

AIR CHECK

NEWSLETTER OF THE RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUGET SOUND (REPS)

VOLUME 9 • NUMBER 1

WINTER • 1999

REPS Members Celebrate Christmas Holiday at Annual Meeting



◀ Lance Corporal Branagan accepts REPS 'Toys For Tots' donations.



▲ Bob Herman 'decked out' for the holidays.

In December REPS Members gathered at the Queen Anne Library for their Annual Meeting and election of officers. This year's meeting was particularly special as we observed the holiday spirit with a Christmas program of radio show recreations and gift giving. With Joy Jackson as producer and director the REPS Radio Readers with Merrill Mael, Doug Young, Stewart Conway and John Jensen performed "My Friend Irma" and "Vic and Sade" Christmas shows. Both shows were extremely professional and well received by the large audience. Well done to Joy and her outstanding cast. REPS members out did themselves in supporting the Marine Corps' Toys for Tots programs. The toy barrel for needy children was filled to overflowing with gifts from

REPS. The Marine Lance Corporal in attendance was truly grateful. Vi Anderson prepared a special Christmas tree which was beautifully decorated. Under the tree were gifts for all of the attendees. Marj and Rhea Lutton, Terry Campbell and others provided a wonderful spread of food. Everyone enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to next years program. See pages 6-7 for more exciting photos!



▲ Everyone's favorite actor, Doug Young.



➤ Vi 'Mrs. Claw' Anderson with her Christmas tree.

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FROM THE EDITORS DESK...

Happy New Year To One And All

1998 was a highly successful year for REPS and 1999 promises to be even better. In this issue we are featuring articles on our Annual Meeting and Christmas Program, a visit by Rhoda Williams and Dave Van Meter, written by Bill Parker, and Mike Sprague's introduction to

Showcase VII. Enclosed with this copy of Air Check you should receive a flyer with a list of the anticipated attendees at Showcase VII at and an attendance application. Please note that the Convention and prices are the same as last year. If you have any doubts about the hotel read Dave Van Meter's letter in this issue.

February's Meeting Features Favorite Mysteries And "Cold Reads"

February's Meeting at the Queen Anne Library Auditorium will have attendees present their favorite radio mysteries tapes and scripts. We hope to use this program to help gather material for our Showcase Convention and to give everyone a chance to support their favorite show. Members will also be given an opportunity to do a "cold read" of selected scripts. These are always popular shows so be sure and join us at 2:00 PM on Saturday 6 February at the Queen Anne Library.

REPS Readers Perform At PEMCO

For those of you who can make it be sure to attend the REPS Radio Readers presentation for the PEMCO Emeritus Club. The program is being produced by Bill Brooks and will be performed at 1:00 PM Thursday 11 March at the Scottish Rite Hall on Capital Hill. Always a good show with 100 or more appreciative old time radio fans in attendance.

Like Antique Radios?

In addition to the programming on radio "back then", several REPS members also have an interest in the radio sets that broadcast the shows. Locally, they affiliate with the Puget Sound Antique Radio Association.

This group has regular meetings, large swap meets, loads of technical information and more. They even have a large museum display in north Seattle. Dues are \$20 per year and the president is Mike Hazelmeyer 253-471-1545. You could also contact active REPS member Cliff Glaspey at 425-353-6637 or email at aglaspey@gte.net

Norma Jean Nilsson And "The Eternal Light"...A Search

The last issue of Air Check contained a story about *The Eternal Light*. This reminded Honorary Member, and Showcase regular, Norma Jean Nilsson of something special.

She stated "In 1952, I was on *The Eternal Light* and got to star with Mel Ferrer. The show was called 'Lizzie and the Golden Whiskers' and it was very special." In addition to having a big crush on Mel Ferrer, Norma Jean really liked the show. She asked "Is it possible that someone would have a copy of that show? It would mean so much."

So, from Larry Siskind who wrote the article to all the rest of us...can you help? Please let Mike Sprague know (write to 9936 NE 197th Street, Bothell, WA 98011 or email at hrrmikes@aol.com or call 425-488-9518). Thanks a lot.

Terry Mahony, Air Check Editor

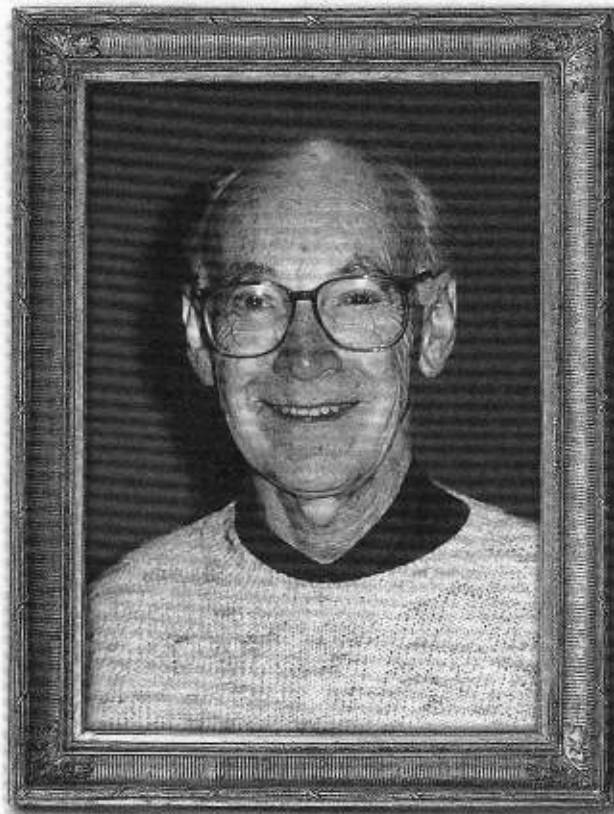


REPS BOARD SET FOR 1999

BY TERRY MAHONY

REPS board members selected Bill Parker as their President for 1999. Like many REPS members Bill has an interesting background. Following graduation from the University of Washington he worked for Boeing for 15 years as an industrial engineer and then did a complete life change by joining the "The Up With People" organization, traveling throughout the world with their folk singing group. His "15 minutes of fame" came in the 1960's when his group became popular in India and hit the top of the charts of Radio Colombo and Ceylon.

Bill returned to Seattle in the 1970's and began working as a shipper and expeditor for the Alaska pipeline construction. After trying early retirement he returned to work as an administrator for a Seattle law firm.



REPS President, Bill Parker

Bill is a charter member of REPS and has been an officer for 3 years. He sings with the Magnolia Chorale and works on blues and jazz guitar in his spare time. Bill's wife Kathy works for the Paramount and 5th Avenue Theaters and Bill admits to sneaking in a few performances as a volunteer usher. We in REPS are fortunate to have Bill leading us this year.

The remaining Board members for 1999 are Dave Selvig, President Elect; Sam Simone, Vice President; Joy Jackson, Secretary; and Janet

Conrad, Treasurer. We are also particularly pleased to announce that Gary and Kathy Hagan are assuming the role of Membership Co-chairmen. As you can tell REPS will be well managed in 1999. The membership graciously thanked out-going Board members Richard Haviland (who continues as the club's Postmaster General), Bill Davies and Terry Mahony for their services.

REPS MEMBERSHIP

REPS welcomes into membership those who have an interest in Old Time Radio and/or current radio drama, variety, comedy, etc. There are three membership categories.

Consider Giving Gift Memberships For Any Occasion!

Membership	1st Year	Renewal
Regular	\$22	\$18
Student	\$13	\$9
Vision impaired	\$13	\$9



SHOWCASE VII UPDATE

JUNE 25~26 AT SEATTLE CENTER

The flyer that is included in this issue of Air Check is your first opportunity to register for Radio Showcase VII. Get a head start and take care of it now.

Here are some of the basic facts, according to Joy Jackson and Mike Sprague, long time co-chairs of this event.

THEME~PROGRAM

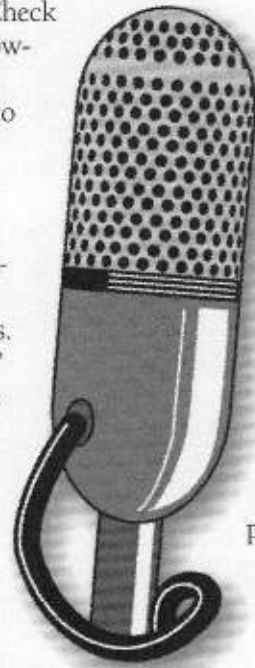
Each year, we select a theme to use as the backdrop for programming. It's kind of a fun thing, but it also helps add some glue to the proceedings. This year the theme will be "Mystery at the Mike."

We anticipate the probability of doing some of the following: *The Adventures of Red Ryder*; *Broadway Is My Beat*; *Jack Armstrong, The All American Boy*; *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet*; *The Adventures of Nero Wolfe*; *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*; *The First Nighter*. Some of these may drop out and others be added, based on guests and other factors.

For the second year, the program will start on Friday afternoon at 3 PM and will conclude on Saturday evening at 9 PM.

GUESTS

As readers will see from the flyer, almost all of our regular "stars" (none of them like to be called that) will be back. You may know that we've begun calling this distinguished group "The Company." What a blessing it is, year after year, to have our friendships with them grow, to learn more about them and to see their talents in many different situations.



Contacts are presently being made with folks who would be coming to their first Showcase. So far, we have confirmed two. Charles Flynn - *Jack Armstrong, The All American Boy* and much more - will be coming. He was a very popular guest at a regular monthly meeting a couple of years ago.

Also coming, health permitting, will be Les Tremayne. Les was another fun guest at a REPS meeting and has so many credits to his name, including *The First Nighter* and *The Thin Man*. There are some issues that might preclude his coming.

SITE

With much positive feedback, and though not perfect, the site will again be the Seattle Center. We'll have a slightly different room situation, but mostly the same.

HOTEL

Once again, *The Inn at Queen Anne* has been chosen as the hotel. It is just across the street and reasonably priced. Last year we referred to it as "quaint" and almost everyone agreed. It has a very distinctive flavor that was well received.

VOLUNTEERS

The REPS members have always pitched in and volunteered. If you haven't, and would like to, please call Mike Sprague 425-488-9518. There are many needs each year, some general and some specific. See the Help Wanted ad below.

SHOWCASE VII HELP WANTED

As of mid-December, in addition to willing workers overall, there are several specific spots where the Showcase Committee can use help. Maybe you're the one to be a REPS...

Engineering/Technical Assistant Donald Zongker is wonderful in this area, and there are several who regularly volunteer to assist. And, there is a need for more help, particularly if you have experience in sound/public address systems. *Contact Donald at 206-365-5046*

Publicity Assistant Help Sam and Jo Simone in sending out news releases to various publications. *Maybe you have writing experience, or you're a good envelope stuffer at...? Contact Sam at 206-722-5868*

Biography Researcher Every year we try to include detailed information on our Show-

case stars. Do you have some detective in you that would like to dig out fresh and new info to go with what we already have? *Contact Mike Sprague at 425-488-9518*

Driver Each year, several REPS members have the fun of picking up our OTR friends at the airport and taking them back when the

Showcase is over. *Contact David Selvig at 206-232-8576*

On-site Greeter and Registrar Often this is done by, less than vigorously interested in OTR, spouses and friends of members. *Contact Mike Sprague at 425-488-9518*



SILENT AUCTION TO BENEFIT SHOWCASE GUEST FUND

As announced in the October issue of Air Check, Janet Conrad is heading this first time program for REPS. The purpose is to raise additional funds for the travel expenses of out of town OTR guests. According to Showcase co-chair Mike Sprague "We want to reach the point where we cover all of our guests' expenses. Their generosity has been overwhelming for years, but we're trying our darndest to grow in this area of our responsibility." All proceeds will go directly to this fund and be used for Showcase VIII in 2000.

"So what do you need?"

Be imaginative! Items can be almost anything with a nostalgic connection. Last year Cliff Glaspey donated antique radios that were auctioned off during the program. He also donated a reel-to-reel recorder. In the past, Frank Buxton donated an autographed copy of his book. Others have helped too.

From the "stars", our performer friends of the Showcases, we already know of autographed photos and at least one is preparing a custom scrapbook for the auction. Everyday fans may well have items that you would be willing to part with. One is giving an autographed biography he purchased at another OTR convention in the past.



"I've got an item, what do I do?"

If you have an item or a question, please contact Janet Conrad at 206-935-4338. She can work through the details with you.

Catalog-flyer

At the appropriate time, an informational sheet will be prepared and mailed to members. Even those not able to attend the Showcase will be able to bid if they choose to.

RADIO JOKES



The following bits of radio humor were provided by Lyle Hegsted and Cliff Glaspey from Antique Radio's October 1998 issue of "Horn of Plenty"

FROM A JOKE BOOK PUBLISHED IN 1939:

An explanation of radio: If you had a very long dog, reaching from New York to Chicago, and stepped on it's tail in New York it would bark in Chicago. That's telegraphy. *Radio is the same thing without the dog.*

"What happened to your canary that used to sing so beautifully?" *"His cage was left by the radio and he learned static."*

A man was tuning the radio when he felt a sudden pain in his back. "I think I'm getting lumbago" he exclaimed. "What's the use?" said his wife, *"You won't understand a word they say."*

"Why was Joe the life of the party?" *"He was the only one who could talk louder than the radio!"*

"Are you going to the flower show?" *"No, I'll stay home and get it on the radio."*

"Have you heard from our neighbor since you loaned him money?" *"Every night, he used it to buy a high powered radio."*

"What do angels do in heaven, Mommy?" *"They sing and play harps." "Don't they have any radios?"*

The young daughter of a radio announcer, saying grace at the dinner table: *"This food comes to us through the courtesy of Almighty God."*

During an terrible thunder and lightning storm a little boy's parents thought he might be frightened and went to comfort him. His first comment was *"What's daddy doing with the radio now?"*

A four year old avid radio listener ended her bedtime prayer with *"Tomorrow night at this time there will be another prayer."*

Radio announcer: *"The last ten minutes of silence was not because of technical difficulties, but was brought to you by the courtesy of Blanko Noiseless Typewriters."*

"How do you like your new radio, McTavish?" *"It's grand, but the wee light is hard to read by."*



▲ Merrill MacI recreates his role of Uncle Fletcher.

Christmas Pa



← Donald Zengker
Does his always
outstanding work.



▲ Cliff and Lynda Glaspey with matching greetings.

▼ Sound effects man par excellence
Stewart Conway and his wife Esther.



▼ Santa's Elves?





Party Memories



▲ Mike Sprague and Dave Selvig getting in the Christmas spirit.



▲ Monte and Priscilla Williams enjoy the Christmas festivities.



▲ The first (and last!) appearance of "The Singing Board"

▼ Jo Simone and John Huta exchange holiday greetings.



► Joy Jackson, the 'Producer/Director' at work.





Rhoda Williams

A REAL STAR AT OUR N



▼A wonderful letter from Rhoda and her husband, David Van Meter.

At our Saturday meeting in November, we were fortunate to have Rhoda Williams as our special guest, along with her husband David Van Meter. Rhoda of course has attended most of our REPS Showcases over the last several years, but this time we were able to spend an unhurried time hearing about her life and career.

"business" in Galveston, Texas when her mother entered her in a 'Beautiful Children' contest. Shortly after this event the family moved to California, where her mother got a "whiff of Hollywood." Quickly becoming a "Hollywood mother," she had Rhoda, at age 5, try out for a part on the 'Uncle Bob Show'. The director told them: "We did specify children who could read" - but unknown to him Rhoda could already read, and was awarded a part on the show every Saturday morning.

Host Larry Albert started the afternoon with a film clip from the 1945 movie 'Our Vines Have Tender Grapes', starring Margaret O'Brien. The scene has Rhoda, playing a girl in a school class, being reprimanded by the teacher for being mean to Margaret O'Brien. This was, we hasten to add, atypical of the roles Rhoda usually played, and we guarantee that Rhoda in person is quite the opposite!

By 1939, Rhoda has landed a role on a soap opera called 'I Want a Divorce', this time playing a little boy. She shortly joined the newly formed AFRA union, just missing being a charter member because her mother was suspicious at first that it might be a scam. Through the years Rhoda has remained active on the AFRA (now AFTRA) board, pointing out that the fee to join is now \$1,200.

Rhoda told us she got her actual start in "show

In the years that followed, Rhoda had roles in a number of movies, including 'Meet John Doe' (1941), 'National Velvet' (1945) and 'Mr. Belvedere Goes to College' (1949). She told us it made her mother happy to see Rhoda in show business. "Mother was the best agent I ever had.

▼Rhoda and Larry Albert talk with REPS membership.



David & Rhoda Van Meter
95 Crocker Lane
Eugene, OR 97404
December 4, 1998

Dear Terry and Bev,

Rhoda would be typing this note to you but she is still recovering from her fractured right elbow. It seems she will still be wearing her splint FOR ANOTHER 3 WEEKS! All she wants for Christmas is both of her elbows working again so she can drive, write, eat, etc.!

We wish to thank you again for all your personal hospitality and for the REPS enthusiasm. We loved the train trip up and back so much! We have decided to do it agin this summer! I know that I speak for Rhoda when I say a big YES! to Mike Sprague's letter asking if we will be there for your Summer Mystery session. We really liked the hotel set-up so close to the show set-up! Tell Joy we will be glad to help out on the video cameras, if my help is needed!

We have included a bunch of photos so your next newsletter could use any. Your newsletter is just the best of it's type we have seen. Tell your printer and layout person what a fantastic job they are doing!

We really think Bev's cooking and housekeeping ought to be written up in Good Housekeeping or some other magazine! We are including a little write-up from the Get Up & Go magazine! The columnist is our writing instructor for our writing class who interviewed us for this piece!

We hope this letter finds you well.

David Van Meter
&
Rhoda Williams (Lefty to her friends!)



Williams

NOVEMBER MEETING *By Bill Parker*

She had no compunctions about calling up for parts." Fortunately, Rhoda's main work was in radio, and "Working in radio was not the all-compassing life that filmwork was. Some kids, who were child actors during the depression, were the only breadwinners in the family. So kids were under tremendous pressure. My only pressure was in trying to keep my mother happy." Because Rhoda was so small in her early radio days, the standard call to the props people was "Get the kid a box." so she could reach the mike.

Rhoda auditioned for 'Father Knows Best' at the age of 17, and we had a chance to hear her on the audition tape. Rhoda, playing older daughter Betty, has decided to marry Billy Smith, her football hero, but father succeeds in discouraging her. The series, starring Robert Young, ran for 5 years with a cast that included June Whitney (Taylor), Dorothy Lovett, and of course Norma Jean Nielsen as the younger sister, Kathy. By 1952 Norma Jean had grown too tall to do Kathy before the studio audience and was replaced by Jean van der Pyle, later Pebbles on 'The Flintstones'. Ted Donaldson (Bud) stayed with the show throughout. Robert Young and Gene Rodney owned the rights to the show, and once when Rhoda was expecting her first child, Young announced it to the studio audience.

"Robert Young was wonderful, great to work with," Rhoda told us. "Although he owned the show, he never gave the impression that he was anything but a member of the cast. He was a warm, friendly man, with a certain reserve. He had a hard time feeling total confidence in himself as an actor." He of course went on to play the same role on television, but 5 years on the show was enough for Rhoda. Later she had a chance to play a couple of small roles on 'Marcus Welby, M.D.' starring Young, and working with him again, "It was as though I'd never left."

Rhoda played many roles on 'Lux Radio Theatre', working with James Stewart, Claudette Colbert, Van Johnson, Betty

Grable, Loretta Young and many others. She described how the stars took part in a March of Dimes broadcast scheduled around Franklin D. Roosevelt's birthday, and how a 16-inch recording of the last one was sent to Warm Springs, arriving just at the time of FDR's death.

She was asked about any memorable flubs on radio. Most memorable was on 'I Want a Divorce', playing a boy with Frank Nelson as her father. She came out with the line: "Daddy, see that fish getting out of the boat? That's my mother." One couldn't help being reminded of the famous flub by the character on 'Sergeant Preston' who said: "That hair, those eyes, those fangs. That's my wife!"

We saw a video of Rhoda on the 'Dragnet' show in the 1960's, in a scene with Jack Webb and Harry Morgan. She played a fast talking woman. "Well," Webb told her afterwards, "You wanted a lot of words." With Webb, she said, you never memorized your lines, you just got a general sense of them and read them off the teleprompter. We were also treated to a video that Rhoda's husband David had but together from home movies.

"Radio didn't die," Rhoda said, "it was killed.

The advertising money was simply transferred to television."

Maybe so, but radio lives on in our hearts through people like Rhoda Williams,

who are so generous in sharing their experiences with us.

DECEMBER 1998

Christmas memories

Recollections of China and Hollywood

BY DAVID E. NEWMAN

Memories of Christmas past seem a natural part of this season. But ask David Van Meter and Rhoda Williams Van Meter what they remember, and the stories are not what you might expect from an older couple living in Eugene.

That's partly because of where they grew up. For Rhoda, childhood life revolved around a budding career as a radio actress in glamorous Hollywood, California. Her best-known role: portraying the older daughter, Betty, on the radio version of 'Father Knows Best'. As for husband David, his memories of Christmas go back to an early age living in China with missionary parents.

Rhoda remembers seeing pictures of Christmas in New York and of snow, and thought it was a "pretty exciting" for a young person living in a town where palm trees grow. Still, Rhoda got to do some pretty exciting things too, like riding in the Hollywood Christmas parade, on the Santa Claus float with Gene Autry. "Aren't you jealous?" she now laughs.

She also helped make Christmas memories for many other. For when Rhoda was 11 years old she recorded Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol', with a cast including "a lot of the top actors in Hollywood." The star who played Scrooge: Basil Rathbone (a "swif-bred English gentleman who was polite and nice," as she describes him).

That was during the summer of 1942. This is how Rhoda, in her best radio voice, describes what happens next:

"That Christmas, there was a show on Saturday morning called Stars Over Hollywood. Christmas that year happened to be on a Saturday, and that's when the show was broadcast. So the producers decided they would do a cut version of 'A Christmas Carol', with the cast from the record and Basil

Rathbone, which would be their Christmas broadcast. Well, since everything was broadcast live in those days, that meant you had to be there on Christmas Day. And it was broadcast early, because it went to the East Coast... So we went to do the show,



David Van Meter and Rhoda Williams Van Meter

and it was a wonderful celebration of Christmas. I have the record, which is now on a cassette tape, and I have been able to listen to it since then. And what is fun, is one year for Christmas I gave my four children each a cassette. On one side was Dickens' 'Christmas Carol', from 1942, and a Christmas show we did on Father Knows Best from 1950. And there's my mommy."

As for husband David Van Meter, growing up — and memories of Christmas as a boy — took place in a setting even more exotic than Hollywood: China. For David's missionary parents one year, the first Christmas problem was to get a Christmas tree, and the only trees "were on the mountains across the lake, and all those trees were owned by the temple," David explains. So when David's mother told him "we're going to get a tree, bring your ax and your saw," the course was set. As the tree cutting was progressing, the priests came along and a Chinese friend had to explain about "the necessity for the Christians to have a Christmas tree, that it was part of their religious ceremony and the priests would be helping out a great deal to have this wonderful Christmas tree." A little man-

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

itary encouragement made a "great deal of difference," David remembers. The next problem was how to decorate a Christmas tree in a place where no ornaments were to be had. The solution: the discovery that some Chinese shops sold "silver and gold paper things" that turned out to look good on the tree. There were other dimensions to this memorable Christmas for David Van Meter and his family, for it all took place in the midst of difficult situations. There was sickness (David had typhus fever

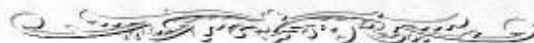
Continued from page 31

and his father was also very ill), there was exhaustion from a long trip (a 250-mile, three-day drive on the Burma Road in an old bus); and then was the problem of keeping warm in cold weather. As David explains, "we had to sit around a charcoal brazier with the fumes coming up and knowing it wasn't good for us." Yet to David, it "was a wonderful Christmas because all of the family was there, along with a few presents. And that, perhaps, is the benchmark for the season, in any part of the world. ■

▲ An article about Rhoda and her husband, David Van Meter, from the December 1998 issue of 'Get Up & Go' magazine.



MIT RESEARCHER SEEKS OTR ASSISTANCE



A research scholar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is working on a new book tentatively titled: *"Patriotic Lessons: Radio, Childhood, and the Technological Imagination"*. Shari Goldin views this project as a cultural history of the changing notions of childhood in relation to the changing ideas and uses of radio, with emphasis on the period of early 1930 to the mid 1940's.

Goldin believes her book, when finished, will offer a more theoretical approach towards the study of children and the media, unlike other books, i.e. *"The Children's Hour"* by Marilyn Lawrence Boemer, which concentrated on the radio programs, not their juvenile audience.

Accordingly, Goldin is now gathering data from numerous sources, including audio tapes and scripts of the juvenile shows, the radio commercials, related toys and premiums, advertisements, and anything that children wrote themselves.

In her preliminary research, Goldin has listened to a number of children's serials in order to evaluate the historical and cultural impact in building a juvenile audience. She is also examining the "tie-ins", including the way the radio premiums were integrated into the plot lines of the stories.

While her budget will not permit buying very many of the OTR premiums, she has been photographing them so she can have this in her research materials. She also uses these photographs when she teaches the subject of children and radio.

Goldin realizes that many original sources refer to "children" but in fact, they mean "boys" since little girls were not involved in OTR the same way their male counterparts were. This is even more true in the area of technology where only little boys are ever photographed building radio sets but the girls are nowhere to be seen.

This researcher welcomes assistance from anyone in the OTR community. She is very interested in acquiring (at reasonable expense) audio copies or scripts of children's shows, particularly the ones that were less popular i.e. *Wizard of Oz, Popeye, Lone Wolf Tribe, Skippy, Terry and Ted, Flying Hutchinsons, Junior Nurse Corps, King Arthur Junior, Omar the Mystic*, etc.

In addition to these copies, she is interested in books and articles. Readers who can help can contact her at slgoldin@MIT.edu or snail mail her at MIT 14N-432, 77 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139.

This article is a reprint from the December 1998 issue of 'Radio Recall', the Metro Washington Old Time Radio Club's newsletter.



RAISED ON RADIO By Gerald Nachman
Pantheon Books: \$28.50

A Review by John Langenbaugh

Just in case you doubted it, here's official proof: Old Time Radio is in a full-throttle cultural revival. Not that that's an unqualified good thing, as Gerald Nachman's book makes clear. Because while there's much to enjoy about this sizable but breezy text, it also has some of the classic defects of a book written to cash in on a hot subject.

Nachman's stated premise in his preface is to provide a personal, anecdotal account of his own experience of listening to radio shows from the 40's and 50's, but unlike, say, Jim Harmon's seminal works *The Great Radio Heroes* and *The Great Radio Comedians*, the text that follows is notably free of any reminiscences, save the occasional reference to what stirred a child's imagination or what logical inconsistencies strained his belief. (He makes the astute and humorous point that to provide an excuse for his monologues, the Lone Ranger's horse Silver sure got an earful on occasion.)

What takes up most of this book is a fairly extensive overview of all different genres of OTR, including Westerns, Adventures, Kid Shows, Soap Operas, and Mysteries, together with a brief history of commercial radio's origins and some behind-the-scenes peeks at announcers and sound effects men. His analysis of some of the top performers, such as Fred Allen and Jack Benny, is admirably clear, and he gives a thoughtful assessment of their accomplishments in shaping both this medium and the infancy of television.

Nachman draws extensively on autobiographies and standard works, with some of his own interviews with the medium's surviving masters and commentary on shows on tape that he's had a chance to listen to. It's a pleasant and gossipy romp, with the occasional detour into romances and feuds behind the mike, but it's also in desperate need of several editorial fact checks. Inaccuracies include such howlers as telling us Buck Rogers was set in the "5th Dimension" on the "Planet Niagara" (any listener worthy of his name would know that Rogers awoke in the 25th century right here on good old planet Earth), and the oft-repeated apocrypha that the Green Hornet's "faithful Japanese valet Kato" became Filipino immediately following Pearl Harbor. There are enough mistakes along these lines to show that Nachman has been sloppy indeed with his research (or has relied too much on the failing memories of his interview subjects), and hints that while *Raised on Radio* may be a light and enjoyable labor of love, it's got all the hallmarks of a rush-job. Nachman tells a fun story, but as a source for reliable information about the Golden Age of Radio, well, I'd as soon trust Fibber McGee for advice on my financial portfolio.

John Langenbaugh, a proud member of REPS since 1998, writes about theater and the arts for Seattle Weekly.



Tough & Easy

OLD TIME RADIO QUIZ by Larry Siskind

1 Dr. Christian was known:

- a. As a young, handsome doctor with romance on his mind.
- b. For his wild character.
- c. As radio's doctor/detective who hunted criminals more often than he cured patients.
- d. As a tracer of lost persons.
- e. As a kind doctor who tried to help others.

2 Which show was never associated with Orson Welles?

- a. Whitehall 1212
- b. Mercury Theater
- c. Campbell Playhouse
- d. Black Museum
- e. The Third Man
- f. This Is My Best

3 Which show is out of place?

- a. When A Girl Marries
- b. Against The Storm
- c. Helen Trent
- d. Romance
- e. Big Sister
- f. Myrt and Marge

4 KDKA, Pittsburgh broadcast the first presidential election results in 1920. Which station carried the first live professional baseball game?

- a. KDKA, Pittsburgh
- b. WMCA, New York
- c. WNYC, New York
- d. WHDH, Boston
- e. WPRO, Providence, RI
- f. WLBZ, Bangor, ME

5 Can you spot the fictitious show?

- a. Bloomer Girls
- b. Billy and Betty
- c. Mortimer Gooch
- d. Moonshine and Honeysuckle
- e. Milligan and Mulligan
- f. Mickey of the Circus

6 Match the western radio hero to his sidekick:

- a. Tom Mix
- b. The Six Shooter
- c. Hopalong Cassidy
- d. Gene Autry
- e. Lone Ranger
- f. Roy Rogers
- 1. Tonto
- 2. Dale Evans
- 3. California Carson
- 4. Mike Shaw
- 5. Didn't have one
- 6. Pat Buttram

Answers

- 1.... [e]... Dr. Christian was a kind doctor who tried to help people.
- 2.... [a]... Whitehall 1212; although this show was very similar to the Black Museum, it had an all British cast and did not involve Welles.
- 3.... [d]... Romance. This show ran 30 minutes and each episode was a complete story. The others were soap operas.
- 4.... [a]... KDKA broadcast the first live professional baseball game from Forbes Field in Pittsburgh on August 5, 1921. The pirates were playing the Phillies.
- 5.... [a]... Bloomer Girls; too bad, it would have made a great show!
- 6.... [a & 4]... Tom Mix & Mike Shaw
 [b & 5]... The Six Shooter had no partner
 [c & 3]... Hopalong Cassidy & California Carson
 [d & 6]... Gene Autry & Pat Buttram
 [e & 1]... Lone Ranger & Tonto
 [f & 2]... Roy Rogers & Dale Evans

Scoring

- Give yourself 15 points for each correct answer to questions 1-5, and 3 points each for each correct part of question 6.
- 75 or over Your favorite show is "Dr. IQ"
- 60-75 Superior
- 40-60 Average
- 25-40 Below Average
- Less than 25 Your favorite show is "It Pays To Be Ignorant"

SECORD PRINTING ■ GOOD PEOPLE!

Our newsletter is distinctive, don't you think? We continue to thank Jay Secord of Secord Printing for making it so. His kindness in donating so much toward this effort is super. And his daughter Keri, along with Brenda Ellenberg, the graphics/layout star, both take a real interest in Air Check. You could say thanks by sending some printing work their way. 425-883-2182

PUGET SOUND RADIO LISTINGS

Both Old Time Radio and current materials (designated C) are on the air. To the best of our knowledge, this is when and where. THE ONLY WAY WE WILL BE ABLE TO CORRECT THIS LIST IS WHEN WE RECEIVE NOTES AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS. If you know of others, or if any of these need correction, please let Air Check know. One such change is Jim Dolan's Radio Entertainment Network, now each weekday instead of Sunday. Please let the stations and sponsors (if any) know of your appreciation.

Mystery Playhouse (C)	KIRO	710 AM	9:06-10PM	Saturday
Mystery Playhouse (C)	KIRO	710 AM	9:06-10PM	Sunday
When Radio Was	KIRO	710 AM	10PM-1AM	Saturday
When Radio Was	KIRO	710 AM	1AM-4AM	Saturday
When Radio Was	KIRO	710 AM	10PM-12AM	Sunday
When Radio Was	KLKI	1340 AM	6PM-7PM	M-F (Anacortes)
OTR	CFMS	98.5 FM	9-10PM	Saturday (Victoria)
OTR Siskind/Herman	ERRS	SAP FM	8-9PM	Saturday
OTR Dolan	ERRS	SAP FM	11PM-2AM	M-F (note change)
Odyssey/children (C)	KCIS	630 AM	7:30AM	Saturday
Odyssey/children (C)	KCIS	630 AM	7:30PM	M-F
Ruby In'galac. Gumshoe (C)	KUOW	94.9 FM	10:30PM	M-F
Unshackled (C)	KCIS	630 AM	9:30PM	Sunday
OTR	CFMI	101.1 FM	10PM	Sunday (Vancouver)
Radio Replays	CKNW	980 AM	11:10 PM	M-F (Vancouver)
Golden Age of Radio Theater	KLAY		6PM-12PM	Saturday
Golden Age of Radio Theater	KLAY		3PM-6PM	Sunday

