From the Editor's Desk Ryan Ellett

Welcome back, friends. I hope you've been listening to some great old-time radio since we last gathered. I've been making my way through a batch of new (to me) shows that includes many musical programs such as *The Doris Day Show, The Big Time, 10-2-4 Time,* and *Call for Music.* While far from my favorite genre, I've enjoyed them nonetheless. What genres have you found yourself pleasantly surprised by?

We're glad to bring you the second part to Karl Schadow's research on *Murder at Midnight*. Work continues on updating the Maintained (formerly Certified) set but is going a bit slower than planned.

There are a handful of blogs with regular OTR content that I hope to feature here and in future issues. We start out with one of the granddaddies in this issue, Martin Grams' blog. They're a great supplement to your old-time radio reading.

We're also including some information on a few purchasing groups. You'll get an overview of what they do, why they're important, and how you can get involved with one if you so choose.

Just a reminder that activity on our main Yahoo Group has declined considerably since the transition to Facebook a couple years back. If you are a member, you can still post. We are working on getting approvals for new members. Many OTRR members contribute to the forum threads located at the Cobalt Club, one of the busier OTR sites.

http://cobaltclubannex.forumotion.com

Purchasing Groups

The listening opportunities for today's enthusiasts of old-time radio are entirely different environment than those of the hobby's early years in the 1970s and 1980s. OTR accessibility is very different even than when I first entered the hobby in 2000.

When I joined the Old-Time Radio Digest (http://lists.oldradio.net/otrdigest/) there were still regular discussions about whether the mp3 medium was going to last; there was still a wider selection of programs available on cassette from various vendors than was available in the now-ubiquitous (and oft derided) digital format.

Now, one could go to sites such as otrrlibrary.org or archive.org and, depending on your download speed, have more shows to listen to than is possible in a lifetime (yes, quality will vary widely). The vast majority of OTR fans will be satisfied with these offerings and look no further, and this is fine.

Some readers, however, may be interested not just in upgrading some of their poor-quality shows but in helping to make available brand new shows to the hobby. The easiest way to do this is to join one of the multiple purchasing groups found among hobbyists.

Purchasing groups are not new; fans have been banding together to acquire new material since the very beginning of the hobby. Whether getting shows on original transcription records or buying a selection of reel-to-reel tapes or cassettes from a dealer to copy and share among group members, these groups are a backbone of the hobby.

In decades past, OTR dealers could be counted on to track down and introduce new programming into circulation, knowing they'd make their money back eventually selling to their customers. Of course, this market has collapsed in the last ten to fifteen years as fans increasingly turned to digital copies that could be copied and shared for free in seconds. This model for re-discovering lost shows has all but disappeared except for select outfits such

as Radio Archives and Radio Spirits. Even these companies have to be selective in the content they release. As their sets are quickly ripped and uploaded, only the most popular shows entice enough fans to part with their money rather than wait for free digital copies.

The Old Time Radio Researchers for many years has run its own purchasing group. For \$5 per month subscribers will get regular distributions of new material. Sometimes these new shows come from the few surviving dealers such as Ted Davenport

(http://www.radiomemories.com) or Terry Salmonson (http://www.audio-classics.com) and others come from transcription records and reel-to-reels that are won on ebay or on other auction sites. Contact David Oxford (deojao@charter.net) for info on joining this group.

The aforementioned Ted Davenport has his own purchasing group. For \$25 per month you get a total of four hours of high audio quality material, two hours of which is circulating and two hours of which is uncirculating. He adds one additional hour from his own collection. The highlights of the group's recent shows are brand new and uncirculating Fibber McGee & Molly shows. Contact Ted at tedotr@sbcglobal.net for more information, or find him on Facebook.

Finally, Doug Hopkinson, has started a new group where he distributes fresh material that he locates and digitizes. For \$25 per month you get five hours of drama and comedy programming. For \$10 per month you get 2.5 hours of musical programming. Or get the total 7.5 hours for \$30 per month. Email Doug at audiotorium117@gmail.com to subscribe.

Of course, not everyone can afford to participate in one or more of these groups. But I'd encourage you to at least

considering joining one of them when thinking about how to allocate any disposable income you spend on hobbies. Bringing a single new show into circulation can cost \$100, even more for the most popular shows. Plus there is considerable expense for the audio equipment necessary to play, record, and clean these aging transcriptions.

There's no recognition or glory in supporting a purchasing group, but it's a concrete way to know you've made a contribution to our wonderful hobby!

Jerry Haendiges has tens of thousands of transcription labels scanned and available for viewing at his website http://www.jerrysoldtimeradio.com/tdl-001/.



Below are some examples of transcription records that might be bought and shared among members of an OTR purchasing group. These scans are representative of several dozen available at the Old Time Radio Researchers website (https://otrr.org/4img/categories.php?cat_id=217).





*My Son Jeep v. 1904*Maintained Set Release

The OTRR's newest set, *My Son Jeep*, was released in April. It's a small set, containing only nine unique episodes. However, the number of original recordings is ten because episode six is available in both the network and AFRS versions. Four of the episodes are available in .flac format as well as .mp3.

My Son Jeep was created and written by Walter Black and William Mondreck. Robert K. Adams and Hudson Faussett produced the show. The directors were Dan Sutter, Greg Lockwood, and Kirk Browning while John Geller composed the music. All of the cast, except for Leona Powers, who played Mrs. Bixby, the Allison's maid, were played by two different actors/actresses during the run of the show.

Dr. Allison was first played by Donald Cook, followed by Paul McGrath. Martin Huston played Jeep, later followed by Bobby Alford. Joan Lazer and Peggy Lou Keim played Jeep's sister, Peggy. Barbara Miller, Dr. Allison's receptionist and low-key love interest, was performed by Lynne Allen and Joyce Gorden.

According to *On the Air: The Encyclopedia* of *Old-Time Radio* by John Dunning, the 30-minute episodes of *My Son Jeep* aired on Sunday evenings between January 25 and June 14, 1953. These dates seem unlikely since it would mean that 35 episodes aired in just 21 weeks. Digital Deli (http://digitaldeliftp.com) says the episodes ran through September 30, probably a more accurate assessment. According to the same source, the daily version ran from October 3, 1955 until November 2, 1956. The only sponsor of the program was Beacon Wax.

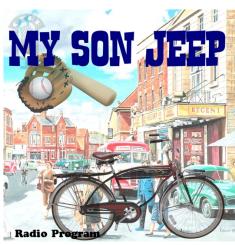
The show was specifically created for Fredrick DeWilde and his then nine-year-old son, Brandon. However, Brandon got rave notices for his part in the movie *Shane*, and chose to pursue a career in movies, rather than radio. This sent the creators on a hunt for replacements for the two major characters. Donald Cook was their first choice for the role

of Dr. Allison, but a large audition was held for the role of Jeep. Martin Huston, 11-years old, won the role. *My Son Jeep* was selected by the Veterans of Foreign Wars as "The Best American Situation Comedy On The Air." The old-time radio show and its star character, Jeep, were supporters of the Boy Scouts of America. The Boy Scouts declared it to be "The Television Program Which Depicts Boyhood In The Best American Family Tradition" (Digital Deli).

My Son Jeep can be downloaded from Archive.org.

Individuals who participated in creating this set are Brian Allen, Ryan Ellett, John Nicholson, David Oxford, Joe Webb, Stu Weiss, and A Randall Wenner.





Remembering Doris Day Claire Nava

Doris Day was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on April 3, 1922 as Doris Mary Kappelhoff. She came from a musical family; her father is listed in the 1930 Federal Census as a Church Organist. Her trademark blonde hair was natural; it was the product of her Dutch and German ancestry.

As a child, she loved to dance, and as a young teenager, she and a friend formed a dance duo



that performed in the Cincinnati area. When she was fifteen, she was in a car accident that damaged her right leg severely and ended her dream of dancing professionally. It took a long time to heal, so to

alleviate the boredom, Day (still known as Doris Kapelhoff) began to sing along with the singers on the radio. Her absolute favorite was Ella Fitzgerald. She told one biographer that "[t]here was a quality to her voice that fascinated me, and I'd sing along with her, trying to catch the subtle ways she shaded her voice, the casual yet clean way she sang the words."

She showed promise very early on, winning spots on shows and series. In 1939, she took the stage name Doris Day. Her first really big hit came in 1945 with "Sentimental Journey." From 1937-1948, she was strictly a musician and recording artist, but in 1948, she was offered a part in the movie *Romance on the High Seas*. Despite her lack of experience, she landed the role. It was another turning point in her long and eventful career.

Professionally, Doris Day went from success to success, but her private life was often tumultuous. She was married four times, but only had one son, who predeceased her. Additionally, Day was a lifelong political conservative, a vegetarian, and an animal lover. She founded the Doris Day Animal League in the 1970s to lobby for animal rights.

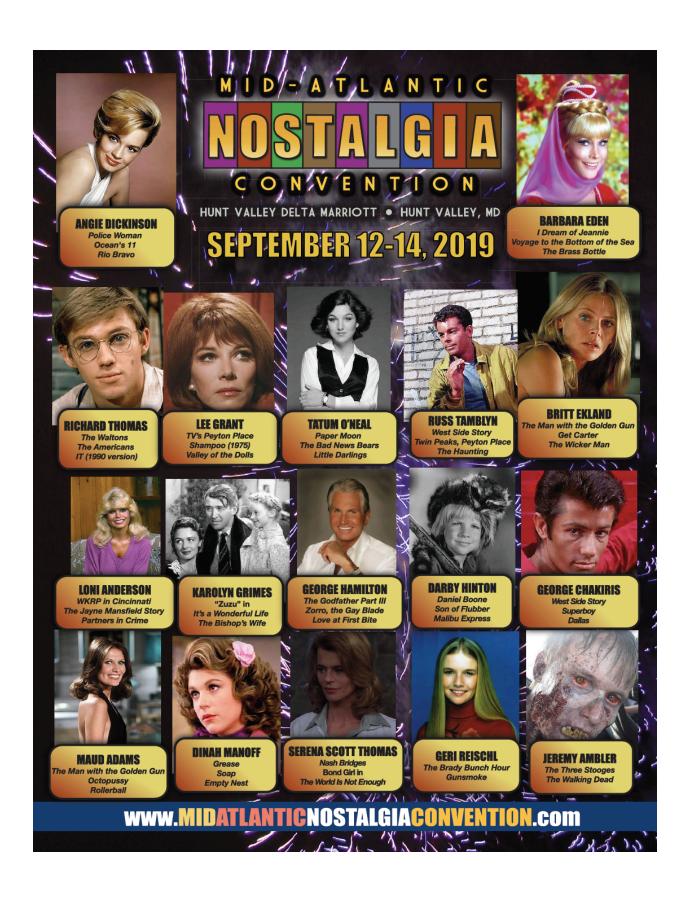
Day was known for her charming nostalgic movies like *Moonlight Bay*, and comedies like *Calamity Jane* and *Pillow Talk*, but during her long and fruitful career, she also acted in live theater, and had several successful runs on television. When she was 89, she released her final album, *My Heart*.

Doris Day died of pneumonia on May 13, 2019. She was 97.



Ad for Radio Transcription Services, Inc., series that included songs by Doris Day.

¹ Hotchner, AE (1975), Doris Day: Her Own Story, William Morrow & Co. Qtd in Wikipedia, "Doris Day." Accessed 21 May 2019.





Convention 2019

November 7.8.9.10, 2019 Crowne Plaza Hotel Costa Mesa,. California

Reservation form will be in next Radiogram

This is the schedule we plan for the convention

RECREATIONS

Jack Benny Mr. District Attorney Dragnet W.C. Fields versus Charlie McCarthy Ethel and Albert

My favorite Husband

GUESTS

Beverly Washburn;;Jeannie Russell
Jeanine Roose;;Alison Arngrim
Camden Singer;;Tony and Lauren Dow
Stuffy Singer;;Tommy Cook
Ivan Cury;;Jimmy Weldon
Wink and Sandy Martindale
Brad Zinn;;Bryan Hendrickson
Phil Proctor::Melinda Peterson
Greg Openheimer

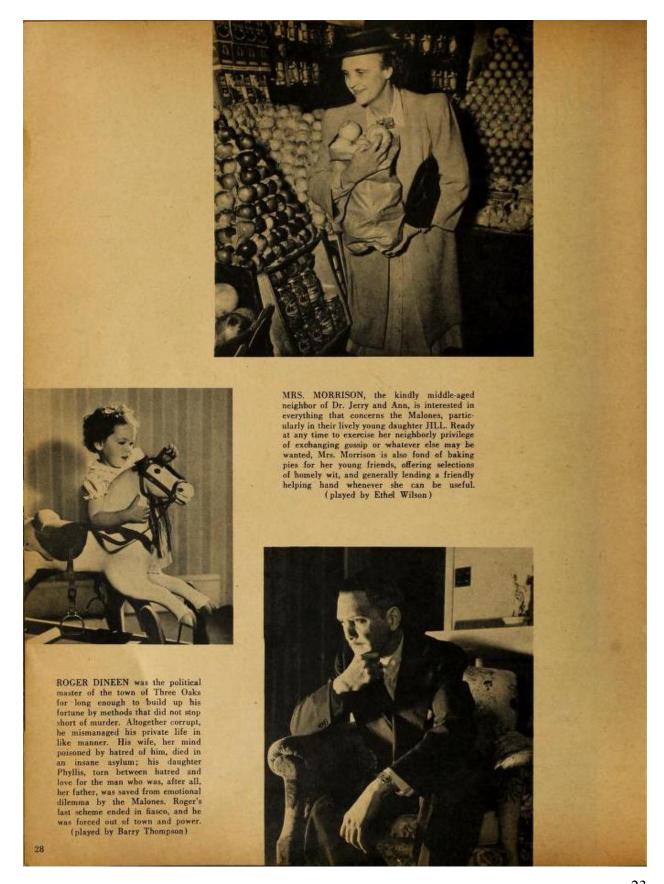
PANELS

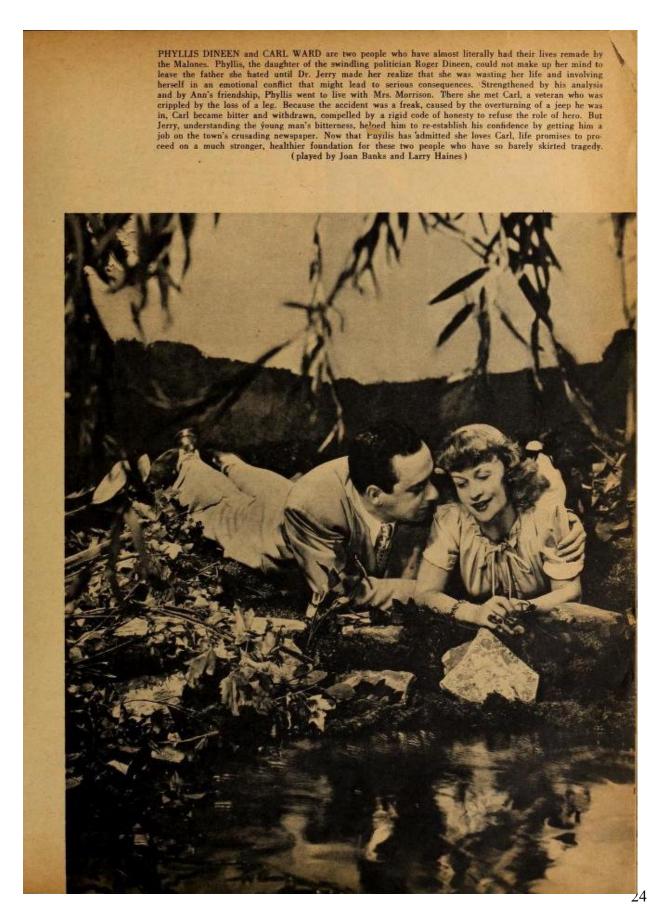
Presenting W. C. Fields with Fields Grandchildren Life of Jimmy Stewart with Kelly Stewart, Jimmy Stewart's daughter Amos 'n' Andy with Rich Correll, son of Charles Correll Perry Huntoon Presents Johnny Mercer Joe Webb Presents "Suspense" The Stu Show hosted by Stu Shostak

"Young Doctor Malone" *Radio Mirror* September, 1946 Posted on Old Time Radio Researchers Facebook by Dan Hughes

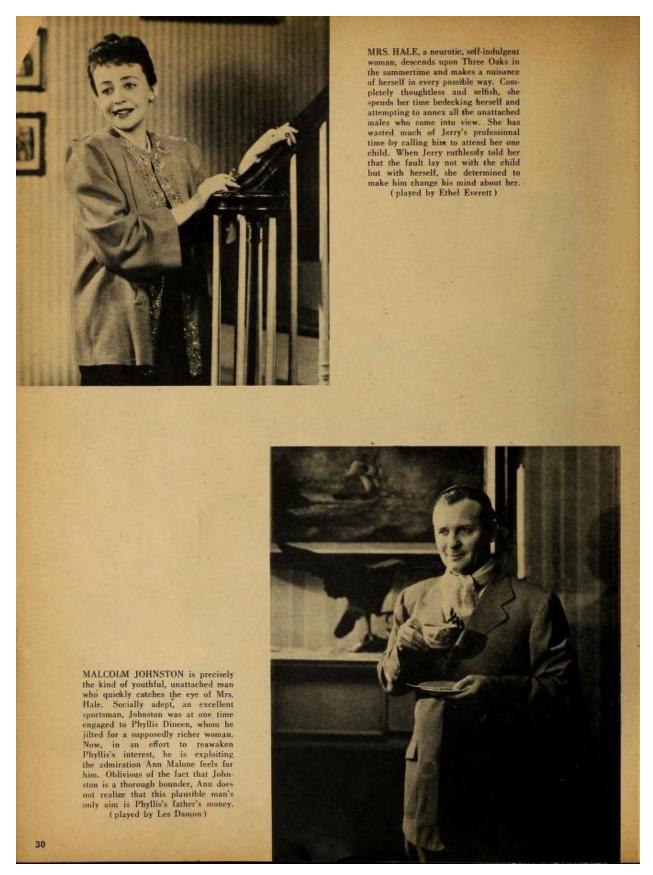








The Old Radio Times * Spring 2019 * Number 102







Created in 1984, the Metro Washington Old-Time Radio Club is the second largest old-time radio club in the United States. Club members enjoy monthly club meetings, an annual luncheon, and a bi-monthly newsletter. You do not have to live in or near Washington, D.C., to become a member. The newsletter, RADIO RECALL, is mailed to members from all over the country and loaded with fascinating articles, news of what is happening in the hobby, recently-discovered "lost" programs and more. Why not join the hundreds who enjoy the newsletter, which can be sent via email in PDF format, or be mailed to you through the post office?





You can sign up to become a member on the club website.

www.mwotrc.com

NOW AVAILABLE

The 5th Revised Ultimate History of Network Radio Programming and Guide to All Circulating Shows

Lists changes and additions to network programming and more theme songs. Lists many new dated shows in circulation with the source of every show.

Cost of entire 625-page book with the supplements is \$50.

Note: This book is no longer available in hardcopy. It can only be purchased as a .pdf document that is e-mailed to you.

Jay Hickerson, 27436 Desert Rose Ct., Leesburg, FL 34748

352-728-6731; FAX 352-728-2405

E-mail: Jayhick@aol.cm

Old-Time Radio Researchers Acquisitions:

New Episodes and Upgraded Sound Encodes

Radio Playhouse 750804 001 Radio Playhouse 750805 002 Radio Playhouse 750806 003 Radio Playhouse 750807 004 Radio Playhouse 750808 005 Radio Playhouse 750811 006 Radio Playhouse 750812 007 Radio Playhouse 750813 008 Radio Playhouse 750814 009 Radio Playhouse 750815 010 Radio Playhouse 750818 011 Radio Playhouse 750819 012 Radio Playhouse 750820 013 Radio Playhouse 750821 014 Radio Playhouse 750822 015 Radio Playhouse 750825 016 Radio Playhouse 750826 017 Radio Playhouse 750827 018 Radio Playhouse 750828 019 Radio Playhouse 750829 020 Radio Playhouse 750901 021 Radio Playhouse 750902 022 Radio Playhouse 750903 023 Radio Playhouse 750904 024 Radio Playhouse 750905 025 Radio Playhouse 750908 026 Radio Playhouse 750909 027 Radio Playhouse 750910 028 Radio Playhouse 750911 029 Radio Playhouse 750912 030 Radio Playhouse 750915 031 Radio Playhouse 750916 032 Radio Playhouse 750917 033 Radio Playhouse 750918 034 Radio Playhouse 750919 035 Radio Playhouse 750922 036 Radio Playhouse 750923 037 Radio Playhouse 750924 038 Radio Playhouse 750925 039 Radio Playhouse 750926 040 Radio Playhouse 750929 041

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Radio Playhouse, which made up the entirety of distros 117-120, was one of several 1970s revival programs that attempted to breathe new life into radio drama, a genre that was long past its prime. The Old Time Radio Researchers made this series available to Purchasing Group members in both .mp3 and .flac format.

WOR INTRODUCES THE RADIO PLAYHOUSE



FOUR BRAND NEW PROGRAMS HEARD MONDAY-FRIDAY FROM 3-4 PM

3 - 3:15 THE FACES OF LOVE

Suddenly a young woman is thrust, completely unprepared, into a life of complete freedom. Her traditional background conflicts with her new-found freedom to confront her with difficult decisions at every turn.

3:15 - 3:30 Author's Studio

Dramatizations of famous novels in serialized form, the first of which is William Makepeace Thackeray's classic, Vanity Fair. A romantic story featuring the bright and clever character Becky Sharp, a liberated woman a century ahead of her time.

3:30 - 3:45 **The Little Things In Life**

A light-hearted and high-spirited program which takes a fond and good-natured look at the trivialities which serve to frustrate us in our daily lives. You'll recognize and identify with the events in the series.

3:45 - 4:00 TO HAVE & TO HOLD

The stresses and demands which face two families of doctors who are daily involved with life and death decisions is the setting for this highly-charged dramatic program. You'll agonize and sympathize as the doctors mix the volatile combination of emotion and intellect in a contemporary society.

PREMIERING MONDAY AUGUST 4TH



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