

# AIR CHECK

NEWSLETTER OF THE RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUGET SOUND (REPS)

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## TALK ABOUT A SEATTLE CONNECTION!!

By Mike Sprague  
and Joy Jackson

At the age of 8 weeks, 91 years ago, True Boardman began his illustrious career on stage in Seattle in *City of Seattle*. True was born in Seattle when his parents were playing with the Scott Company at the Metropolitan Theatre (where the Olympic is now). Mr. Boardman continues acting by portraying Ralph Waldo Emerson across the country.

Honorary member Jim French was True's host at the November meeting. Jim had done his homework well and led us through the many stages of True's career.

### *The Early Years*

In 1912 True appeared with his father in *Brocko Billie's*. Mary Pickford, Helen Keller and Charlie Chaplin were actors he worked with in films as a youngster in Hollywood where he grew up. After high school, True headed to New York in 1928 where he became a radio actor. He began writing while in college.



▲ Jim French interviews True Boardman at the November 2000 meeting.

### *Lux and More*

One of his first jobs after returning to LA was working for KHJ where he played a general and three Mexicans. True said that for actors in Hollywood, no part was a challenge since all were dialecticians. He was part of the cadre of radio actors located in LA that included Frank Nelson, Barbara Luddy, Jeanette Nolan (whom True got into the business) and John McIntyre.

The regular pay was \$5.00 per performance whether you were acting, directing or writing. He did 15 – 18

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## WMAQ SAYS SO LONG

*Pioneering Chicago station is gone;  
sports format WSCR grabs its frequency*

by Elizabeth A Rathbun

WMAQ (AM) is dead! Long live WMAQ! Chicago's oldest radio station retired its call letters last Monday after more than 78 years, but its archives will live on at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago.

WMAQ owner Infinity Broadcasting Corp. had to sell an AM in Chicago to win federal approval of parent CBS Corp.'s recent merger into Viacom, Inc. The natural target was WSCR (AM), at 1160 kHz, with its weak nighttime signal. But rather than sell off WSCR completely, Infinity decided to move WSCR's call letters and potentially popular sports talk format to its WMAQ, which at 670 kHz has the strongest AM signal available. (Infinity is looking for a buyer for the 1160 frequency.)

Ratings also came into play in Infinity's decision: WMAQ tied for 21st place in the spring Arbitron book. Although WSCR was tied for 26th, Infinity is hoping to duplicate the success of its sports/talk WFAN (AM) New York. WFAN has been the top-billing radio station not just in New York but in the entire country since 1995, according to BIA Research.

While WMAQ billed some \$20 million in 1999, it "was not functioning as a successful station," CBS spokesman Gil Schwartz says. Meanwhile, the sports format is a "successful franchise," he continues, although WSCR reportedly billed just \$10 million last year.

WMAQ employees had a rough couple of weeks before the change, says Mike Krauser, formerly news director of WMAQ and now news director of Infinity's all-news WBBM Chicago. About a dozen WMAQ employees have moved to WBBM, the No. 6 station in the market; the other 40 or so are looking for jobs.

WMAQ, which went on the air on April 12, 1922, was the birthplace of radio's first serial, *Amos 'n' Andy*, in 1928, and originated "more soap operas than you can begin to name," Chicago broadcast historian Rich Samuels says. This station also hosted *Fibber McGee & Molly* and personalities including Red Skelton and Don Ameche. WMAQ also lays claim to the first play-by-play sports broadcast, in 1925, and the first transoceanic news broadcast, in 1928.

The station was started by Chicago Daily News and a local department store, the Fair Store. NBC bought WMAQ in 1931 and owned it until 1988, when the station was sold to Westinghouse Electric Co. Westinghouse bought Infinity in 1996, the year after it bought CBS.

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# SEATTLE CONNECTION...continued from page 1

shows a week and sometimes 3 shows a day. He frequently had 20 scripts a week going. Rehearsal time was always short. True realized five minutes into a show that it would be two minutes short, so he handed the directing task over to the announcer and hurriedly wrote enough to fill the shortage. "I handed the script to Jeanette Nolan. Without ever having read it, she did it perfectly."

Jim French asked: "How did you go about trimming and fitting the budget when rewriting movies for *Lux Radio Theatre*?" True told the story about writing the script for *Tale of Two Cities*. He got the contract just prior to leaving on a 5-1/2 month trip. "It had to be original" so he read the book while on a trip aboard the SS Matsonia to Hawaii. He finished the play at noon on the last day in Hawaii, prepared it for mailing, gave it to an employee of the Matsonia and boarded the boat to Japan.

It was a standard clause in contracts that rewrites would be required. True told of his approach when writing for *Perry Mason*, "You would write a story with 4-5 suspects, any of whom could have done it." After the parts were cast, the ending would go to the biggest star.

This led to comments about one of the most unpleasant actors that he worked with. Paulette Goddard was on an episode of *Silver Theatre*. After the two-hour rehearsal on Thursday, she wanted some changes. The 3-hour rehearsal on Friday resulted in more changes. The performance was scheduled for 3 pm; however, True received a call in the morning stating that Paulette was "indisposed" and wouldn't be able to be at the performance.

## Current Values

True wrote 14-15 *Virginian* episodes. He worked hard to avoid gunplay on the show which prompted a discussion about current values on television and in film. "Can we ever find our way back?" queried Jim French. "I doubt

it," True stated emphatically. "The genie is out of the bottle."

## Stories...

True said that his biggest nightmare occurred when he forgot his cue and burst on the stage late.

The easiest actors to work with were Loretta Young, Rosalind Russell, Ginger Rogers and Clark Gable.



▲ Joy Jackson talking with True Boardman after giving him a copy of her play, "Skyway To Hell"

True wrote a segment of *Silver Theatre* for Jimmy Stewart entitled 'Child, Save My Fireman'. He felt this was the best comedy show that he ever wrote.

True has acted with, wrote for or directed many of the biggest stars and shows in Old Time Radio:

- Pat O'Brien in 'Dan Carson's Story'.
- Marlene Dietrich in 'Sheherezade'. True played a love scene with Marlene and "Throughout it all, I stood at one microphone with her, with my arm around her waist."
- *Family Theatre*, *Skippy Hollywood Theatre*, *Silver Theatre*, *LUX Radio Theatre*, *Bergen e<sup>2</sup> McCarthy* and

## Presenting Charles Boyer

• Clark Gable in 'For Rich, For Richer'; "I wrote this play for the *Silver Theatre* for Clark before he became famous," said True.

## Blacklist

True was a member of the Hollywood Independent Citizen's Committee along with Olivia de Haviland, Jimmy Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan. This organization was set up to deal with Social Security and other items of concern for actors. True spoke out against what was happening and was blacklisted. His normal channels dried up and the standard response became "Oh, we already have a show in production like that." or "We have no open possibilities." True turned his talents to business films and documentaries.

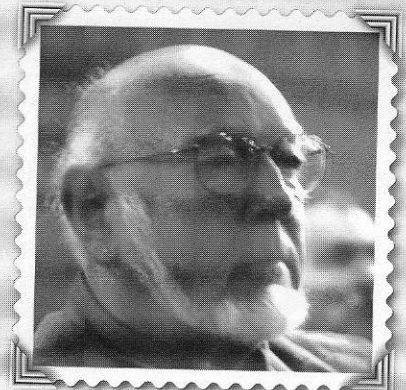
# CHRISTMAS CHEER SHARED BY ALL



*Lynda Glaspey*



*'Toys for Tots' Donations*



*Frank Denton*



*Glenn Sisson*

Our December meeting featured toys, food and tapes. Terry Mahoney took responsibility for delivering the contributions of our REPS members to 'Toys for Tots'. Unfortunately, the Marine Reserves were unable to have an officer in attendance at our meeting due to a scheduling conflict. Thank you so much for your generous donation to this worthy cause.

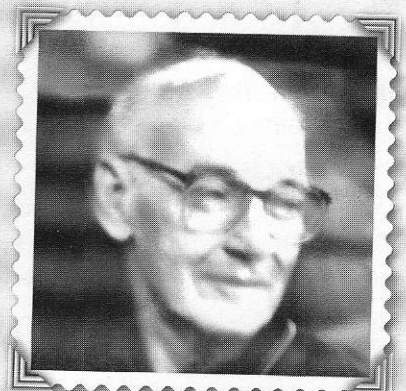


*Anna Denton*



*Janet Conrad*

Dave Selvig and Andy Anderson played tapes of several Christmas episodes. Members shared memories of some Christmas shows. Many of the shows used the same Christmas episode year after year. What Christmas shows do you remember?



*Bill Parker*

Vi Anderson brought one of her many trees under which the tapes for the gift exchange were placed.



*"Skully"*



*Jay Secord*



*Vi Anderson*





# TOUGH AND EASY

Old Time Radio Quiz by Larry Siskind

**1** Which super hero never had his own show?

- A) Popeye the Sailor
- B) Batman
- C) Green Lama
- D) The Blue Beetle
- E) The Avenger
- F) Jungle Jim



**2** Match the heroine to the radio show.

- |                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| A) Betty Fairfield  | 1) Big Town                 |
| B) Lorelei Kilborne | 2) Casey Crime Photographer |
| C) Ann Williams     | 3) Captain Midnight         |
| D) Patsy Donovan    | 4) Sam Spade                |
| E) Effie Perrine    | 5) The Thin Man             |
| F) Nora Charles     | 6) Jack Armstrong           |



**3** Complete the radio pair.

- A) Dean Martin and \_\_\_\_\_
- B) Detective Black and \_\_\_\_\_
- C) Ethel and \_\_\_\_\_
- D) Big Jon and \_\_\_\_\_
- E) Bob and \_\_\_\_\_
- F) Betty and \_\_\_\_\_



**4** Name the famous radio uncle of:

- A) Dan Reed .....Uncle \_\_\_\_\_
- B) Billy Fairfield.....Uncle \_\_\_\_\_
- C) Marjorie Forrester .....Uncle \_\_\_\_\_
- D) Betty Regent .....Uncle \_\_\_\_\_
- E) Penny King .....Uncle \_\_\_\_\_
- F) Speed Gibson .....Uncle \_\_\_\_\_



**5** Match the radio show hero to his nemesis.

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| A) Speed Gibson          | 1) Professor Moriarty |
| B) Jack Armstrong        | 2) The Octopus        |
| C) Captain Midnight      | 3) The Dragon Lady    |
| D) Sherlock Holmes       | 4) Dr. Shupato        |
| E) Terry and the Pirates | 5) Shanghai Lil       |
| F) Jungle Jim            | 6) Ivan Shark         |



## SCORING Give Yourself 4 Points For Each Correct Answer

- Above 90 .....You have a Harvard education
- 71 - 89 .....Above average
- 51 - 70 .....Average
- 31 - 50 .....Below average
- Less than 31 .....We're too polite to mention!



## ANSWERS BELOW

- 4**
- (A) Dan Reed
  - (B) Billy Fairfield
  - (C) Marjorie Forrester
  - (D) Betty Regent
  - (E) Penny King
  - (F) Speed Gibson
- 5**
- (A) Speed Gibson
  - (B) Jack Armstrong
  - (C) Captain Midnight
  - (D) Sherlock Holmes
  - (E) Terry and the Pirates
  - (F) Jungle Jim
- 3**
- (A) Jerry Lewis
  - (B) Blue
  - (C) Albert
  - (D) Sparkie
  - (E) Roy
  - (F) Bob
- 2**
- (A) Betty Fairfield
  - (B) Lorelei Kilborne
  - (C) Ann Williams
  - (D) Patsy Donovan
  - (E) Effie Perrine
  - (F) Nora Charles
- 1**
- (A) Batman
  - (B) Batman
  - (C) Chandu the Magician
  - (D) Great Gildersleeve
  - (E) Sky King
  - (F) Clint Barlow

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  - (B) Blue.....(E) Roy
  - (C) Albert.....(F) Bob



# FOR WHOM THE BELL RINGS

◆ by Jack French ◆

©2000

The ringing of the telephone is rather hard to ignore since it usually gets our attention quickly. Playwrights, until it became a cliché, liked to open a stage play with a telephone ringing. A maid would enter from stage right, answer the telephone, and the play would be set in motion. So it's not unusual that radio shows also incorporated a ringing telephone into their opening, usually followed by the title lead answering it. There were almost a dozen different series that used this technique to begin each program. Half of these were detective shows; there were four male PI's and two lady crime-solvers. Two other programs were comedy shows, while one mystery anthology also started with the sound of Bell's invention.

◆◆◆◆

One of the first shows to use the telephone opening was *Lum and Abner* which began in 1931 and lasted on network radio until 1954. It starred Chester Lauck as Lum Edwards and Norris Goff as Abner Peabody. Since it was on the air for almost a quarter-century, over 1200 audio recordings of it have survived. The opening varied over the years, but a common one would sound like this:

RING...RING...

Abner: "By grannies, Lum, I b'lieve that's our ring."

(Sound of receiver click)

Lum: "Hullo, Jot 'em Down Store..."

◆◆◆◆

The next series to use the telephone to open the program was *Duffy's Tavern*, which ran from 1941 to 1952. Its creator and star was Ed Gardner who played Archie, manager of the tavern. Approximately 100 shows are in trading currency today. At the beginning of most shows, we'd hear men singing in the tavern, interrupted by:

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)



▲ Stuart Erwin and Florence Lake have telephone troubles galore on CBS's *Phone Again, Finnegan*.

Archie: "Hello, Duffy's Tavern, where the elite meet to eat. Archie the manager speakin'...Duffy ain't here...oh, hello, Duffy..."

◆◆◆◆

Two crime solvers were brought to network broadcasting in 1943, both of whom began each program with the sound of a telephone. *The Adventures of Nero Wolfe* actually had three lives: 1943-44, 1950-51, both on NBC, and 1946 on Mutual. A total of 32 shows have survived. The '50s version, starring Sidney Greenstreet (as Wolfe) usually opened with:

RING...RING...

Announcer: "Ladies and gentlemen, the ringing of that phone bell brings you mystery and adventure."

(Sound of receiver click)

Wolfe's assistant: "Nero Wolfe's office. This is Archie Goodwin speaking. No, I'm sorry, Mr. Wolfe is busy planning a menu. I'll see if he can talk to you. What's your name, please?"

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The second detective, beginning in 1943, was *The Falcon*; it was on the air for the next 12 years and several actors played the lead, including James Meighan and Les Tremayne. About 75 episodes can be located today and most of them open with the Falcon (Michael Waring) being called by his girl friend on the telephone. A typical beginning of this show would be:

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)

Michael Waring: "Hello...yes, this is the Falcon. Oh, Thelma, I'm glad you called, but I'm afraid that tonight is out, Angel. Some girl wants to break up with her boy friend and it's up to me to make sure he doesn't love her to death."

◆◆◆◆

In 1946 two more adventure shows debuted with the sound of a telephone ringing. In one, *The Adventures of Sam Spade*, brash Howard Duff starred as a private eye who phoned his secretary, Effie Perrine, (the voice of Lurene Tuttle) and announced the title of each program. This series ran for five years and about 60 audio copies are still circulating. An example of the beginning would sound like this:

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)

Effie: "Sam Spade Detective Agency."

Sam: "It's me, sweetheart..."

Effie: "Sam! Would you please tell me where you are...?"

Sam: "I'm headed for the office, baby, to dictate my report on the Bashful Boy Friend Caper."

◆◆◆◆

The second series to begin in 1946 was *The Crime Club*. It only lasted a year, but 32 of those shows survived. It was an anthology mystery series with the premise that someone phones the Crime Club, a library of crime and mystery books, and requests a certain book (or story). The librarian (or narrator) was Raymond Edward Johnson and he would begin the tale:

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)

Librarian: "Hello...I hope I haven't kept you waiting...yes, this is the Crime Club. I'm the librarian. 'Silent Witness'? Yes, we have that book for you. Come right over..."

(Sound of organ)

◆◆◆◆

In 1949 an insurance crime solver series first aired that would go on to become the last dramatic series on network radio; it finally terminated in September 1962. *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* had many actors in the lead over the years, including Edmund O'Brien, Bob Bailey and Mandel Kramer. At least 440 episodes are still available. Most of them open with a telephone call from a client:

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)

Dollar: "Johnny Dollar."

Man: "Mr. Dollar, I need your help on a very suspicious insurance claim."

◆◆◆◆

The same year *Johnny Dollar* debuted, another series began with a crime solver in the lead, only this was a woman. *Candy Matson* starred Natalie Parks and was created and produced by her husband, Monty Masters. This sexy private eye would be on the air for two years, but only 14 episodes are with us now. Each program began the same way:

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)

Matson: "YUkon 2-8209...yes, this is Candy Matson..."

(Organ theme song: "Candy")

◆◆◆◆

When *Candy Matson* went off the air in May 1951 on the West Coast, another female crime fighter debuted on the East Coast. This series was a juvenile adventure series called *The Lady in Blue*, a 15-minute Saturday morning show. It featured an attractive socialite, assisted by her maid, who went forth disguised in a blue veil to fight crime. The series aired for about nine months and ended; two copies still exist. Here's the way the show opened:

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)

Lady: "The Lady in Blue."

Announcer: "The Lady in Blue is known to the world of crime as a feared and hated criminologist and is known to the criminals only by that name."

◆◆◆◆

Perhaps we're lucky that Dodge City, Kansas in the 1870's only had a telegraph line and not a telephone line, otherwise *Gunsmoke* might have begun like this:

Announcer: "Around Dodge territory, there's just one way to handle the killers and the spoilers, and that's with the sound of..."

RING...RING...

(Sound of receiver click)

Chester: "Marshall's office...Deputy

Chester Proudfoot speaking...What's that? Yup, he's right here... Mister Dillon, its fer you."

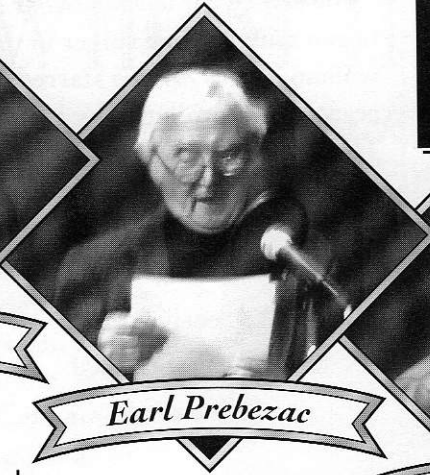




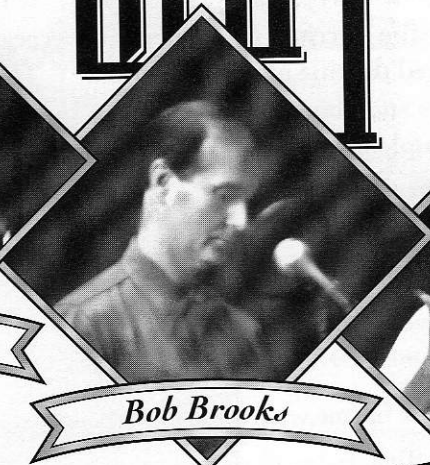
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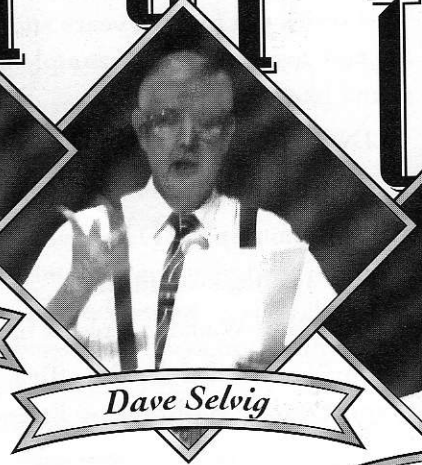
*Lynne duGuay*



*Earl Prebezac*



*Bob Brooks*



*Dave Selvig*



*Alan Bentson*

Presented at  
The Museum of Flight,  
Saturday, October 21, 2000 .....by Joy Jackson

There were twenty-six speaking roles in the Museum of Flight performance. Originally the entire cast was men. In order to have some women's voices in this production, I found it necessary to switch genders on some of the minor characters. The biggest role switched was Farmer Wilmeth, who became Ma Wilmeth, played by Marge Lutton. Envision the Martians having the nerve to land on Ma Kettle's farm! Lynne duGuay lent her voice to several smaller parts, including a radio announcer.

I also made the decision to separate the roles of Orson Welles and Professor Pierson. John Jensen accepted the formidable challenge of Orson, and Earl Prebezac, 77, proved the perfect voice for Professor Pierson. He did an excellent

job with the pages and pages of monologue.

Dave Selvig was stunning as Carl Phillips, the commentator at Grover's Mill. Raymond Jones and Roger Scrafford did yeoman work as the two major announcers, with Roger doing a very credible job as Secretary of the Interior. Bob Brooks, the programming director from KIXI, portrayed General Smith, as well as a short-wave operator and a bird in flight—what a versatile guy.

Harry McDonald, vice president of radio operations (aka CBS) was very well done by Alan Bentson. Because this is radio, the listeners couldn't tell that the CBS v.p. was being played by a blind guy, but Joy could hear Orson chuckling. Jeff Cavanaugh had the

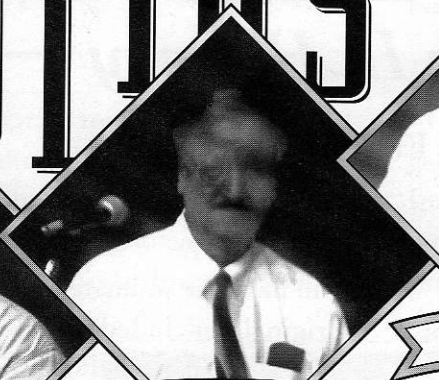
difficult task of the New York announcer who is announcing the fall and destruction of his city before his eyes. Les Westrum had a meaty role as Captain Lansing of the Signal Corps, giving the build up to the battle. Bryan Haigood was the Stranger, the survivor that Professor Pierson meets after the destruction. Thom Probst did a good job as the Mercury Announcer, even though a number of his lines had to be removed. 'Columbia Broadcasting System' was removed from the play to avoid any potential problems with KIRO or KIXI. The smaller roles were shared out amongst the cast, depending upon the sounds of the voices.

David Persson and Pat McNally were kept hopping on the sound effects, and Pat had a role to do as

# pe worlds



*Jeff Cavanaugh*



*John Jensen*



*Pat McNally*



*Joy Jackson*

*entson*

well. Some of the sound effects used in this production were from the Stew Conway Sound Effects Collection, donated to REPS in August. Bob Cardenas, in addition to being the man with the idea of producing this play, recorded and performed the recorded sound effects. Hot stuff, all around.

I wrote both an introduction to the play as well as an epilog, describing the panic that resulted from the broadcast. John Jensen, Marge Lutton and Les Westrum added their voices to mine in conveying the historical facts.

The Museum of Flight tech crew did an outstanding job with the microphone and electronic hook-ups. It would have been just actors moving their mouths in silence without their skill and efforts. The

Museum of Flight took our poster and enlarged it. They were behind us 100%.

And then there was me...for more than two months, I obsessed about detail after detail, and occasionally successfully relinquished one to someone else. My e-mail stack of correspondence was measured by the inch. John Jensen provided lots of support in a number of categories, as did Dave Selvig and Bryan Haigood.

My directorial style was a surprise to the non-Radio Readers of the group: Alan Bentson, Bob Brooks, Jeff Cavanaugh, Bob Cardenas, Lynne duGuay, Raymond Jones and Roger Scrafford. The Readers are comfortable with everyone sharing their knowledge, ideas and critiques during the rehearsal, which makes the productions more of an ensemble piece.

This proved important during our efforts to create the right live sound for the guns being cranked. Jeff Cavanaugh broke through his reserve to share his hard-earned knowledge from the US Army. Without that, the gun sounds would have been quite different. And that sound effect was constructed out of a saw blade, being turned with a handle, against a piece of metal. My friend, Norm Alquist, constructed the effect. Bob Brooks shared some of the techniques about announcing, which helped Raymond and Roger a great deal.

Reports have been trickling in, from friends and colleagues, who were amazed about how professional the program was. Comments like "Wow, this is what radio really was." were heard from the audience.





# ADVERTISING AND THE INTERNET

## A Place In History

by Glen Emerson Morris

### Best Part of the Show

The phrase "the best part of the show was the commercials", is about as old as commercial broadcasting itself. It's frequently a true statement even when the programming is pretty good, because, quite often, the commercials are good entertainment by any standard. Just as generations grew up, romanced, and raised children to the tunes of pop music, they also grew up to the tunes of commercial jingles. Some commercial tunes, like 'No Matter What Shape Your Stomachs In', even appeared on the pop charts themselves.

It's unfortunate that so much of the commercial landscape of the past has been lost; local used-car dealers, furniture dealers, tailors, morticians, restaurant owners, uniquely doing their own late night commercials in hundreds of local markets. (A sixty-minute video collection of the more bizarre car dealer commercials of the fifties would probably be a best seller.) More has survived from the national level, but much of that is at risk. For a number of reasons, the advertising industry never made much effort to save its work, either for history's sake, or for the public's.

### Another Chunk of History to Disappear?

Now, unless the advertising industry does something soon, another large chunk of its history will disappear. In the next year or two, the fate of most advertising from the golden age of radio will be decided. The public and Radio

Spirits are competing for the ownership of nearly every golden age radio show ever broadcast, and the winner will have the ultimate say in whether the commercials originally included in those shows survive or perish. The advertising industry, if it chooses, could well

## Startling Revelation of 1940 Car Values!



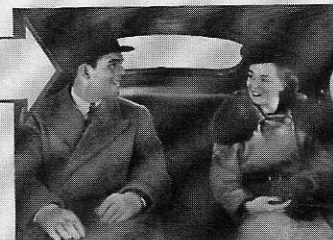
Now you can easily see which of "All Three" low-priced cars has the finest quality. **STEP #1.** See the 1940 Quality Chart, a clear picture of the facts on car size, comfort, engineering, and long life. **STEP #2.** Make doubly sure by taking the 1940 Plymouth's thrilling Luxury Ride—delightful evidence that Plymouth is the low-priced car most like the high-priced cars!



OF 22 IMPORTANT FEATURES FOUND IN HIGH-PRICED CARS—  
*Plymouth has 21... Car #2 has 11... Car #3 has 8*

USE THE EASY "ONE-TWO" WAY TO DECIDE

1. SEE THE QUALITY CHART  
#  
2. TAKE THE LUXURY RIDE



THIS YEAR it's more evident than ever—how much more size, style, comfort—how much more quality Plymouth gives you.

The 1940 Plymouth is the only one of "All 3" low-priced cars that gives you a majority of the 22 important features found in high-priced cars.

See the 1940 Quality Chart... at your Plymouth dealer's. And to satisfy yourself still further, take the Luxury Ride. Plymouth is easy to buy! Plymouth Division of Chrysler Corporation.

TUNE IN MAJOR BOWEN'S AMATEUR HOUR, COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM, THURS., 9 TO 10 P.M., E.S.T. BUSINESSMEN! SEE THE LOW-PRICED 1940 PLYMOUTH COMMERCIAL PICK-UP AND PANEL DELIVERY!

1940 PLYMOUTH

COUPES \$645 | SEDANS \$699  
START AT | START AT

—Delivered in Detroit, Mich. Prices include Federal taxes. Transportation and state, local taxes, if any, not included.

PLYMOUTH  
BUILDS GREAT CARS

determine which contender will inherit 30 years of radio history (which, incidentally, the advertising industry paid for in the first place).

### Public Domain

It actually came as a surprise to many in the advertising industry that the golden age of radio could be considered anything but public domain. It also came as a surprise to the dedicated OTR fans who collected OTR over the past 35+ years. According to them, broadcasters and advertisers rarely bothered to save the transcription disks OTR shows were recorded on. Instead, collectors found these disks in flea markets, in estate sales, even in their neighbor's attics. Over the years, they salvaged about 80% of all the national radio shows ever broadcast.

Meanwhile, Radio Spirits systematically bought OTR tapes from collectors, and also, so they claim, bought the rights to those shows (from largely undisclosed sources). In late 1999, Radio Spirits threatened a number of OTR distributors, fans and small businesses alike, with legal action for distributing OTR shows Radio Spirits claims it owns the rights to. No one had the money to go to court to dispute these claims, so many of the OTR MP3 sites on the Internet disappeared, and at least one business stopped selling OTR material completely.

Despite these events, many in the advertising industry continue to believe most OTR shows are really public domain, and not without reason. Under current copyright law, anything published from 1923 to 1963 without a copyright notice is deemed public domain, and most OTR shows didn't include copyright notices.

If this position is correct, dozens of major advertisers are losing a lot of free advertising because of Radio Spirits. OTR is loaded with commercials for companies that are still with us, including makers of soap, toothpaste, gasoline, tires, cars, milk, insurance,

appliances, and dozens of other products. Commercials for these products are being heard everyday by OTR fans by the thousand, but it could be by the million.

### Heart of Problem

OTR has developed a significant following in generations just hearing it for the first time via the Internet. Similar to the Napster phenomena, OTR fans are trading MP3 files to discover and share OTR shows, and in growing numbers. Many OTR fans

prefer to listen to shows with the commercials still in them, and for shows like *Fibber McGee and Molly* or the *Jack Benny Show*, where the stars did the commercials themselves, hearing the show without the commercials just isn't hearing the whole show. And that's the heart of the problem.

If Radio Spirits is the only source of OTR, and they choose not to include the original commercials in what they sell, these commercials will be lost forever. Even if Radio Spirits does include the original commercials, they still only

mass market a few dozen episodes of each show, at most.

There are over 700 *Jack Benny* episodes available, alone, each with a uniquely different commercial. It's not surprising that OTR fans buy MP3 OTR shows by the hundred (they commonly sell each other CDs containing 100+ shows for under \$10). Meanwhile, Radio Spirits is selling boxed sets of 60 OTR shows on 20 cassettes for about \$60, making large scale collecting very space consuming, and also very costly.

### Free Advertising Campaign

Given the alternatives, it would be far better for the national advertising community if OTR were determined, once and for all, to be public domain, including all the commercials. It could be managed

**Replace those worn-out tubes NOW!**

For better reception, always specify

# PHILCO TUBES

It has been proven time and again that the high quality, sturdy construction and precision design of Philco Tubes will increase the efficiency of any radio!

If your radio is not giving you the fine reception it did originally, the trouble may be caused by weak, worn-out tubes. Replace those tubes now and get all the performance your set is capable of giving. Philco Tubes cost so little, yet do so much to improve reception, it is wise to retube NOW!

**PHILCO TUBES IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF ANY RADIO**

**Guaranteed!**

**PHILCO RADIO TUBE**

**FREE TEST OFFER!**

Bring in your old tubes and let us check them for you on our modern tube testing equipment. No obligation whatever!

CORPORATION PHILA



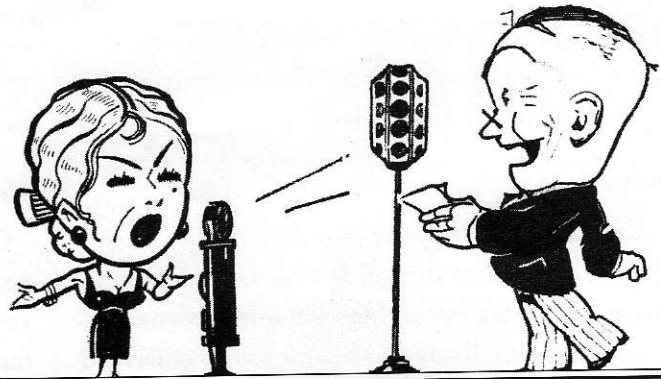
# ♦ Try It, You'll Like It! ♦

by Darrell Anderson

(first appeared in April, 1996 Air Check)

Was it ole' King Cole or Good King Wenceslas who said, "Fear of the unknown is an unknown fear."? Regardless of which royal mouth said it, it kept sailors from sailing toward the horizon for fear of falling off the edge of the world. This situation delayed the discovery that the earth was a sphere...by several days or more. FDR said it best when he told us "We have nothing to fear, but fear itself."

Don't let fear prevent YOU from ordering programs you are not familiar with. For example, *Whitehall 1212*; this series of six tapes contain true cases from the files of Scotland Yard. The all-British cast takes us step-by-step through each case history. Thrilling listening. If you have enjoyed the *Black Museum* with Orson Welles (also a BBC production), you will enjoy *Whitehall 1212*. Try it. We guarantee that it will open a whole new horizon of radio enjoyment.



## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES & NOTICES

**Membership is \$18.00 for the year.** Members may take advantage of the tape library.

**Door prizes.** Share your tapes as door prizes at the meetings. Each meeting several lucky people are the 'winners' of tapes.

**Internet.** Have you checked out any of the Old Time Radio links from our web site? There are many interesting places to visit.

**Tape library and grab bags.** Tapes can be rented by members for \$6.00 (10 cassettes for 30 days). Grab bags can be rented at each meeting for \$5.00. All tape orders must have name and phone number. On returning tapes you must include your name and phone number. This saves a lot of extra work for the tape librarians. There is a fine for tapes held over two months. Mail tape orders to: DARRELL ANDERSON, 17232 174th SE, RENTON, WA 98058. Phone orders are not accepted except in dire need. All tape orders must be by tape number — not name of show as the librarians do not have time to look up titles to get numbers. Be sure that tapes are in the correct box, as this is not always the case.

If you do not have an order blank, please call Darrell or Vi at 425-226-7005. If you do not have a catalog, contact one of the officers listed in the Air Check. You can also find a catalog or order blank at our website: [www.repsonline.org](http://www.repsonline.org).



We meet on the first Saturday of every month at the Queen Anne Library from 2pm to 4pm

400 West Garfield • Seattle

**February 3rd:** Behind the Scenes at KIXI. Program Director Bob Brooks will be sharing some insights into this fine Golden Oldies station, and we'll be especially interested to learn more about their growing interest in dramatic radio on the air.



**March 3rd:** OTR Star and REPS friend Ray Erlenborn. A must attend meeting! The irrepressible Ray Erlenborn will be on hand to take us from Vaudeville up to today. He has done it all, but is best known as a superb sound effects artist. The list of OTR shows is so large; from *Jack Benny* to *Blondie* with stops at so many other familiar ones in between.



**March 23rd:** Imagination Theatre. Kirkland Performance Center.

**April 7th:** Captain Midnight. Not only a historical look-back at this favorite memory of many, with taped excerpts and many details, but a live re-creation of the show will be done as well.



**April 14th:** Captain Midnight. 2:00 pm at the Museum of Flight.

**June 18th:** Imagination Theatre. Kirkland Performance Center.

VISIT US AT THE REPS WEBSITE!

[www.repsonline.org](http://www.repsonline.org)

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 & ACTIVITIES



# ADVERTISING AND THE INTERNET...continued from page 11

legally so no advertiser's trademark rights would be compromised, and fans and businesses alike would be free to distribute 200,000+ radio shows with some of the finest commercials ever produced. It could be the biggest free advertising campaign of the century.

To this end, Advertising & Marketing Review is proposing that laws be passed in Colorado to protect old time radio, and the commercials that are part of it. If the public is willing to preserve them for us, the least we can do is give them a chance. First, to protect OTR in general, we need a law that directs Colorado courts to presume any OTR show broadcast without a copyright notice to be in the public domain. Second, we need a law that allows commercials to be included in OTR shows, for historical purposes, without the permission of the trademark owner, whether the OTR is distributed by a lone OTR fan, or a large-scale business. This law would relieve advertisers of any

liability arising from those commercials, and also relieve OTR distributors from any trademark infringement litigation, as long as the commercials were not altered in any way.

The public would benefit from these proposed laws, and so would the advertising industry. With a younger generation just discovering old time radio, the timing couldn't be better. All it will take to make these laws reality is some modest effort by the appropriate trade groups and politicians, a small price to pay for an industry's place in history.

*(This article appeared in the September 2000 issue of Advertising & Marketing Review and was sent to us by Honorary Member, Ed Scott.)*

## "BE LOVELIER TONIGHT!"

"It's amazing the way Lux Soap facials leave skin softer, smoother," says Dolores Moran. "I smooth the creamy lather well in, rinse with warm water, then cold. As I pat with a towel to dry, skin takes on fresh new beauty." Don't let neglect cheat you of Romance! Be lovelier tonight!

In recent tests of Lux Toilet Soap facials by skin specialists, actually 3 out of 4 complexions improved in a short time!

"My Beauty Facials bring quick new Loveliness"

*Dolores Moran*

Star of  
"JONATHAN  
LOVES THEM ALL"  
A United Artists  
Release

**FIGHT WASTE**  
Lux Toilet Soap uses vital materials. Don't waste it!

9 out of 10 Screen Stars use Lux Toilet Soap  
—Lux Girls are Lovelier!

# A personal note of thanks from Sandy Mael

Dear Friends:

I just want to tell all the REPS family how much I have appreciated your cards, notes and calls. Your support has been wonderful, and it has been such a pleasure to read how Merrill's life and personality impacted people. He was a dear, sweet, man of many talents and much faith, and everyone involved in REPS has been so affirming of his



Merrill Mael

faith and life's work and influence.

Thanks again, guys, for all your support, your prayers, and the millions and millions of things you have done for both of us. Next time I see Merrill sitting on the telephone pole with his angels and slingshot, I'll let

him know of your continuing thoughtfulness and support! Perhaps he knows already.

Signed: Sandy Mael



## CORNER

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. 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 98136

KINDNESS

### In Memory Of Merrill Mael:

Mike Sprague, Tyler & Esther McVey, Harry & Bev Bartell, Douglas & Eileen Young, Ray & Meridy Erlenborn, Lawrence & Gweneth Bliss and William Buckley

### Showcase:

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

### Stewart Conway:

Sound effects collection.  
Thank you Stewart.

### REPS Showcase Guest Fund:

Major thanks to the many who responded to the recent letter from Dave Selvig and Mike Sprague. Your generosity has raised almost \$3500.00 at the present time! All of these donations go directly to the expenses of our special guests at the Showcase. **WOW!! Thank you:** Lynn Barker, Mike & Linda Sprague, Brent Pellegrini, Harriet Baskas, Richard Bonesteel, Terrance Christ, Jerauld Miller, Neal Shulman, David Taylor, Gary & Kathleen Hagan, Kenneth Bertrand, Adele Lohman, Robert & Meredith Loudon, Les Westrum, Paul Feavel, David & Joan Selvig, Joel & Carolyn Senter, Jim French Productions, Inc., The Rich McCoy Company, Inc., John Theodore, Ray Tweatt, Thomas & Elizabeth Roach, Don & Patricia Tewkesbery, Gil & Dee Stratton, John Norton, Edward Blanchard, Frank Buxton, Diane Hensel, Bill Brooks, Art Gilmore, Sam Simone, John Hura, Jim & Drucilla Briggs, and Bill & Kathy Parker

### Silent Auction Donators:

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 Sandra Gould:

Norma Jean Nilsson

If we have forgotten to list anyone, please let the Air Check editor know and we will correct that on the website and in the next issue of Air Check.





REPS

9936 NE 197TH STREET  
BOTHELL, WA 98011



Tom Brown 1402 S. Kahuna Dr Spokane WA 99212	287 7
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Showcase IX...  
Will it be "The best ever?"  
Come and see!

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

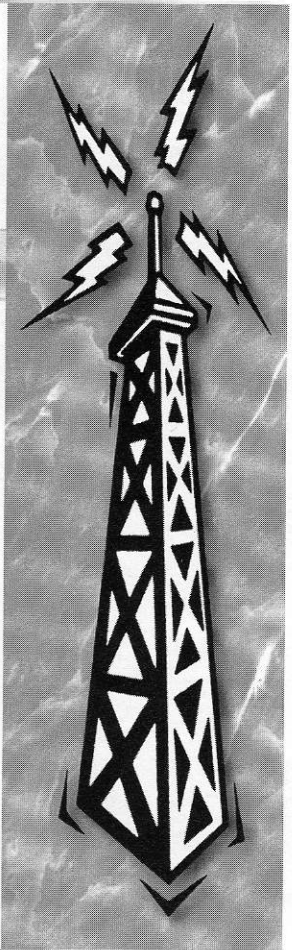
People continue to say things like "Your newsletter is the nicest, most professional looking one I've seen." Guess why? It's because Jay Secord, his daughter Keri, and graphic designer Brenda Ellenberg really care. Almost everything is donated and we feel quite indebted when each issue comes out so special. 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.

Imagination Theatre (C)	KNWX	770 AM	9:06-10PM	Saturday
Imagination Theatre (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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**Please help in the preservation of old time radio by supporting legitimate organizations who strive to preserve and restore the programs and related information.**