

## HELLO AGAIN

VOL. 22 NO. 5

SEP - OCT 1991

**A PERSONAL NOTE:** Here is an update on my family. My brother, Joe, will be at the convention. He still is head of acquisitions at the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress...My son Craig (26) and his wife, Kim, will also be at the convention. Craig attended a convention at Bridgeport over 10 years ago. Craig still runs Hickerson Cable Installation and lives outside of Kansas City, MO. With about 90 employees in 5 states, they install cable television... My daughter, Robin (27) had a baby boy, Jacob. I am a new grandfather and Robin is a new mother. Robin and Neil Baumann raise Christmas trees in the Albany area. Robin takes care of all the financial matters of the Corporation...I will turn 57 in November, still have a full load of piano students and with my wife, Karen, entertain in the Northeast at weddings, parties and old-time radio conventions.

**CONVENTION 1991:** Dates are Oct 24 - 26, 1991. Some flyers had last year's dates on the reverse side in the cost section.

**EARLY COMMENTS ABOUT OUR GUESTS:** From Radio Guide, April 24, 1937: **Willard Waterman**, young actor in NBC's "Girl Alone," etc., is engaged to Mary Anna Theleen, Kenosha, Wis., junior socialite...From Radio Guide, July 17, 1937: **Willard Waterman**, Chicago actor, heard in many serials, and Mary Anna Theleen, Kenosha, Wis., home girl, were wed June 30 at Kenosha...From Radio Guide, July 24, 1937: **Betty Wragge**, who takes the part of Peggy on "Pepper Young's Family," attracted the attention of Spencer Tracy while she was playing in "Dead End" on Broadway. Recently was screen-tested by M-G-M studios...From Radio Guide, August 7, 1937: Child actress **Sybil Trent** came to "Let's Pretend" as Sybil Elaine; changed her name...From Radio Guide, Sep 4, 1937: **Jackson Beck** plays the part of Paul Harvey in the Myrt and Marge sketch. He has appeared on several shows and at present may be heard as a member of the "Death Valley Days" cast. He also performs as actor, producer and announcer on station WMCA in New York...From Radio Guide, Nov 13, 1937: **Adele Ronson** in the role of Elizabeth on "John's Other Wife" has had little "Legit" experience, but is character and dramatic actress on several air shows. Hobby: Her Connecticut farm...From Radio Guide, October, 1943: **Shirley Mitchell**, who's heard on The Red Skelton and The Great Gildersleeve air shows, says that true love hasn't hit her yet. If it does, she will marry regardless of war or the fact that her man is in uniform. To Miss Mitchell's way of thinking, the marriage bond between a man and a woman shortens the days apart, makes a girl plan seriously for tomorrow...From Radio Guide, Feb 1, 1936: **Betty Winkler** (cover picture) had a cold in her head in Cleveland, 1932. She was to audition for a radio part over station WTAM. So she disobeyed her doctors and dashed to the station, still with the cold and with a high fever to augment it. Her luck lay in the fact that the director wanted a person with a high-pitched voice, and the cold had given her that.

**REMINISCING:** From **September, 1971; Vol. 2 No.9:** Subscription rates are now \$3.50. Two booklets are available: A log of most circulated radio shows for \$3.50 and a Suspense log for \$2.00...In 1932 Jack Benny was making \$1500 a week in Earl Carroll's Vanities. He took a chance in radio and in 1935 was #1 and making \$25,000 a week...Roger Hill passes these thoughts on: Try to stir up local colleges in offering courses in radio programming. Roger has completed his thesis on OTR and it makes very interesting reading. Also, have you helped a new collector recently?...**New Friends:** Dan Adams, Karl Amundsen, Don Beeks, Harold Brown, Wayne Congleton, Bernie Ferstenberg, Earl Grow, Robert Haugen, Ron Hare, Duane Hutchinson, Ed Johnson, Ross Leslie, John Lyon, Mark North, John Olsen, Jr., Louis Paul, **Ken Piletic** (one of the first to use video recorders), Charles Sexton, Henry Wrightington (Only Ken and Henry are subscribers now. Do you recognize some of these names?)

Featured under collectors of the month is **Steve Lewis**, 66 Constance Lane, Bristol, CT (now in Newington, CT). Steve is 29, has one girl, and teaches math at Central Conn. State

College. Steve has started collecting and with the help and generosity of Ernie Hack has about 100 Programs. He is interested in everything and has been collecting since May. He is also interested in mystery and S F pulps and comics...An article in the New Haven Register in August, 1971 had this amusing rendition of a radio show by Mary Jane Higby. It was about one episode of "When a Girl Marries" that, according to Higby, went completely to "Hell." Trouble began when one actor made a slip and the sudsy-weepy dialog that was supposed to have been heard built into a snow-balling gag. The initial mistake was followed by a period of silence punctuated by explosive giggles. The following is the unrehearsed script.

That's too bad," Ann said. (she stared hard at her script but strangled on the next line.) "Coming so soon after - (whoops, she was off again in laughter) - the house burned down." "That's not the worst," Rosemary tittered wildly on. "I'm afraid he'll have another nervous breakdown." (They both convulsed at this.) When Jeanette Dowling entered the scene, she began firmly enough. "Thank goodness, Kathy, I've found You. I have dreadful news. But when she heard Rosemary's voice tremulous with merriment, ask "Why, Mother, What is it?" she let out a roar of laughter. "It's little Sammy," she chortled. "The doctor says he won't live through the night." Disaster piled on disaster, while hilarity mounted. In the control booth the director had thrown his script in the air and was sagging forward, head on desk, shoulder shaking convulsively. The engineer had slumped out of sight...Then came Mary Jane Higby's turn bravely. "Irma, I must talk to you." (She caught a glimpse of the contorted faces of the cast). "Harry," she wavered, "Harry-," then with a loud guffaw, "Harry's in jail." Miss Higby said the cast shrieked out woe upon woe, until each actress came to the end of her part and collapsed with tears streaming down her face and limp with laughter...With the ruin of a serial before him, the poor announcer vainly tried to cope with a commercial about chocolate chip cookies...The next day the cast learned a new sponsor had been listening to the program...To this day, Miss Higby said, the cast never heard a word about the program from either the agency, sponsor, or the most astonishing thing of all, from the listeners.

**RADIO IS ALIVE AND WELL:** Charles Michelson, who will be attending our convention, has recently sold the rights of several series to the BBC including 52 episodes of "Tales of the Texas Rangers," "War of the Worlds," "Box 13" and "Dragnet." "Tales of the Texas Rangers" will show up in this country in early 1992... If you want a list of the 26 different series that Charles Michelson is distributing, please send me a SASE...Betty Mandeville and Hank Booraem have a non - profit OTR Theater group in the Hendersonville area in North Carolina. It is the Blue Ridge Players. They plan to issue cassettes of their performances. Betty and Hank hope to be at our convention.

**PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED:** **Collectrix**, Winter - Spring. This is the magazine of books on Antiques and collectibles. This issue also contains a directory of magazines and newsletters about antiques and collectibles...New from Bob Burnham and Ed Cole is **Radio Forum Newsletter**, Box 3509, Lakeland, FL 33802. Cost is \$18 for 6 issues. RFM is a publication geared both toward the electronics experimenter as well as the innovative broadcast engineer looking for that home-brew gadget (or just designed one), that makes the job easier and makes the station run more efficiently...**Old-time Radio Digest**, May - Jun; articles about Bobby Benson, the Saint...**SPERDVAC Radiogram**, August; articles about Dwight Weist; broadcasting the dance band remotes; Howard Caine...September; articles about Richard Wilson, Stu Wilson, Arthur Tracy, some of radio's top announcers...**Daily Sentinel**, Sep - Oct; articles on audition shows, Jack Armstrong (from Fred King's booklet)...**Illustrated Press**, July - August; article about the Avenger by Chuck Juzek.

**BOOKS AND MAGAZINES:** New in October will be **Empire of the Air**, the Men who Made Radio, by Tom Lewis. A PBS radio drama and tv special are set to debut in late January, 1992. Tom plans to be at our convention and books will be for sale. The book is about the lives of Lee de Forest, Edwin Armstrong and David Sarnoff, their lives and bitter rivalries.. **Jack Benny, the Radio and Television Work**; edited by the Museum of Broadcasting, Harper Collins, New York, 1991, 275 pages, \$24.50. This book is published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title at the Museum of Broadcasting in New York. There are several articles about Jack Benny plus complete descriptions of many of the radio and tv shows. Two scripts are in the book. Jell-O brand desserts sponsored the exhibit...**A Heart at Fire's Center, The Life and Music of Bernard Herrmann** by Steven C. Smith, University of California Press, 1991, 415 pages, \$29.95. This book discusses the movie, radio and tv career of Herrmann. His scores are among the most distinguished ever written ranging from Fahrenheit 451 to Obsession. The legends of his personal life are carefully researched.

**ORGANIZATIONS AND CONVENTIONS:** Don't forget SPERDVAC's next convention Nov 8 - 10 at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza in Los Angeles. For details call (213) 947-9800...Another fan club is The **Popeye Fan Club**. For information send a SASE to "Uncle Donnie" Pitchard, Box 869, Carthage, TX 75633...The Revival of Creative Radio OTR Club has a new service in addition to their Lending Library and Subscription Radio. It is a printed material library. Write for details to Tim Coco, Box 1585, Haverhill, MA 01931.

**CATALOGS AND NEW SHOWS:** **Bob Burnham**, Box 2645, Livonia, MI 48151 has a new supplement out with reduced prices on cassettes. Some series are Jack Benny, Gunsmoke, Suspense, Fibber McGee and Molly.

**LOGS:** From **Ray Stanich**, 173 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201; Three logs including **Damon Runyon Theater...Dangerously Yours and Matinee Theater.. Two on a Clue**. Each is available for a SASE. All three for 2 stamps.

**NEW ADDRESSES:** **Mel Yahre**, 24 Ryder Ave., Dix Hills, NY 11746...**Tom Kleinschmidt**, 26101 Country Club Blvd. #706, North Olmsted, OH 44070...**Museum of Broadcasting**, 25 West 52nd St., New York, NY 10019 (212) 621-6600. Grand opening was September 12...**Emory L. Brown, Jr.**, 500 Lakewood-Farmingdale Rd., Howell, NJ 07731.

**NEW FRIENDS AND RETURNEES:** **Jim Freeman**, 227 River Dr., Hadley, MA 01035...**Aaron Mintz**, 11 Crescent St., Millers Falls, MA 01349...**Richard Rubenstein**, 39 Midlands, West Hartford, CT 06107...**Judy Moore**, Drawer 160, Refugio, TX 78377 wants tapes of Judy and Jane...**Dixon Chandler**, 6358 Brixton Rd, #6, Maumee, OH 43537 is doing a research project on science fiction on radio at Bowling Green University, Ohio. It will concentrate on Dimension X and X - 1. Any help would be appreciated. I have lost track of Meade Frierson who did a similar project in 1972...**James Pegolotti**, 158 Brushy Hill Rd., Danbury, CT 06810, (203) 790-8677 doing research on Howard Barlow and would like any information...**Chandler Nelson**, 109 Park Ave., Mount Vernon, NY 10550...**William Hicks**, 421 West 125th St. #12, New York, NY 10027...**Barbara Fisher**, 346 East 87th St., New York, NY 10128...**Stewart Keill**, 1131 Cedar Ridge Rd., Oyster Bay, NY 11771...**Eric Hoyer**, 229 Watchung Ave., Montclair, NJ 07043...**Beverly Cutler**, 2035 Valparaiso Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025...**Daniel Switala**, 2408 Cobden St., Pittsburgh, PA 15203...**Franz Douskey**, 50 Ives St., Hamden, CT 06518.

**OLD FRIENDS:** **John Barber**, Box 70711, New Orleans, LA 70172 has 2 shadow comics; Sep 1945 and July 1946 in good condition for their age with stories of The Shadow, Nick

Carter and Doc Savage...John also has many scripts for sale and is looking for more...**David Frederick**, RD 1 Box 27, Meshoppen, PA 18630 is looking for old Christmas ads from the 1930's through the 50's; also info on the Great Gildersleeve.. **Terence Goggin**, 1777 No. Vine St. #409, Los Angeles, CA 90028 has about 500 discs/ET's he would like to sell (213) 286-9825.. **Thom Salome**, 196 Lawence Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11230 will trade with anyone. His new catalog is ready with 2600 reels...**Andrew Steinberg**, 159 Gazette Ave. #3, Lexington, KY 40506 wants to trade or purchase The Aldrich Family, Mysterious Traveler and Amos 'n' Andy.

**IN FOND MEMORY:** **Harry Reasoner**, Aug. 6, 68; veteran CBS News reporter; worked as radio and television newscasters for CBS news from 1956 to 1983...**William D. Gordon**, 73; radio and tv writer (Behind the Story, Tommy Dorsey Show)...**Stu Wilson**, 87; Los Angeles radio personality (Quiz of Two Cities, Surprise Party)...**Richard Wilson**, Aug. 21, 75; film director, producer and writer, close associate of Orson Welles and original member of of the Mercury Theater. Richard directed "Dracula" at our last convention.

Write if You Get Work....and Hang by Your thumbs

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JAY HICKERSON, Box 4321, Hamden, CT 06514 (203) 248-2887. \$12 a year

*L.A. Times 7.22.91*

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## Obituaries

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### Dwight Weist: 'Man of 1,000 Voices' Was Radio Mainstay

By BURT A. FOLKART  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Dwight Weist, radio's ubiquitous "man of 1,000 voices," has died while on vacation in Rhode Island.

The Associated Press reported over the weekend that Weist—whose impressions ranged from Adolf Hitler to Franklin D. Roosevelt—was 81 when he died of an apparent heart attack last Tuesday on Block Island.

A former president of the New York chapter of the Screen Actors Guild, Weist maintained homes in Manhattan and on Long Island.

An inveterate performer whose career spanned both the earliest and waning days of radio ("The March of Time" in 1931 and the last network soap opera "The Second Mrs. Burton" in 1960), Weist was a master of dozens of accents which he placed in the mouths of aged and ageless characters.

On "March of Time" alone his impersonations ranged from Hitler to Roosevelt to labor leader John L. Lewis to New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia.

He was the original "Mr. District Attorney" when that program first aired in April, 1939.

Never identified by name, the hard-nosed prosecutor was heralded as:

*"Champion of the people, guardian of our rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."*

Based on the career of racket-busting New York Dist. Atty. Thomas E. Dewey, "Mr. District Attorney" ran through the early 1950s on radio with others later taking over the title role. It became a short-lived TV series in 1951.

Weist also portrayed Police Commissioner Weston on the mystery series "The Shadow," was host of "We, the People," an anthology of human interest stories and an announcer of such shows as the quiz game "Grand Slam."

He did voice-overs for Pathe newsreels during World War II and in 1948 was host when "We, the People" became the first series to be simulcast on both network radio and television.

Weist also was the announcer for TV's "Search for Tomorrow" and the voice of many TV commercials.

Woody Allen cast him in two films, "Zelig" and "Radio Days" where he was seen announcing the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Weist was a co-founder of the Weist-Barron School of Television and Commercial Acting in New York, one of the oldest in the nation.