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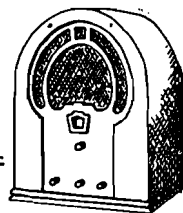
EST. 1975

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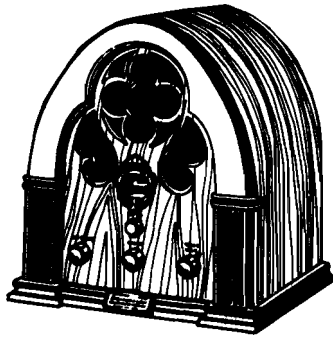


Mr. & Mrs. NORTH

THE OLD TIME



RADIO CLUB



THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Club dues are \$17.50 per year from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. Members receive a tape listing, library lists, a monthly newsletter (THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS), an annual magazine (MEMORIES), and various special items. Additional family members living in the same household as a regular member may join the club for \$5.00 per year. These members have all the privileges of regular members but do not receive the publications. A junior membership is available to persons 15 years of age or younger who do not live in the household of a regular member. This membership is \$12.00 per year and includes all the benefits of a regular membership. Regular membership dues are as follows: If you join in January, due are \$17.50 for the year; February, \$17.50; March, \$15.00; April, \$14.00; May, \$13.00; June, \$12.00; July, \$10.00; August, \$9.00; September, \$8.00; October \$7.00; November \$6.00; and December, \$5.00. The numbers after your name on the address label are the month and year your renewal is due. Reminder notes will be sent. Your renewal should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be certain to notify us if you change your address.

OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIPS are now available. Annual dues are \$29.50. Publications will be air mailed.

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Fenwick, Ontario LOS 1C0

BACK ISSUES: All **MEMORIES** AND **I.P.s** are \$1.25 each, postpaid. Out of print issues may be borrowed from the reference library.

Dominic Parisi
38 Ardmore Pl.
Buffalo, NY 14213

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DEADLINE FOR IP #127 - April 6
#128 - May 4
#129 - June 1

ADVERTISING RATES FOR MEMORIES:
\$50.00 for a full page (ALL ADS MUST BE CAMERA READY)
\$34.00 for a half page

SPECIAL: OTR Club members may take 50% off these rates.
Advertising Deadline - September 1

NICK CARP

COPYRIGHT: STREET & SMITH THE NINE O'CLOCK

CHAPTER XVII THE BEER SUMPS

There was no time to lose. Nick's eye caught a silver gleam tumbling down the farther wall. Suspended from the ceiling there were gigantic gas tanks and oil drums, left overs from the days when this basement had been used to house a great fleet of rum trucks. Two of the tanks had been burst or shot through, spewed their contents down upon the floor. With air driving into the place, none going out, the gas would quickly vaporize, spread and mix. When the air was sufficiently saturated, there would be a violent concussion, a propellant explosion creating such disturbance in the air around it that it would, in turn, cause any other volatile fluids in the place to explode.

Nick slipped on his rubber gloves. There were welding goggles in his pocket. He snapped those over his eyes. A second and he had the tong adjusted. He reached the wire from which the short was causing the flashing blue arc, yanked it free, broken. The arc sputtered between the two ends as if loath to end its life. Nick pulled the wire back, twisted it. The arc gave a mad last leap and ended.

Pulling his trousers high, his coat collar up, he headed through the blaze, raced up the iron rungs. He had to pause at the top, beat out flames. His legs had been badly scorched. He pressed his nose close to the wall, took a few deep breaths from the wall draft. He must watch for the invisible, odorless and deadly monoxide fumes. They sneaked up without warning.

He gave a violent tug to the iron ring. Nothing happened. Sweat broke on his brow. Flames leaped beneath him, grew higher with each leap. A crate of Christmas tinsel burst into flame. The flame leaped against Nick's back. A black pall of choking smoke shrouded him. He had to drop the tongs.

He wrenched the ring again. It was loose in a socket, but did not pull. A fit of coughing seized him. As he leaned over in a racking sob, his weight fell on one side of the ring. It twisted. There was a groan in the wall. The brick door beside him turned slowly open.

Nick rushed through. A flame followed, lapped at his heels. He could not leave the door open to make a chimney for the flames. He searched for a lever, found a wire cable, yanked it. The door closed.

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THE NINE O'CLOCK FIRES May, 1935

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Nick rushed through. A flame followed, lapped at his heels. He could not leave the door open to make a chimney for the flames. He searched for a lever, found a wire cable, yanked it. The door closed.

Ahead of him lay a corridor alight. His blood went cold. Nobody was in sight. But he had a sudden illumination of what the secret cellar was. It might extend beneath most of the long block, be a veritable storehouse of the underworld. It might be filled with every conceivable type or merchandise. But much of it would be tar, oil combustible, ship supplies, paint, construction materials, chemicals--the host of "hot" goods not easily traced and always subject to the raids of pirates, wharf rats and highway and freight robbers.

He sped down the short corridor, turned a corner, went down a long flight of steps. He thought of the teeming life overhead, happy and gay people unaware of the danger beneath.

There were three theaters in that block. They would soon be filling. There was one of the largest movie houses. There was a hotel, several garages, a dozen clubs and restaurants, perhaps fifty brown brick houses harboring criminals, but sheltering, too, actors, authors, the host of struggling outer fringe of Broadway.

A studded iron door confronted him. It was solid, barred from the other side. He could find no mechanism to open it. Behind him there was a distant rumble, the first explosion. The air of the corridor dashed at him in a turbulent wave. He would have to get out of there. A big explosion would telescope that closed-in air, perhaps cause combustion in that hallway.

He sped along the corridor further, twisted again. He must be in the center of the block by know. As he came to another flight of steps, lights switched out before him. He caught a bare glimpse of a few steps down, a dark pool. The sickening stench of heavy oil came to his nostrils.

A wooden, zinc lined hatch cover had been thrown aside at his feet. There was a hatchway a little smaller than a door. A room full of oil! For what purpose?

He remembered. There was a chemical which would be mixed with common crude oil that would loosen the paint or enamel on a car immediately without harming the metal beneath. This was the "bathing pit," the first operating room for stolen cars.

Nick plunged down the few steps, gazed across the darkness. A match flared. He thought he saw Kyle and another figure

beside him in a doorway. The match dropped. A sheet of flame burst up, roared across the surface of the shallow pond.

In that closed space the fire would eat every vestige of oxygen from the air. Nick would be left gasping to be overcome by fumes.

Directly across from him was the other door. It might be shut. But he had no choice. He ripped out his gun, plugged four shots into the center of the hatch cover. The roar of the pistol ripped over the blast of the flame, reverberated like thunder along the hall. There was another muffled explosion from behind. A blast of wind rushed along the corridor, nearly knocked Nick into the blazing pool, blew the very flames low for an instant.

Nick propped the hatch on a step, jumped squarely between the holes. There was a sound of crunching wood, but the zinc held. He flipped out his knife, cut the zinc away. A second later and he kicked a hole a little larger than his foot.

His body was wet from heat. The air was already getting thin. His ear pounded. He lifted the hatch cover, fitted it through the door. It would not do to cause a splash. Flames lapped at him as he let its heavy weight slowly onto that blazing surface. It blotted out a square of flame expecting in the center. That shot through like a burning wick.

Nick gave a silent prayer, clamped his teeth, fell upon the hatch cover. As he fell, he kicked off from the lowest step. He blocked out the flame through the hole with his arm. It burned before it ceased. The cover wobbled. He was balanced unevenly, protecting his body from those roaring flames.

A nauseous dizziness overcame him. There was almost no air. But he did not notice that in the sudden stench which crept down his nose and into his lungs like a coating of sickening oil. Around him flames roared with furnace heat. Had he been three inches higher, the heat would have roasted him alive. Ignited oil splattered onto his float.

He folded his arms under him, put his hands through into the silky liquid. It was hot, almost scalding on the surface. He paddled quickly but carefully. He must not go off course. He thanked his stars for no drafts to blow the raft aside.

The float crept across the hot flaming gulf. It moved by bare inches. Nick gasped. Would the other side never come? Was he going in a circle? He could not see beyond the wall of searing flame. The heat stung his face and body. One ear was being slowly burned simply by the intense heat.

The float jarred, bounced back, started to turn. Nick gave a powerful stroke, reached out through a blanket of flame. His heart pounded. His hand met nothing but smooth wall!

Then he found a step. He pulled toward it. There was the ticklish business of getting onto it without spilling from the raft. Nick found himself a mass of blaze, clawing at an iron door in a space which seemed to have no air. The door came open. A burst of air rushed through. If he had not instinctively flattened against the wall he would have been carried back by it.

There was a blinding flash behind him, a shock, a hideous suck, all in one. Nick was picked up, thrown outward through the door.

He jumped to his feet, ripped off his coat, beat out the flames of his clothes. Then he bolted headlong down a hall.

His mind cleared a moment later. He was standing in the middle of a lighted room gasping for breath. The air was not good. That was his first thought. He did not remember coming through the corridor.

A cloud of smoke hung along the ceiling. He blinked. No, it wasn't smoke. It was dust. A stack of old batteries, thousands of them, were piled along one side of the room, they had disintegrated. The dust was choking carbon. It was mixing in the air, circling with the strong draft. A moment now and that too might explode.

A ladder was at one end of the room. Nick forced himself together, leaped for the ladder. It seemed endless. He came through an open hatch with difficulty, lowered the cover to lessen the draft. He was behind bales of cotton. They were stacked high above him, a bare alley running between. He started down the alley, squeezing through. He stopped midway, stilled his rasping breath. There was a scream ahead.

A man, terrified, yelled out. A flood of words tumbled over one another. Nick could not understand all he was saying. His voice was wild, uncontrolled in fright.

Then Nick knew what he man was saying. He had to reorganize sentences, put thoughts straight. The man was so frightened he could not think clearly. It was Oles.

"I hadn't figured to double cross you, Cook," he screamed. "Carter's lying. I swear he's lying! I slipped. He found out I'd been over to your alky plant the night of the fire. I didn't mean to murder Morelli. He showed me how to get in the joint. I looked over the alky still, found out what I wanted. We were on the way out the next floor

when the fire broke loose. I got scared. If I got stuck in the fire I might hold the bag for arson. I bopped Morelli with a blackjack before I knew. Then I rushed downstairs. Too late, the firemen had come. I got upstairs, out of the building. I hid for a while in a tenement, then made a getaway. I'm not lying!"

"Too bad if your are!" Cook yelled savagely. There was no mercy in his voice. But he and Oles had been of help to each other--might still be. "He's framed the two of us for what he's done!" he roared. "Let's go--the back way. We'll get him."

There was the distance-dimmed crack of two fast pistol shots, a groan and an oath.

"You can lie, Oles," a familiar voice, cold as steel, announced. "You and Morelli were going to double-cross Cook's racket. Morelli was the go between from Cook to me. But I'll fix the pair of you! You'll bake tonight, mugs. Both of you. Carter's baking now. But there's one thing I want to get from you and one more ride. The whole lot of you are a pack of double-crossing----" The voice faded. There was a scuffle, like that of a man being jerked to his feet and the slam of an iron door.

Nick's memory failed him. That voice had been either Dawson or Kyle. But with the merciless, savage intensity and the sound absorbing cotton, he couldn't be sure. They had similar voices.

He darted between the bales. He must get to a phone, put through an alarm. He had not expected to find this vast underground maze that had been built out of the deep beer sumps of a long forgotten brewery. He had told the Fire Chief to watch for sign of smoke. But with the complicated fan system in the sumps, smoke might not appear on the street for hours.

Yet Nick could not afford to lose the trail. Where was Chick? His help would save the day. Where would those three men above be heading? Suddenly Nick knew. They would be at the Fly High, in Cook's office. Whatever that third man wanted of Cook, he had outsmarted the gangster tonight, would probably return to the office to force something, some paper or directions, out of Cook and Oles. At least, the door toward the back of the block had been the one which slammed. He leaped between bales, headed through the door.

A few rooms farther over, in another vault, Chick Carter came out between other bales of cotton, stood dismayed. He had found his way down into the underground maze, had caught sight of a man, followed him. Who the man was, he was not sure. He had moved quickly, with the sureness of one knowing his whereabouts.

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He had lost sight of the man, but tumbled over two recently killed bodies. Both had been crushed beneath a heavy bale of paper and both stood as if on guard, pistols in outstretched hands. He passed on.

Suddenly the world went black. He came to, his head throbbing with pain, to find the world afire around him. Blindly, he rushed through the flames, found a door, came into the present vault filled with cotton. A few moments more and he would have been burned to a crisp. Luckily, the blow had glanced his head.

But now Chick faced four aisles. At the end of each was a large heavy iron door. Which one had the man he had followed taken?

Chick tried two doors. Locked. The third one opened upon a long series of rooms crowded with goods. The lights were on in all. He listened. Distantly, came the the sound of running overhead. That would be just above the level of the first room he had entered. He was nearly six stories beneath the streets!

He ran through the rooms, his heart pounding. There were other doors, many of them. But all locked. He caught sight of bales of waste, paper, rags. One whole room was stacked with sacks of wheat, corn grain, sawdust--another hangover from prohibition rackets. Oles had been the "Sawdust King". He charged ten dollars a bag. Political aid was extended to his customers.

One room was filled with building supplies. Another entirely with rope and tar. A third, the lowest of the group, was given over to a gigantic ice machine. Chick saw a row of bags marked "24 parts carbon 2 parts hydrogen by weight." His heart gave a thump. Acetylene. Here, beneath the ground, it was of utmost danger if fire should get through.

He twisted through the alley, came into a long arched vault in which were tins of explosive, nitrous oxide, methane, ethylene, cyanogen, chlorine--all violent if mixed with oxygen and near fire. And another vault contained benzene, gasoline, oil naphthalene, anthracene, phenanthrene, alcohol. A third was filled with perfumes, paint, varnish, turpentine.

He tried all doors, could find none open. Several times he came up to great elevator doors of heavy iron. But the shutters were closed, locked tight by some control he had not found.

He raced back to the room with the cotton bales. Was he trapped? No, almost hidden in shadow was an iron ladder the color of the wall. He climbed up, pushed open a trapdoor. He stood in a room looking like the control room of a ship. It was filled with switches, dynamos, panel boards of electrical controls. But none of them were labeled. Somewhere

CONT'D FROM PAGE EIGHT

BENNY: I have to confess that I had not heard any of these shows in a long time. They have fond memories for me.

HODGSON: Do you have access to the shows and the scripts?

BENNY: Yes. A lot of the scripts. They are in an archive at the University of Wyoming. Some are at UCLA. I had quite a few of them left to me. There were rooms full. I donated them to the University of Wyoming.

LISTENER: What about Eddie Cantor? Wasn't your father close to him? Did your father own the Maxwell automobile?

BENNY: No, he never owned a Maxwell. That was just a prop that he used. My first memory was of an old Packard, a touring car. You mentioned Eddie Cantor. He lived a block from us.

HODGSON: The Ronald Coleman's did not live next door to you as on the show but actually about seven, eight blocks away. On the show, Jack could go next door to borrow some sugar or flour or something.

BENNY: Our next door neighbors were Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. Before them there were some people name Bird (I really do not remember their name). The two houses are almost identical. Both being big white brick with Georgian architecture. They were easy to confuse one with the other. They were 1000 and we were 1002.

The touring buses used to go by. People then were much more friendly and open with not as much security. People would come up to the door. They would ask for an autograph, an autographed picture or just to say hello to my father. If he was home he would. However the Birds who lived next door, did not appreciate having their door bell rung twenty times a day with someone asking for Jack Benny. Finally in a fit of pique, we came home one day to find, in the driveway of 1000 North Roxbury, an enormous sign, "Jack Benny does not live here. He lives next door". There was a big arrow pointing to our house. When the Arnazes moved in we were quite friendly. My father practiced his violin in the bathroom which was situated so that it echoed into my room. When the Arnazes moved in, Desi practiced his drums in the driveway. I lived with a cacophony of sound.

LISTENER: (ED): Is it true that your mother and father were married in Cleveland? And George and Gracie stood up for them.

BENNY: I do not know. I do not think it was Cleveland. I think it was Los Angeles.

HODGSON: What are you involved in, these days?

BENNY: I am doing all kinds of things that I am absolutely adoring. I am lecturing around the country on growing up in Hollywood. I lecture on the psychology

CONT'D ON PAGE SEVEN

SAY!

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?



Take My Wife, Please....

I imagine that it has happened or will happen to all of us that collect OTR on tape. At one point our spouse will say something like..."Just what this house needs...More tapes!" or "This house is going to explode if you bring in any more tapes!" Well, I have no answer for the last one. I've been gathering these shows for a long time and will continue to do so but I've never thought were they will ultimately end up.

My wife is right. As I look around at all the bookcases and shelves filled to overflowing with my collection I realize that pretty soon there just won't be room for any more...then what? I don't know! And what's it going to be like ten years from now? It boggles the mind.

I dread the day that I have to make a decision as to what to do with my collection. Should I just give it away? Nope, I'm too cheap to do that. Should I try to sell it? Well maybe...IF the price was right and I thought it was worth.

Should I toss it out in the trash? (Wash your mouth out Bob) after all the time, energy, and money that has gone into it there is no way that it will be trashed. Besides...think of the poor trash man that would have to cart it away. A guy could get a hernia!!!

Has anyone ever thought out what their ultimate goal is for their collections? If so, drop me a note. I'm wide open for suggestions.

One more thing about my wife and I believe that this is the rule rather than the exception. I'm deeply involved with OTR and love it dearly. My wife cannot stand it and barely puts up with it all. To her it's all silliness and trying to live in the past. The silliness I might argue but the living in the past...maybe to an extent she's right again.

Radio was something I grew up with and does have very pleasant memories for me. It was the kind of thing that you can't really explain to someone else unless they were brought up the same

way. You had to be there and experience it first hand to truly understand the deep affection we hold for these bits of Americana. I love OTR very much.

Does it show?

Okay Gang...Remember, you read it here first....There is absolutely no truth to the rumor that Ted Turner is going to start colorizing old radio shows!!! Gee, my first exclusive

See ya next time.



NEWS CHATTER

Well another month as rolled around & I see that we have a new reel to reel librarian. James Steg is the fellow's name and he's Frank Bork's son-in-law. I guess the end has finally come to Frank Bork's reign as reel librarian. What a shame. Well good luck Jim, you'll be needing it in the months to come.

Our tape libraries are continuing to grow by leaps and bounds. Members like Jack Mandik, Jim Snyder, Dick Olday and other special people have kept our club alive and kicking with new donations to the tape libraries. We thank you one and all for your generous donations. Not only are they donations coming in but we are getting as many people renting tapes as well. And that's great.

If I sound like I'm repeating myself in my column the past few months, it is due to being busy taking care of your orders and adding all the new tapes to the library. I think old Frank's forgetfulness is starting to rub off onto other people. I think he's the club gremlin.

Till next time.

CONT'D FROM PAGE SIX

of comedy, on the history of film comedy. Once a year in Aspen, I teach a course on the history of film comedy. I am thinking about writing a book. I have a title and chapter headings but nothing else.

HODGSON: You never thought about going on the stage or following in your father and mother's footsteps and doing anything in the entertainment business.

BENNY: That is not true. I was an actress for awhile and I was quite terrible. I was a panelist on talk shows for awhile on television. Then I got married and all of a sudden all these children came along (I have four). Housewifing and mothering was what I was enjoying the most. I enjoy being Joan Benny, but also I enjoy being Jack Benny's daughter.

Albert Tonik

THE DEALERS CORNER

As you may be aware, there are several OTR dealers from which to choose from, however, there are certain ones which set the standards for quality. Dealers like Edward J. Carr, Bob Burnham of BRC Productions, Don Aston of Aston's Adventures and Terry Solmanson of Audio Classics are synonymous with "Excellence." Several times I have mentioned Ron Barnett of Echoes of the Past as a quality dealer as a quality dealer who puts out one of the best OTR products on reel to reel and cassette but never really talked very much about him.

Ron got hooked on OTR while working for the U.S. Government in Europe for some 17 years. An OTR collector for 11 years he formed Echoes of the Past in 1979. However, he prides himself as one who is dedicated to the hobby rather than as a dealer. All profits from Echoes of the Past are put back into the hobby in the form of new and better quality sounding shows and the upkeep, repair and/or replacement of his equipment.

He takes a great deal of pride in putting out a quality product which he is very proud of. Quoting Ron: "People who buy and keep bad material deserve what they get if they don't complain". "There are enough people who sell programs so purchasers don't have to be with marginal purveyors of junk!". "Dissatisfied customers don't complain -- they just never come back." There are dealers who sell for less than Ron and on that he says "I have no quarrel with those who sell for less -- they know what their products are worth".

If one looks at Ron's catalog he will find several holes in it. (several shows missing) because his concept is to collect high quality NOT quantity so his shows are the best quality available. A quality so good that even Frank Bork, our cheap elderly librarian emeritus, would actually think of parting with money to buy them.

good news to reel to reel fans. Ron believes that the so called demise of reel to reel is extremely premature and will continue to offer quality reel to reel tapes. Ron's reels literally stand out on the shelf. First they are in brown heavy duty boxes. Like most dealers he uses Ampex used tape, however he puts it on new reels. His labels are typewritten. Shows are listed chronologically. Sound quality for each show is listed (Example A-, B+, B- etc. etc.) Any defect are also listed (Example: crosstalk-slight hum-chopped endings-no introduction etc. etc.) This is so that one is not surprised. By the way the quality is listed in both his catalog and on his tape labels.

A new catalog is available for \$4 (Refundable with first order) Reels are available for \$10 each (buy 5 get 1 free). Cassettes are available as follows: 1 to 4 = \$3.95/each; 5 to 9 = \$3.75/each; over 10 = \$3.50/each.

Ron also sells blank reel tapes which are individually hand sorted through Audio Tapes Inc. Last year he sold 14,768 reels of recording tape. The number returned to defects was -0-. Ron will sell as a special offer to OTRC members who mention the I.P. 12 reels of individually hand sorted blank recording tape, in brown heavy duty boxes and shipped post paid to anywhere in the U.S. for \$19.50 (limit 24 to a customer).

To order blank tapes send a check payable to AUDIO TAPES INC. BOX 9594, ALEXANDRIA VA 22304. To order the NEW OTR CATALOG SEND \$4 to ECHOES OF THE PAST, BOX 9593, ALEXANDRIA, VA. 22304. * * * * *

CONT'D FROM PAGE FIFTEEN

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HODGSON: Did Jack bring his work home with him? Did he do any creative activity at home? Or did he step into a different guise once he left the show?

BENNY: He did not bring it home with him. He lived it. In his car, in his shower, in his room, in my room, it did not matter where he was. The show was everything. He loved it. He used to write the show at home. When I was a little girl, I would come home from school and sit in on the writing sessions. The writers and my father would gather in the library. I would get my milk and cookies and sit in the corner and listen to them write the show. Later when he had an office he would come home in the evening and he would talk about writing this sketch and who the guest would be next week and what they were planning. He loved the show. It was everything. I think that is why it was so good. He lived and breathed it and it was really his show. He wrote it as much as the writers. He edited it.

LISTENER: Miss Benny mentioned that Van Johnson was one of the people she adored. Recently I heard the show where he went out with the two telephone operators.

BENNY: Was it Gertrude Gearshift and Nabel Flapsaddle?

HODGSON: That is right.

CONT'D ON PAGE SIX

Wireless Wanderings



JIM SNYDER

Back in my October column, I mentioned that I would be moving this spring and that I wanted to weed out some of the tapes in my collection. All together I had 117 reels to dispose of, so I offered to give them to our members who had smaller sized collections.

I expected to hear from 4 or 5 people, and so I had a few large boxes on hand to send out bundles of 25 or more tapes. I was not prepared for the 23 requests that I received. A couple of these had to be turned down because they didn't quite meet the conditions that I had set down in that October column.

Two other people wrote to me early in the game, one asking for tapes for a blind friend, and the other asking for tapes for a junior high school. Since I expected very few responses I readily agreed to these requests, and later, even though the response was very heavy, I felt an obligation to live up to my agreement.

The other 19 respondents received substantially smaller boxes of tapes than I had anticipated. I had a real problem trying to find enough boxes for shipping. The requests came from as far apart as the east coast to Hawaii, and Wisconsin to Texas. I was very pleased that 2 of the respondents were teenagers.

I had mentioned in my October column that there would be a fairly complete six month run of JACK ARMSTRONG. That interested several people who specifically asked for those tapes. Obviously only one person could get them, but since there was so much interest in that particular series I have made up both reels (four 1800' reels) and cassettes (23 of them) and sent them to the club's two lending libraries. While I assume that there won't be a library supplement out for a number of months, I am sure that if you ask the respective librarians for the JACK ARMSTRONG tapes they will be happy to send them to you.

Oh yes, the thing that started all of this was the fact that I was about to move. For those of you who might be interested, my new address is:

James L. Snyder
314 North Colony Drive #2-D
Saginaw, MI 48603

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LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

I was reading the IP recently (1-87 issue) and thought I would put my 2¢ in re: the advertising issue. I agree with you and others who feel advertising can only help our club grow. I think OTR needs as much exposure as possible.

In 16 years of this hobby, with all the hundreds of people I have told about it, perhaps a dozen have shown significant interest. None of them have entered the hobby or even buy tapes from dealers! They were happy to have enjoyed the tapes I've provided, but that was the extent of it. While my batting average was (is) poor, the more who know and learn about OTR, the better the chances are that interested sales will be found. The larger the number of interested fans, the chances of obtaining new members and new shows increases. This is of course true for all clubs.

Duff Campbell
P O Box 4371
Panorama City, CA 91412

Here in Seattle we have a local radio personality named Jim French. During the early 1970's he was working at KVI radio and wrote and produced some very entertaining radio series. These series were DAMERON, THE ADVENTURES OF HARRY NILE, and a very good quality series called CRISIS.

Recently I have obtained all the episodes of these series and have put together a complete log. The HARRY NILE series ran a total of 23 episodes. 22 of these episodes were aired, but due to a sudden change in format at KVI the 23rd episode was never aired. This show is included in the log (it stars Hans Conreid). Only two copies of the show exist; Jim French has the original master copy and I have a copy made from this master.

I am making copies of these three series available. The logs are in dated order and complete. DAMERON run 49 episodes, HARRY NILE runs 23 episodes, and CRISIS runs 152 shows. The CRISIS log is put together in dated order is cross referenced in episode number order to indicate repeated shows. I am asking \$5 for all three logs.

I will make copies of the shows available for trade or sale. Dameron runs 4 reels, Harry Nile runs 2 reels, and Crisis runs 13 reels. If you know of anyone that might be interested have them write me.

W. E. Brooks
3061 NE 92
Seattle, WA 98115

* * * * *

SPERDVAC 1986 CONVENTION A SALUTE TO RADIO HEROES

The 1986 convention of the Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy was held at the Viscount Hotel at the Los Angeles International Airport on November 7-9. The theme this year was A Salute to Radio Heroes.

I had visited with the members of the SPERDVAC board when we were at the FOIR convention in Newark at the end of October, but I didn't decide to attend until early in the week of the meeting, so I had to make my reservations by phone. The convention opened at 6 pm Friday evening with registration and a social hours. I paid my fee and found a seat at a table with two couples my wife and I had spent the same evening with at the Tenth Anniversary Convention in 1984. There was time for some visiting before the buffet was ready.

The group was greeted by Chairman, Sol Pavlosky, and the current president, Larry Gassman. The evenings program was a panel on kids shows and was directed by Jim Harmon, the well-known author, actor and collector, who prepared a short takeoff on Jack Armstrong performed by the panel members. They were: Anne Seymour, veteran of radio dramas and soaps since her start in Chicago, and currently in movies and TV; Charles Flynn, Jack Armstrong from 1938 - 1951 and other roles; Frank Breese, child actor and host on radio nostalgia programs; Dwight Weist, who did some acting but is best known as an announcer and newsreel commentator, and Fred Foy, of Lone Ranger fame. The latter two were filling in for scheduled guests who were not able to come. They had a great time with stories and reminiscences. Jim Harmon talked about seeing Curley Bradley and his efforts to produce a new series of shows about Tom Mix and Ralston Purina. Some shows were recorded but a proposed 52 week series was lost in a change of advertising people.

Saturday morning I was up and finished breakfast before eight, so I could be in the collectors room when it opened. I was disappointed with the number of traders who had set up tables. Since SPERDVAC prohibits the sale of unlicensed programs, there were no reels or cassettes for sale. I am particularly interested in Radio Guide magazines but here were only 2 who had magazines and there were none for me. I looked at some transcription disks and 78 records. The other table was sponsored by SPERDVAC and featured publications and convention shirts; they also had a new volume by Fred Foy about his radio days at WXYZ. I got the new SPERDVAC magazine and some back issues I had missed. I also bought the Foy booklet and a shirt.

There were also a table of preservation products from LAST (Liquid Archival Sound Treatment) in connection with their workshop presentation, and later there was one more table featuring microphones. I was surprised when I saw the display because the first item I noticed was from KTRH in Houston.

The first workshop was on tape care and the moderator was Walter Davies, president of LAST. He reported on their efforts to develop methods of lengthening the life of oxide-based material and improving the sound qualities. He said that the amount of resources that would

be devoted to these projects would depend upon the interest and support of both the producers of the products and the actual users. After his prepared he answered a number of questions until the allowed hour was completed. He requested that those in attendance fill out a brief questionnaire to indicate interest in their proposals.

The schedule was designed to allow 30 minutes between each session. At ten I went by the Video Area to watch a specially prepared 2 hours film of radio nostalgia that was presented continuously all day. The host was Frank Breese and there were excerpts and background material on Amos and Andy, Tom Mix, Fibber McGee and Molly, Abbott and Costello, Rudy Vallee, GI Journal, The Great Gildersleeve, Milton Berle, and Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. This was followed by a tape of a recreation of Sorry, Wrong Number with Lurene Tuttle produced by the Society For the Preservation of Variety Acts.

The panel at 10:30 was a Salute to Space Heroes, with John Larch, Frankie Thomas and Andy Anderson, moderated by John Gassman. Since SPERDVAC had restricted the use of recorders at the various sessions I was not able to make any tapes, so my reports are limited to memory and the notes I took. All the events were recorded on audio and video and will eventually be available from the SPERDVAC library. John Larch discussed his performance on Starr of Space, a short-lived series which was developed by Gordon McClendon from Dallas. Frankie Thomas was represented in space by Tom Corbett, Space Cadet, which was on radio from 1950-52 and on TV from 1950-55. Andy Anderson is a collector and an expert on space programs; he reported on Space Patrol. They discussed the development of the programs and the performers, particularly as to where they are at present.

Frankie Thomas said that the producers of Tom Corbett tried to make the program as authentic and plausible as possible at the time. They had a technical consultant, Willy Ley, a well-known space scientist on the staff of Werner VanBraun

at Huntsville, and he had them use only equipment and situations that were within the realm of possibility. As a result, he said that when he watched the pictures of the landing on the moon in 1969 and saw Armstrong step onto the surface, he thought he was back on the soundstage and the Polaroid.

After leaving his acting career Frankie Thomas became interested in contract bridge and is an expert player and teacher. He has also written several books about Sherlock Holmes, and offered several paperback copies as prizes for trivia questions during the panel. He also has written two books combining those two areas of interest called "Sherlock Holmes, Bridge Detective" under the name Frank Thomas. Since I'm a bridge and Holmes fan I had purchased and enjoyed both books, but did not connect them with him until he mentioned it.

Following a social period the luncheon began at noon. After the meal there was a panel of WXYZ Revisited, moderated by Bobb Lynes, with Fred Foy, Ernie Winstanley (who played Dan Reed), Bob Maxwell, Mel Morehouse and Casey Kasem, all of whom had performed on the Lone Ranger program and others on that famous station. There were many interesting and humorous anecdotes and much bantering back and forth among the guests. Fred Foy told of an incident when George Trendle had decided that a replacement might be needed for Brace Beemer; Foy had joined the Lone Ranger in 1948. He was instructed to learn to ride horses. He said that not only did he not know how to ride but he had a deathly fear of horses. However he went out to a stable and made an appearance of learning to ride, but fortunately was never called upon to actually do it. Ernie Winstanley reported that he has in his personal collection some of the original sound effects equipment from WXYZ.

The afternoon program was devoted to the Shadow. The first part was a recreation of a program from November 19, 1944, called "The Man Who Dreamed Too Much." It was produced and directed by Anthony Tollin, who is well known for his interest and knowledge about the Shadow. All of the players had appeared on the program, several of them a number of times. The lead was played by John Archer, who was the Shadow on some of the 30 broadcasts in 1944-45. There were Alice Frost, Amzie Strickland, who appeared on 40 episodes and substituted for Grace Matthews twice as Margot; Les Tremayne; Dwight Weist, Lesley Woods, who was Margot for one season with Bret Morrison; Bill Zuchert and Andre Baruch. Les Tremayne played the role of Dr. Nightmare, the villain, and that was a departure from his usual personality. Dwight Weist recreated his role as Commis-

sioner Lane. and well Foy appeared Tollin's stories Orson W Shadow on his Redick. did not and Ric rehearsed Orson W playing Tremayne he often another a number his stag John Shadow. in the At the for a Haven. but would night at He gave and War also pl Daughter The was a p by Chl by Fred Fred Foy and wri the fin in his at his sure if finally Jim publicat how he complete It is a activiti Norman him to l 720 pag out 200 publishm with an book w be out director mention York on the Hall Chr radio b which h the year which a to add t The

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sioner Weston and Lesley Woods was Margo Lane. It was an excellent production and well done by all concerned.

Following the program the guests appeared on a panel moderated by Anthony Tollin. As usual there were lots of stories and anecdotes, particularly about Orson Welles. Welles could not do the Shadow laugh so the openings and closings on his shows were the voice of Frank Redick. It was well known that Welles did not like to rehearse so Bill Allen and Richard Wilson read his part at the rehearsals. Kenny Delmar also replaced Orson Welles on one show. Asked about playing the villain in the show. Les Tremayne stated that in 1931 to 1933 he often played heavies. Dick Osgood, another familiar personality, played a number of parts in early Shadows under his stage name of Elmer Cornell.

John Archer was the highest paid Shadow. He saw Bob Fields, the director, in the hall and asked him for an audition. At the time he was appearing in tryouts for a Jed Harris Play and was in New Haven. So he missed the Wednesday reading, but would leave after the play on Saturday night and do the program Sunday afternoon. He gave up a part on the FBI in Peace and War to do the Shadow. Amzie Strickland also played Charlie Chan's Number One Daughter on some of that series.

The final event for the afternoon was a panel on radio literature organized by Chis Lembesis, with participation by Fred Foy, Jim Harmon and Lyn Murray. Fred Foy discussed the background, research and writing of his new booklet, and how the financial problems involved resulted in his publishing this reduced version at his own expense. He said he wasn't sure if the balance of his material would finally appear in a published form.

Jim Harmon discussed his several publications and gave some details on how he handled it. Lyn Murray has just completed a book called "Musician". It is based on a journal of his daily activities that he kept up to 1983. Norman Corwin saw the journal and urged him to have it printed. It was originally 720 pages on computer but Corwin edited out 200 pages. They contacted Corwin's publisher and on April 1, 1986, a contract with an advance was signed. The final book was 400 pages. The book should be out in a April. Murray was the musical director on a number of programs and mentioned particularly one year in New York on the Ford Theater and being on the Hallmark Playhouse with James Hilton.

Chris had a number of copies of radio books in their original condition which he has acquired and preserved over the years. He listed some of the sources which are available for those who want to add to their radio libraries.

The evening activities began with

a social hour at 6:30, followed by a dinner at eight. I was assigned to the Captain Midnight table, which include five fans and John Larch and his wife, Vivi Janiss. We had a very interesting discussion during the evening, with everyone contributing stories. John Larch and Vivi Janiss told us about their acting careers, reporting particularly about appearances on Hawaii 50. The main feature of the evening was a recreation of the first episode of "This Is Your FBI" from April 6, 1945. The creator and only director of the program, Jerry Devine, was the director and the producer was Peggy Webber. The featured players were Parley Baer, Richard Erdman, Lou Krugman, Jimmy Lydon, George Pirrone, Irene Tedrow, Peggy Webber and Howard Caine, and the announcer was Art Gilmore. It was an interesting story about spies on the domestic front near shipyard in Philadelphia. After the presentation there were a number of tributes to Jerry Devine and good wishes for his birthday. One of the awards presented by a Special Agent from the Los Angeles office of the FBI was in recognition of many public services through the years. The finale was a large, three-tiered cake which was displayed for him and then cut and served to all the guests.

The convention concluded Sunday morning with a brunch and an appearance by Dr. Paul Winchell as guest speaker. He talked about his career and his invention of the artificial heart, and answered questions from the audience. He was presented a special citation from the city of Los Angeles and Mayor Tom Bradley for his outstanding humanitarian activities. Unfortunately my plane reservations were too early to permit me to attend, but I'm sure it was a fitting end to an interesting event.

I was able to visit with a number of the guests and add to my collection of autographs in The Big Broadcast. The panels were uniformly interesting and I always look forward to meeting old radio performer friends in person. The sound engineering at the panels and workshops was excellent and added much to the enjoyment. SPERDVAC is to be commended for this latest effort, and I look forward to similar events in the future.

Raleigh E. Barker
6206 Bankside Drive
Houston, TX 77096

TAPESPONDENTS: Send in your wants and we'll run them here for at least 2 months.

WANTED: A copy of Tune In Yesterday. I have lobby cards, posters and rare comics to trade for quality sound radio

JUST THE FACTS MA'AM

By: Frank Boncore

If you ever dealt with Bob Burnham, You will know that in addition to quality reels and cassettes, BRC Productions is an excellent source for Old Time Radio books. While attending the Friends of Old Time Radio Convention in Newark, I noticed that Bob was selling a new OTR book and quickly purchased it.

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BRC Productions
P O Box 39522
Redford, MI 48239-0522

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Chuck Wheeler
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HODGSON: You had a violinist in your band. A fellow linked closely with Abbe Lane, Rita Hayworth and Charo.

HARRIS: Xaviar Cugat. He started with me after he left Bass and Weeks. He was with me in the Coconut Grove in 32. We had a rhumba band there. During intermissions for the big band they would play. After the rhumba band left, he asked me if I would mind if he formed a rhumba band. So he put a band together and that is how he started. I was the original guy who called him Cussy Cuggy.

HODGSON: You met Alice when she was a singer for Rudy Valley in Valley's Place in New York.

HARRIS: I was in the Pennsylvania Roof. That was in 33. I had meet her here in California earlier. She had a home in Encino and so did I. We sort of met over two Doberman Pinschers.

HODGSON: In 1936 you became the band leader for the most successful radio comedian of all time, Jack Benny. Tell us about your memories of Mr. Benny and a little about how you got the job.

HARRIS: He met me in New York. I had my own program in New York. I was with J. Walter Thompson. I was staying at the Essex House. Jack Benny and Mary were staying there and we became friends. Later I was in New Orleans and got a call to come out to California. Jack asked me what I was doing. I told him I did not have a show that year. He said, "You are with me". I was in the right place at the right time. I was fortunate because everyone wanted that job.

HODGSON: Tell us about your memories of Mr. Benny, the man.

HARRIS: One of the greatest men I have ever met in my life. Very dedicated. Very talented. A great humanitarian. He was anything but the person he portrayed on radio. He was the most gracious, the most generous man that I have ever known.

HODGSON: The book, TUNE IN YESTERDAY, by John Dunning, the ultimate encyclopedia of old time radio, had this to say about you, "Harris has a reputation as a polite, almost shy man. A complete reversal of his radio image. On the air he was a master of the crude quip, aided and abetted by the medium's best practitioners of the same." You were with Jack for 18 years. In the meantime you began with the Fitch Band Wagon in 46.

HARRIS: I took over the show. He let me go, but he kept me on for the first 15 minutes of his show. Then I would go in and warm up my audience which followed his show.

HODGSON: That led on October 3, 1948 to the PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW for Rexall.

HARRIS: That was Faye's show that started on the Fitch Band Wagon. Later we wound up with Rexall.

HODGSON: By that time Jack Benny had moved to CBS.

HARRIS: That is right, He and Charley McCarthy and Amos and Andy, all went to CBS, but I stayed with NBC.

HODGSON: Did your leaving the show, bother Jack?

HARRIS: No. I will tell you something. I am sure he hated to see me go, because I loved the show and I think I was a great part of it. He was happy for me that my show was a success. When he moved to CBS, I had to run about a block and a half through the alley after 15 minutes on his show to open my own show. After awhile it became too intricate. I am sure he hated to see me leave, because he loved me and I loved him.

HODGSON: Everyone has said he was a great man and anything but what he portrayed on the radio.

HARRIS: You know he magnified everything. He was anything but cheap. He said to me, "You keep drinking like that, Phil, and it won't be funny anymore". People used to ask me if I drank as much as indicated on the Benny Show. I would reply, "If I did, I could not read the queue cards."

HODGSON: When you were on opposite networks, Jack brought in Bob Crosby.

HARRIS: No. He brought in Bob Crosby when I enlisted. I was stationed in Catalina.

HODGSON: One of the unforgettable characters on your PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE show was Julius Abbruzio played by Walter Tetley.

HARRIS: Very clever individual. A beautiful boy. One of the youngest fellows that ever stated at NBC. He started as a child protege. He was a great character. He came from THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE. He played a little nasty kid off the street, the grocery boy. Truthfully he was the nicest kid, the exact opposite of what he portrayed.

HODGSON: I have had a lot of people ask me this question. How old was Walter Tetley back then?

HARRIS: I think Tetley must have been close to forty when he was working with me.

HODGSON: How about Robert North who played Willie, Alice's wimpish brother.

HARRIS: I do now know whatever happened to him. He was very good on our show, but I never kept track of him afterward.

HODGSON: Then there was Elliot Lewis.

HARRIS: Elliot Lewis was a charm. Elliot Lewis was something else again. After we stopped working together, he never acted again. He went into producing and directing. Elliott Lewis was so clever. He did two or three characters with Benny before he worked with me. Talented people like that worked on many shows at the same time.

HODGSON: Tell us about Franke Remley.

HARRIS: Frank Remley and I met around 1921. He was playing on the boat going to Honolulu. I was going over with an organized band to open in the Princess Theatre in Honolulu. I was in my first year in high school, in a dixieland band. That is where I met Frank. We became friends and we played in several bands together. When I got my own show, naturally he was with me. He was with me for years. He comes from Fargo, North Dakota. He is a fine guy and a very close friend of Jack's. We did 39 weeks and when we had off, Jack would always take him along.

HODGSON: He played the guitar.

HARRIS: He was left-handed.

HODGSON: You had a fringe man named Gale Gordon. He was the Rexall man, Mr. Scott.

HARRIS: Gale worked with everybody. Ask Lucy about him. Lucy thinks he is the greatest guy who ever lived.

HODGSON: You had a lot of fun with Rexall. Did they ever complain about the way you handled their products?

HARRIS: No. I think we did a beautiful job with them. We never had any complaints. We had them as sponsors for 7 very pleasant years. I enjoyed working for them.

HODGSON: I remember when you came up with the line, "Rexall? What's a Rexall?" I don't think you could get away with that today.

HARRIS: I don't think so. Jacks' stock in trade was kidding the product. I'll tell you one thing, he sold the product. I never will forget when I walked into the parking lot one time in NBC and he says we are leaving Jello. I asked why. He said they can't make it fast enough. That is when he had to go with Lucky Strikes. In those days going to Lucky was the mark of death. They keep people for 13 weeks while they were hot and then let them go. But Jack Benny stayed on Lucky Strike forever. That is how clever he was.

HODGSON: What about Phil Harris in the future?

HARRIS: I am living the life of Riley. I have a home and a beautiful wife and two beautiful daughters and four grandchildren. I am a member of the Outstanding Club (we have 70 of them in Palm Springs). I am an honorary member of Thunderbird. I am enjoying life. I think I deserve it because I spent half my live on a bus. I was lucky enough to be with Benny. I made a couple of dollars. I want to say "Hello" for Alice and I. We are both healthy and enjoying life. We both thank show business for what it has done for us. We hope that our listeners out there, have a merry holiday and everything good happens to them in 1987.

BENNY: Hi, Gary. How are you.

HODGSON: you were an adopted child. Is that correct?

BENNY: Yes.

HODGSON: Was your mother's name Sadie Marks Benny or Mary Livingstone?

BENNY: Originally it was Sadie Marks. I guess in the early days when they were first married, it was Sadie Marks Benny. At some point when she went into show business with him (it was new to her because she had worked at the stocking counter at the May Company) they used that name on the show. When they went into radio, the early writers gave her the name Mary Livingstone. After that it became her legal name. You mentioned that listeners did not know that they had a daughter. On the early shows, in the 30's, my father used to say, "Good night Joannie" at the end of the show. As I recall, the show was on about 7 o'clock at night. It must have been later in California because I was not allowed to stay up to listen to it. I would hear the record of it the following day. It was always so exciting to hear "Good night Joannie". I wanted to yell, "That's me!"

HODGSON: What kind of parents were Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone?

BENNY: From my point of view that is hard to say. The seemed to me to be like anybody else's parents. The stories about my father and George Burn being close friends were true. It could not be exaggerated too much. They were practically joined at the hip. They adored each other. They were together almost all the time as were Gracie and my mother. I was raised with Sandy, their daughter, who by the way was also adopted. So I grew up thinking that adopted was the norm. They treated Sandy the way my parents treated me. My mother was the strict one. She did the disciplining. My father was the patsy who let me have anything I wanted. I knew from the beginning since my father was the pushover, that it was my mother I had to go to for permission. She was the one who made me mind my manners and when I got older and started dating, told me to be home at 10 o'clock. She laid down the law. People hear about Hollywood kids being spoiled. I was very strictly raised.

HODGSON: What was Christmas or Chanukah like in the Benny home?

BENNY: I can answer only from my point of view. We celebrated Christmas. We had a big Christmas tree in the library which was a large paneled room. The presents covered the entire floor of the room. You can't imagine this many presents for one family of three people. It was very impressive As I got older, the number of presents got slimmer. Now I get presents from my children and a few close friends and that is it.

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HODGSON: Did your family give lavish parties in the house?

BENNY: Oh yes. There was an annual party. I am not sure, but I don't think it was New Year's Eve. The back yard was tented and there was an orchestra and it was very lavish. During the rest of the year they had small diner parties. A common evening was having a couple of friends for dinner and then running the latest MGM or Twentieth Century Fox film in our living room. There was a projection room and they hired a projectionist to operate the 35 mm cameras. It was nice not going to a movie theater, I could watch from the living room sofa.

HODGSON: Your father and mother must have made it into the social register of Hollywood. There must have been some interesting guest visiting the Benny household.

BENNY: It is funny to remember back in the bobby sox era of the War and slightly after, Van Johnson was every one's favorite. He was a very close friend of my family. He was my favorite. I thought he was just adorable and wonderful. We saw a great deal of the Jimmy Stewarts, Barbara Stanwyck (and husband, Robert Taylor), Gary and Rocky Cooper, the Burnses, and Frank Sinatra (and his wife of the moment).

HODGSON: Today is Frank Sinatra's birthday. What kind of a guy was he?

BENNY: Terrific! Happy Birthday Frank. I love you. In my whole life he as been of the the warmest, the most charming, the loveliest of men I have ever known.

HODGSON: The other day we had Jake Lamotta on our station. He told how Frank Sinatra paid the hospital bills for Joe Louis when Joe was down on his luck. That is something that most people do not know.

BENNY: Forget about the fact that Frank could afford to pay the bills, but he is the best friend for whom anyone could ask.

HODGSON: How about reminiscing about the cast members such as Phil Harris and Dennis Day.

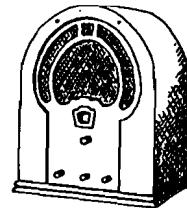
BENNY: Our relationship with them was not as much of personal relationship as a business one. We saw a lot of them. It was not, you come to our house on Tuesday night and we will visit you Friday night. I saw them at rehearsals. I saw them on the Sunday show. The only one of the cast of whom we saw more and who was close to the family was Mel Blanc. We went to visit him at the lake, Big Bear. I remember trying to teach my father to water ski. All my life I loved to get Mel to do those silly voices. I kept thinking "The poor man. He does them all the time". But I could never get enough of it. Do Bugs Bunny. Do Porky Pig. The poor man was forever doing voices. Oh, he was wonderful and

Continued on page eight

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