

# AIR CHECK

NEWSLETTER OF THE RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUGET SOUND (REPS)

Volume 13 Number 3

Showcase 2003

## RADIO AND THE SILVER SCREEN SHOWCASE XI JUNE 26 - 29, 2003



### GUESTS

Left to Right: Pat French, Jim French, Gil Stratton, Jr. Jimmy Lydon, Ginny Tyler, Douglas Young, Art Gilmore, Kathy Garver, Harry Bartell, Anne Whitfield Phillips, Peggy Jordan, Dick Beals, Barbara Fuller, Sam Edwards and Ray Erlernborn. Kneeling: Ben Cooper. Also participating but not included in this picture: Larry Albert, Bill Brooks, Frank Buxton, Susan Connors, Jim Cox, John Patrick Lowrie, Ellen McLain, and Hal Stone.

*Just a quick note of congratulations for an incredible job this past weekend ... and you (Joy) are to be commended for all your hard work. The success of the weekend should tell you some-*

*thing; something positive, that is. I enjoyed myself immensely and I appreciate your confidence in me. I'm sure that the "veterans" got a big kick out of being in the spotlight once again. Their contributions were major. You did a fabulous job! Frank (Buxton)*

### SPECIALS

**Thursday ...** Tribute Spotlight on Harry Bartell; **Friday ...** Writing Workshop, Phone Call to Tyler & Esther; **Sunday ...** Buffet and American Museum of Radio Tour.

### RECREATIONS, PANELS & MORE

A fabulous array of activities was provided for this year's attendees starting with Just Sittin' Around Visitin' and ending with *The Cisco Kid*. Between these bookends were: OTR Research, Radio Stars in the Movies, *Mr. & Mrs. North*, Ben Cooper Spotlight, Sound Effects Demo, *Escape*, *Damon Runyon Theatre*, *Imagination Theater*, Jimmy Lydon Spotlight, *Our Miss Brooks*, American Museum of Radio, Radio & the Silver Screen, Banquet & Live Auction, Music, They Went That-away, *Lux Radio Theatre* and, as always, the Group Photo.

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## Kindness Corner

This important section is here to recognize and thank donors. It may be many, it may be few, thanks to those who have given. All of your generosity has made a real difference. If we left your name off, or misspelled your name, please let the editor know so that the information can be reflected correctly. Current donations may be sent to REPS, c/o David Speelman, 417 N Bowdoin Pl, Seattle, WA 98103. These are tax deductible and receipts will be sent to donors.

The money received from the Showcase XI Auction goes toward the Guest Travel Fund for Showcase XII.

*Harry Bartell, Dick Beals, Ron Bowser, Bill Brooks, William Buckley, Jean Rouverol Butler, Frank Buxton, Terry Campbell, Michael Comstock, Janet & Christopher Conrad, Jim Cox, Bill Davies, Frank Denton, Sam & Bev Edwards, Ray & Meridy Er-lenborn, Paul Feavel, Mary Fichtenberg, George Fowler, Robert Fudold, Al Gil, Art Gilmore, Cliff Glaspey, Anne Hockens, Steve Holden, Joy Jackson, John Jensen, Don Lacky, Rhea Lutton, Danean MacAndrew, Terry Mahony, Brent Martin, Judy Miller, Jerry Miller, Kate Molling, Millie Morse, Norma Jean Nilsson, One Man's Family family, Bill Parker, Anne Whitfield Phillips, Robert Rohrer, Andrew & Marjorie Rosen, Joan Selvig, Neal Shulman, Sam Simone, David Speelman, Mike Sprague, Ray Thweatt, Carolyn Van Jepner, Janet Waldo, Helen C. Warburton. Janet Wilt, Marilyn Wilt, Stewart Wright and Harlan Zinck.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

We meet on the first Saturday of every month except July at the Queen Anne Library (400 W. Garfield, Seattle) from 2 pm – 4 pm. Directions to the library are on our website: [www.repsonline.org](http://www.repsonline.org).

**October 4, 2003: Favorite Show.** Another REPS member will be sharing about his favorite show. In the past we have looked at *Command Performance* and variety shows. What will it be this year?

**November 1, 2003: Radio Play.** Jack Packard, Doc Long and Reggie York will take center stage in episodes 13 & 14 of "Temple of Vampires" from *I Love a Mystery*.

**November 24, 2003: Imagination Theater** recording session at the Kirkland Performance Center. Doors open at 7:00 pm, program starts at 7:30. Call the Kirkland Performance Center Box Office for tickets ... 425-893-9900. Tickets: Adults - \$7.00, children under 12 - \$5.00.

**December 6, 2003: Annual Meeting and Holiday Cheer.** Bring your gift for the gift exchange and an unwrapped toy for Toys for Tots. Share the holiday spirit with REPS.





Harry Bartell then ...

## SPOTLIGHT ON: HARRY BARTELL

THURSDAY, JUNE 26

**In another first for REPS, Thursday evening was a tribute to Harry Bartell.** Radio was special because it "... allowed an actor or actress to play roles they couldn't obtain anywhere else," Harry once told John Dunning. Many of you will agree that Harry Bartell is one of the talented professionals that allow radio to be special even today.

"There was a voice on the radio, a voice that I noticed on an episode of *Yours Truly Johnny Dollar*. I then began to notice that voice in many episodes of that series and many other radio series. The actor behind the voice played

good guys, bad guys and everything in between. Sometimes he played the lead, other times a supporting role. The actor also did lots of dialects and accents. No matter what role he was playing there was always a common quality in his performances; his characters were always believable. Finally, I connected a name with that voice: Harry Bartell. He seems to be everywhere during the Golden Age of Radio," stated Stewart Wright. Anyone who listens to Old Time Radio is familiar with Harry's voice as he appears in many of the shows we listen to such as: *A Date With Judy*, (Archie Goodwin on) *Adventures of Nero Wolfe*, *Broadway Is My Beat*, *Cavalcade of America*, (12 years on) *Dear Abbey*, *Dragnet*, *Dr. Christian*, (56 appearances on) *Escape*, (Lt. Siberts on) *Fort Laramie*, *Frontier Gentleman*, *Green Lama*, (first and last episodes of) *Gunsmoke*, *I Love a Mystery*, *I Was a Communist for the FBI*, *Let George Do It*, *Lux Radio Theatre*, *My Favorite Husband*, *On Stage*, *Red Ryder*, (Officer Ed Miller on) *Rogers of the Gazette*, *The Saint*, *Suspense*, *Tales of The Texas Rangers*, *The Six Shooter*, *This Is Your FBI* and *Yours Truly Johnny Dollar*.

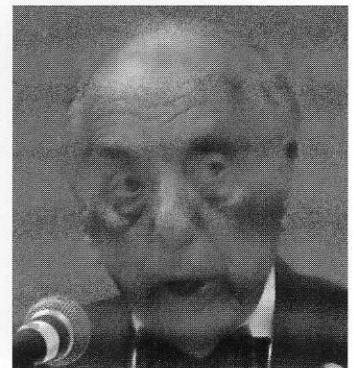
Harry's credits also include two *Gunsmoke* scripts he co-wrote with fellow actor and close friend, Vic Perrin ("Chester's Inheritance" and "Father And Son"). He was the announcer on *Silver Theatre*, *Sherlock Holmes*, and *The Casebook of Gregory Hood* even though he never considered himself to be an announcer. *Get Smart*, *I Love Lucy*, *Perry Mason*, *Peter Gunn*, *Richard Diamond Private Detective*, *The Twilight Zone*, *The Untouchables*, *The Veil*, and *The Wild, Wild West* are some of the television series Harry performed on. When work was scarce, he worked as a professional photographer often taking pictures during show rehearsals. Harry's most recent venture was writing "Struts and Frets" for the Old Time Radio Digest.

Harry got his start in radio in Houston in the early 1930's on local radio show condensations of motion pictures. His pay for these condensations: two 25-cent movie tickets. He moved to the West Coast in 1937 where he worked as a DJ, doing commercials, and performed at the Pasadena Playhouse. His first role on network radio required him to play a Hindu! This was the first of many dialect and accent roles he would do.

Kaspar's Restaurant was the gathering place for the 40 or so people who came to pay tribute to Harry. Since many of our invited Showcase guests came to honor Harry, this was a great opportunity to talk with them and get to know them a little bit better. After dinner — what about those potato martinis? — Larry Albert took over as Master of Ceremonies. Sam Edwards, Christopher Conrad, Bill Brooks, and Dick Beals were among those who shared memories of Harry.

Harry kept wondering why we chose to honor him and expressed appreciation on behalf of all the actors present.

What a great evening! For those of you unable to make it this year, mark your calendars for next year when we will spotlight another OTR star.



## WRITING WORKSHOP

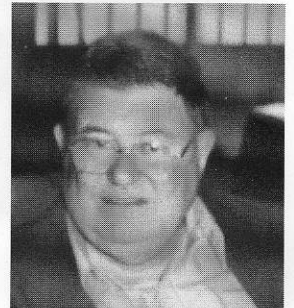
OTR author Jim Cox led this Friday morning session. He had tips for those interested in writing about Old Time Radio even if it is solely for the author's satisfaction. Jim's main purpose for writing is to preserve and perpetuate the legacy of Old Time Radio and he suggests picking a topic that the writer is interested in and/or has some knowledge of. Here are a couple of his tips:

- Ask permission to quote someone
- Be sure to do an index
- Leave an idea hanging when you stop writing
- Try negotiating for cost of pictures, etc.

Jim said, "... (you're) not a true writer if you don't have rejection slips," so try to view them as learning experiences. And don't get too hung up on your title because most contracts allow the publisher to pick the title.

Jim also talked about the different types of publishing, primary sources vs. secondary sources, and reminded everyone that they could submit their articles for publication in OTR newsletters!

*Thank you again for inviting me to participate in the REPS Showcase. I hope my contribution was satisfactory to the planners and the participants. I tried to tailor it to the needs and interests as I perceived them. Let me add that never have I seen as much advance thinking go into one of these events as what I witnessed at Seattle. Everywhere we turned someone had thoughtfully considered ahead of us what would transpire, and what needs should be met. It indicated that someone had given tender loving care at every turn ... It all seemed so effortless ... Thanks from me. Jim Cox*



## PHONE CALL TO TYLER MCVEY

We had planned to call three of our absent "company" during the weekend but the only call that was successful was the one to Tyler McVey and Esther Geddes. Tyler & Esther expressed their disappointment at not being with REPS this year; then Sam & Bev Edwards sent greetings on behalf of all those at Showcase XI. For most REPS members, this was the last chance to hear from Tyler as he lost his battle with leukemia and passed away on July 4th. Stewart Wright sent this tribute to Tyler.

Tyler McVey, a fine actor with impressive radio credits, has left the stage. He died this morning. Tyler was 91 years old and a regular at REPS, appearing at 9 Showcases. He was a recipient of the REPS Radio Achievement Award, which is given for "a body of work by an actor, director, producer, or other individual whose work has contributed to the perpetuation and furtherance of radio theater past or present." Among his many enjoyable performances was Peavy in *Last Tango In Cucamonga* at Showcase X. Those who have attended past Showcases had the opportunity to observe and enjoy Tyler's acting talents, his great storytelling ability, and his wry wit.



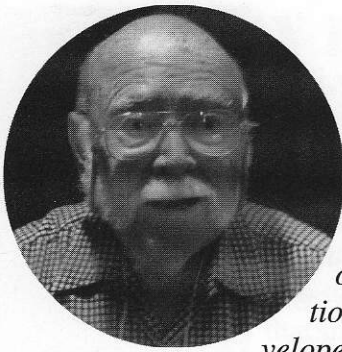
4 Tyler McVey at Showcase X.

When you take a look at Tyler's career, one thing jumps out immediately: the variety of shows he did. This versatile actor did lots of comedies, dramas, mysteries, and westerns.

Tyler McVey broke into radio in the 1930's. His first part in radio was on *Jerry of the Circus*. He had continuing roles on *Glamour Manor* as Tyler - the desk clerk, *One Man's Family* as Elwood Giddings, and was featured on *Gene Autry's Melody Ranch*. In addition to acting,

.....continued on page 12 .....





# ERLENBORN RECEPTION

**SATURDAY, JUNE 28**

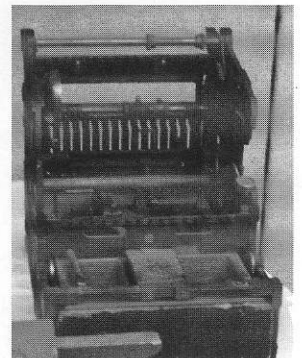
*Joy, I'm sure everyone was as pleased as I was with the professional way the programming of the convention events were managed. Joy you are to be commended for having assigned such an adept staff of persons to carry out the numberless chores. I will be anxiously waiting to hear the convention CD this year and critique my performance as the old man. David has developed as an excellent sound effects tech. I heard many compliments for his work from the OTR fans. Looking forward to your publication of the June convention. Best wishes and thanks. – Ray (Erlenborn)*

This was a chance for those who donated to the Erlenborn Sound Effects Project to meet with Ray and gather for a photograph. Ray shared some tricks of the trade, showed off some of his sound effects and answered questions. As usual, Ray's sound effects along with his talent were on display at Showcase XI, including the crash of Fibber McGee's closet at the start of the Pardners music set. Some of the items included in Ray's collection are: 4 Mc Kenzie machines, reel-to-reel sound effects and music tapes, crash tub, gun, gloves, and "squeaker" box.

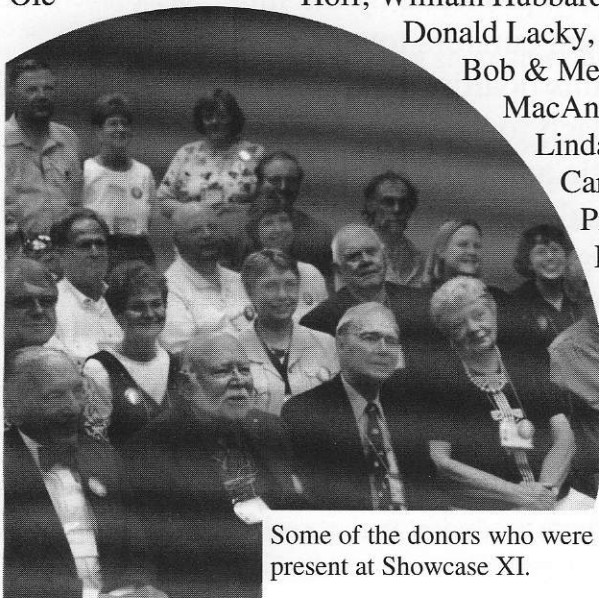
Thank you to everyone who made this dream a reality ... all the donors listed below, Terrance Chriest, Christopher Conrad, Paul Feavel, Mary Fichtenberg, Emil Oana, Dave Selvig and especially, Ray & Meridy Erlenborn.

## Donors

Don Allen, Darrell & Vi Anderson, Arthur Anderson, Anonymous, Harry Bartell, Harriet Baskas, Ken Bertrand, Edward Blanchard, Lawrence & Gweneth Bliss, Dick Bonesteel, Thomas Brandt, Ira Braymer, Dennis Burk, Terry Campbell, Roland & Martha Carlson, Michael Comstock, Samuel Dillon Conrad, Archie Cress, Dennis Crow, David Dintenfass, Shelley Dodge, John Doyle, Wil Dufour, Herb Ellis, Kaelyn Feavel, Paul Feavel, Clifton & Joleen Ferguson, Mary Fichtenberg, Bruce Forsberg, Alfred Gil, Art & Grace Gilmore, Cliff & Lynda Glaspey, Bill Grandey & Kathy Morby, Gary & Kathleen Hagan, Bill Haugen, Richard Haviland, Anne Hockens, Ole Hoff, William Hubbard, Joy Jackson, Suzanne Johnson, Michael LaGrandeur, Donald Lucky, Keith & Lisa Leopard, Scott Leslie, Adele Lohman, Bob & Meredith Loudon, Marjorie Lutton, Rhea Lutton, Danean MacAndrew, Pat McNally, Wayne Morris, Denman Morrison, Linda Moschell, John Norton, David & Bernice Palmer, Carol Pearce, Brent Pellegrini, David Persson, Ken Piletic, Fred Ritterspach, Tom & Elizabeth Roach, Robert Rohrer, Richard & Margaret Schacht, Art Scott, Sandra Scudder, Paul Secord, David & Joan Selvig, Katy Sewall, Roy Sexton, Daniel Sherman, Neal Shulman, Sam Simone, Larry Siskind, Glenn Sisson, Mark Skullerud, David Speelman, Gil & Dee Stratton, Jr., David Taylor, John Theodore, James Thomas, Ray Thweatt, Les Tremayne, Patrick Turner, Jay Wang, Glenn & Georgianne Wilson, Marilyn Wilt, and Doug & Eileene Young.



Cash register from Lum and Abner donated by Ray Erlenborn to REPS.



Some of the donors who were present at Showcase XI.

# AMERICAN MUSEUM OF RADIO

SUNDAY, JUNE 29

by Neal J. Shulman

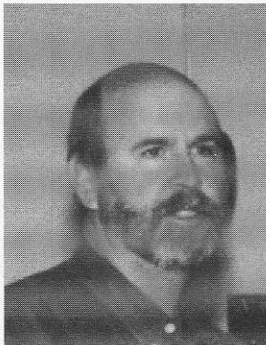
After several days of Showcase activity, a great banquet, a sumptuous brunch at the Conrad studio and a recreation of *The*



Jonathan Winter shows off some of his rare radio collection from the early 1920's.

*Cisco Kid* by the guest stars of radio, could there possibly be a more fantastic wind-up to Showcase 2003? Those that had registered for the trip to the American Museum of Radio in Bellingham could emphatically answer "yes"!!

A luxury motor coach ride, punctuated by movie clips of old time radio and nostalgic recollections by OTR stars Dick Beals and Sam Edwards, was a special treat for those headed to the museum. John Jenkins, a curator and a prime mover behind the birth of the museum, accompanied the group and provided a verbal introduction to the museum and its history.



John Jenkins explains his interest in early electricity.

On arrival in Bellingham the group was greeted by Jonathan Winter. It was

Winter's collection of radio equipment from the 1920's through the 1960s, combined with the early wireless and electrical devices from the collection of John Jenkins, that formed the backbone of the

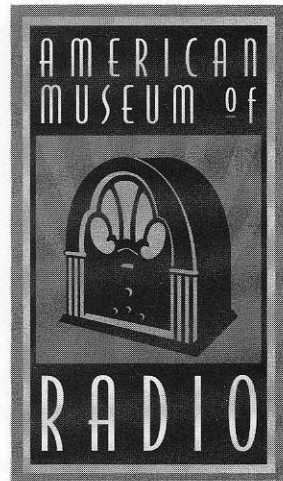
museum displays. And what a display it is! A fantastic collection of historical electrical devices from the dawn of electricity to vintage radios. The collection spans 300 years of progress, from 1650 when intellects and inventors like Benjamin

Franklin first discovered electricity (though they knew not what to do with it), to 1950 when television was fast becoming common in the American home. In addition to the vast collection of communication and radio hardware, visitors had the opportunity to view a detailed reproduction of the radio room of the doomed ocean liner *Titanic*. They tried their skill at playing the Theremin, and just relaxed and listened to old time radio in a complete reproduction of a 1930's living room.

Following a delicious lunch provided by the museum curators tour participants boarded the motor coach for the return to Seattle and yet another special treat. Dick Beals presented individually autographed copies of his book Think Big to each tour participant.

The success of the tour has prompted consideration of putting together yet another tour to the American Museum of Radio.

*Needed more time at the Museum ... AMR put on a fantastic buffet and experience. We just needed more people to experience it. Paul Feavel.*



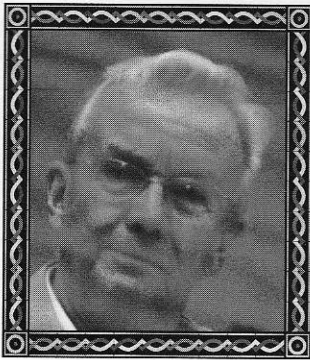
Dick Beals is part of the history the museum has on display.



# SUNDAY BRUNCH

## THE CISCO KID

Once again our Sunday brunch was at Christopher Conrad's studio. The studio was nicely decorated with a Mexican theme and the cooks out did themselves with the food. Part of the fun of this recreation is that the audience has a chance to participate either as actors or sound effects "technicians". This year everyone was given a script so they could follow the action. Bill Brooks helped prepare the volunteer actors while Ray Erlenborn showed his volunteers what they needed to do.



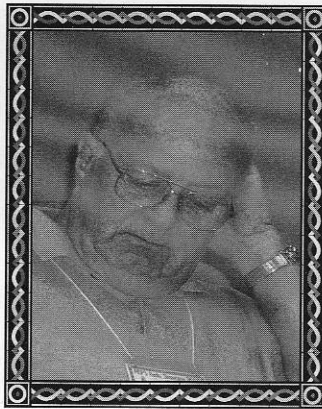
The Cisco Kid (Ben Cooper) always helps the damsel in distress.

the Cisco Kid," originally aired on April 17, 1946. The show is vaguely centered in O. Henry's classic romantic character Robin Hood from a short story titled "The Caballero's Way."

It's rodeo time in the Gila Valley and cowhands from everywhere are gathered for the big event. Old man Eaton has offered ten thousand dollars to the man who can ride his wild black bronco. Only two men are capable of riding the bronco — Cisco Kid (Ben Cooper) and Pat Moody (Sam Edwards).

Cisco and Pancho (Hal Stone) spy a lovely but despondent señorita (Anne Phillips) sitting on a rock by a stream when they stop to let their horses drink. Gay doesn't want to talk to them until she realizes that this is Cisco Kid and Pan-

This episode of *The Cisco Kid*, "A Prize for



The sheriff finds the "stolen" pearls in Pancho's (Hal Stone) pocket at the dance.

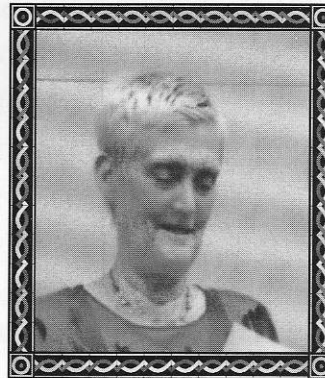
cho. Gay asks Cisco to ride for her at the rodeo because she desperately needs the prize money.

Jane Norton (Peggy Jordan) enchants Cisco and Pancho at the local dance hall. She exclaims to the sheriff (Gil Stratton, Jr.) that her pearls have been stolen. He finds them in the pocket of Pancho and hauls Pancho and Cisco off to jail. Pat Moody and Jane Norton steal the prize money and suspicion is placed on Cisco and Pancho — which is all part of their plan.

After they break out of jail, Cisco sends a note to Pat and then Pat winds up dead. Now Cisco is in real trouble. But all is not lost ... they find "pebbles" by the three cedars where Pat was killed. This leads them to the conclusion that Jane is involved. They ask Gay to lead the sheriff there and then wait for the killer to show up.

When Jane shows up, the sheriff realizes that the pearls belong to her and places her under arrest. Cisco wins the prize and gives it all to Gay which doesn't please Pancho as he is hungry.

This fine cast was directed by Dick Beals. Douglas Young was the announcer. Music by Joy Jackson and engineering by Bob Cardenas.



Jane (Peggy Jordan) gets caught when she comes looking for her pearls.



Cisco and Pancho ask Gay (Anne Phillips) for a favor.

There is never enough time to talk with these stars and hear their stories. They always leave us wanting more and wishing that the next Show-case wasn't so far away.

*The Sunday Brunch was such a treat for those in the audience that participated, and the food ... my goodness. Dick (Beals)*

## JUST SITTING AROUND AND VISITING

Dick Beals was the moderator of these two sessions. It is difficult to keep track of their comments as one story leads to another story. Here are some of their comments.

**Jimmy Lydon** — mentor and favorite director is William K. Howard; worst job was on a soap opera, *The First Hundred Years* — over 450 live shows!

**Anne Phillips** — her mom was star struck so she wrote to Carlton Morse and then they headed to west to Hollywood on Route 66 in an old ford; thought Danny Kaye was very funny.



Left to Right: Frank Buxton, Kathy Garver, Jimmy Lydon and Barbara Fuller shared stories at Just Sittin' Around and Visitin'

**Hal Stone** — wanted to be in the military but “couldn’t be an officer and a gentleman” without a degree; went to a non-union station in Michigan so he could do everything.

**Kathy Garver** — loves doing audio books; would probably be a microbiologist if she wasn’t an actress since she enjoys knowing how things work and are put together.

**Sam Edwards** — did *12 O'clock High* with Gregory Peck at Eglin AFB and even though it was supposed to be cold they were sweating since it was shot in July; *Hello, Dolly* with Tyler McVey.

**Art Gilmore** — did 3000-4000 trailers for Paramount for 25 years; sang, read poetry and news at KVI (Tacoma).

**Barbara Fuller** — loved working with Charles Boyer in a movie and Kirk Douglas on TV; did 25 shows a week in Chicago.

**Ben Cooper** — got hurt on *Johnny Guitar* when horses were moved; *The Land is Bright* was first radio show.

**Ray Erlenborn** — a good sound man will say “nothing is impossible”; biggest problem was interpreting what given directions mean.

**Frank Buxton** — favorite director is Gary Marshall; jazz pianist.

Most of them agreed that they wouldn’t want to be anything but an actor. Ray summed it up best when he said, “I could do anything in the world and be happy as long as it is show business.”



## OTR Research

by Mary Fichtenberg

This panel consisted of Jim Cox, Stewart Wright, Harlan Zinck and Frank Buxton. These gentlemen have devoted hours and sometimes years to researching, writing and restoring Old Time Radio so that we can not only listen to the programs but learn about them as well.

- ◆ *Jim Cox* — semi-retired writer and educator. He is the author of several books on Old Time Radio. Jim likes to look at areas of OTR not yet covered.
- ◆ *Stewart Wright* — produces broadcast logs for series about which not much is known.
- ◆ *Frank Buxton* — author of *The Big Broadcast*, a book celebrating the Golden Age of Radio.
- ◆ *Harlan Zinck* — Preservation Manager at First Generation Radio Archives.



Stewart Wright, left, and Harlan Zinck have devoted many hours to research on the subject of Old Time Radio.

### What Motivated You?

Frank Buxton had worked at CBS as host of a program called *Discovery* and part of the programming was playing trivia games. However, often when someone thought of a good question, there was no place to look up the answer so that started Frank doing research into old time radio. There was not much material available although he found quite a bit of information in old copies of the *New York Times*.

Jim's motivation was a love for both history and English. When he was seven years old, he acquired a manual Smith Corona typewriter and began writing neighborhood newsletters.

He listened to the radio growing up and started a collection of programs, tapes, and pictures. In college he studied journalism. Radio's Golden Age was his first book.

### Where Do You Find Your Material?

Harlan stated that many recordings are in basements, attics, or storage rooms. There are a lot of recordings available to restore so he made a significant investment in high tech equipment. The matrix number on the label can provide quite a bit of historical information about the recording and a good source of information is the scripts, but these are difficult to find.

Jim Cox mentioned that the American History Museum at the University of Wyoming has an extensive collection of Old Time Radio material. He was looking for information on *Mr. Keene* but came across a huge collection of Hummert material. Frank and Anne Hummert were the producers of thousands of Old Time Radio programs. His two weeks were not nearly enough time to go through all the scripts. The university had an aggressive approach to obtaining scripts which is why they possess such a collection. Stewart happened to come across scripts of *21st Precinct* while doing research on another subject. He was able to obtain a lot of information about the series.

The Archive Division of the Wisconsin Historical Society has a significant collection of *Vic and Sade* material. Frank Buxton obtained scripts of programs by walking into the NBC building, going into the studios, and retrieving them from wastebaskets. UCLA and USC, being close to Hollywood, were given a lot of memorabilia to create tax advantages for the donors. Thousand Oaks has material from Rudy Vallee.

This was an interesting and informative panel that provided a new way of looking at Old Time Radio and a unique addition to the Showcase format. Hopefully, it is the start of a new tradition.

## Radio Stars in the Movies and on Television

This Showcase was truly a multi-media event! Larry Albert had short clips of many OTR greats. Jack Webb loved using radio people so we saw Herb Ellis, Harry Bartell, Art Gilmore, Virginia Gregg and Peggy Webber in black and white episodes of *Dragnet*. Westerns were represented with Alice Backes on *Rifleman*, Tyler McVey on *Maverick* and Ben Cooper in *Johnny Guitar* with Joan Crawford. Parley Baer with Jimmy Stewart in *The FBI Story* and Anne Whitfield with Bing Crosby in *White Christmas* were two of the movie clips Larry showed. Were Jimmy Lydon and Elizabeth Taylor (*Life with Father*) ever that young? And, then there was Sam Edwards in *Captain Midnight*.

## American Museum of Radio

by Andy Anderson

One of the most interesting programs of Showcase 2003 was the presentation by John Jenkins, co-curator of the American Museum of Radio located in Bellingham, Washington. This gigantic collection of electrical devices and early wireless equipment is second to none in the entire country.

Jenkins (a former Microsoft executive) merged his collection with Jonathan Winter. Winter started the museum in 1989 under the name Bellingham Antique Radio Museum. Eventually the facility will cover 22,000 sq. ft., nearly double what it now encompasses.

There are six major galleries, each dedicated to a period of time in radio's development:

- ◇ Dawn of the Electrical Age — 1600 to 1820
- ◇ Electricity Sparks Invention — 1821 to 1879
- ◇ Wireless Age — 1890 to 1920
- ◇ Radio Enters the Home — 1921 to 1927
- ◇ Golden Age of Radio — 1928 to 1950
- ◇ Jones Collection — vacuum tubes

The museum has a 1930's listening room where visitors can hear vintage broadcasts on a Zenith

console. In the planning stage is a 1930's broadcasting studio and a ham radio shack where licensed radio operators can come and use the equipment. Another interesting and historical display is the replica of the *Titanic* wireless room from which the distress signals were sent out on that fateful night of 1912.

Jenkins told of a cub scout visiting with his troop and asking, "What do you look at when you are listening to the radio?" The reply was, "You watch the radio." The boy's countenance took on a blank and puzzling look.

The finale of the program was a musical demonstration of the very rare Theremin, the first electronic musical instrument. The musician produces sound by the movement of his hands. Some rather eerie and unearthly sounds can be obtained; for this reason, it has been used often in Sci-Fi motion pictures to accompany flying saucers and alien visitors. The demonstration ended with a musical rendition of George Gershwin's "Summertime".

The American Museum of Radio is located at 1312 Ray St., Bellingham. The hours are 11:00 am to 4:00 pm Wednesday through Saturday.

## Radio and the Silver Screen

Frank Buxton hosted this panel of Jim Cox, Stewart Wright, Harry Bartell, Sam Edwards and Gil Stratton, Jr. There are some unique connections between the two and antidotes were flying fast and furiously. Hollywood talent became valuable when *Lux* moved from New York to Hollywood.

Since characters don't look like they sound, they don't necessarily take their roles from one medium to another. When "The Ride Back" was on radio William Conrad and Larry Dobkin were featured but on the silver screen William Conrad and Anthony Quinn were used. But then *Blondie* went with the original radio cast. Billy Wilder pictures had a narrator because it is cheaper to fix problems in the studio than it is to re-shoot. "In a way, it's like doing radio," commented Gil.

Jack Webb used a teleprompter and preferred radio actors since movie and stage actors were not used to reading. Jimmy Stewart directed one episode of *The Six Shooter* ("A Christmas Carol")

which played every Christmas for years.



## REPS RADIO ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

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 theater past or present.” Past recipients are invited to participate in the selection of the new awardee. Award Chairman John Jensen coordinated the review and communications. This year the past recipients in attendance ... Ray Erlenborn (1994), Harry Bartell (1996), Art Gilmore (1997), Sam Edwards (1999), Dick Beals (2000) and Jim French (2002) ... joined a procession to the table of Anne Whitfield Phillips. [Other past winners are Parley Baer (1993), Jeanette Nolan (1995), Tyler McVey (1998) and Herb Ellis (2001).]

This was Anne’s ninth Showcase and she appeared in six of the series that had recreations this year ... *Our Miss Brooks*, *Lux Radio Theatre*, *Escape*, *Damon Runyon Theatre* and *The Cisco Kid*. One of her favorite shows is a Christmas *Suspense* episode, “’Twas the Night Before Christmas” in which she co-starred with Greer Garson. On

*Escape* she appeared in a Daphne du Maurier story that was later made into a motion picture by Alfred Hitchcock (*The Birds*) and on *Damon Runyon Theatre* she played Little Miss Marker, a classic Runyon character. Anne remembers that on *The Cisco Kid* (she played Becky Chester, a naïve heroine) that you didn’t rehearse much as the scripts weren’t usually ready until the last minute. As a child she sometimes played boy’s roles — she did Little Beaver for a few weeks on *Red Ryder* when the boy in the role suffered the fate of all young male actors ... his voice changed. Anne played one of the daughters, little Phyllis, on *The Phil Harris and Alice Faye Show*. Her extensive radio credits include such series as *Baby Snooks Show*, *Doorway to Life*, *Dr. Christian*, *Hallmark Playhouse*, *Honest Harold*, *Let George Do It*, *My Favorite Husband*, *Nightbeat*, *Ford Theatre*, *Gunsmoke*, *The Man Called X*, and *Have Gun, Will Travel*. She appeared in several feature films including two classics — *White Christmas* and Disney’s *Peter Pan*.

Some of her recent Showcase roles were: Madeline, *Young Widder Brown* (2001); Cinderella, *Let’s Pretend* (2001); Hazel, *One Man’s Family* (2002); Effie, *Cavalcade of America* (2002); Gay, *The Cisco Kid* (2003) and Susan, *Lux Radio Theatre* (2003).

This year’s winner of the **REPS Radio Achievement Award**, Anne Whitfield Phillips, was truly surprised by this honor.

## JOHN ARCHER VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

John Archer was always so willing to give of his time, talent and techniques to REPS. It was only fitting that we renamed the Volunteer of the Year Award to commemorate such dedication.

REPS has been blessed with so many good candidates who are willing workers, it makes this award extremely difficult when only one person or a couple has to be selected. REPS members have the chance to make nominations for this award.

This year we honor Rhea Lutton and Marge Lutton. Every time that REPS gather, Rhea and Marge seem to be involved with the food. The spreads at the monthly meetings are truly amazing. Every year, the actors rave about the Green Room ... another responsibility of Rhea and Marge.

*The Green Room, again fantastic. Dick (Beals)*  
*Fantastic food ... it provided a space to work on what needed to be done ... Larry (Albert)*



**Volunteers of the Year** — Marge Lutton, left, and Rhea Lutton.

.....continued from page 4.....

he was the announcer on *The Smiths of Hollywood* and *Daisy Discovers America*.

From 1939 through 1955 Tyler appeared on *Lux Radio Theatre* at least 53 times and in many of those productions he did two characters. On a few of the those appearances, he acted as a commercial spokesman for Lux products.

Tyler's impressive radio series credits include a superb variety of series: *The Adventures of Ellery Queen*, *The Adventures of Harry Nile*, *The Alan Young Show*, *Burns and Allen*, *Cavalcade of America*, *The Cisco Kid*, *Dr. Christian*, *Dragnet*, *Family Theatre*, *The F.B.I. In Peace and War*, *Fibber McGee & Molly*, *The Great Gildersleeve*, *The Hermit's Cave*, *Heartbeat Theater*, *Imagination Theater*, *Jack Benny Show*, *Let George Do It*, *The Life of Riley*, *On Stage*, *Red Ryder*, *Red Skelton Show*, *Roy Rogers*, *Sears Radio Theater*, *Suspense*, *This Is The Story*, *The Whistler*, *Wild Bill Hickok*, and *Yours Truly Johnny Dollar*. One of Tyler's favorite shows was an episode of a CBS sustaining series called *The City*.

"Live radio was the greatest way in the world to make a living," Tyler remarked to a REPS audience. "There were probably 150 actors in Hollywood that worked quite steadily on the many shows that emanated from there."

Tyler also appeared in many television series. Here is just a sampling of the shows in which he

appeared: *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *All in the Family*, *Bat Masterson*, *Bonanza*, *Broken Arrow*, *Climax!*, *Daniel Boone*, *Death Valley Days*, *December Bride*, *Dragnet*, *Eight Is Enough*, *Fibber McGee & Molly*, *Highway to Heaven*, *I Love Lucy*, *Ironside*, *Lassie*, *Lux Video Theater*, *Maverick*, *Mayberry RFD*, *Men into Space!*, *My Friend Irma*, *Perry Mason*, *Playhouse 90*, *Rawhide*, *The Rebel*, *The Red Skelton Show*, *Riverboat*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, *Wagon Train*, *Wanted: Dead or Alive*, *Wild, Wild West*, and *You Are There*. He was in the cast of the television *Gunsmoke* pilot and quite a few regular episodes. In one *Gunsmoke* episode he was a sheriff leading a posse to meet Matt, except he wound up at the back of the posse. The cast and crew broke up and the director instructed the posse to please allow the sheriff to arrive first. Tyler has extensive major motion picture credits like *Hello, Dolly!*, *Dead Heat on a Merry-Go-Round*, *Seven Days in May*, *That Touch of Mink*, *The Gallant Hours*, *The Caine Mutiny*, *All the Brothers Were Valiant*, *From Here to Eternity*, *O. Henry's Full House*, and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. Tyler's career started on the stage. Two of his favorites plays were *Plaza Suite* with Gale Storm and *What Did We Do Wrong?* with his wife Esther Geddes. I feel privileged that I had the opportunity to meet Tyler McVey and watch him perform. Rest in peace Tyler.

## True Boardman

True Boardman passed away on July 29th at the age of 94 in Pebble Beach, California. True was an Honorary member of REPS and was at Showcase IX (2001) as well as a meeting in November 2000.

True was born in Seattle when his parents were playing with the Scott Company at the Metropolitan Theatre. True made his debut in the theater at the age of eight weeks, but "I was fired for crying", he told the audience during his interview at Showcase IX. At the age of 4, he went on the road with



True Boardman at Showcase IX.

his father for the popular *Bronco Billy* series. By the age of 10, True had already appeared in ten movies with the likes of Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford and Helen Keller with whom he learned to communicate thanks to Helen's teacher, Anne Sullivan.

True supported himself at Los Angeles City College by doing local radio shows, both as an actor and a writer. In 1934, he graduated from UCLA with a degree in English literature and Spanish and switched from acting to writing. He wrote scripts for *Family Theatre*, *Favorite Story*, *Family Theatre*, *Lux Radio*

.....continued on page 20.....



## SPOTLIGHT ON: BEN COOPER

by Stewart Wright

It is not unusual for a first-time Showcase guest to be interviewed; however, it is quite unusual for that person to be interviewed by one of their oldest friends. This was the case for Ben Cooper who was interviewed by Hal Stone.

Ben got into show business at the age of 8 as a result of Hal's school boy crush on Ben's sister. Hal's mother recommended that Ben try out for a part which Hal had outgrown in the play, *Life With Father*. He auditioned for the role of Harlan - the youngest son, won it, and was in the play for over three years. He had a good time working in the theatre saying, "I was too young to be afraid of it; I thought it was great fun."

When he started his show business career, Ben's parents told him he must always follow the director's instructions. When a radio director found out about his parents' instructions, he told fellow directors about this unusual and talented young actor. This helped Ben to compile a resume of over 3000 radio performances including featured roles on *Mark Trail*, *Portia Faces*, and *Second Mrs. Burton*. He enjoyed working in radio and told the audience, "I thought we would grow old doing radio. You could be anything you wanted."

In 1950 Ben moved to California to perform in motion pictures and television. He particularly enjoyed his work in Westerns, appearing in many of the Western series that aired on television during the 1950's and 1960's including *Bonanza*, *Death Valley Days*, *Gunsmoke*, *Johnny Ringo*, *Laramie*, *Rawhide*, *The Rifleman*, *The Virginian*, *Wagon Train*, and *Zane Gray Theatre*. He even met his future wife, Pamela, while filming an episode of *Wagon Train*.

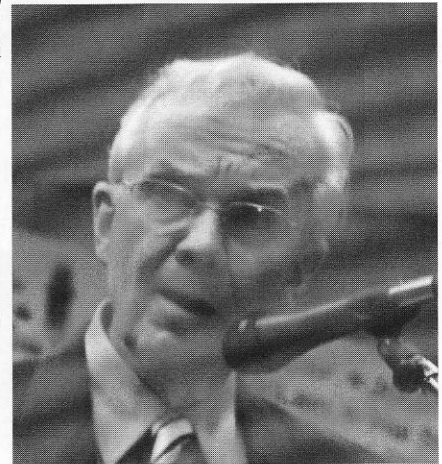
It is not surprising that Ben Cooper is an accomplished horseman, a fast draw artist, and expert shot with a six gun. He taught several performers, including Sammy Davis Jr., the fast draw.

As a result of working together in the motion picture *Johnny Guitar*, Ben and actress Joan Crawford became good friends. When his Dad visited him in Hollywood, Joan insisted that Ben and his Father come to her home for dinner. After dinner, Joan called Ben's mother to talk to her and wish her a Happy Birthday.

The audience got to see a video that Ben uses for his marketing business. The video is a compilation of Ben getting shot, stabbed, or killed in his various television and movie roles. Pamela estimated that his characters had been killed in 247 television shows and 19 motion pictures. Ben remembers that, "It was more fun for me to play the bad guy because I didn't look like one. That way it could be more frightening for the audience."

He will be the Master of Ceremonies for the upcoming Golden Boot Awards Ceremonies in Los Angeles. These Awards recognize the achievements of film and TV western actors and actresses, as well as writers, directors, and stunt people.

*In late June, we went to the OTR REPS Convention in Seattle. We drove from Arizona, left early to visit friends and relatives along the way, and had a great time at the Convention. They kept us busy doing recreations, and I finally had the chance to meet (and work with) Harry Bartell. A neat guy, very pleasant to be around. My good Buddy Ben Cooper was one of the "first time" guests, and it was a blast working with him again. I also had the opportunity to meet Jimmy Lydon for the first time. (Remember him, he played Henry Aldrich in the movies). What a charming guy, and loaded with stories about the business ... Hal (Harlan) Stone*



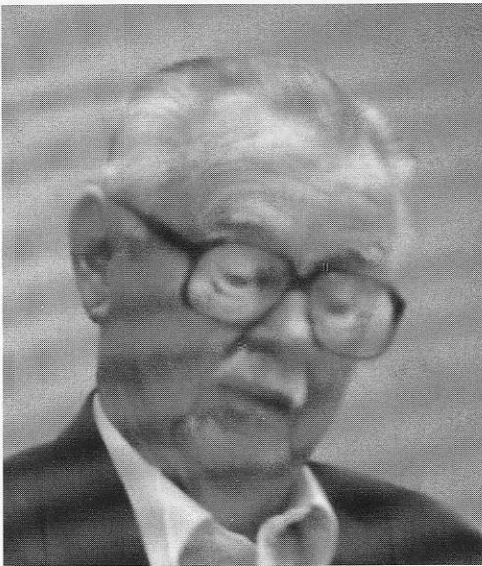
Ben practiced jumping off the stable onto horse's back. "I was the only person who could ride a horse sitting between his ears!"

# SPOTLIGHT ON: JIMMY LYDON

by Bill Davies

Christopher Conrad who has known Jimmy since he was eleven years old conducted this interview. Jimmy has been an actor, producer, writer and Vice President of the Screen Actor's Guild. He is the middle son of nine children and got into acting by accident. His father was an alcoholic and because of that "retired" early. His mother had a friend with two children who were earning \$45 a week for acting and Jimmy decided that this was the way to go. The only problem ... he had no acting credits to his name. As a result, his first interview wasn't very successful. After "stretching" the truth a bit at the next interview or two, he was able to get his foot in the door which led to roles in *Western Waters* and *The Happiest Days*. He admitted to being a frightened little boy and "I was basically raised by theater actors," Jimmy commented, "they were really good to me and taught me about the trade." One memorable experience from his stage days was doing a performance for blind people and realizing that they laughed and enjoyed the play just like sighted people.

He got his break in radio, as many children did, on Nyla Mack's *Let's Pretend*. His stage peers had told him that radio acting wasn't real acting but he appreciated that he could re-do his mistakes. Jimmy's radio appearances include, in New York, *Believe It or Not* and *Pretty Kitty Kelly* for which he earned \$300 a week for doing two shows a day. His big break in movies was somewhat radio related as he played Henry Aldrich in a series of highly popular motion pictures. Once in Hollywood, his radio work included *Favorite Stories*, *G.I. Ambassador of Goodwill*, *The Anacin Hollywood Star Theatre*, *The Camel Screen Guild Theatre*, many AFRS productions and *Young Love* with Janet Waldo. In 1947 he was paired with Elizabeth Taylor in *Life with Father*. Jimmy considers Elizabeth to be a wonderful, lovely lady with a great sense of humor. While under contract with RKO, Paramount, Columbia and Warner Brothers, he made about 100 feature films. Then he turned his attention to that new medium ... television. He was Biff Cardoza on *Rocky Jones*, *Space Ranger*. Live TV was a tough job. Jimmy told a story about an excited goose who decided to flap its wings while Jimmy was holding it. The wings hit him in the eye. He merely wiped his eye and continued on. "What else could you do? It was live," he said.



"I still had to do the dishes," Jimmy commented when he was asked if he was treated different than his siblings.

Jimmy was invited to work with Bill Conrad on the production end. He said that it took 25 years from the time he started directing until he became a producer. Jimmy was part of the production team for *Wagon Train*, *Alfred Hitchcock Hour*, *McHale's Navy*, *77 Sunset Strip*, *F Troop* and *MASH*.

Jimmy ended the interview with a story about Kirk Douglas who is a physical actor. Kirk was waving his hands around and knocked Jimmy's script into the third row. Without missing a beat, Parley Baer came to Jimmy's aid. "A perfect gentleman," was Jimmy's summary of Parley.

*This was my first visit to an enclave for old-time radio enthusiasts. It was wonderful to see old friends such as Gil Stratton, Barbara, Ben, Peg-Peg Jordan and the rest of the radio pros. And Chris Conrad. Wow. I had the best time. Your group couldn't have been more friendly and warm ... and a special thanks to you (Joy). Warmest personal regards. Jimmy (Lydon)*

## MR. AND MRS. NORTH: "DIE HARD"

Pam North (Anne Phillips) takes her husband Jerry (Ben Cooper) back to visit all her college haunts at Colfax in this episode of *Mr. and Mrs. North*. One of the last stops on the tour is to see Birdy Twigg (Barbara Fuller) at the library. Tommy Norton (Dick Beals) and Mildred Turner (Kathy Garver) both seem to be hanging around the library but for entirely different reasons. Mildred's reason for hanging around shows up in the form of Professor Markham (Douglas Young). When the Professor thinks that he has a chance at becoming the next president of the college, he begs Mildred not to tell her husband Cliff (Bill Brooks) about their rendezvous. On his way out, the professor checks out The Psychology of Murder.

While Jerry and Pam are having dinner at the local greasy spoon, they overhear Cliff and his wife, Mildred, fighting. As she walks out the door, Cliff threatens her with, "I'll kill you, I'll kill you." Mildred reports all this to the professor when they rendezvous at Pilot Rock that night. Mildred pushes for marriage and the professor acknowledges that he doesn't love her and will correct his mistake.

In a continuing attempt to visit all her old haunts, Jerry and Pam head to Pilot Rock. Guess what they discover? The book ... The Psychology of Murder. After they return it to the library, Birdy calls the professor to tell him that his lost book has been found. The professor is clearly flustered and requests Birdy to let this be their secret.

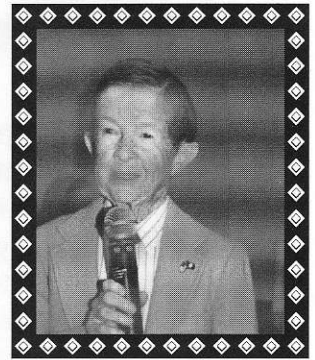
When Mildred is reported missing the next day, Sheriff Turner (Hal Stone) pays a visit to the library to ask Birdy some questions. Meanwhile, Pam and Jerry decide to tell the sheriff about the fight they overheard but he isn't very concerned until he hears that Mildred is dead!

The professor is picking up his "lost" book when Tommy excitedly stops by the library to deliver the news about Mrs. Turner to a nervous Birdy. Markham realizes that Birdy has figured out what happened and ...

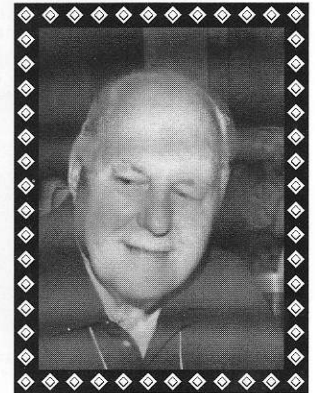
Pam becomes very worried about Birdy so the Norths enter the darkened library through an unlocked door. Pam is convinced that Birdy never would have left that door unlocked. When they turn on the lights, they find Birdy. While Pam is calling the sheriff, Jerry discovers Professor Markham trying to escape through the window. Instead of making his escape, the bookcase tips over and the professor is pinned.

This light-hearted murder mystery was directed by Hal Stone. Music: Randy & Chris McMillan. Sound Effects: Ray Erlenborn and David Persson.

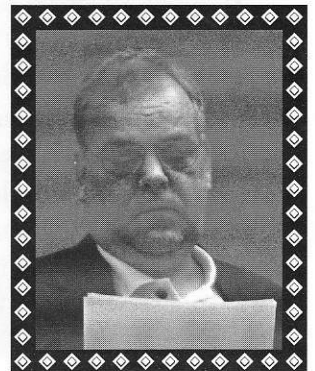
Art Gilmore reminds us to "Listen as Pam and Jerry solve the mystery ..."



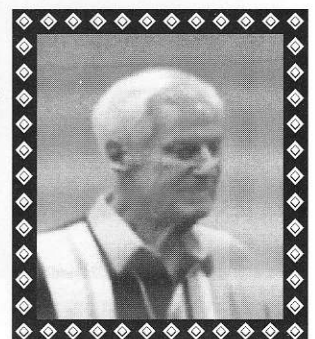
Dick Beals as Tommy is excited over the arrest of Mr. Turner.



Professor Markham (Doug Young) gets caught with evidence!



Cliff (Bill Brooks) threatens to kill his wife.





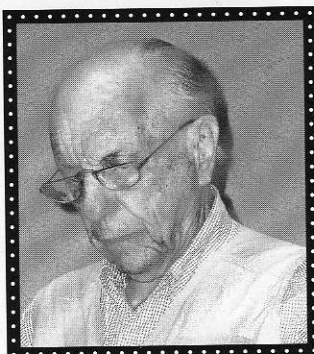
## ESCAPE: "A SHIPMENT OF MUTE FATE"

by Stewart Wright

*Escape* was Radio's premiere series of High Adventure. It took listeners to exotic locales and put them into perilous situations. At this year's Showcase our cast and crew adroitly recreated one of the most terrifying *Escape* stories: "A Shipment Of Mute Fate," in which the passengers of an ocean liner are terrorized by a deadly bushmaster snake. It was the most frequently performed story on *Escape*; airing four times on the series. REPS was indeed fortunate to have Harry Bartell reprise his role of Christopher from the 1948 *Escape* production.

This series featured one of the most compelling and effective openings in radio drama, making use of its only continuing character who was known as the Voice of Escape or simply as the Voice. The function of the Voice was to draw the listener into the main character's predicament by use of the word 'You' during the opening.

The recreation started off innocently enough and rapidly intensified. The Voice of Escape asks, "Did you have too many Easter eggs today? Dreaming about that vacation you can't take yet? Want to get away from it all?" The announcer then dramatically stated, "We offer you. . . Escape!," as Moussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain" briefly swells in the background. Next, the Voice drew the audience into the drama by setting the stage, "You are groping your way slowly through the dark hold of a ship at sea, moving carefully step-by-step searching intently for something you are dread to find, because you know this ship carries a cargo of . . . death."



Harry Bartell gave another stunning Showcase performance.

The announcer concludes the opening with, "*Escape*, designed to free you from the four walls of Today, for a half hour of High Adventure. Tonight, at your request, we bring back one of our most popular *Escape* stories. We *Escape* to the harbor front in Venezuela and a grim voyage which started from there as told by Martin

Storm in his gripping tale - 'A Shipment of Mute Fate'."

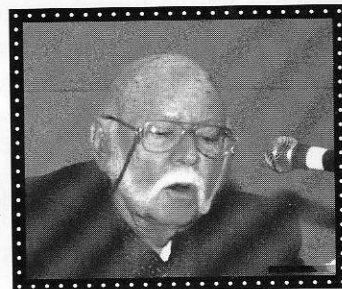
The deadly and almost mystical nature of the bushmaster is revealed by the main character and narrator, Christopher. After catching the snake in the Venezuelan jungle, he attempts to transport it to the States on an ocean liner. A freak wave on the high seas liberates the bushmaster. Our cast deftly built the tension and terror in the desperate search to find the snake. Finally cornered by the bushmaster, Christopher is accidentally saved by the intervention of a more ferocious creature who fearlessly attacked and

killed the deadly snake: a mother cat protecting her kittens.

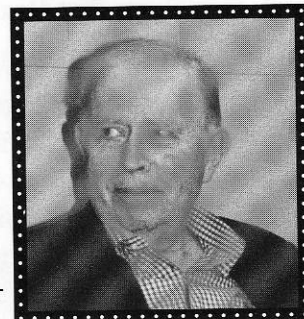


Ginny Tyler wants to get off the ship!

In addition to Harry Bartell, our cast included Ray Erlenborn (as Clara, the cat), Pat French, Jimmy Lydon, Frank Buxton, Sam Edwards, Larry Albert, Jim French, and Ginny Tyler. Larry Albert was the Voice and Jim French was the announcer. Dick Beals was the director. Bob Cardenas, John Jensen, and Joy Jackson collected and presented the music. Donald Zongker was our engineer. David Persson and Mary Fichtenberg performed the sound effects.



And who can forget Ray Erlenborn as Clara, the cat?

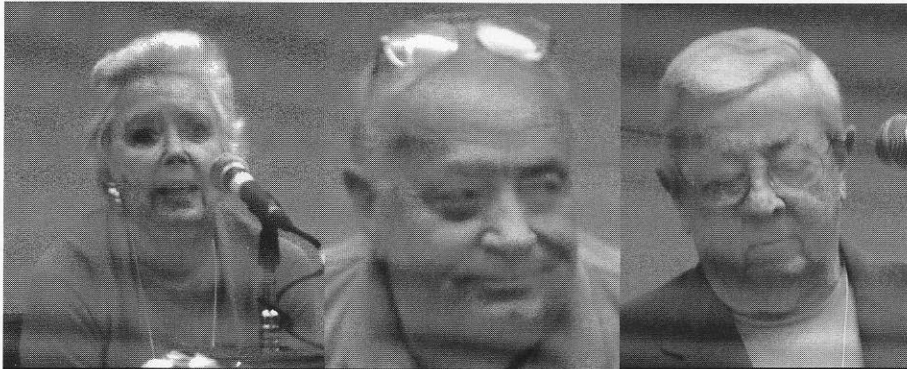


"We *Escape* to . . . Venezuela and a grim voyage . . .," said Jim French.

# DAMON RUNYON THEATRE: "MADAM LA GIMP"

by Bill Parker

As described by Hal Stone who directed this recreation, in a "cold read" a cast was called in to audition as well as to read a script for the first time. With no rehearsal, and maybe a hint from the director as to how he would like them to play the parts, the reading began. There was no music or sound effects.



The "bag lady" (Barbara Fuller) is transformed for her daughter Eulallie.

Director Hal Stone gave the actors a brief description of their character.

Harry the Horse (Gil Stratton, Jr. ) becomes the Governor?!!

Our drama today was written for radio based on Damon Runyon's story "Madam La Gimp." Madam (Barbara Fuller), an elderly woman "one step up from a bag lady," is visited by mobster Dave the Dude (Hal Stone) and his friend Broadway (Ben Cooper). Dave is determined to help Madam out of a seemingly impossible situation: her daughter is arriving from Spain believing that Madam is a New York society

woman. An elaborate hoax must be staged to keep the daughter from finding out the truth about her mother. This marvelous story was filmed twice by Frank Capra as *Lady for a Day* (1933) and *Pocketful of Miracles* (1961).

As always in cold reads, our cast of professionals did an amazing job. This cast was rounded out by Gil Stratton, Jr. (Harry the Horse/Announcer), Frank Buxton (the "judge" who poses as Madam's husband and later marries her), Jimmy Lydon (Harrigan the police lieutenant who eventually decides to go along with the charade), and Joy Jackson (Dave's friend Billie who transforms Madam's appearance to fit her top society role).

Of the few glitches, Hal asked: "Do we get a chance to do it over again?" Well, they certainly didn't need to. They did a beautiful job the first time.

*I think it all went well, and I certainly enjoyed doing it ... All your people do a great job, and certainly make us feel wanted, which makes it an even "love match" ... Gil Stratton*



**No task this big could be undertaken without the help of many of people.**

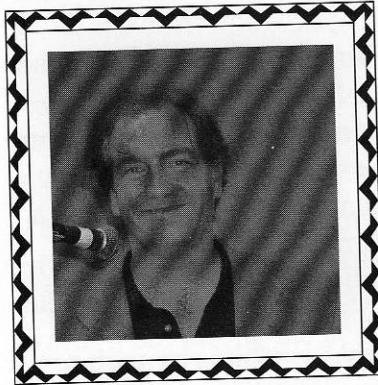
**Thank you everyone for your contributions towards Showcase XI.**

*Larry Albert, Ron Aley, Vi & Darrell Anderson, Dick Beals, Dick Bonesteel, Tom Brandt, Bill Brooks, Frank Buxton, Mary Moore & Gus Campagna, Terry Campbell, Bob Cardenas, Terrence Christ, Janet Conrad, Christopher Conrad, Jim Cox, Bill Davies, Jim Dolan, Ray Erlenborn, Paul Feavel, Mary Fichtenberg, Jim French, Pat Garner, Butch Gibson, Cliff & Lynda Glaspey, Bryan Haigood & Cheri Swenson, Anne Hockens, Julie Hoverson, Joy Jackson, Cheryl Jacobs, John Jenkins, John Jensen, Mark Kirkland, Marge & Rhea Lutton, Bev & Terry Mahony, Randy & Chris McMillan, Kate Molling, David Persson, Tom & Liz Roach, Paul Secord, David Selvig, Neal Shulman, Sam Simone, Glenn Sisson, David Speelman, Mike Sprague, Hal Stone, Gil Stratton, Jr., Marilyn Wilt, Stewart Wright and Donald Zongker.*



# THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: "THE ADVENTURE OF THE GREAT AMERICAN"

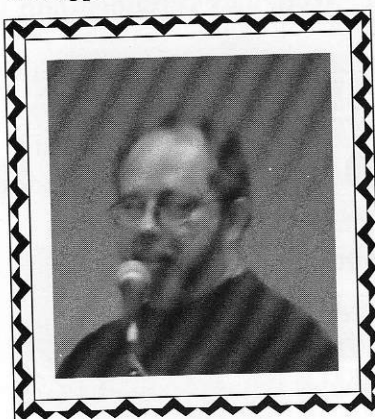
by Carolyn and Joel Senter



John Patrick Lowrie as Sherlock Holmes was a great addition to Showcase.



Mrs. Lavinthal (Pat French) is kidnapped!



"My name is Doctor John H. Watson," is the way Larry Albert starts *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

After recording this Episode 40 to be added to his Imagination Theater's *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, Jim French brought the entire production before the live audience assembled for Showcase XI. Over the years, we have heard a great many audio presentations of Sherlockian dramas, both canonical and pastiche, from Rathbone and Bruce to Merrison and Williams. There is really little to say about the performances of this cast except to quote BBC, "... one of the best audio dramas available in the English language." After the performance one of us, who had never met John or Larry in person, approached Paul Feavel and asked, "Are these guys really British?" What better endorsement could John Patrick Lowrie as Holmes and Larry Albert as Dr. Watson receive than to have a member of the audience believe that their accents were those of native-born Brits? We have never heard better Holmes and Watsons - bar none. Harry Bartell seemed to enjoy the relief from his traditional role as "the announcer," who visited Dr. Watson each week, as he created the character of Cornelius C. Lavinthal, "a pompous American plutocrat," who tries to buy Mr. Holmes's services as a "muckraker" to seek sensational news for Lavinthal's "yellow newspapers." Kathy Garver, as Mrs. Hudson; Pat French, as the vacuous Mrs. Lavinthal; Hal Stone, as Inspector Hopkins; and Gil Stratton, Jr. as the announcer and the waiter were all as professional as their individual theatrical histories would predict.

The solution of the mystery of Lavinthal's missing wife, by way of amazing Holmesian "deductions," well reflected Jim French's grasp of the Sherlock Holmes character and the Victorian era. Perhaps the most impressive aspects of this presentation lay in matters not immediately apparent to the casual observer. First, the direction, and the cast's responsiveness to that direction, were impeccable! More subtle matters, of particular notice to hard-core Sherlockians, were also in evidence. Examples of Jim's attention to these important details included the reference to Constance Adams, Dr. Watson's apocryphal first wife; the dating of the case in 1902 which made the inclusion of telephone communication among the characters believable; and, finally, Mr. Lavinthal's offer of 50,000 pounds Sterling to Mr. Holmes was correctly translated to 250,000 US dollars using the rate of exchange proper for the time setting of the story! As members of the Sherlockian Community, we found this attention to detail to be most impressive and gratifying. A great show! We were honored to have been in the audience!

*We wanted to tell you what a great time we had at the Showcase. It was, truly, a once-in-a-lifetime occasion ... Hope it won't be our last one ... Y'all did a magnificent job with the gathering - we have never seen a better managed convention ... we had a great time and will store the REPS Showcase in our memories as another "treasure of the heart." In our opinion, REPS is the model of what an OTR club ought to be. You*



# OUR MISS BROOKS: "LADY OF THE LAKE"

by Mary Fichtenberg

The *Our Miss Brooks* episode, "Lady of the Lake", was a classic. It is as contemporary and humorous today as it was when it was first broadcast.

The plot centers around Miss Brooks' attempts to rent a film and a projector in order to persuade the School Board to provide Madison High School with audio visual equipment. She plans to show the film to Mr. Stone of the school board in order to demonstrate how interesting and educational films can be.

Miss Brooks has rented the film *The Lady of the Lake*, based on the poem by Sir Walter Scott, and a projector with money Mr. Conklin has given her. As the film rolls, the viewers see a provocative Theda Bara and a scantily clad Marilyn Monroe instead of Scottish countryside. *The Lady of the Lake* was replaced with *Sirens of the Screen!* Mr. Stone is horrified, and Mr. Conklin is outraged. Miss Brooks assures Mr. Stone that it is all a mistake and that she will get another film. Harriet and Walter take a collection from the students and Mr. Boynton adds \$2.35 but there still isn't enough to rent another movie since Mr. Conklin made it very clear that

another movie has to be rented. After some negotiation, Mr. Gibson agrees to one free movie for his biggest customer — the school district. The movie of choice ... *The Board of Education at Work*.

Back at school, the gang decides to get ready for Mr. Stone's re-

Las Vegas. Just then Mr. Stone and Mr. Conklin return and Mr. Stone goes on at great length about Mr. Conklin's moral laxity.

Mr. Gibson shows up with the real movie, *The Lady of the Lake*. He greets everyone, calling Mr. Stone by name. As Mr.

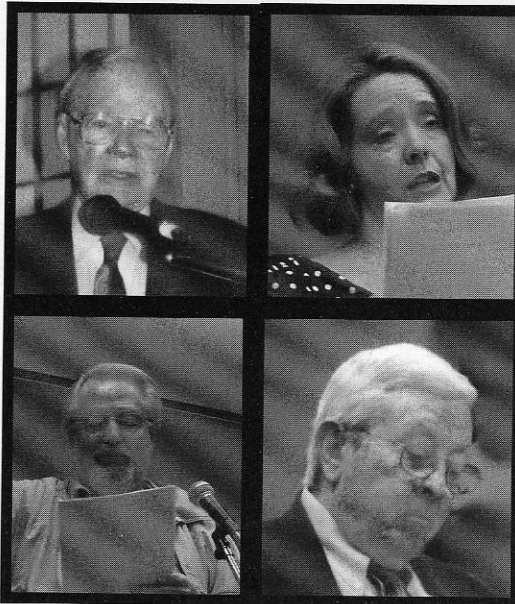
Stone protests, Mr. Gibson explains that he rented a movie to Mr. Stone — the very movie, in fact, that has caused all the trouble ... *Sirens of the Screen!* Faced with this, Mr. Stone departs, defeated, and Miss Brooks is vindicated.

The cast was admirably suited for their roles. Jim French was perfect as Mr. Conklin. Move over, Gale Gordon. Anne Phillips and Gil Stratton, Jr. were ideal as Harriet Conklin and Walter Denton. Ellen McLain and Frank Buxton both were excellent as Miss Brooks and Mr. Boynton. Sam Edwards was a believable Mr. Gibson, and Bill Brooks did a great job as Mr. Stone. Barbara Fuller was a first-rate

Mrs. Davis. Art Gilmore was the announcer. Frank Buxton directed, music by Randy McMillan and sound effects by Cheryl Jacobs. Well done by all members of the cast!

**Left:** Mr. Gibson (Sam Edwards) just can't seem to get the right film.

**Right:** Ellen McLain as Miss Brooks.



**Left:** Frank Buxton directed this recreation.

**Right:** Walter Denton (Gil Stratton, Jr.) collects 65 cents from the guys for Miss Brooks.

turn by watching the movie. As the movie starts, there are a group of men sitting around a large table who seem to be rolling dice. This particular movie happens to be about gambling in

*I think this (use of local actors) worked out Great! Susan, Ellen, Larry, and John Patrick were wonderful! Hope we can continue to use some of the local acting talent at future Showcases. I just consider myself one of the many REPS volunteers who helps make the Showcase the BDOTRCW. Signing off for now, Stewart Wright (BDOTRCW - "Best Darned Old-Time Radio Convention In The World." I've been to FOTR and SPERDVAC and they don't even come close.)*

# THEY WENT THAT-A-WAY

by Bill Parker

This is an original western comedy sketch by Joy Jackson incorporating characters from several series radio westerns. Brit Ponsett (*The Six Shooter*) stops to camp, and is joined by Paladin (*Have Gun, Will Travel*) and his pal Hey Boy. Chester (*Gunsmoke*) rides up in a buckboard with Miss Kitty, telling Ponsett, "I'll make my own coffee." Marshal Dillon is expected—Ray Erlenborn howls like a coyote—"that must be the marshal now," says Chester. As the action develops, two people are in grave danger, J.B. Kendall (*Frontier Gentleman*) and Hey Boy's girlfriend, Missy Wong. The murderous and insane Sedgwick has them locked up in his barn. With much laughter and many thrills, the crisis is resolved. Thanks to director Frank Buxton, the cast of Art Gilmore, Frank Buxton (doing Jimmy Stewart as Ponsett), Ben Cooper, Jim French (as Hey Boy!), Sam Edwards, Susan Connors (as Kitty), Ginny Tyler, Doug Young, Jimmy Lydon and Ray Erlenborn shines. Joy Jackson and David Persson were on music and sound effects, respectively.



Miss Kitty (Susan Connors) pretends to be Sedgwick's dead wife.

Chester (Sam Edwards) isn't convinced that Hey Boy can make coffee.

*felt before. There was a recognition toward each and everyone for every task given to do. The casting was terrific ... I felt honored and privileged to be a part of it ... Wow! Love, Ginny (Tyler)*

*This year's Showcase seemed every bit as good as all the others I've been to.*

*Thank you for letting us take part in it. Pat and Jim (French)*

..... continued from page 12 .....

*Theatre, Sears Radio Theatre, Silver Theatre and The Columbia Workshop.* True wrote an episode of *Silver Theatre* ("Child, Save My Fireman") for Jimmy Stewart which he felt was the best comedy he ever wrote. He directed this recreation when he was in Seattle for Showcase IX. He also wrote "For Rich, For Richer", *Silver Theatre*, for Clark Gable before Clark was famous. He did 15-18 shows a week and sometimes three shows a day with up to twenty scripts a week.

One of his fondest memories is writing and acting with Marlene Dietrich in "Sheherezade". He wrote the script while listening to Rimsky-Korsahov's Sheherazade, with a little help from Omar Khayyam. True played a love scene with Marlene and "Throughout it all, I stood at one microphone with her, with my arm around her waist," he told us when he visited REPS in November, 2000.

During World War II, True was an Army broadcaster assigned to create radio programming for the troops. He was a member of the Hollywood Independent Citizen's Committee and later turned his talents to business films and documentaries.

True wrote the first dramatic television show ever telecast in Hollywood, on December 24, 1946 as well as writing for *Perry Mason, The Virginian, Bonanza* and *Gunsmoke*. *Perry Mason* was always written with four or five possible viable suspects and once the show was cast, the ending would go to the biggest star.

In 1993, the Writers Guild presented him with its Valentine Davies Award for lifetime achievement.

His most recent endeavor was a one man show on Ralph Waldo Emerson.

# LUX RADIO THEATRE: "MOTHER IS A FRESHMAN"

by Janet Wilt

Every Monday night when I was a little girl we gathered around my grandfather's radio, the centerpiece, the heart and soul of our living room to listen to *Lux Radio Theatre*. Grandfather's radio was smooth to the touch, stood about 3 feet high, and had a golden shine to it. I loved to touch the radio, to run my 11-year-old fingers down the front, around the sides and up over the top.

I was always first. Next came grandfather and then my younger brothers and sister scampered into the room taking their place directly in front of the radio. Mother and father followed. Mother always checked the drapes on the front window and slightly tilted the oversized lampshade on the floor lamp to bring a warm glow to the room. Father adjusted the big black knobs on the radio and I snuggled in between mother and father on the



**Left:** Douglas Young as Dean Gillingham knows and agrees to keep Abigail's secret — "... you and Susan Abbott share the same home address ..."

**Center:** Abigail Fortitude (Kathy Garver) enrolls at Pointer College so she can collect the \$3000 Abigail Fortitude Scholarship endowment.

**Right:** "Tests prove it. In three out of four cases ... try it," says Art Gilmore of Lux soap facial products.

oversized sofa with an air of importance and a feeling of excitement. This was our special night together and we all eagerly awaited the magical words, "Lux presents ..."

Tonight the program is "Mother is a Freshman," starring Kathy Garver as Abigail Fortitude, Anne Phillips as Susan Abbot, and Jimmy Lydon as Richard Michaels. Tonight the program is funny, sometimes the adults laugh but I'm not sure why — I think that I'll ask my mother later, or maybe Aunt Mae. Aunt Mae is so sophisticated she will know and she will answer all my questions. As the program continues the velvety voices coming over the radio waves mesmerize me (a word Aunt Mae taught me) and I find myself pretending that I am Susan. I imagine myself grown-up, being in college, and falling in love. When the commercial comes on for Lever Brothers soap, I reach up and run my fingers across my face — and then I realize, I'm not 11 years old and the year is not 1949, its 2003 and I'm in the Lopez room at the Seattle Center for Showcase XI. The words are being spoken true enough — not by Loretta Young and Van Johnson but rather by Art, Ben, Jimmy, Dick, Gil, Barbara and others. They do such a good job and we in the audience are the beneficiaries of this unique form of entertainment. We don't intend to let it be forgotten!

Cast members: Art Gilmore, Jim French, Anne Phillips, Kathy Garver, Ben Cooper, Douglas Young, Jimmy Lydon, Barbara Fuller, Dick Beals, Gil Stratton, Jr., Pat French, Ginny Tyler and Peggy Jordan. Music by Randy McMillan, sound effects by David Persson and directed by Larry Albert.

*It was well organized, on time, involved all the actors, in a variety of acting performances and brought your audience up close and personal. From a marketing perspective...that's what it's all about. That's why they come. That facility is the best. Dick (Beals)*

*All the recreations were great. Millie (Morse)*



# SILENT AUCTION

by Terry Campbell, Silent Auction Coordinator  
\$1,896 ... \$1,900 ...

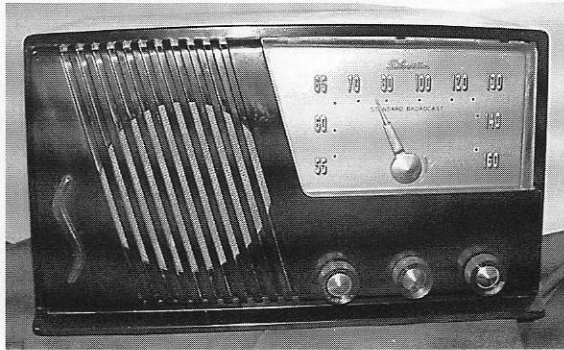
\$2,000. The Showcase XI Silent Auction wasn't over until it was over ... and the already record-breaking ante of \$1,896 was upped twice to put \$2,000 in the Guest Travel Fund for Showcase XII. More than 60 items donated by REPS members,

friends and guests were up for bid at the event. (Names of donors and purchasers appear in the Kindness Corner.) When the auction total of \$1,896 was announced at the Saturday night banquet, Neal Shulman rounded the sum up to \$1,900. Then Stewart Wright, who already had donated two Jim Cox-signed books to the auction, put a 'one' in front of the 'twenty' when he paid for the *Allen's Alley* spoof script he'd won. Top money went to item No. 1 – a 1939 Westinghouse console radio with push buttons. Terry Mahony donated it and Cliff Glaspey put it into top working form, ensuring that it lived up to its billing: Real radios glow in the dark. William Buckley held off other bidders to take it home for \$205. Cliff Glaspey was both the donor and the radio repair technician on a 1951 Silvertone tabletop radio (pictured above) in brown bakelite. Ron Bowser's the new owner, for \$35.

Showcase attendees hot to get the portable Rio-Volt to play the new mp3 CDs that are chock-full of radio shows filled up all the lines on one bid form and started on a second form. When time was called, Carolyn Van Jepner was the top bidder at \$61. The player was donated by Danean MacAndrew (aka The Radio Lady). Speaking of those mp3 discs: for \$30, Al Gil bought a CD with 63 episodes of *Nightbeat* contributed by Paul Feavel. Joy Jackson launched a new REPS series with mp3 CD tributes to three Showcase regulars; each disc contained dozens of shows. Don Lacky picked up the Larry Dobkin CD for \$80, but had to bid \$100 to win the two-CD Parley Baer set. William Buckley collected the

Rhoda Williams CD for \$40. Pat Garner

served as a proxy for Ray Thweatt, fending off challenges to register the final bid of \$55 on REPS inaugural mp3 CD "Winter Holidays on the Radio." Disappointed bidders can take heart: Michael Comstock has donated one of the limited edition discs – which is sold out and otherwise no longer available – for next year's Silent Auction. Conventional CDs proved to be popular, too. Harlan



Zinck donated two 10-CD sets from his Radio Archives offerings. Brent Martin paid \$37 for the *Lum and Abner* CDs and Judy Miller landed a collection of President shows for \$50. *Gunsmoke* and Harry Bartell fans vied for two draft scripts he wrote with Vic Perrin and donated to the auction. Paul Feavel was the successful bidder at \$25 on "Chester's Inheritance" and Janet Conrad won the "Father and Son" script for \$35.

Christopher Conrad portraits of Showcase X performers ran up the Silent Auction total. Danean MacAndrew bought a framed version for \$33; William Buckley bought a print signed by the performers for \$55; and, for \$95, Donald Lacky got a special framed print so he could collect the signatures himself. Steve Holden donated a number of items that brought in good money, including a 1970's Dokoder, reel-to-reel tape player that went home with Ron Bowser for \$75. Three framed photos of radio personalities he added to the auction wares were thought to be ones from the 1950's that hung in an affiliate lobby. John Jensen bought the Bob Hope portrait for \$20 and was the 12th and successful bidder at \$58 on the Groucho Marx photo. Terry Campbell got Gordon MacRae's picture for \$18. Speaking of photographs ... Neal Shulman paid \$60 for a framed portrait of Carlton E. Morse, taken just before his 90th birthday and signed by the famed radio writer. Millie Morse donated two of the large, framed works; look for the second in next year's auction. And more photos – Showcase attendees found their favorite stars and programs featured in pictures donated by George Fowler, .....continued on next page.....

.....continued from previous page.....

Janet Waldo, Anne Phillips, Jean Rouverol Butler, Sam Edwards and Mike Sprague. And others found a book or two to bid on from those donated by Stewart Wright, Frank Buxton, Danean MacAndrew, Ray & Meridy Erlenborn and Steve Holden; and scripts donated by Bill Brooks and Millie Morse.

Cliff & Lynda Glaspey helped with the Silent Auction during the entire two days of its run and before in the planning and collection phase. Also lending a hand were Janet Conrad, Christopher Conrad, Kate Molling and Marilyn Wilt.

As you can see, this year's Silent Auction has nearly cleared out our donations closet. And you can also tell that bidders prize all kinds of radio-related items and memorabilia. If you have anything you wish to contribute to the Showcase XII Silent Auction, please write me, Terry Campbell, at 710 S. Fifth Ave., Yakima, WA 98902, e-mail me at tcampbell@yakima-herald.com, call me at (509) 457-535, or bring the item to a REPS meeting. If I'm not able to attend the meeting, the Glaspeys will accept the items in my stead. All proceeds go to the Showcase Guest Travel Fund.

*The dinner auction was a great success! ... I would hesitate to eliminate it. Also, the audience seemed to enjoy the bidding. Stewart (Wright)*

*I sure had a great time at Showcase! I really do think it was even better than last year's!*

*I thought the catalog was just wonderful! It was so nice to have bios included in the program, have the times of everything listed so that they were easy to refer to, and the organization of the catalog was just great! It's a really neat keepsake!*

*I thought the silent auction was very well organized. It seemed to have even better items than last year, and I love the stuff I won - the Erlenborn "Wizard" shirt and the framed photo of last year's Showcase stars. Neat stuff! I thought the recreations were super, as always!*

*It's funny, last year's Showcase was the first OTR convention I'd attended. Now that I've also been to SPERDVAC, I appreciate the Showcases SO much more! It's kind of hard to explain, but there's a "feel" to REPS conventions that just wasn't at SPERDVAC ... I'm definitely planning to attend next year, too ... Danean (MacAndrew)*

If you missed the opportunity to hear recreations live at Showcase XI, you can tape them off the air even when you are not home. Dick Bonesteel submitted these instructions using *Imagination Theater*, Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 pm — 10:00 pm on KIXI (880) AM, as an example:

- Buy an electric digital clock/timer. Home Trends (1450 Lyell Ave., Rochester, NY 14606-2184, 800-810-2340) sells an easy to set timer (Item #040536) for \$21.95 plus postage & handling. Other stores may carry similar digital models.
- Plug the timer into the wall socket and your radio with cassette recorder into the timer's socket.
- Set the timer to turn ON at 9:00 pm and OFF at 10:00 pm.
- Turn the receiver to KIXI. Insert a cassette tape into your tape-deck.
- Turn the receiver and tape-deck ON. Using the timer, turn the receiver and tape-deck OFF. (If your timer has a timer circuit, switch it on.)
- Press the PLAY and RECORD controls.

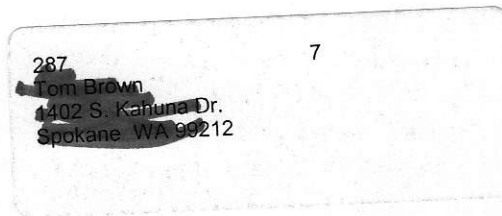
When the timer turns the power on at 9:00 pm the machine will record. You may want to let the timer stay on a little longer so that a 60-minute tape will run out and activate the tape machine's auto-stop. This helps avoid damage to the tape transport mechanism.



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## **Showcase XII June 24 - 27, 2004**

### **Mutual Broadcasting and its West Coast Affiliates**

**There are at least 153 shows to choose from for recreations!!!**

**The "company" ... Alice Backes, Harry Bartell, Dick Beals, Frank Buxton, Herb Ellis, Ray Erlenborn, Jim French, Barbara Fuller, Esther Geddes, Art Gilmore, Jimmy Lydon, Anne Phillips, Hal Stone, Gil Stratton, Jr., Ginny Tyler and Doug Young ... have all been invited to return for another year.**

**Sam Edwards will be honored during the Thursday night spotlight tribute. Jack Edwards and Jane Webb have promised to come.**

**The location will be the Seattle Center again and the hotel is Comfort Suites.**

**See you all at Showcase XII!!**

**Check our website ([www.reponline.org](http://www.reponline.org)) for more details as they become available.**



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