

AIR CHECK

NEWSLETTER OF THE RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUGET SOUND (REPS)

VOLUME 10 • NUMBER 3

SHOWCASE VIII • 2000

Our OTR Treasures...



The Showcase VIII Stars. L to R front: Norma Jean Nilsson, Rhoda Williams, Esther Geddes McVey, Ray Erlenborn, Anne Whitfield Phillips, Gil Stratton Jr., Jo Anna March. Back: Jim French, Pat French, Ed Scott, Tyler McVey, Alice Backes, Art Gilmore, Sam Edwards, Janet Waldo, Paul Herlinger, Harry Bartell, Dick Beals. Not Pictured: Frank Buxton, Merrill Mael, Ginny Tyler and Douglas Young.

...are true gems!

What a great privilege to share time with Our OTR Treasures at Showcase VIII. We met some new treasures and enjoyed many familiar treasures.



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Visit us at the REPS Website!
repsonline.org

An Open Letter To Our Friends At PEMCO



◀ Don Murray, left, and John Okerman from PEMCO hope we remember the commercial: "PEMCO, Value You Can Trust".

Dear Mr. McNaughton and staff:

Do you get tired of so much appreciation? We sure hope not, because it flows throughout our entire club and our guests.

Thank you again for your generous financial support of the PEMCO/REPS Radio Showcase. It truly makes a major difference to our enthusiastic, but little, non-profit group. And the Old Time Radio stars that attend always express their thanks too.

Thanks also for the quality of the people that have come from PEMCO to be with us for the weekend. They just fit right in and have become like part of the gang.

We were gratified during the Showcase when we asked how many PEMCO customers were in the audience. Even with many out of town attendees, a very large percentage of hands went up. We're pushing for more.

Our hope is that this relationship, financial and personal, can go on well into the future.

With deepest thanks,

The Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound

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Showcase VIII

By Bill Parker



HIGHLIGHTS

with input from Joy Jackson

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Cold Read

The Showcase was kicked off with a cold read of "The Second Time Around" from *Romance*, 1956. Gil Stratton, Jr. directed Jo Anna March, Harry Bartell, Sam Edwards, Anne Whitfield Phillips and Esther Geddes McVey. Gil said "cold reading was always a great challenge. Everyone wanted to help everyone else." Gil verbalized the sound effects which some of the directors did at a cold read.



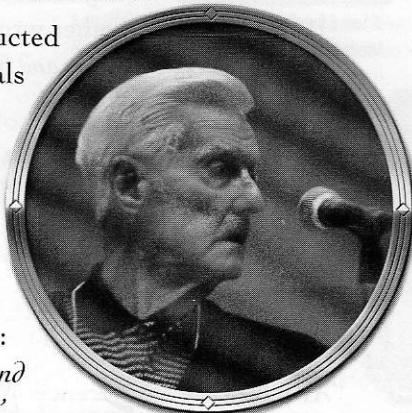
▲ Esther Geddes McVey in "Second Time Around".

The interaction between the characters played by Esther McVey and Harry Bartell was awesome. The cast commented afterwards on how the writer with the flow of this particular script had made it easy for them

to pick up the parts and visualize the action. It was a funny story and easy for us in the audience to follow as well.

10 Treasures and One Stinker

Larry Albert conducted a panel with Dick Beals and Art Gilmore on "Radio's Ten Top Treasures and One Stinker". According to Larry's REPS survey, the top ten were, in reverse order: *'The Six Shooter'*, *'Vic and Sade'*, *'Our Miss Brooks'*, *'The Lone Ranger'*, *'The Jack*



▲ Art Gilmore hears about the one stinker picked by REPS members in a survey.

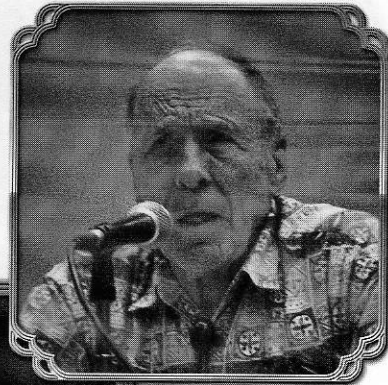
Benny Show', *'Gunsmoke'*, "Three Skeleton Keys" from *'Escape'*, *'Fibber McGee and Molly'*, *'Yours Truly Johnny Dollar'* and "The House in Cypress Canyon" from *'Suspense'*. The stinker was *'Hawk Larabee'*. Poor Hawk.

Close to...

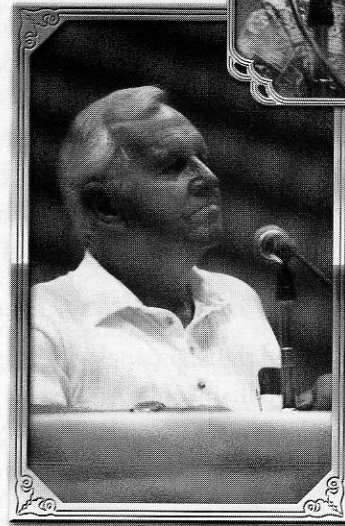
The panel was supposed to be Close to Corwin. However, due to illness, Norman Corwin wasn't able to be with us. John and Larry Gassman talked with Paul Herlinger and Ed Scott.

Paul was enrolled at Stuyvesant High School in New York in 1945 studying radio drama using the textbook, *13 by Corwin*. He had looked forward to meeting the man whose "imagery made the listener feel they were there". His high school class had the unique experience of doing radio drama on New York Stations.

Ed Scott started out in Seattle radio, auditioning for KIRO when they were located in the Olympic Hotel. At 18, he became a staff announcer at fledgling KING. He has done virtually every job in radio, including owning several stations. His biggest challenge was saying "the raucous cacophony of an itinerant calliope" in a job interview.



▲ Paul Herlinger got an early start studying radio at his New York high school.



◀ Ed Scott started his radio career at local Seattle stations.

FRIDAY EVENING

The Snow Queen

Ginny Tyler directed this great Hans Christian Andersen story from *Let's Pretend*. Douglas Young plays a troll whose mirror is smashed. Pieces fly all over the world, and wherever a piece falls, terrible things happen. Esther Geddes McVey as the Snow Queen had excellent help from Gil Stratton, Jr., Norma Jean Nilsson, Anne Whitfield Phillips, Rhoda Williams and Bill Brooks.

Dr. Christian

KIRO radio's Gregg Hersholt took the role played for years by his grandfather, Gene Hersholt, on radio and in

the movies. Gregg wore his grandfather's ring ("which I always wear") and carried a pipe that was presented to his grandfather as *Dr. Christian*.

Dick Beals directed the fine cast of Art Gilmore, the an-

nouncer on *Dr. Christian* for 17 years, Alice Backes, Tyler McVey, Douglas Young, Sam Edwards and Rhoda Williams. Dr. Christian gets himself in deep trouble by agreeing to play John Alden and propose to Sarah (Alice Backes) on behalf of his friend Dan (Tyler McVey). The rest of the episode consists of how he gets himself out of this mess.

Just Sittin' Around and Visiting, Part I

Mike Sprague hosted the first panel with Ray Erlenborn, Alice Backes, Rhoda Williams, Harry Bartell, Anne Whitfield Phillips, Douglas Young, Norma Jean Nilsson and Sam Edwards. It's always entertaining when our guests

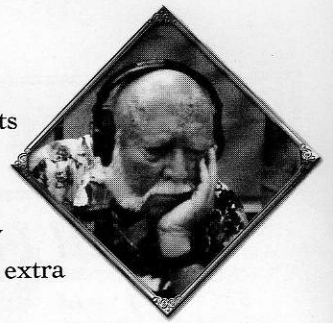
get together and trade stories, which trigger other stories. Following is a sampling of the comments made by Our OTR Treasures:



▲ L to R: Esther Geddes McVey, Alice Backes, Dick Beals, Douglas Young, Sam Edwards and Gregg Hersholt in *Dr. Christian*.



▲ Sam Edwards, Norma Jean Nilsson, Rhoda Williams, Anne Whitfield Phillips, and Harry Bartell listen to Alice Backes during *Just Sittin' Around*.



▲ Ray Erlenborn, master soundman.



Ray Erlenborn— received credits besides that of soundman since he was frequently called upon to do sound voice-overs; "Every time I did vocal sounds, I got an extra check from AFRA".



Alice Backes— had her first radio role on *Dr. Christian* after coming from Utah to Hollywood "determined to be a radio actress". An AFRA refresher course was the door opener.



Rhoda Williams— recently returned from Disneyland where she participated in the 50th anniversary of *Cinderella*. Rhoda was the voice of Drucilla and followed the director's advice "to sing as badly as I could" on the sound track.



Harry Bartell— had no favorite part but indicated that *Escape* was among his favorite shows on which he performed. That's an amazing statement from a veteran of over 10,000 radio shows during the Golden Age of Radio.



Anne Whitfield Phillips— talked about her time on the *Phil Harris/Alice Faye* show and the traveling to Chicago and New York. She remembers being invited by Alice Faye to dinner with the other children on the show.



▲ Sam Edwards got his start in vaudeville.



Sam Edwards— grew up in a vaudeville family performing with the Edwards family. During one tough time in San Antonio, his mother wrote a radio show called *Sonny and Buddy*.



Douglas Young— one of first roles was on *Dr. Christian*. "I got into acting much later in life".



Norma Jean Nilsson— "AFRA made a difference. My paycheck went from \$40 to \$150!!"



▲ "I remember *Sonny and Buddy*" said Douglas Young.

Treasured Radio Commercials

Chris Conrad hosted a panel with Frank Buxton and Norma Jean Nilsson on commercials. The first paid radio

ad was broadcast in 1918. The sponsors owned the shows and they were king. The sponsors closely watched the content

of the show and each sponsor had "censored" words. Frank Buxton commented on the 60-second commercial: "Little Orphan Annie" and "Jack Armstrong" were the advent of the 60-second commercial. They went on forever".

Suspense

Harry Bartell starred as Alexander Bonaparte Custe in the 'ABC Murders', an Agatha Christie Hercule Poirot tale that was written for radio without Poirot. Custe is the primary suspect who eventually turns detective to prove that the real murderer is the up-standing gentleman, Franklin Clark, played by Tyler McVey. Dick Beals directed this play, which required all the actors to maintain an English accent. The supporting cast included Janet Waldo, Jo Anna March, Art Gilmore, Ed Scott, Larry Albert, Alice Backes and Paul Herlinger. Cheryl Jacobs provided the sound for this show.

Just Sittin' Around and Visiting, Part II

John Jensen moderated *Just Sitting Around and Visiting, Part II* with Art Gilmore, Janet Waldo, Jo Anna March, Esther Geddes McVey, Ed Scott, Gil Stratton, Jr., Dick Beals, Tyler McVey and Paul Herlinger. Some comments made by **Our OTR Treasures:**



Janet Waldo— revealed that her husband, director Robert E. Lee, gave her roles she probably would-

n't have had otherwise. "The great thing about radio is that you could do anything you could sound like".



Art Gilmore— narrated 156 episodes of 'Highway Patrol'; "I was once stopped by a Patrol car, and when I mentioned the 156 episodes, he said 'get out of here' ".



Gil Stratton, Jr.— commented on movie people doing radio, especially 'Lux Radio Theater', and how some of them had difficulty reading radio scripts.



Tyler McVey— radio actors were so busy that many didn't have time to listen to other shows; however, "people in the radio business would stop what they were doing to listen to 'Vic and Sade' ".



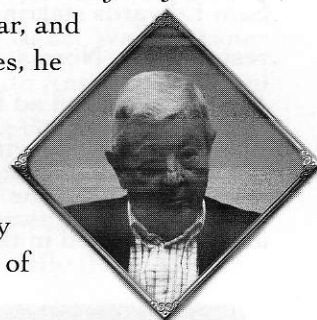
Jo Anna March— worked on 'The Front Page' with Pat O'Brien and the cast was so influenced by the way O'Brien talked that the director said "Stop, you're all sounding like O'Brien and there's only one of him!".



Ed Scott— hung around KING until they thought he worked there. He once signed off the news with: "This is your reporter, Ed Squat".



▲ John Jensen moderates *Just Sittin' Around, II* with Esther Geddes McVey, Ed Scott, Gil Stratton, Jr., Dick Beals, Tyler McVey and Paul Herlinger.



▲ Gil Stratton, Jr. speaks about movie people trying radio.



▲ Tyler McVey commented about being a busy radio actor.



▲ Art Gilmore, Larry Albert, Rhoda Williams, Tyler McVey, Jo Anna March, Harry Bartell and Janet Waldo rehearse 'ABC Murders'.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

I Love a Mystery

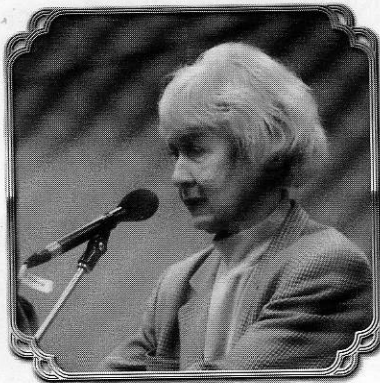
Episodes six and twenty of *"Temple of the Vampires"* were directed by Frank Buxton. Gil Stratton, Jr. read



▲ Douglas Young, Ginny Tyler, Sam Edwards and Frank Buxton rehearse "Temple of Vampires" from 'I Love a Mystery'.

the narrative, which bound the episodes together. Frank was Jack Packard with Douglas Young and

Sam Edwards starring as Doc Long and Reggie York, respectively. Norma Jean Nilsson provided the *"Ivory Flakes"* jingle and ad libbed Spanish, in which she is fluent, to go along with the written words for her character, Angelina. Anne Whitfield Phillips and Ginny Tyler also participated in this outstanding recreation.



▲ Did you know that Alice is an accomplished violinist?

Fast 30 with Alice Backes

Stewart Wright interviewed our first time attendee, Alice Backes. Alice was a speech and drama major at the University of Utah.

"When my family moved to California, I

decided to act for a living", said Alice. Her career has touched base with the crème de la crème of Old Time Radio: Lorene Tuttle was her acting coach, producer Neil Reagan hired her, Art Gilmore helped get her an audition and she worked with Norman Corwin. "He's a treat to work with, so creative with a great sense of humor and a positive sense of how to do things".

Acting Technique

Frank Buxton and Ginny Tyler helped David Selvig discuss radio acting, then and now. Today, radio actors are doing voice-overs. Ginny shared her squirrel voice for Disney's *'Sword and the Stone'* and commented that the "microphone is your best friend's ear". Frank said, "Create a voice around the character. You have to be able to see a scene in your mind". Visualization is a very big thing in voice creation.



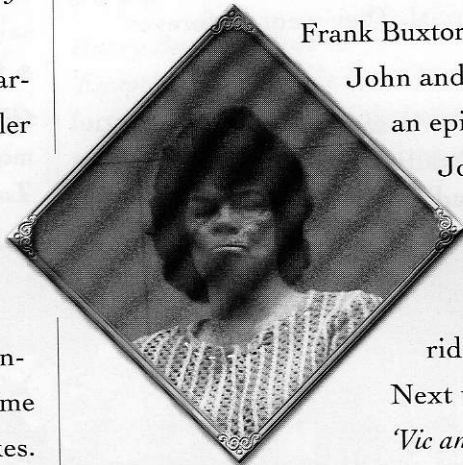
▲ "Keep your day job!" advises Frank Buxton

The Bickersons/Vic & Sade

Frank Buxton and Ginny Tyler played John and Blanche Bickerson in an episode of *'The Bickersons'*.

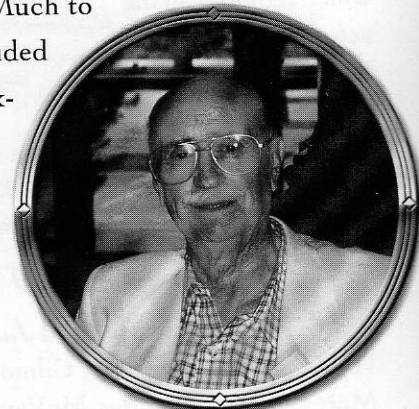
John and Blanche are having a constant battle over beds and sleep while on a train ride during a business trip.

Next up was a recreation of *'Vic and Sade'*. Much to our delight, Merrill Mael, who has been very ill, was able to ap-



▲ Ginny Tyler as Blanche Bickerson.

pear as Uncle Fletcher. Much to our delight, the cast included Anna Denton, Frank Buxton, and Joy Jackson with Ed Scott setting the scene "halfway up in the next block".



▲ The unforgettable Merrill Mael as Uncle Fletcher.

Randy & Chris

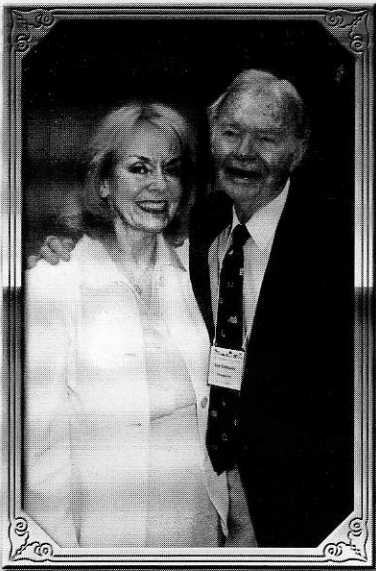
After dinner, Randy and Chris McMillan provided us with musical entertainment. Randy is a talented keyboardist who also provided music on some of our featured shows. His wife, Chris, joined him on the flute. Randy played "Name That Tune" with some of the popular themes from OTR shows.



▲ Randy & Chris McMillan provided a delightful musical interlude.

Meet Corliss Archer

What is a showcase without a couple of surprises?



▲ Janet Waldo and Sam Edwards had the crowd in stitches with their Corliss and Dexter performance.

Janet Waldo and Sam Edwards surprised us with a visit from Corliss and Dexter. What could be more delightful than seeing these two in action before the microphone?

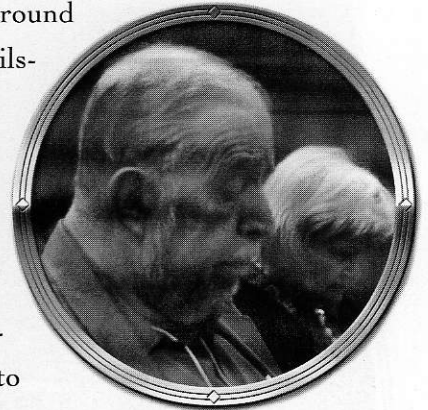
My Client, Curley

Jim and Pat French stepped in at the last minute to "save our bacon" and directed this delightful recreation in the absence of Norman Corwin. The cast was large and used

almost all of our OTR treasures. Gil Stratton, Jr. starred as The Agent and Dick Beals was featured as Stinky. Stinky has a pet caterpillar that can dance to the tune of "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby". The Agent sees a great opportunity for fame and fortune and contacts Steven Spielberg. The Agent holds out for \$500,000 while word

of this caterpillar spread around the world. Norma Jean Nilsson and Rhoda Williams had the opportunity to

practice their foreign language techniques. In the end the caterpillar disappears to Stinky's great sorrow, only to reappear as a beautiful butterfly and fly away. Tough for the agent, perhaps, but for the rest of us a great way to end the evening. All-out comic per-

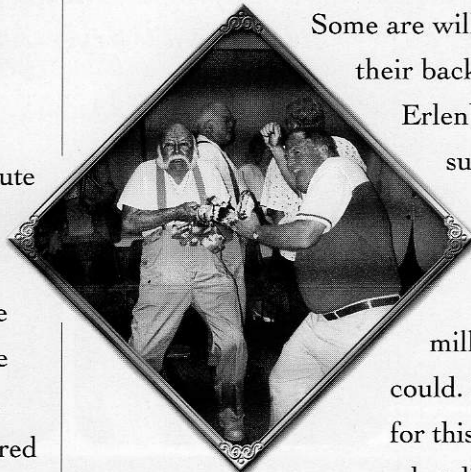


▲ Jim and Pat French were real lifesavers.

formances from the whole cast — Janet Waldo, Anne Whitfield Phillips, Harry Bartell, Jo Anna March, Paul Herlinger, Sam Edwards, Tyler McVey, Bill Brooks and Art Gilmore as the announcer — added to the enjoyment. Gil Stratton, Jr. was heard to comment after the performance that the thought of the butterfly flying away "brought tears to my eyes".

Surprise, Surprise II

Some are willing to give the shirt off their back for the cause. Meridy Erlenborn had arranged a surprise joke on Ray. Mike would auction the shirt off his back. He was stunned and then milked it for everything he could. Bill Buckley paid \$55.50 for this extra auction item. And what did Ray think of all of this? "What a lucky OTV (Old Time Vaudeville) stooge I am! I got



▲ "Look what I got!" says Bill Buckley.

to take the stage at the REPS 2000 Convention with two pro-straight men: Mike Sprague and Bill Buckley..."

SHOWCASE

The John Archer Volunteer of the Year Award

◆ Mike Sprague

John Archer, radio/television/movie actor, and long-time friend of REPS, died earlier this year. He had been REPS member #1. The Board of Directors felt that we needed to acknowledge his contributions to REPS and so voted to change the name of the Volunteer of the Year Award to the John Archer Volunteer of the Year Award. John had always been willing to donate his time and knowledge to anything the club needed; it was fitting that his name be attached to such an award.

The Board, unanimously, felt that the only person to get the first John Archer Award had to be Mike Sprague. But subterfuge was necessary, since Mike was the person who constructed the Awards, so Lynda & Cliff Glaspey agreed to pretend to be the recipients. David Selvig made his own version of the Award, and brought it to the Awards dinner. He did a quick switch of the plaques and presented the John Archer Award to a completely unsuspecting Mike Sprague. The audience, including our special guests, gave him a standing ovation. There were tears in more than a few eyes. And then he had to give out the rest of the awards.



REPS Radio Appreciation Award

◆ Rhoda, Esther, Norma Jean

In the past, this award has been voted on and represents a popular vote for a popular person on radio and with REPS. It goes to whomever the members choose.

Previous recipients have been: John Archer, Gil Stratton, Jr., and Stewart Conway.

This year we broke with tradition and honored those who have made significant contributions to radio and REPS. We are so grateful to all of them.



➤ REPS Radio Appreciation Award recipients 1 to 6, top: Rhoda Williams, Esther Geddes McVey and Norma Jean Nilsson; bottom: Anne Whitfield Phillips, Douglas Young, Jim and Pat French

III AWARDS



REPS Radio Achievement Award

◆ *Dick Beals*

Past recipients are invited to participate in the selection of the new recipient. Award Chairman John Jensen, coordinates the review and communications. John is always impressed by the seriousness of the panel.

This award recognizes a "body of work by an actor, director, producer or other individual whose work has contributed to the perpetuation and furtherance of radio theatre, past or present". In the event of a tie, the Chair of the selection committee will vote to break the tie. The REPS Board then ratifies the selection.

Previous recipients were total professionals: Parley Baer, Ray Erlenborn, Jeanette Nolan, Harry Bartell, Art Gilmore, Tyler McVey and Sam Edwards.

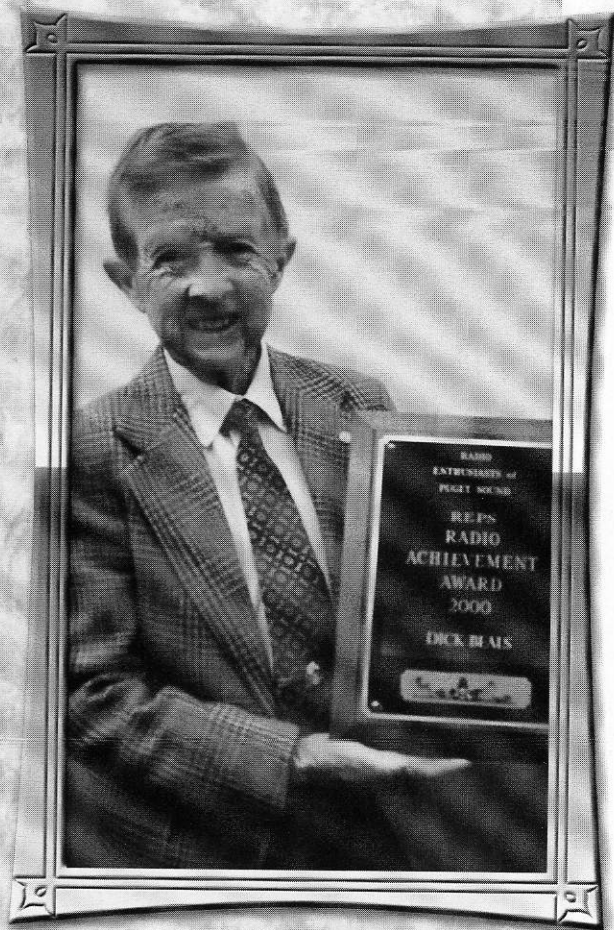
This year the recipient was Dick Beals. Dick has been with us for every showcase and is always willing to do whatever we ask of him and more. Thanks, Dick.

Anne, Doug, Jim e? Pat

the general membership. In most ways, this award is given to a person who has demonstrated significant involvement with REPS and whose membership wishes and is a sign of our affection.

Merrill Mael, Jim French, Herb Ellis, Dick Beals,

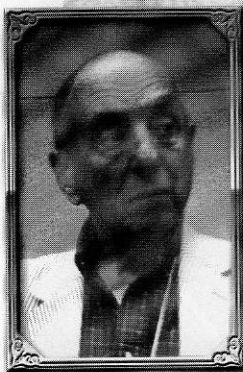
and seven people instead of just one. All of these people have been with REPS for several years.



▲ Dick Beals with his "gorgeous hunk of wood".

Our OTR Treasures Speak

Dick Beals: You topped all previous shows with this winner, Mike. You filled all the empty spots smoothly...your Waldo-Edwards spot brought down the house. And yes, I do display all the framed certificates and a new spot will be reserved for my favorite of all...REPS is the best.



Harry Bartell

Harry & Bev Bartell: You, and your fellow REPSians, have been awarded the BGUF (Bartell-Gallantry-Under-Fire) prize for the year 2000. Bev and I were amazed that you were able to hold the weekend together under the circumstances...I wish I could personally express my thanks to all of you who helped Bev so much. The 'Suspense' recreation has a particular interest for me. I had never played a part like that. And, by way of an unrequested opinion, I thought 'Curley' was the best overall production I can remember from the Showcase schedules.

Frank Buxton: Many, many thanks for all your efforts in making this showcase a smash.

Art Gilmore: I thought the whole weekend went very well in spite of many changes that you had to contend with.

Anne Whitfield Phillips: I think the scripts were very well chosen — I liked the selection better than in past years...it might be fun to turn the tables and let us ask the audience some questions...Maybe we can stump the audience with things we know.



Anne Whitfield Phillips

Jo Anna March: Thank you for all that you did to make the REPS Showcase such a tremendous success. Everyone I talked to said how each one just keeps getting better, and I agree. We ALL had such fun...and the scripts were good. See you next year.



Jo Anna March

Alice Backes: It was absolutely a delight to be with you and all of the delightful "treasures" at the Seattle meet. It was great to have such wonderful material...and such a treat to be working

with old friends and new ones, too...thank you in every language I can think of.



Norma Jean Nilsson

Norma Jean Nilsson: It was the best one ever! I'm going to look at my little Oscar again.

Gregg Hersholt: I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed my experience 6/30 at the "little white house in River's End"...to be directed by Dick Beals was more than I could ever hope for. What a pro that man is. I was also pleasantly surprised to see Ginny Tyler for the first time in about 35 years. She was a member of a now-defunct Hollywood actors club...where I spent many happy childhood years. Thanks again for a memorable evening.

Janet Waldo: I've decided that you are the real treasures for putting it all together so smoothly and never losing your cool. What fun we had!

Ray & Meridy Erlenborn: Definitely a 5-star show!...What a dedicated team of actors, directors, musicians, staff members and technicians...added kudos to those I'm not in contact with like Paul Secord for our airport shuttling, the center's audio technician...hope to see you at SPERDVAC's 2000. Signed: Your Lascivious Leprechaun and his Winsome Wife.



Janet Waldo

Ed & Aggie Scott: ...Our compliments on the job you did in organizing and executing Showcase VIII. The contents were most interesting, and the other participants were superb. I must confess that portraying a jaded Scotland Yard detective, concurrently with other roles, didn't result in my best work. But, all together, it was fun.

Rhoda Williams and her husband, David Van Meter.



Rhoda Williams & David Van Meter: Thank you for my award.

It was totally unexpected. I enjoyed the people, the shows, the accommodations — everything. And it was particularly wonderful to have Jim & Pat French again. My award is occupying a special place in my living room...thanks again for everything.

Others helped our OTR Treasures

➤ *Stewart Wright wrote the bios in the Showcase packet.*



➤ *Donald Zongker kept all the equipment working.*

◀ *The Gassman brothers (center and right) conducted an interview. Check out Larry Gassman's article on our web page.*

◀ *Mike Sprague and Joy Jackson kept everything running despite a multitude of changes. Thanks so much for all of your hard work.*

▲ *Cheryl Jacobs assisted with the sound effects.*

Thanks to all the Volunteers

This Showcase would be impossible without the combined contributions of this group. Clearly, some invested lots of hours and some were able to give just a little. But, the sum of their efforts is so good!

Larry Albert, Ron Aley, Tom Brandt, Bill Brooks, Bob Cardenas, Christopher Conrad, Janet Conrad, Bill Davies, Anna Denton, Frank Denton, Jim Dolan, Pat Garner, John Gassman, Larry Gassman, Cliff Glaspey, Lynda Glaspey, Joy Jackson, John Jensen, Marge Lutton, Rhea Lutton, Bev Mahony, Terry Mahony, Kate Molling, Bill Parker, Tom Roach, Elizabeth Roach, Frank Rosin, Paul Secord, David Selvig, Dick Shell, Sam Simone, Jo Simone, Glenn Sisson, Linda Sprague, Mike Sprague, Jack Taylor, David Van Meter, Marilyn Wilt, Stewart Wright and Donald Zongker

And to anyone we missed, extra thanks for your work and forgiveness.

◆ From the Fans ◆

Attendees using the Memory Sheets that were in the Showcase Packets submitted most of these. Most of these were submitted by attendees using the 'Memory Sheets' in the Showcase packets. Thank you for your responses. We love knowing that the chemistry and programming seem to please so many. We take seriously the suggestions for improvements.

I had a lot of fun at the convention tonight...the stars are wonderful. I really enjoyed talking to Douglas Young at dinner, real nice guy.

Getting a chance to meet and talk to Paul Herlinger, whose work I have admired for years was a real high point for me. Hope Paul will be able to come back next year. Is it too early to volunteer for next year?

Something I will remember for a long time: Janet Waldo stories, treasured OTR commercials.

'My Client, Curley' was fantastic.

All in all very good taste and fun.

Great showcase in spite of all the last minute changes.

I still think of bits from past Showcases. BUT one of the greatest will be the SURPRISE with Corliis and Dexter...redone by the very people who actually played these parts on "real radio" brought a few tears.

This was my 3rd year and they get better each year.

Radio entertainment was very much a part of our kidhoods and we really regret the loss.

I say that our radio actors/voice actors are OUR living national treasures.

Thanks to...the special guests who have made and make a gift of their time for our enjoyment.



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SILENT AUCTION

by Janet Conrad

The incredible generosity of the donators was overwhelming. We were receiving donations as late as Saturday afternoon of the Showcase. So, we are well on our way for next year with some really interesting and unique items. More on that in upcoming Air Checks.

Without the contributions of our donators, we would not have a silent auction in the first place. So a very heartfelt thanks to all our donators. Ray Erlenborn gets an extra thank you for being such a sport, literally auctioning the shirt off his back!

There were certainly a lot of bidders this year, with a number of bidding wars going on. It looked like people were having some fun with this.

THANK YOU...Evelyn Bruniski, Bill Buckley, Terrance Chriest, Cliff Ferguson, Kirk Gardner, Pat Gardner, Lynda Glaspey, Gordon Gregersen, Mark Kirkland, Donald Lackey, Adele Lohman, Kate Molling, Andrew Rosen, Max Schmid, Paul Secord, Jack Taylor, Gary Walker and Les Westrum.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated. The \$1400 made from this will go directly to the Showcase IX Guest Fund. It helps tremendously to off set some of the costs of bringing these fine performers into town.

THANK YOU again this year to Cliff and Lynda Glaspey. They are always such a big help. I really appreciate it.

With Showcase IX already on our minds, we are thinking of ways to make this run more smoothly. Any suggestions, comments or, of course, donations are welcome! See you next year.



Upcoming REPS Meetings

September 2nd: (Note: This is Labor Day Weekend)
 "Over the Top, Boys". This original radio drama by REPS member John Jensen is about a small community theatre re-staging the play "Over the Top, Boys" and what happens when the star of the production accepts a role in it 50 years later.

October 7th: OTR Actor George Pirrone.

In addition to being Pinky on 'One Man's Family', George worked on 'Dr. Christian', 'Mayor of the Town' (as Scruffy) and 'The Life of Riley', where he played Egbert Gillis. There are other show and lots of stories. Be sure to ask George about the Mother/Daughter Pageant.

October 21st: 2 p.m. The REPS Radio Readers will be performing 'War of the Worlds' at the Museum of Flight. This will be done in conjunction with Fifth Saturday Theatre.

November 4th: True Boardman...a True talent from the Golden Age. Born in Seattle 91 years ago, to actor parents, True has had an illustrious career. For REPS fans, you'll recognize a few of the shows for which he was the writer: shows like *Presenting Charles Boyer*, *Family Theater*, *Silver Theater*, *Rexall Summer Theater* and *Skippy Hollywood Theater*. There is much more and we'll learn about it all with Honorary Member Jim French at his skillful interviewing best hosting True at our meeting.



December 2nd: Annual Christmas Party and Toys for Tots

Drive. Food, cassette exchange, a special program and traditional Toys for Tots drive in conjunction with the US Marines.

December 21st – December 31st: "The Holiday Big Broadcast". Contact the Kirkland Performance Center for tickets at 425-893-9900.

Upcoming Conventions

Friends of Old Time Radio: October 19-22 in Newark, NY

Contact: Jay Hickerson, Box 4321, Hamden, CT, 06514.

Phone: (203) 248-2887 e-mail: JayHick@aol.com

A large convention with many East Coast guests.

SPERDVAC: November 10-12 in Los Angeles

Contact: Larry Gassman, Box 1163, Whittier, CA, 90603.

Phone: (562) 947-9800

Our friends to the South have many OTR guests dropping in and they do a nice job.



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 Membership For Any Occasion!

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

They Tickled My Funny Bone...by Ray Erlenborn

In the thirties I quickly became aware of certain actors and actresses who grabbed my attention as soon as I wheeled my sound effects props into the studio. There was something about their attitude that for me, set them apart from the other members of the cast. Just a glimpse of them sitting there holding their scripts "tickled my funny bone", and I would put a smile on my face.

I'm sure that some of you have heard about a talented and eccentric actor name Hans Conreid who inevitably would wear one red sock and one green sock to the radio or recording studios. Hans would many times find my vulnerable countenance to intimidate me with humorous bits of laughter provoking mime antics.

No place was a sacred haven from actors like Les Tremayne. Even at the AFRA Board meetings, Les would attract my attention and with his "pinky", he would delicately stroke his eyebrows, purse his lips and mime a kiss in my direction, in a gay gesture that was regarded as something to make jokes about in the thirties. He continues to tickle my funny bone with his "fay" attitude during the old time radio convention rehearsals. Larry Dobkin has a different style of getting under my skin. He has a special talent for deflating my ego whenever I have spoken during convention's question and answer periods. When he delivers an ego stripping remark, I try not to perceive the smirk on his face when



▲ Laugh Tracks Augmentation.

I return to my chair but I have all I can muster to keep from delivering the Jack Benny retort: "NOW CUT THAT OUT!!!"

From the beginning of comedy and variety shows in radio there were people who were called upon to

warm up the audience and get them in a laughing mood before the show went on the air. The announcers, Roy Rowan, Wendell Niles, Bill Baldwin, John Harlan, Johnny Jacobs and others would all have their own special routines to prepare the audience for a funny show. A surefire trick was to ask everyone to turn around on the count of three and shake hands with the person directly behind them. (Where'd they go?) Another bit was to ask everyone in the audience to hold hands. The announcer would then call out and say: "Now will the lady in the last row reach out and stick her finger in the light socket?"

Even though comedic broadcasters were not visible to the radio audience, they could enhance comedy material with their actions and reactions in front of a live audience. During the sketches, practically everyone on stage were asked to play to the audience. The announcers laughed at the stars, the supporting players reacted. And from behind the prop table, located downstage on the apron, we sound effects folks reacted as though we hadn't heard it all during rehearsals. If a sound effect got a laugh, I would slowly turn my "dead pan" look

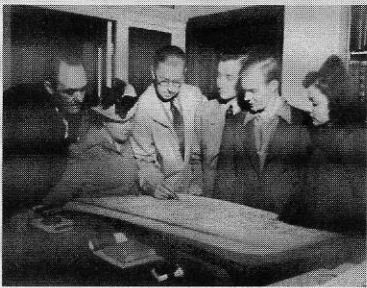
toward the audience, and occasionally comb the "misplaced" fringe of hair on my baldhead. Yes, we were encouraged to "milk" the laughs whenever possible. (Listeners at home were curious as to why the laughter for a "Fibber McGee's Closet" crash lasted so long!) Supporting players who knew the timing and delivery of 'punch lines' and who had expertise with facial mime, were sought after, and were therefore heard on "Big Time" comedy shows.

May I recall some of the funny folks you may have already become aware of? Starting with the old-timers, there was Phil Arnold, Sylva Picker, Martha Wentworth, Fritz Feld, Benny Rubin, Elmore Vincent, Sandra Gould, Charlie Cantor, Ralph Moody, Pinto Colvig, June Foray, Bea Benedaret, Daws Butler, Stan Freberg, Peter Leeds, Jerry Hausner, Hal March, Elvia Allman, and many more I can no longer recall... (You may not find many of these people on tape; some of their work was never saved by dubbing from acetate, which deteriorated, to tape.)

I doubt if there is any recordings of 'The Blue Monday Jamboree' starring Harrison Hal-loway. It came from KFRC in San Francisco. And there was 'The Happy Go Lucky Hour', starring "Al Pearce and his Gang", and 'Gilmore Circus' which originated from the Beaux Arts Building in Los Angeles. I sat in the audience with my mom and witnessed these early radio events in the late twenties and early thirties. Watching Al Pearce in my teens, I didn't have an inkling that I would be a "member of the Al Pearce Gang" in less than ten years! On that show I was written a "demonstration of laughter and applause" routine by the writers, which seemed to work week after week to warm up the audiences for over five years. I also used the routine on the 'Edgar Bergen Show' for three years with an assist by Bill Brown.



June In
"WE'RE BUILDING A HOUSE"
KGO
Friday Evenings 8:15 p. m.
 A REAL FAMILY BUILDS
 A REAL HOME OVER RADIO



*The Edwards Family
 and
 Architect Roland Stringham*

You will enjoy this unique radio broadcast of the Edwards Family as they actually progress in the planning, construction and furnishing of their "dream home."



CORNER

KINDNESS

This little section is going to be in Air Check to recognize and thank donors. This may be in remembrance of someone who has passed on. It might be a gift for the Showcase Guest Fund to cover travel expenses for out-of-town OTR folks. Maybe it is a donation of material, or money toward acquisitions. And, if you donate and don't want your name listed, we'll respect that wish. So, it may be many, it may be few, but thanks to those who have given in the past six months. In case you don't know, donations to REPS are tax deductible and givers will receive a receipt. All gifts, with an indication of the purpose, should be sent to REPS c/o Janet Conrad, Treasurer, 6550 47th Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98156

Showcase:

Merrill & Sandy Mael, Art Scott, Dick Bonesteel, Terry Campbell, Jay Secord, Paul Secord, Bill Buckley, Jim & Pat French, PEMCO, Our OTR Treasures who paid parts of their own expenses

Silent Auction donors:

Tyler & Esther McVey, Ray & Meridy Erlenborn, Gil Stratton Jr., Anne Whitfield Phillips, Janet Waldo, Sam & Beverly Edwards, Jack Edwards & Jane Webb, Stewart Wright, Sam Simone, John Jensen, Cliff Gaspey and Don Allen

In Memory Of:

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Berns (Sandra Gould) from Norma Jean Nilsson



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SECORD PRINTING...THEY REALLY DO A GREAT JOB!

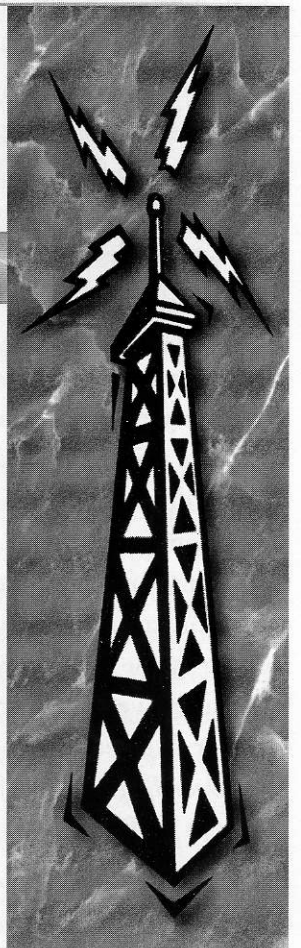
People continue to say things like "Your newsletter is the nicest, most professional looking one I've seen." Guess why? It's because Jay Secord, his daughter Keri, and graphic designer Brenda Ellenberg really care. Almost everything is donated and we feel quite indebted when each issue comes out so special. We encourage you to call Secord Printing at 425-883-2182 for all your printing needs.



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)	KNWX	770 AM	9:06-10PM	Saturday
Mystery Playhouse (C)	KNWX	770 AM	9:06-10PM	Sunday
When Radio Was	KNWX	770 AM	10PM-1AM	Saturday
When Radio Was	KNWX	770 AM	1AM-4AM	Saturday
When Radio Was	KNWX	770 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



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