

AIR CHECK

NEWSLETTER OF THE RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUGET SOUND (REPS)

Volume 15, Number 3

March 2005

SHOWCASE PREVIEW

Coming Fast: June 24-25 ... the time is coming fast and the program is taking shape nicely. Remember, we're celebrating **The Good Ol' Days** with our theme and approach. It will be a relaxed and peaceful time concentrated only on Friday and Saturday at The Seattle Center complex.

Originals in original roles: Whether you were major fans of a particular radio show or not, isn't it fun to hear and see actors re-create roles they did "back then"? Every year at Showcase, we have various opportunities to do that — 2005 will be no exception.

BILL IDELSON will join us for the first time. Some may best remember Bill as Rush on *Vic and Sade*. And, he'll be doing that with us. But, you'll be fascinated to learn about the many other things he has done in his career.

HAL STONE, BOB HASTINGS and **ROSEMARY RICE** would rather not do *Archie Andrews* because they have done it at other conventions. But, because we've never done it in Seattle, three of the originals have agreed to jump right back to Riverdale High. They will also be doing other roles at Showcase.

Then comes **ART GILMORE** announcing, as he did in the Golden Age, *The Adventures Of Frank Race*. Many OTR actors worked on *Romance* and we'll have a rollicking time at sea in a comical, pirate romance story. Sounds different, doesn't it? It's a fun program.

Other Program Pieces: A highlight again will be a new *Imagination Theatre*, written around old time radio professionals. Locally based **JIM FRENCH** writes just as well as any Good Ol' Days writer and is syndicated throughout the country. One more show is being selected for recreation and will be announced on the website: repsonline.org.

In a segment called Twos on Radio, there will be time with *Bob and Ray*, *Ethel and Albert*, *The Bickersons* plus *Abbott and Costello*.

The Showcase committee is also anticipating that we'll be able to experience Improv Radio, with actors led by **FRANK BUXTON** taking ideas from the audience and creating a show right on the spot.

Panels and interviews are being arranged for freshness and entertainment value. Nostalgia vendors will be on hand with intriguing items for sale.

The Stars: In addition to the folks mentioned above, REPS is honored to welcome Golden Age actors **GIL STRATTON, JR.**, **ANNE WHITFIELD PHILLIPS**, **JOANNA MARCH**, **RAY ERLNBORN**, **HERB ELLIS**, **DICK BEALS** and **ALICE BACKES**.

Professionals **ESTHER GEDDES McVEY**, **PAUL HERLINGER** and **LARRY ALBERT** will round out the performers with other talented folks helping out as needed.

Registration information can be found on the REPS website: repsonline.org.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

The Saturday afternoon monthly meetings are designed to bring you up close and personal with the best of Old Time Radio. Now, with your help, your newly elected Board would like to move things up a notch or two.

So far you've heard first hand true stories from a veteran actor. Then Larry Albert presented a detailed history of Sherlock Holmes, the actors, the stories, and snippets from the actual broadcasts, collector items all.

Next, celebrating April Fool's Day, you will get a once in a lifetime opportunity to compete in a Quiz Show. It will be the Gentlemen vs. the Lovely Ladies, with prizes galore.

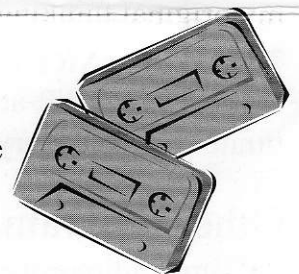
Now it's your turn. Tell us what kind of programs are your favorites. The sky's the limit. Who are your favorite radio performers? Do you want them to recreate shows, or just chat a bit and answer your questions? How about listening to vintage, one of a kind recordings and receiving a copy?

WHAT DO YOU WANT? We all have mailboxes, e-mails, telephones, and cell phones. Let us know.

Dick Beals, President

LIBRARY NEWS

You will find another 4 pages of new CDs in our library. The CDs may duplicate other programs in the Cassette part of the library — remember they do have a different numbering system. **Be sure to indicate Cassette or CD when ordering from the library.** Check the web page for more not listed here. Among those not listed in this issue are 104 *Sherlock Holmes* episodes and all 125 *X Minus One* episodes. We have tried to include entire runs of a series if it is possible. Some series such as *Suspense*, *Gunsmoke*, and *Dragnet* go on for many years. For these series we are putting in a half year to a year at a time. It is hard to make a choice of what to work with first, vintage radio is so widespread. We believe you will find a good sampling now, and if it is not here yet, let us know, it may be available. Almost everything in the CD library is coming from the original source, not simply redubbed existing cassettes. Of course there are exceptions when a particular episode is not available otherwise. There is no plan to put MP3 CDs in the library at the present time.



Great News!!! Early last year, Sharon Brown donated a number of transcription disks that had been saved by her father, Harry Bryant. This is a rare and wonderful thing for REPS because they are mostly choice uncirculated programs. They include *Jack Benny*, *Vic and Sade*, *Jimmie Durante*, *Red Skelton*, and many more. Of particular note among these uncirculated programs are fifteen *Archie Andrews* episodes that have not been heard since their original broadcast. We will have a formal unveiling of the *Archie Andrews* episodes at the Showcase this June. After Bob Hastings, Rosemary Rice, and Hal Stone, original cast members, re-create one of the episodes for us picked from one of the fifteen, all fifteen 'new' episodes will be available to us REPS members on CDs and cassettes in our library.

Frank Rosín

MARCH 5TH MEETING: SHERLOCK HOLMES REDEAUX

by Larry Albert

Due to a blind moment of weakness involving an over active ego and a strong desire to get REPS meetings back to being about old time radio and the programs and people therein, I agreed to host the March meeting. I didn't even have to mull over my choice of topic since I felt that Sherlock Holmes on radio was a natural for me. I'd already done one program on the subject several years ago and had covered what I

thought was everything there was to talk about regarding the show. Time and a deeper involvement then I'd ever imagined in the audio world of Conan Doyle's gas-lit sleuth and his Boswell have shown me the error in my original thinking. Rarely, in my view, have the radio interpretations of Holmes and Dr. Watson come close to representing the characters as created by Sir Arthur. This fact was barely covered in my first presenta-

tion those long years ago and I decided to take the opportunity the March meeting offered to amend that omission.

Over the years there have been many audio incarnations of the Baker Street duo beginning as far back as October 20, 1930. According to lore and some OTR logs this was the date of the first broadcast of a Holmes adventure in the United States. The story was "The Speckled Band" and the star was William Gillette, the man most associated with the role at the time. He'd written and played the title character in what to this day remains the most famous and most performed play regarding the exploits of the great

detective Sherlock Holmes. There is no surviving record of that first program but I doubt that Gillette's performance strayed too far from the characterization he perfected in his more than 4,000 performances of the stage play.

How close was he to the Holmes of The Strand Magazine fame? Well, since he wrote the play and since he was renown as a romantic matinee

idol, I seriously doubt he would have played the part with the high strident voice and cold calculating manner that Doyle used to describe his invention in the very first published story "A Study in Scarlet." And what of Watson, how was he done in this premier radio program? No one, including me, knows so let's move on to the first of the long line of actors to play the parts for any length of time on the air, Richard Gordon and Leigh Loyal.



Holmes & Watson from original *Strand Magazine*, story, "The Greek Interpreter"

These two men were Holmes and Watson respectively from 1930 to 1933 over the NBC Red and Blue networks, and at least one of their shows is available to collectors. In this episode we find that Gordon's voice is probably the nearest any actor ever came to achieving the unpleasant high-pitched quality Doyle attributed to his creation. The actor also establishes the quick and clipped delivery that has come to be a part of the best of the interpreters of the role. In short, he could be the Holmes of the canon except for one major flaw — he sounds far too old for the role as does Loyal as Watson. I ask the reader to understand that according to the original

continued from previous page stories both the good doctor and his more famous roomy were in their twenties when they began sharing the dangers of Holmes' cases and that Holmes himself was either forty-nine or fifty when he retired to raise bees on the Sussex Downs. However, in his favor Loval does at least come across as intelligent, which cannot be said for the next actor to take on the part.

Watson as Mushed Mouth Mental Midget

Nigel Bruce has a lot to answer for. It is largely through his interpretation of Doctor John Watson that at least two generations of radio and movie goers in the forties and television viewers in the fifties and sixties have come to view the character as a well meaning bumbler and a rather stupid and silly individual. His portrayal along side Basil Rathbone in the films and on the air, was for years thought to be, by those who've never read the stories, the exact way Conan Doyle had written the man — a mushed mouth mental midget who was lucky to be able to dress himself in the morning. Through fourteen movies at Universal and around 250 radio shows Bruce perpetuated this abomination. Only in the two films pictures he made at Twentieth Century Fox, "The Hound of the Baskervilles" and "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," did he curtail the idiocy and give the public a Watson to admire. It goes without saying that he was far too old for the role.

(On a side note, when I gave my original presentation I said, matter of factly, that although he had announced during the 1945-46 season, Harry Bartell had never appeared on the program in an acting role. I was proven wrong the very next day when, while playing a tape of a show from that time period, I clearly heard the voice of my friend in the part of the villain.)

Now to continue ... in the fifties the British BBC finally decided to air a radio series of their own devoted to the exploits of Sherlock Holmes. Did they make any attempt to correct the errors of their American cousins? No, in fact, they compounded them by casting two actors who could not have been more ill suited for the characters — Sir John Gielgud and Sir Ralph Richardson. Sir John's portrayal is lifeless for the most part, without fire and Richardson's Watson carries none of the youth and vigor so vital to the man. However, at this point I must admit that these shows as well as episodes of the Rathbone/Bruce series are eagerly collected by those in the hobby, but I hope it's because they are representative of the period and not as true representations of Sir Arthur's heroes.

Who Got It Right?

The longest reigning Holmes and Watson over the airwaves belong to English performers Carleton Hobbs and Norman Shelly. They portrayed Holmes and Watson over the BBC from the 1952 to 1969. These are perfectly adequate adaptations of the original stories but they are marred by the fact that Hobbs and Shelly sound much, much too old and, in Shelly's case, far too stuffy.

So has anybody ever got it right? Yes, they have ... in the eighties the BBC began the ambitious project of producing for broadcast the complete canon, fifty-four short stories and four novels with the same two actors in the lead roles throughout and playing the parts as Doyle had envisioned them. With Clive Merrison as Sherlock Holmes and Michael Williams as Dr. Watson the public at last has the truest audio version of these stalwarts ever done. And when combined with the writing, production and acting of the supporting players, it makes these shows the finest radio adaptations of the original stories to date. Merrison's Holmes is erratic in behavior and a man who clearly sees himself as a giant among pygmies, intellectually speaking, and Williams' Watson is the lover, story-teller, medical man and more than competent partner that Doyle created him to be. If you haven't heard these programs and you love Sherlock Holmes; then buy or borrow copies as soon as you can.

Part of the History

For the past eight years I've played Dr. Watson, as Doyle wrote him, along side two of the finest actors to ever bring the Great Detective to life — John Gilbert and John Patrick Lowrie. Together we have, in conjunction with the fine writing of series creator Jim French, done our best to bring to American radio the first U.S. produced version of Sherlock Holmes and to get it right. Our show is broadcast over the internet and picked up in the U.K. and Canada. We now have four British scriptwriters and one Canadian sending us scripts all of which you have either already heard or will hear in the near future. Sherlock Holmes has been on radio almost as long as there has been audio drama and for the most part, while the shows have been entertaining and fun they have not been true to the characters so loved by the millions who know the stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Now, in our time we see things have changed for the better; and since I'm convinced that as long as there is audio theatre there will be an audio Holmes somewhere, let's hope we never go back to the old incorrect versions.

CD 117 DRAGNET
 1 3-22-1953 SUN **Big Informant** 196
 2 3-29-1953 SUN **Big Dream** 197
CD 118 DRAGNET
 1 4-5-1953 SUN **Big Chet** 198
 2 4-12-1953 SUN **Big Compulsion** 199
CD 119 DRAGNET
 1 4-19-1953 SUN **Big Rip** 200
 2 4-26-1953 SUN **Big Scrapbook** 201
CD 120 DRAGNET
 1 5-3-1953 SUN **Big Carney** 202
 2 5-10-1953 SUN **Big Joke** 203
CD 121 DRAGNET
 1 5-17-1953 SUN **Big False Make** 204
 2 6-7-1953 SUN **Big Will** 207
CD 122 DRAGNET
 1 6-14-1953 SUN **Big Lilly** 208
 2 6-21-1953 SUN **Big Revolt** 209
CD 123 DRAGNET
 1 6-28-1953 SUN **Big Ham** 210
 2 9-1-1953 TUE **Big Bop** 211
CD 124 DRAGNET
 1 9-8-1953 TUE **Big Lift** 212
 2 9-15-1953 TUE **Big Cab** 213
CD 125 DRAGNET
 1 9-22-1953 TUE **Big Slip** 214
 2 11-24-1953 TUE **Big Present** 223
CD 126 DRAGNET
 1 12-1-1953 TUE **Big Odd** 224
 2 12-8-1953 TUE **Big Pick** 225
CD 127 DRAGNET
 1 12-15-1953 TUE **Big Brink** 226
 2 12-29-1953 TUE, **Big Steal** 228
CD 128 DRAGNET
 1 1-5-1954 TUE **Big Listen** 229
 2 1-12-1954 TUE **Big Switch** 230
CD 129 DRAGNET
 1 1-19-1954 TUE **Big Bill** 231
 2 1-26-1954 TUE **Big Bid** 232
CD 130 DRAGNET
 1 2-2-1954 TUE **Big Filth** 233
 2 2-9-1954 TUE **Big Broad** 234
CD 131 DRAGNET
 1 2-16-1954 TUE **Big Sucker** 235
 2 2-23-1954 TUE **Big Pipe** 236
CD 132 DRAGNET
 1 3-9-1954 TUE **Big Cup** 238
 2 3-16-1954 TUE **Big Rod** 239
CD 133 DRAGNET
 1 3-23-1954 TUE **Big Mustache** 240
 2 3-30-1954 TUE **Big Confession** 241
CD 134 DRAGNET
 1 4-6-1954 TUE **Big Saw** 242
 2 4-13-1954 TUE **Big Note** 243
CD 135 DRAGNET
 1 4-20-1954 TUE **Big Net** 244
 2 4-27-1954 TUE **Big Lift** 245
CD 136 DRAGNET
 1 5-4-1954 TUE **Big Stop** 246
 2 5-11-1954 TUE **Big Look** 247
CD 137 JACK WEBB SHOW
 1 4-10-1946 WED **K G O San Francisco**
 2 4-17-1946 WED **K G O San Francisco**
CD 138 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 6-24-1951 SUN **Shipboard Fire**
 2 7-1-1951 SUN **Hill 102**
CD 139 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 7-8-1951 SUN **Down, But Not Out**
 2 7-15-1951 SUN **Adrift**
CD 140 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 7-22-1951 SUN **Landing The Marines**
 2 7-29-1951 SUN **Underwater Demolition Teams**
CD 141 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 8-5-1951 SUN **War In The Aleutians**
 2 8-12-1951 SUN **Hunters, The**
CD 142 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 8-19-1951 SUN **Port Bound** *Fog Bound*
 2 8-26-1951 SUN **Sea Bees In Action**
CD 143 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 9-2-1951 SUN **Philadelphia, The**
 2 9-9-1951 SUN **Ten Day Leave**
CD 144 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 9-16-1951 SUN **What Makes A Hero**
 2 9-23-1951 SUN **No Blood For Battle**
CD 145 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 9-30-1951 SUN **Retreads, The**
 2 10-7-1951 SUN **Lady, The**
CD 146 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 10-14-1951 SUN **Emperor's Bathtub, The**
 2 10-21-1951 SUN **Right Cross**
CD 147 NOW HEAR THIS
 1 10-28-1951 SUN **No More Tomorrow**
 2 11-4-1951 SUN **Too Long Remembered**
CD 148 ALL AMERICAN SPORTS
 1 7-17-1953 FRI **Ben Hogan Story** 2
 2 7-24-1953 FRI **Story Of Rocky Marcianno** 3
CD 149 SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE
 1 11-16-1950 THU **Lifeboat**

CD 150 SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE
 1 1-25-1951 THU **Spellbound**

CD 151 LUX RADIO THEATRE
 1 12-2-1951 SUN **Strangers On A Train**

CD 152 STUDIO ONE
 1 3-23-1948 TUE **Thirty Nine Steps, The**

CD 153 ACADEMY AWARD THEATRE
 1 7-24-1946 WED **Foreign Correspondent**
 2 9-11-1946 WED **Shadow Of A Doubt**

CD 154 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 2-2-1958 SUN, **Shelton Brothers 1**
 2 2-9-1958 SUN **Charlie Meeker 2**

CD 155 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 2-16-1958 SUN **Honkkeytonkers, The 3**
 2 2-23-1958 SUN **Kendall's Last Stand 4**
 3 3-2-1958 SUN **Lost Mine, The 5**

CD 156 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 3-9-1958 SUN **Claim Jumpers 6**
 2 3-16-1958 SUN **Big Sam For Governor 7**
 3 3-23-1958 SUN **Actress, The 8**

CD 157 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 3-30-1958 SUN **Gentle Virtue 9**
 2 4-6-1958 SUN **Powder River Kid 10**
 3 4-13-1958 SUN **Trial, The 11**

CD 158 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 4-20-1958 SUN **Aces And Eights 12**
 2 4-27-1958 SUN **Random Notes 13**
 3 5-4-1958 SUN **Daddy Buckbacks 14**

CD 158.1 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 5-11-1958 SUN **Canibal 15**
 2 5-18-1958 SUN **Advice To The Lovelorn 16**
 3 5-25-1958 SUN **Cowboy, The 17**

CD 159 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 6-1-1958 SUN **School Days 18**
 2 6-8-1958 SUN **Bell Boy's Prisoner, The 19**
 3 6-15-1958 SUN **Wall, The 20**

CD 160 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 6-29-1958 SUN **Gambling Laldy 21**
 2 7-6-1958 SUN **Education Of Kid Yancey 22**
 3 7-13-1958 SUN **Justice Of The Peace 23**

CD 161 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 7-20-1958 SUN **Mighty Mouse 24**
 2 7-27-1958 SUN **Mighty Tired 25**
 3 8-3-1958 SUN **Nebraska Jack 26**

CD 162 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 8-10-1958 SUN **Cat Man, The 27**
 2 8-17-1958 SUN **Wonder Boy 28**
 3 8-24-1958 SUN, **Belle Siddon's Encore 29**

CD 163 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 8-31-1958 SUN **Belle Siddon Strikes Back 30**
 2 9-7-1958 SUN **Last Of Belle Siddon 31**
 3 9-14-1958 SUN **A Horse For Kendall 32**

CD 164 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 9-21-1958 SUN **Indian Lover 33**
 2 9-28-1958 SUN **Gold Digger, The 34**
 3 10-5-1958 SUN **Librarian, The. 35**

CD 165 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 10-12-1958 SUN **Aces And Eights 36**
 2 10-19-1958 SUN **Preacher, The 37**
 3 10-26-1958 SUN **Rainmaker, The 38**

CD 166 FRONTIER GENTLEMAN
 1 11-2-1958 SUN **Nasty People 39**
 2 11-9-1958 SUN **Holiday 40**
 3 11-16-1958 SUN **Random Notes 41**

CD 167 RED RYDER
 1 2-28-1942 SAT **Indians On Warpath**
 2 3-5-1942 THU **Iron Horse Junction**

CD 168 RED RYDER
 1 3-12-1942 THU **Casa Grande Valley**
 2 3-26-1948 FRI **Pepperwood**

CD 169 RED RYDER
 1 2-26-1942 THU **Range War**
 2 3-28-1942 SAT **Trouble In Devil's Hole**

CD 170 RED RYDER
 1 4-9-1942 THU **Rodeo, The**
 2 5-7-1942 THU **Roaring River**

CD 171 SIX SHOOTER
 1 7-15-1953 WED **Ben Skoldfield** *audition*
 2 9-20-1953 SUN **Jenny 1**

CD 172 SIX SHOOTER
 1 9-27-1953 SUN **Coward, The 2**
 2 10-4-1953 SUN **Stampede, The 3**

CD 173 SIX SHOOTER
 1 10-11-1953 SUN **Silver Annie 4**
 2 10-18-1953 SUN **Rink Larkin 5**

CD 174 SIX SHOOTER
 1 10-25-1953 SUN **Red Lawson's Revenge 6**
 2 11-1-1953 SUN **Ben Skoldfield 7**

CD 175 SIX SHOOTER
 1 11-8-1953 SUN **Capture Of Stacy Gault 8**
 2 11-15-1953 SUN **Escape From Smoke Falls 9**

CD 176 SIX SHOOTER
 1 11-22-1953 SUN **Gabriel Starbuck 10**
 2 11-29-1953 SUN **Sheriff Billy 11**

CD 177 SIX SHOOTER
 1 12-6-1953 SUN **A Pressing Engagement 12**
 2 12-13-1953 SUN **More Than Kin 13**

CD 1 7 8 SIX SHOOTER
 1 12-20-1953 SUN **Brit Poncet's Christmas Carol** 14
 2 12-27-1953 SUN **Cora Plumer Quincy** 15
CD 1 7 9 SIX SHOOTER
 1 1-3-1954 SUN **A Friend In Need** 16
 2 1-10-1954 SUN **Hiram's Gold Strike** 17
CD 1 8 0 SIX SHOOTER
 1 1-17-1954 SUN **Silver Belt Buckle** 18
 2 1-24-1954 SUN **Helen Brickler** 19
CD 1 8 1 SIX SHOOTER
 1 1-31-1954 SUN **Trail To Sunset** 20
 2 2-7-1954 SUN **Apron Faced Sorrel** 21
CD 1 8 2 SIX SHOOTER
 1 2-14-1954 SUN **Quiet City** 22
 2 2-21-1954 SUN **Battle At Tower Rock** 23
CD 1 8 3 SIX SHOOTER
 1 3-7-1954 SUN **Cheyenne Express** 24
 2 3-14-1954 SUN **Thicker Than Water** 25
CD 1 8 4 SIX SHOOTER
 1 3-21-1954 SUN **Duel At Lockwood** 26
 2 4-1-1954 THU **Marrying Off Aunt Emma** 27
CD 1 8 5 SIX SHOOTER
 1 4-8-1954 THU **Widow's Secret** GENERAL GILFORD'S WIDOW
 2 4-15-1954 THU **Crisis At Easter Creek** 29
CD 1 8 6 SIX SHOOTER
 1 4-22-1954 THU **Tracking Down A Killer** JOHNNY SPRINGER 30
 2 4-29-1954 THU **Revenge At Harness Creek** 31
CD 1 8 7 SIX SHOOTER
 1 5-6-1954 THU **Accused** ANNA NORQUIST 32
 2 5-13-1954 THU **Double Seven** 33
CD 1 8 8 SIX SHOOTER
 1 5-20-1954 THU **Reluctant Hero** 34
 2 5-27-1954 THU **Blood Relatives** 35
CD 1 8 9 SIX SHOOTER
 1 6-3-1954 THU **Silver Threads** 36
 2 6-10-1954 THU **New Sheriff** 37
CD 1 9 0 SIX SHOOTER
 1 6-17-1954 THU **When The Shoe Doesn't Fit** 38
 2 6-24-1954 THU **Myra Barker** 39
CD 1 9 1 HOLLYWOOD STAR PLAYHOUSE
 1 4-13-1952 SUN **Six Shooter, The**
CD 1 9 2 LEO LASSEN
 1 **Interviews And Play By Play**
CD 1 9 3 GATEWAY
 1 12-31-1939 SUN **Gale Storm**
CD 1 9 4 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-9-1945 MON **Viennese Strangler**
 2 4-23-1945 MON **Notorious Canary Trainer**

CD 1 9 5 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-30-1945 MON **Unfortunate Tobacconist**
 2 5-7-1945 MON **Purloined Ruby**
CD 1 9 6 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 5-14-1945 MON **In Flanders Field**
 2 5-21-1945 MON **Paradol Chamber**
CD 1 9 7 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 9-3-1945 MON **Case Of The Limping Ghost**
 2 9-10-1945 MON **Colonel Warburton's Madness**
CD 1 9 8 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 9-17-1945 MON **Out Of Date Murder**
 2 9-24-1945 MON **Eyes Of Mr. Layton**
CD 1 9 9 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 10-1-1945 MON **Adventure Of Thor Bridge**
 2 10-8-1945 MON **Vanishing White Elephant**
CD 2 0 0 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 10-15-1945 MON **Manor House Case**
 2 10-22-1945 MON **Great Gandolfo**
CD 2 0 1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 10-29-1945 MON **Murder By Moonlight**
 2 11-5-1945 MON **Gunpowder Plot**
CD 2 0 2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 11-12-1945 MON **Speckled Band**
 2 11-19-1945 MON **Double Zero**
CD 2 0 3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 11-26-1945 MON **Accidental Murderess**
 2 12-3-1945 MON **Murder In The Casbah**
CD 2 0 4 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 12-10-1945 MON **A Scandal In Bohemia**
 2 12-17-1945 MON **Second Generation**
CD 2 0 5 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 12-24-1945 MON **Night Before Christmas**
 2 12-31-1945 MON **Iron Box**
CD 2 0 6 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 1-7-1946 MON **Strange Case Of The Murder In Wax**
 2 1-14-1946 MON **Murder Beyond The Mountain**
CD 2 0 7 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 1-21-1946 MON **Tell Tale Pigeon Feathers**
 2 10-28-1946 MON **Strange Case Of The Demon Barber**
CD 2 0 8 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 2-4-1946 MON **Indiscretion Of Mr Edwards**
 2 2-11-1946 MON **Guileless Gypsy**
CD 2 0 9 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 2-18-1946 MON **Camberwell Prisoners**
 2 2-25-1946 MON **Terrfying Cats**
CD 2 1 0 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 3-4-1946 MON **Submarine Caves**
 2 3-11-1946 MON **Living Doll**

CD 2 1 1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 3-18-1946 MON **Adventure Of The Blarney Stone**
 2 3-25-1946 MON **Girl With The Gazelle**
CD 2 1 2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-1-1946 MON **April Fool's Day Adventure**
 2 4-8-1946 MON **Disappearing Scientists**
CD 2 1 3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-15-1946 MON **Mystery Of The Headless Monk**
 2 4-22-1946 MON **Tankerville Club**
CD 2 1 4 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-29-1946 MON **Waltz Of Death**
 2 5-6-1946 MON **Man With The Twisted Lip**
CD 2 1 5 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 5-13-1946 MON **Uneasy Easy Chair**
 2 5-20-1946 MON **Haunting Of Sherlock Holmes**
CD 2 1 6 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 11-16-1946 SAT **Adventure Of The Genuine Generius**
 2 11-23-1946 SAT **Adventure Of Sally Martin**
CD 2 1 7 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 11-30-1946 SAT **Strange Death Of Mrs. Abernetty**
 2 12-7-1946 SAT **Singular Affair Of The Coptic Compass**
CD 2 1 8 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 3-17-1947 MON **Strange Case Of Professor Presberry**
 2 3-24-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Scarlet Worm**
CD 2 1 9 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-14-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Carpathian Horror**
 2 4-21-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Lion's Mane**
CD 2 2 0 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-28-1947 MON **Island Of Death**
 2 5-5-1947 MON **Strange Adventure Of The Pointless**
CD 2 2 1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 5-12-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Wisteria Lodge**
 2 5-19-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Harley Street Murders**
CD 2 2 2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 5-26-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Submerged**
 2 6-2-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Red Headed League**
CD 2 2 3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 6-9-1947 MON **Murder In The Locked Room**
 2 6-16-1947 MON **Death In The North Sea**
CD 2 2 4 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 6-23-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Speckled Band**
 2 6-30-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Innocent Murderess**
CD 2 2 5 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 7-7-1947 MON **Adventure Of The Iron Maiden**
 2 9-28-1947 SUN **Case Of The Dog Who Changed His**
CD 2 2 6 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 10-26-1947 SUN **Laughing Lemur Of Hightower Heath**
 2 11-2-1947 SUN **Adventure Of The Copper Beeches**

CD 2 2 7 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 11-9-1947 SUN **Cadaver In The Roman Toga**
 2 11-16-1947 SUN **Case Of The Well Staged Murder**
CD 2 2 8 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 11-23-1947 SUN **Case Of The Stolen Naval Treaty**
 2 11-30-1947 SUN **Case Of The Cradel That Rocked Itself**
CD 2 2 9 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 12-7-1947 SUN **Prof Moriarty And The Diamond Jubilee**
 2 12-14-1947 SUN **Case Of The Sussex Vampire**
CD 2 3 0 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 12-21-1947 SUN **Adventure Of The Christmas Bride**
 2 12-28-1947 SUN **New Year's Eve Of Scilly Isles**
CD 2 3 1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 1-4-1948 SUN **Mazarian Stone**
 2
CD 2 3 2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 1-18-1948 SUN **Case Of The Lucky Shilling**
 2 1-25-1948 SUN **Case Of The Engineer's Thumb**
CD 2 3 3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 2-1-1948 SUN **Case Of The Avenging Blade**
 2 2-8-1948 SUN **Case Of The Sanguinary Spectre**
CD 2 3 4 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 2-15-1948 SUN **Case Of The Shocombe Old Place**
 2 2-22-1948 SUN **Case Of The Wooden Claw**
CD 2 3 5 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 2-28-1948 SAT **King Phillip's Golden Salver**
 2 3-7-1948 SUN **Adventure Of The Six Napoleons**
CD 2 3 6 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 3-14-1948 SUN **Case Of The Serpent God**
 2 3-21-1948 SUN **Death Is A Golden Arrow**
CD 2 3 7 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 3-28-1948 SUN **Disapperance Of Lady Frances Carfax**
 2 4-4-1948 SUN **Lady Waverley's Imitation Pearls**
CD 2 3 8 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 4-11-1948 SUN **Adventure Of The Empty House**
 2 4-18-1948 SUN **Case Of The Very Best Butler**
CD 2 3 9 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 5-2-2048 SAT **Sinister Crate Of Cabbages**
 2 5-9-1948 SUN **Adventure Of The Illustrious Client**
CD 2 4 0 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 5-16-1948 SUN **Case Of The Everblooming Rose**
 2 5-23-1948 SUN **Case Of The Accommodating Valise**
CD 2 4 1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 5-30-1948 SUN **A Case Of Identity**
 2 6-6-1948 SUN **Complicated Poisoning Of Eel Pie Island**
CD 2 4 2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
 1 12-31-1960 SAT **Valley Of Fear Part 1**
 2 1-7-1961 SAT **Valley Of Fear Part 2**
 3 1-14-1961 SAT **Valley Of Fear Part 3**

OZZIE NELSON ...

from vaudeville, to law school, to radio, to film, and TV

by Frank Rosin

Ozzie Nelson, born in 1907, was the son of George and Ethel Nelson. They were minstrel entertainers, the children growing up under this influence at engagements around Jersey City in New Jersey.

Ozzie's first paying job was with a friend in 1921, when at age 14, they were each paid \$5 to play for the local Women's Club Dance in Ridgefield Park.



Ozzie became an Eagle Scout shortly before his 14th birthday, one of the youngest at that time. He was active in football at Ridgefield Park High School and while attending Rutgers continued in football. During this time period, 1923-1927, he was also a boxer and diver. The athletics were brought to a halt due to an injury sustained while doing a half gainer in competition against Syracuse University.

He entered New York Law School but by 1930 his music career was going so strong that he postponed law in favor of being a full time orchestra leader. More and more, Ozzie patterned his saxophone-banjo playing and singing after Rudy Vallee. In 1930 he became a part of WMCA's lineup in New York City, part of Roemer's Homers. Roemer's Homers featured a dance band and orchestra which Ozzie soon replaced. Milton Roemer's promotion and publicity was good for Ozzie, and his was the first group to play coast to coast on CBS from the Glen Island Casino.

On December 31, 1931, Niles Granlund, the announcer and MC, was unable to be at the program. He was replaced by a young lady who did a specialty dance and announced the various numbers. This young lady from Des Moines Iowa, was Harriet Hilliard, daughter of Roy Hilliard, a dramatic stock actor and director. Her mother was Hazel McNutt who had begun a stage career at age 14 in musical and dramatic stock companies.

Harriet became a permanent part of Ozzie's orchestra as singer and dancer; they were married on October 8th 1935. She signed a contract with RKO and they appeared in several films from 1935 to 1940. David was born in 1936 and Ricky in 1940. This took the family to California to settle. In 1941 Ozzie and Harriet signed with Red Skelton to do a bit of banter, singing, and music on his radio program. This was successful but when Skelton went into the Army in 1944, they were adrift. This did not last long, however, as International Silver put them on the air in the *Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* in 1944. The sons were played by young actors, Tommy Bernard and then Joel Davis as David and Henry Blair as Ricky. It was in February 1949 that David and Ricky played themselves for the first time and the entire family was on the air.



After the International Silver contract in 1949 they signed a 10 year contract with ABC which included a television show after the second year. In 1951 they made a movie called *Here Come the Nelsons*.

There are not many of the radio episodes available but we do have a copy of many of the early television episodes. These early television episodes and the movie are among those that will be in our DVD library when it is up and running. Many of the people we know appear such as Janet Waldo, Mary Jane Croft, Lyle Talbot, Don DeFore, and Parley Baer. Watch for them on the www.repsonline.org web page.

FORECAST: Is There a Sponsor in the House?

by Martin Grams, Jr.

The trial-and-error system being an old if frequently painful institution in the show business (else all stage plays would be hits, and all radio programs would have an *Amos and Andy* average in the Crossley ratings), the Columbia Broadcasting System's *Forecast* series shrewdly dramatized the fact that there is no such phenomenon as a sure thing. For two particular seasons, the CBS people enlivened summer's somewhat lethargic air waves with a schedule of experimental entertainments which, to tell the truth, aren't experimental in the exact sense of the word, but have nevertheless a refreshing air about them, if only for the ideas they represented.

The idea is that neither CBS nor anyone else knew, until they were produced, whether the programs were any good or not, though they were of course, hoping for the best. And, very sensibly, they made a game of it. Whereas the listener during the busy season was told to take what he got and, if possible, like it, *Forecast* invited criticism. Listening to the various episodes, one could not help but applaud for Marlene Dietrich in "The Thousand and One Nights," and convulse with laughter as they listened to the amorous antics of "Mischa the Magnificent." (Mischa Auer, that is.) Whatever it was that made people bet on horse races or write letters to the editor, they could file an honest opinion about the programs and then sit back to await the verdict.

If the public, in sufficient numbers, liked a *Forecast* sample – as they liked *Duffy's Tavern* during the first season – the chances were that the fully developed product would be on the air after the fall semester opened. On the other hand, a negative response or some hearty, candid disapproval would prevent a lot of headaches, save a good many dollars, in the months to come.

Speaking of dollars, it is giving away no trade secret to say that the producing company did not do all this out of sheer altruism. It probably believed in health, but was not in the business for it. It was looking for program sponsors as well as for new writing and acting talent. To a potential sponsor, it said, in effect, "Here is a show and here is the public reaction to it, and perhaps with a little play-doctoring and some recasting . . ." A tryout is a tryout, almost anywhere, what this radio's audience enjoys over the theater's . . . it paid nothing at all, and it sat comfortably at home. There was a good deal to be said for that.

How much was to be said for the *Forecast* broadcasts, and the public response cannot be found. Still, if the program did make it to the airwaves for a regular run, say the highly successful *Duffy's Tavern*, we can only suspect the reviews favorable. Take the episode "The Thousand and One Nights." According to the New York Times:

"It had its points, to be sure. It had Miss Dietrich, whose sultry voice fitted into the pattern of enchantment evoked by the Rimsky-Korsakoff music; and Miss Dietrich's is a voice that can all but live up to even the gaudy introduction arranged for her in a script not notable for its understatement. ("Let her name echo from the furthest mountain top," said a lackey after a proper roll of drums.) But what is virtually a monologue, by Miss Dietrich or anyone else, is hard to take for an hour, or even the half hour which the successful *Forecasts* will have for running-time."

But not everything was new. One of the *Forecast* broadcasts, "51 East 51" raised a curtain toward an audience that no doubt, found it difficult to see anything experimental about it, unless it was that no one else has heretofore presented a radio sketch called "51 East 51." Otherwise, things were as they usually were in fables about nightclubs, including the song cues introduced as with a sledge

hammer. It was described in advance as “a new musical show with comedy and vice-versa” (whatever that meant), but it sounded rather like vaudeville in its last, unhappy phase, with no more for a plot than Kay Thompson (“our midnight girl of music”) tormented by a couple of practical jokers, while she poured out her unhappy heart in song. Seems I’ve heard this before somewhere.

Another déjà vu was the “Hopalong Cassidy” entrance without William Boyd playing the role of Hoppy. Clarence E. Mulford, the creator of the fictional character, sat within listening distance of his radio set the night Hopalong Cassidy first rode on to radio, originating from the New York studio. “I found it interesting,” he was quoted of saying. “I naturally hope there are more of them.” Mulford’s agent worked actively to land a sustaining series, possibly over NBC stations, according to researcher Bernard Drew, but without success. It wouldn’t be until William Boyd took over the Cassidy property for television that the radio market was exploited. After this *Forecast* broadcast, Hopalong would not grace the radio waves again until 1950. (They were working on pre-production of the series in 1946, but it still took four years till the show became a reality.) The only thing I have yet to solve is the script itself. Having heard the broadcast years ago, I recalled, half-way through the program, that the same script was later used for another western radio broadcast (or perhaps a B-class western picture) because the plot was not only familiar, but I knew in detail how the ending was going to turn out without hearing it. Would anyone know if this script was later done on another Hopalong episode?

The opinions varied, the critics were pleased or disgusted (whichever viewpoint the readers of their columns accepted), but one thing definitely stood in stone. *Forecast* was a good idea. Though most were not really experimental – *The Columbia Workshop* presented more experimental dramas than *Forecast* – they were highly entertaining. With many Hollywood stars backing some of the productions with their appearances, Burgess Meredith, Herbert Marshall, Duke Ellington, and even Hedda Hopper, the program entertained and dazzled listeners. NBC even began their own summer audition/pilot series in 1950 entitled *Advance Release* offering various stars in various dramas and musical presentations. Imitation is often the sincerest form of flattery.

Keep in mind that the program had a full-hour time slot and many of the airings offered two half-hour programs. A majority of the broadcasts do exist and are in circulation among collectors, but remain individual recordings. For the July 29, 1940 broadcast, as an example, the *Duffy’s Tavern* presentation stands alone on cassette and CD.

Both *Forecast* series were summer replacements for *The Lux Radio Theatre*, heard over the CBS network, Monday evenings from 9 to 10 p.m., EST. **[Editor’s note: Martin then gives a log of all the shows ... here are three.]**

EPISODE #1 “**BATTLE OF MUSIC**” Broadcast on July 15, 1940. Starring: Arlene Francis, Freda Gibson, Frankie Hyers and Raymond Paige and his orchestra. Written for *Forecast* by George Faulkner. Directed by George Zachary. Plot: An entertaining battle of the bands as some people call such a broadcast, using a symphonic orchestra and a swing band to play one-on-one, vying for the title of “the better band.” Albert Spaulding supplies the violin music. Gordon Gifford and Joe Venuti also perform. George Zachary, who was presently directing the weekly mystery, *The Adventures of Ellery Queen*, also directed this broadcast. This program never made it as a regular series. (30 m.)

EPISODE #3 “**WHEN YOU WERE TWENTY-ONE**” Broadcast on July 22, 1940. Starring: Jane Cowl, Joan Edwards, Rush Hughes and Danny Kaye. Plot: This broadcast, a comedy-variety show, a forerunner of that “wonderful year” idea, presents a nostalgic look back at 1919. What makes this broadcast interesting is that three people wrote the script: Sylvia Fine, Nathaniel Curtis, and Ed Forman. John Tillman was the announcer. Brewster Morgan was the director. Lyn Murray composed and conducted the music. (30 m.)

EPISODE #12 “**JUBILEE**” Broadcast on August 26, 1940. Starring: Duke Ellington, Wonderful Smith and Ethel Waters. Plot: This all-star Negro musical variety revue wasn’t successful the first time around, but when it was redone the year after, the second time was a charm. (30 m.)



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Comfort Suites off Broad Street

Membership meeting

April 2, 2005: 2 pm
Norse Home
Quiz Programs

Board meeting

May 6, 2005: 7 pm
Comfort Suites off Broad Street

Membership meeting

May 7, 2005: 2 pm
Norse Home

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Theme: *The Good Ol' Days*

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