

Announcing the National Broadcasting Company, Inc.

National radio broadcasting with better programs permanently assured by this important action of the Radio Corporation of America in the interest of the listening public

THE RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA is the largest distributor of radio receiving sets in the world. It handles the entire output in this field of the Westinghouse and General Electric factories.

It does not say this boastfully. It does not say it with apology. It says it for the purpose of making clear the fact that it is more largely interested, more ardently interested, in the best possible broadcasting in the United States than anyone else.

Radio for 26,000,000 Homes
The market for receiving sets in the future will be determined largely by the quantity and quality of the programs broadcast.

We say quantity because they must be diversified enough in that some of them will appeal to all possible listeners.

We say quality because each program must be the best of its kind. If they ideal were to be reached, no home in the United States could afford to be without a radio receiving set.

Today the best available statistics indicate that 5,000,000 homes are equipped, and 21,000,000 homes remain to be supplied.

Radio receiving sets of the best reproductive quality should be made available for all, and we hope to make them cheap enough so that all may buy.

The day has gone by when the radio receiving set is a plaything. It is now one of the instruments of service.

WEAF Purchased for \$1,000,000

The Radio Corporation of America, therefore, is interested, just as the public is, in having the most adequate programs broadcast. It is interested, as the public is, in having them comprehensive and free from discrimination.

Any use of radio transmission which causes the public to feel that the quality of the programs is not the highest, that the use of radio is not the broadest and best use in the public interest, that it is used for political advantage or selfish power, will be detrimental to the public interest in radio, and therefore so the Radio Corporation of America.

To insure, therefore, the development of this great service, the Radio Corporation of

America has purchased for one million dollars station WEAF from the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, that company having decided to retire from the broadcasting business.

The Radio Corporation of America will assume active control of that station on November 15.

National Broadcasting Company Organized

The Radio Corporation of America has decided to incorporate that station, which has achieved such a deservedly high reputation for its quality and character of its programs, under the name of the National Broadcasting Company, Inc.

The Purpose of the New Company

The purpose of that company will be to provide the best program available for broadcasting in the United States.

The National Broadcasting Company will not only broadcast these programs through station WEAF, but it will make them available to other broadcasting stations throughout the country so far as it may be practicable to do so, and they may desire to take them.

It is hoped that arrangements may be made to take every corner of national territory may be broadcast widely throughout the United States.

No Monopoly of the Air

The Radio Corporation of America is not to say never seeking a monopoly of the air. That would be a liability rather than an asset. It is seeking, however, to provide machinery which will insure a national distribution of national programs, and a wider distribution of programs of the highest quality.

If others will engage in this business the Radio Corporation of America will welcome their entry, whether in its cooperation or competition.

If other radio manufacturing companies, competitors of the Radio Corporation of America, wish to use the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company for the purpose of making known to the public their receiving sets, they may do so on the same terms as accorded to other clients.

The necessity of providing adequate broad-

casting is apparent. The problem of finding the best means of doing it is by no means unimportant. The Radio Corporation of America is making this experiment in the interest of the art and the betterment of the industry.

A Public Advisory Council

In order that the National Broadcasting Company may be advised as to the best type of program, that discrimination may be avoided, that the public may be assured that the broadcasting is being done in the fairest and best way, always allowing for human frailties and human imperfections, it has created an Advisory Council, composed of twelve members, to be chosen as representatives of various shades of public opinion, which will from time to time give it the benefit of their judgment and suggestion. The members of the Council will be announced as soon as their acceptance shall have been obtained.

M. H. Aylesworth to be President

The President of the new National Broadcasting Company will be M. H. Aylesworth, for many years Managing Director of the National Electric Light Association. He will perform the executive and administrative duties of the corporation.

Mr. Aylesworth, who has hitherto been identified with the radio industry or broadcasting, has had public experience as Chairman of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, and, through his work with the commission which represents the electrical industry, has a broad understanding of the technical problems which necessitate the pace of broadcasting.

One of his major responsibilities will be to see that the operations of the National Broadcasting Company reflect enlightened public opinion, which represents itself as promptly the meaning that may arise of issue or judgment or departure from fair play.

We have no hesitation in recommending the National Broadcasting Company to the people of the United States.

It will need the help of all listeners. It will make mistakes. If the public will make known its views to the officials of the company, from time to time, or any confidence that the new broadcasting company will be an instrument of great public service.

RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA

OWEN D. YOUNG, Chairman of the Board

JAMES G. HARBORD, President



THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

New member processing-\$2.50 plus club donations of \$17.50 per year from Jan. 1 - Dec. 31
Members receive a tape listing, library list, monthly newsletter, the Illustrated Press, the yearly Memories publication and various special items. Additional family members living in the same household as a regular member may join the club for a \$5.00 donation 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 with a regular member. This membership is a \$13.00 donation per year and includes all the benefits of regular membership. Regular membership donations are as follows; If you join in Jan.-Mar. \$17.50--Apr. - June \$14.00--July-Sept. \$10.00 Oct.-Dec. \$7.00. All renewals are due by Jan. 2. Your renewal should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be sure to notify us if you change your address.

OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIPS are now available. Annual donations are \$29.75. Publications will be airmailed.

The Old Time Radio Club meets the first Monday of every month.

from Aug.- June at 393 George Urban Blvd., Cheektowaga, N.Y.
Anyone interested in the "Golden Age of Radio" is welcome.
Meetings start at 7.30 P.M.

Club Address

Old Time Radio Club
P. O. Box 426
Lancaster, N. Y. 14086

Club Officers

President - Jerry Collins
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, N. Y. 14086
(716) 683-6199

Vice-President & Canadian Branch
Richard Simpson
960-16 Rd. R. R. 3
Fenwick, Ontario
L0S 1C0

Treasurer & Video & Records

Dominic Parisi
38 Ardmore Pl.
Buffalo, N. Y. 14213
(716) 884-2004

Illustrated Press

Dan Marafino
19 Church St.
Lancaster, N. Y. 14086
(716) 684-0733

Reference Library

Ed Wanat
393 George Urban Blvd.
Cheektowaga, N.Y. 14225

Membership Renewals, Change of

Address, Mailing of Publications
Pete Bellanca
1620 Ferry Rd.
Grand Island, N.Y. 14072
-(716)-773-2485

Membership Inquiries

Richard Olday
100 Harvey Dr.
Lancaster, N.Y. 14086
(716) 684-1604

Tape Libraries

Cassettes

Jim April
85 Hyledge Dr.
Amherst, N.Y. 14226
(716) 837-7747

Reel to Reel 1-600

Bill Weber
226 Harding Rd.
Williamsville, N.Y. 14221
(716) 634-7021

Reel to Reel 601 & up

Tom Harris
9565 Wehrle Dr.
Clarence, N.Y. 14031
(716) 759-8401

MIS-ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

by Bob Davis

The John Otto Show

(9:00 AM - 12:00 PM)

"All Talk..."

Buffalo's leading local talk show host, **John Otto**, talks with high profile guests and WGR 55 listeners about a wide variety of stimulating topics researched particularly for local interest.

02



It seems that John Otto has been hosting a call-in radio show here in Buffalo, N.Y. since the days of steam-powered radio - back when the numbers on radio dials were written in Roman Numerals!

In a business that changes like the seasons John is a constant, a Rock of Gibraltar, a man who has everything under control at all times...well, most of the time BUT every once in a while something goes wrong!

My partner (Chuck Seeley) and I did the show with John for 15 years. We were his resident trivia "experts", fielding questions from listeners and arguing with him about some of the answers.

John and his crew were real pros, with everyone knowing and doing their jobs in a highly professional manner.

Maybe it was just us, but something seemed to jinx the show when we got on. The smooth running machinery jammed and things seemed to fall apart!

There was the time when we came to the studio just a few minutes before air time and found one tiny problem. Tiny??? The engineer was nowhere to be found!!!

A call-in show is a complicated thing to run. Switches, buttons, dials, and meters all have to be set and set right to get the show

on the air. It was now just a few minutes before air time and nothing was set!

John frantically called the stations sister TV operation and tried to get some help from their engineer but no one there could help us out. It got so bad that even Chuck and I were trying to get us going. You know things had to be really desperate for that kind of thing to happen! (Did you know that banging a microphone on it's side will not get it to work?)

Keep in mind that this was ten o'clock at night and we were the only ones in the station with the exception of the DJ that was about to sign off, and an elderly cleaning lady. The DJ was busy with his show and the old lady "had mopping to do!".

The DJ finally came into our studio while his last record was playing and threw the proper switches to get us on the air.

He was able to set us up so that we were "on" and able to accept phone calls but the tape-delay that is necessary with this type show, never did get activated. We went through the whole program (4 hrs!) hoping that nothing filthy was going to be said. It wasn't!

We were also unable to "screen" the calls before-hand to weed out the sicko's and pranksters.

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(Wonderland-cont.)

Finally, after about two hours, the Program Director showed up and then, the engineer. The studio is soundproof but we were still able to hear the "talking" out in the hallway.

What happened was that there was a schedule mix-up and no one had noticed that there was no engineer slated for that night!

Sheesh!

Well, after the "discussion" in the hallway was over and we were running under controlled conditions again, about two-and-a-half hours had gone by and we hadn't played one commercial or cut away for the network news. That has to be some sort of record for a commercial radio station. Hey Guinness Book, take note!

Obviously someone was out there listening because the next day the newspaper had a big write-up about what had happened. I found out, at a later date, that it had been the Program Director's first week on the job. It almost turned out to be his last!

And then there was the time the station was having a promotion in which they were giving away helium filled balloons. We were doing the show and everything was moving just fine, when the engineer (yes, we had one this time!) came into the studio and handed the two of us each a balloon. A glint came into ol' Chuck's eyes and right away I knew what he was thinking!

I nodded to him and we untied the balloons. He inhaled the helium briefly and started to talk. His voice was raised appreciably in pitch and was really strange.

Then it was my turn.

Nobody ever told me that a tiny bit of that gas goes a long way...I inhaled the entire contents of the balloon!

I swear, the voice that came out of my mouth sounded just like Alvin and the Chipmunks - on speed!

Anything I said with that breath made me sound like I'd just escaped from Munchkin-Land. It even broke me up and I started laughing like an idiot...until I realized that I couldn't draw another breath. The residual gas in my lungs had somehow affected my breathing and some anxious moments went by before I was finally able to inhale again. The whole bit got a good laugh, but took about 10 years off my life!

For about a week afterward I had a sore throat like you wouldn't believe. I'll never try that stunt again even though Chuck insists that the soreness was caused by the pack of cigarettes I smoked that night.

That's another thing...

At one time all three of us smoked and the air in the studio used to get thick enough that it would threaten to set off the smoke alarm system. One time, the woman that did the show right after us, and used the same studio, came in ready to do her show. In her hand she carried a small portable fan to clear the air. On her face was a look that could peel paint off the wall. I guess she didn't smoke! (excuse me while I light one up!)

A big worry of mine was that I would swear over the air. For many years I worked in a steel mill in which, if you said three sentences without a swear word, you were considered a religious fanatic. After a short while you use these words without thinking. I've always been able to avoid these words outside the mill but the worry is always there, especially when on the air!

In next month's installment I'll tell you about our toughest show.

THE OTR COLLECTOR'S CREED

I am lucky to be involved with one of the most fascinating hobbies there ever was.

Let the tv networks program what they want, we've got our OTR shows to entertain us.

Only the most hard-hearted can look back at OTR without a feeling of warmth and joy.

Very few in our hobby don't get totally involved in it.

Entertainers may come and go, but to an OTR collector they will live forever.

Over the years our love of OTR will endure and grow.

Lux Radio Theater seems to be on everyone's list of favorites.

Drama, comedy, news, and music are all available on OTR.

Tom Mix was a favorite in both the movies and OTR.

In the old days no one realized just how great OTR was.

Many OTR shows tried switching over to tv, but tv couldn't convey the "magic" of radio.

Entertainment ran rampant on OTR with stars like Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, and Rudy Vallee.

Replays of OTR shows are still being aired on many stations.

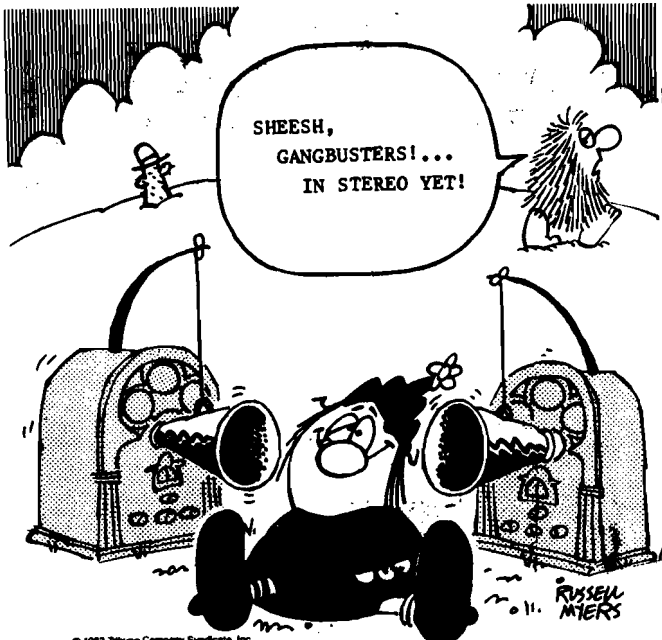
All you need is your imagination to enjoy OTR, the "screen" is behind your eyes.

David Harum, Ma Perkins, Our Gal Sunday, and Stella Dallas all helped the ladies get through the day.

Inner Sanctum and Lights Out both thrilled and chilled us.

Oak trees fall and buildings may crumble but OTR lives on!

Take the first letter of each sentence and you'll have the Collector's Creed.



THE REEL LIFE

by Tom Harris

#824 SHADOW

- Temple Bells of Neban
- Three Ghosts
- 1-9-38 League of Terros
- 1-16-38 Sabotage
- 1-30-38 Poison Death
- 1-23-38 Society of Living Dead
- 2-6-38 Phantom Voice
- 3-6-38 Bride of Death
- 3-13-38 Silent Avenger
- 1-29-39 Prelude to Terror
- 3-12-39 Appointment with Death
- 10-22-39 House of Fun

#825 SHADOW

- 2-20-38 Hounds in the Hills
- 2-27-38 Plot Murder
- 3-20-38 White Legion
- 12-4-38 Murder in E Flat
- 1-15-39 Ghosts Can Kill
- 1-22-39 Valley of Living Dead
- 2-12-39 Hypnotic Death
- 2-19-39 Friend of Darkness
- 3-5-39 Sabotage by Air
- 10-1-39 Night Marauders
- 12-24-39 Stockings Were Hung
- 11-24-40 Green Man

#826 SHADOW

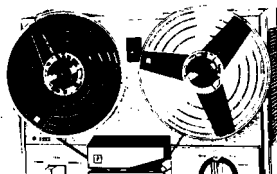
- 1-5-41 Leopard Strikes
- 1-12-41 Ghost Building
- 1-19-41 Shadow Challenged
- 12-8-46 Devil Takes a Wife
- 12-15-46 Murder on Main Stem
- 11-9-47 Dream of Death
- 11-16-47 Doom & the Limping man
- 11-23-47 Comic Strip Killer
- 11-30-47 Murder & the Medium
- 3-14-48 Stakeout
- 3-21-48 Death Coils to Strike
- 3-28-48 Death & the Easter Bonnet

#827 SHADOW

- 5-12-46 Bride Wore Black
- 5-19-46 Touch of Death
- 5-25-47 Seance of Death
- 9-14-47 When the Grave is Open
- 10-5-47 Curse of the Gypsies

#827-con't

- 10-19-47 Ruby of Karvahll
 - 10-26-47 Death Hunt
 - 11-2-47 Death Mes Eight Arms
 - 1-4-48 Chill of Death
 - 1-11-48 Bones of the Dragon
 - 2-29-48 Man Who Was Death
 - 3-7-48 Beest of Darrow House
- #828 SHADOW
- 3-13-39 Can the Dead Talk
 - 12-10-39 Flight of the Vulture
 - 12-3-39 Death Shows the Way
 - 12-17-39 Murder Incorporated
 - 2-11-40 Death is an Art
 - 10-6-40 Ghost Town
 - 12-22-40 Joey's Christmas Story
 - 4-6-41 Murder from the Grave
 - 2-1-48 One Dead & Two to Go
 - 2-8-48 Thing in the Cage
 - 2-22-48 Nursery Rhyme Murders
 - 2-27-49 Collectors of Death
 - 3-6-49 Until Death Do Us Part
 - 3-13-49 Ring of Mahliatlayles
 - 5-29-49 Monkey Woman
 - 6-5-49 Preview of Terror
- #829 SHADOW
- 10-23-38 Gun Island
 - 10-30-38 Isle of Fear
 - 11-5-39 Mansion of Madness
 - 11-12-39 Inventor of Death
 - 11-19-39 Shadow Returns
 - 11-26-39 Sandhog Murders
 - 12-31-39 Cat that Killed
 - 1-7-40 Murder in Death House
 - 1-21-40 Precipice Called Death
 - 10-13-40 Isle of Living Dead
 - 10-20-40 Oracle of Death
 - 12-29-40 Ghost on the Stair



OUR OTR FRIENDS NEED HELP...or,
PERRY MASON MAY WORK FOR NOTHING
BUT NOBODY ELSE DOES!

by Carolyn and Joel Senter

If you happen to have read Bob Burnham's article, "A New Legal Problem for Old Time Radio Dealers" in the August '89 ILLUSTRATED PRESS (the publication of The Old Time Radio Club, based in Buffalo, N.Y.) you know that some of our friends in old time radio are in trouble! If you didn't read the article, or if you haven't heard about it from some other source, could we please take a few moments to tell you about it?

We all know that there are many different attitudes concerning the role of vendors of OTR programs in our hobby. We wouldn't presume to judge which of these views, or what compromise among them, might eventually turn out to be "right". The evolutionary process of time and custom will ultimately settle these issues one way or another. Some of these processes of resolution will necessarily be legal ones. This is fitting and proper because it may well be that "due process" through our legal system offers the only proper forum for the ultimate settlement of serious controversies. Unfortunately, the price tag on "due process" can become very high!

Just now a number of our OTR friends are being sued for alleged infringement on a license of some classic radio shows. The plaintiff, allegedly, has refused what seems to be a more than fair monetary settlement (even if the alleged license were to turn out to be real) which has been offered to resolve the disagreement without further contest, but instead, we are told, is holding out for a FIVE DIGIT

settlement from EACH of the half-dozen or so, defendants named!

It certainly looks like the matter will end up in court.

The defendants are beginning to incur considerable expense simply to insure that they get their proper "day in court" (and we all know that nobody gets rich selling OTR tapes). A pertinent question has arisen in our minds, i.e., "Can we OTR fans help?!!!" Can we help our friends, who have given so much to our hobby, to have their day in court without suffering the total financial burden by themselves? Our personal answer is, "Yeah, sure, we'll be glad to lend a hand!" We sincerely hope that all OTR fans will echo our personal feelings on this matter.

As a start toward "lending a hand" we (the authors of this piece) have taken the liberty of setting up a fund at a local bank, which we call THE OTR DEFENSE FUND. We feel so strongly about this issue of legal defense that we will personally start the account with a contribution of \$100 (we wish it could be more!). We hope that many other fans will join us in the belief that our friends who happen to be directly involved in this litigation should not be left alone to bear the total cost of a contest which really stands to affect all of us! If you feel moved to help, please send whatever contribution you can and we will see that every cent goes to defray the expenses incurred by our friends in their efforts to defend themselves.

If we each give a little, we could all help a lot! What say ye? Will you join us to help out our OTR friends?

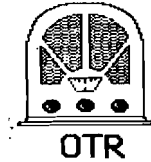
Rest assured that whatever contribution you can spare will be most appreciated. Thanks in advance.

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(Defense Fund - cont.)

Please make checks out to "OTR Defense Fund" and send your contributions to....

OTR Defense Fund
c/o Carolyn and Joel Senter
4003 Clifton Ave.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45220



The
Cassette
Library

Jim Aprile

(Editor's note).....It is the I.P.'s position to remain neutral in this matter until conclusive proof is presented from either side as to which side is in the "right". Possibly this is a case in which neither party involved is completely in the "right".

This is an uncomfortable position for us as many of the people involved are close friends and we feel we should side with them because of this friendship. This however would be taking the easy and somewhat biased path. We have not been convinced by either side as to whether or not harm has been caused and litigation is called for. Please do not read into this that we are, by our neutral stand, turning our back on the dealers. We are not! Nor are we siding with the copyright owners. We are not!

Our sympathies lie with the OTR dealers for the expenses they are experiencing because of this situation and we encourage everyone to donate funds to them in their battle to finally settle this matter once and for all.

Last month I said I would list those cassettes that are no longer in our library. Here they are...

- 1 2 4 5 8 12 19 28 29 33 34 39 41 60 71 72
73 75 79 80 82 83 84 86 87 117 120 128 139
141 148 164 171 181 182 183 184 186 187 188
189 204 205 206 210 215 220 231 233 252
255 256 261 266 271 280 281298 307 313
317 322 328 349 351 357 365 369 386 406
407 415 575 580 596 634 636 659 663 689
737 745 747 748 749 750 751 757 763 794
796 835 850 857 881 882...

Please delete them from your catalog.

If any of our members have duplicates of these cassettes that they would like to contribute to our library Please let me know. Maybe we can get these titles back into circulation!

One more thing...Some members, Suzanne Siegal for instance, have been cooperative enough to let me know when the sound quality of a tape is below par. It helps

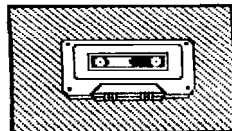


the club when you take the time to do this "service"... It helps your fellow OTR enthusiasts by saving them from experiencing that feeling of aggravation and disappointment you felt when the first sounds of the lemon hit your ear AND

you improve the overall quality of the tapes in the library because we now have the information we need before we can remove or (even better), replace the defected one(s)....!!!

I've prepared a cassette evaluation form that I will enclose with your orders that will (I hope) make this action more convient for you to take.

One last item... In order to add interest to this column and provide members with an opportunity to take a more active role in the activities of the club, I invite YOU to write a review/summary of one of the programs from our cassette library. I will include one of your summaries each month in the library column..... Hopefully...?!!



DEALERS

by Jack Palmer

As you become more involved in OTR you probably have either thought about, or have dealt with, one or more OTR dealers. This is fine if it is what you prefer and you can afford it. Even though most dealers sell their products at relatively low prices it still becomes expensive trying to build an OTR collection this way.

I am a firm believer in going the least expensive way. Since I grew up in the depression, raised a family on a small income, and never had a lot of loose funds to spare, I always tried to keep things as inexpensive as possible. This does not mean cheap! Buy the best you can afford, and maintain it properly - but don't go overboard on unnecessary frills. In my opinion, most of the time, that includes dealers!

Like all hobbies, many people become so deeply immersed in OTR (or coins, or woodworking, etc.) that they want to spend as much time as possible on this exciting thing that has entered their lives. To do this they become dealers, either full or part-time.

There are a few major dealers who sell their products nation-wide, through mail and/or retail outlets. These dealers are in business to make money, and should be considered the same as any other business enterprise. But they are not the subject of my discussion.

I must state now that I personally have never had a problem with any purchase I have made from a dealer. And I do deal with them occasionally. I also understand why they exist and what they are trying to do. Given all this, I still have some problems with them!

1...My main problem, and the one I've mentioned several times, is the expense. Even though most of them keep prices fairly low it is still much cheaper to obtain shows from other sources. Even with membership fees and postage charges, trading and copying are much less expensive.

Many dealers claim their sound is better than the shows available from other sources. Perhaps it is, but does that warrant the extra cost? If the sound is listenable it is acceptable to me. I like great sound as well as anyone else but, unless it is really a noticeable improvement, I'm not interested in paying that extra cost.

Sometimes, to obtain a certain show, you have to purchase it from a dealer. My purchases have usually been for this reason.

Which brings up another point.
2...Is it ethical to withhold shows from general distribution among OTR fans so the dealer can make a profit on the sale of such shows? I have discussed this point with them and have not reached any conclusion.

Dealers claim they often have to pay big bucks to obtain the original discs of the shows so they can make the copies to sell. This is probably so because I've noted a few ads lately where people are asking a fortune for OTR discs. The ideal situation would be for OTR clubs, acting alone, or as a group, to buy these discs and place copies in general distribution. Unfortunately, most OTR clubs or their members do not have the resources to do this.

What other sources are available to obtain these items? Perhaps the only answer is to allow the dealers to continue as they have. At least the material is being saved for
(continued on next page)

(Dealers-continued)

posterity. Which brings up my third point...

3...Do they really help the hobby as much as they claim? I've read statements in many OTR publications and even received letters myself, from dealers stating they had donated particular shows to club libraries, or obtained items that were not available except by their purchase. What about the non-dealers who have donated items to club libraries thus making them available to all interested parties? I am sure there have been as many of them as there have been dealers.

Too many dealers spend too much time patting themselves on the back for all they do for the hobby! What about all the others contributing new shows, new ideas, and new blood to the hobby?

Perhaps I am too naive, or too old-fashioned, but I have never thought of any of my hobbies as a way to make money. I do them for the enjoyment I get out of them, plus the joy of introducing others to the same enjoyment. To me OTR has always been a hobby to share with as many others as possible. Just because others don't share my outlook does not mean they are wrong. It only means we look at things from a different point of view.

Even I have to admit that dealers appear to be a necessary part of our hobby today. Everyone in OTR will have some contact with them at various times.

Just remember that there are many other less-expensive sources for the shows you are looking for.

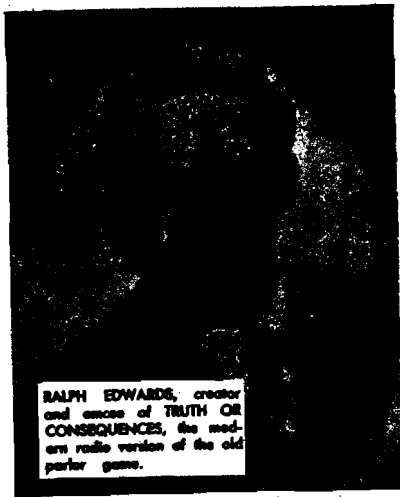
Use the money you save to upgrade and/or add to your equipment!



HARLOW WILCOX,
popular announcer on
TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

NBC, 8:30 P.M., E.S.T., Saturday



RALPH EDWARDS, creator
and master of TRUTH OR
CONSEQUENCES, the modern
radio version of the old
parlor game.

RADIO BROADCASTING IN KNOXVILLE,
TENNESSEE, DURING WORLD WAR II

Eddie Blick

Background & Methodology

World War II was the first major conflict in which the United States was involved after radio became a pervasive medium. Because the war affected most people and businesses in the United States in some way, it seems reasonable to think that it should have had some effects on radio as well.

Searching for some signs of the impact that war might have had on radio broadcasting, the author undertook a study of the Knoxville, Tennessee market to determine what radio operations there were like during World War II.

In the early 1940's, Knoxville had three radio stations--WBIR, WNOX, and WROL. Since World War II, all three stations have changed ownership and headquarters, and only WNOX has retained its call letters. It appears that no World War II-era documents from any of these stations exist. After contacting officials at those stations' successors and former employees, the author was unable to locate any primary documents that might have provided insight into station operations in those days.

However, some people who worked at those stations during the war were available to discuss radio during that period as they remembered it. Their comments provided insight and perspective.

Secondary source material was available through microfilm copies of Knoxville's two daily newspapers of that period, The Knoxville News-Sentinel and The Knoxville Journal. Radio pages in those publications provided information on changes in staff and programs. However, the latter must be considered probable rather than certain. Because program listings and descriptions were for what was to come, rather than what had been broadcast, the possibility exists that

that some programs may not have been broadcast according to schedule. Even with that caveat, the papers provided helpful information to supplement interviews.

Because time did not permit reading each day's radio page in each of the newspapers for the entire period, sampling was necessary. A pilot study indicated that daily papers had little about radio other than daily logs. However, Sunday papers carried more description of programs' contents. Thus, the sample contained radio pages of Sunday editions of each papers, using the first Sunday of each month from January 1942 through September 1945. Those Sundays covered the period from the attack on Pearl Harbor through the Japanese surrender that ended the war.

News

Probably the first impact on radio of the Pearl Harbor bombing came in news operations. "Radio news really came into its own," said John Hart, who was able to progress and respond to the challenge of covering the war because of its spontaneity and immediacy.

Apparently, network news coverage increased during the early part of the war and then gradually returned to a more normal schedule. Several people recalled a rush of network news in the beginning. John Reese, who was program director at WROL, remembered that station carried newscasts more often than before and that the schedule had many interruptions. Others, however, remembered no significant increase in news coverage during the war as a whole.

The war effort in the United States seemed, as Fred Shepard (who worked in sales for WNOX) noted, to make news more important. That feeling is reinforced by the emphasis given to radio news in local newspaper advertisements soon after the Japanese attack. The Knoxville News-Sentinel of December 8, 1941, carried one full-page advertisement for

WNOX and another for WROL.

Each advertisement urged the reader to keep tuned to its respective station for all news developments. The messages also stressed the immediacy and universality of radio news coverage. WROL urged listeners to

GET THE NEWS AS IT HAPPENS

§New York §San Francisco (sic)
 §Washington §Berlin §Tokio (sic)
 §London §Manila §Singapore

24 HOUR SERVICE

The station also offered listeners a chance to "hear a transcription of President Roosevelt's declaration of war-- 7:30 PM tonight."

WNOX said listeners could "Know What Happens--WHEN IT HAPPENS!--in Washington, Manila, Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, London, Thailand--Everywhere!" It promised to "interrupt its entire regular broadcast schedule to bring you all the news--DAY and NIGHT--as it happens!" and called itself "Your newspaper of the air".

Advertising of radio coverage of the war continued. On December 9, 1941, WROL ran an ad surrounding the daily log promoting its war coverage. Two days later, WNOX again advertised itself as "Your newspaper of the air."

One week after the Pearl Harbor attack, WNOX ads emphasized CBS news coverage. Then, as if to support those claims, an ad on December 15, 1941, included a list of 39 CBS reporters and the 27 locations around the world to which they were assigned. The trend toward making people more aware of who was covering the war for them was more evident in early 1942. On January 5, WNOX began a series of ads, each featuring a photograph of a CBS correspondent and a brief sketch of his background.

Meanwhile, that station did not neglect coverage of the home front. An ad in a December 18, 1941, newspaper mentioned a program with "War news by Ted Collins (and) home defense news by

Kate Smith."

WNOX's promotion of CBS newscasters may have indicated a trend toward recognition of such individuals. Hart recalled that some of the popular commentators then were Lowell Thomas, Raymond Swing, Edward R. Murrow, H. V. Kaltenborn, and Fulton Lewis, Jr.

Knoxville listeners sometimes could hear Allied leaders speak directly to them. On December 9, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke to the nation on all major radio networks, and twice in 1942, WNOX and WBIR carried speeches by Winston Churchill.

Local news took a back seat to war news. Two factors that probably influenced this were (a) that many people were more interested in war news than in local news and (b) that many local news persons went into military service, so that coverage of local news became more difficult than it was before the war. Most locally prepared newscasts during the war apparently relied greatly on wire-service copy.

Perhaps the most significant characteristic of local newscasts on Knoxville stations during the war was what was not said about the federal government's work with atomic energy at Oak Ridge. The number of people at the three stations who knew anything about the development of the atomic bomb was limited, and those who did know were careful to keep such news off the air. Hart noted that this was in line with a general tendency for stations to control their news voluntarily and thus avoid risking government censorship.

Approximately one year before the war ended, WROL gave its listeners a new dimension of war news coverage. It installed equipment to monitor short-wave broadcasts from London, Paris, Berlin, and Rome and had someone listening to those broadcasts 24 hours a day. Information thus received was combined with network and wire-service reports in hopes of

providing a more complete newscast. The operation was described in a newspaper report as the only listening post of its kind in East Tennessee.

next month--part 2

FAVORITE - STORY

THOMAS

In the August issue of the I. P. I wrote an article on one of my favorite programs, "The Voyage of the Scarlet Queen". I did not, on purpose, discuss one of the most colorful aspects of the show - it's titles, because I had hopes of giving you a complete log of the 35 titles. So, with the help of Don Aston's wonderful catalog, is that log.

2-2-47 Death of David Malone

(Addition w/ Howard Duff)

#1. 7-3-47 Shanghai Secret

#2. 7-10-47 Report of the White Jade Buddha

#3. 7-17-47 Spaniard and the Laskar Pirates

#4. 7-24-47 Boston Geisha & Chesapeake Bay

#5. 7-31-47 Lily in the Chim-olpo Bar

#6. 8-7-47 White Cargo Act & Ah Sin

#7. 8-14-47 Street of the Wooding Woman

#8. 8-21-47 Story of the Eight Historic Periods

#9. 8-28-47 Barefoot Nymph & The Mother Hubbard Jacket

#10. 9-4-47 Black Pearl of Delaile Bay

#11. 9-11-47 Jewel Thieves & the Straw Filled Dummy

#12. 9-18-47 Courtship of Anna May Lamour

#13. 9-25-47 Shore Leave & the Unhappy Wife

#14. 10-2-47 Fat Trader & the Sword of Apokaejiam

#15. 10-9-47 Tattooed Beaver & Baby Food for Pare Pare

#16. 10-16-47 Ah Sin & the Balinese Beaux Arts Ball

#17. 10-23-47 Grafters' Fort & the Black Pearl of Calahal Bay

#18. 10-30-47 Lonely Sulton of Isabella de Basilan

#19. 11-6-47 Kang's Treasure & the Ghost of Tangolen Bay

#20. 11-13-47 Beautiful Girl in the Bargain Basement

#21. 11-20-47 Huntsman's Quarry & the Dead Chinese

#22. 12-3-47 Green Tourist & the Temple Bell

#23. 12-10-47 Wandering Master & the Warlord at Rest

#24. 12-17-47 Red Beard & the Bag of Pearls

#25. 12-24-47 15th Llama & the Wise Guy from the East

#26. 12-31-47 Hattie McCormick & the Patient Stowaway

#27. 1-7-48 Darrelit & the Wandering Boy

#28. 1-14-48 Fang Rubies & the Black Siamese

#29. 1-21-48 Ambitious Hostess on South Bridge Road

#30. 1-28-48 Bubble Dancer & the Buccaneers

#31. 2-4-48 Pegleg Skipper & the Iberien Blade

#32. 2-11-48 Rocky III & the Deadman's Chest

#33. 2-18-48 Queen Anne Pistols & the Dealer on King George Rd.

#34. 2-25-48 Winchester Rifle & the Ambitious Groom

Note: Title for #10 is very much like #17???

THE WOODEN RADIO

I remember the Detrola table model radio being on the end of the kitchen counter close to the window. Part of the morning ritual was turning it on to hear the mellow voice of Clint Buehlman giving the weather and traffic reports. If I was real lucky he would be giving the school closings, and maybe, just maybe, he would be closing mine.

The radio was magic. I didn't know how it worked. I could figure out the gas stove. Just a pipe to the burner, light a match and one could boil water. I crawled behind the refrigerator one day, only to find a mechanical hutch for dust bunnies. One couldn't get excited about a stove or fridge. What made the Radio work? I peeked in the back, being careful not to get a shock. The five tubes glowed with a reddish-orange light. I saw the dial light. I could see the dial cord move when I turned the tuning knob. Oh, it has some wires, and a metal chassis, but unlike my bike or scooter, I couldn't see what made it work.

On Sunday evenings my parents would take it into the living room, place it on a chair and we would listen to our special programs. "Good evening Mr. & Mrs. America and all the ships at sea" - Wow! The same guy who was talking to us was broadcasting to the ships far out at sea! Yes, we enjoyed the Lone Ranger, Gunsmoke, and all the usual favorites, while we waited for television to be improved. Maybe next year my dad would buy a TV but for now the radio would do.

Even after the TV came, the radio was still part of the morning routine. With the advent of top forty stations of the 1950's and early 60's, the old wooden radio seemed out of place. Old programs should come out of it not the "latest and greatest hits", but still the radio did it's yeoman duty. Through the

years, with technical study, I found out how it worked. I was able to keep it in repair by replacing tubes, line cord and dial cord. It is a simple radio.

A few years ago, I was able to purchase a "state of the art" radio. It is completely solid state, microprocessor-controlled and has 32 memories. It took me a few hours just to learn how to operate it. It covers the broadcast band and the entire high frequency region. It can do all modes: AM, FM, Sideband, and Radioteletype, as well as being controlled by a computer. It does this with cold efficiency; and I do mean cold. It has no tubes. No heat from tubes. No red glow from tubes. It has no memories of school day mornings and Sunday evening programs. The Old Wooden Radio is mine now, and with it I can tune in to the warmth of bygone years. I still peek into the back of it, because real radios glow in the dark.

Martin Braun

From the President's Desk

I have both good news and bad news for our members. First the good news. Some of our members have been putting a lot of extra time working on our new catalog. It will be much bigger than our three previous catalogs. We will approach the 1500 mark in both our reels as well as our cassettes.

Now some bad news. We have been trying to do such a good job in putting the catalog together that we have fallen way behind our schedule. We have experimented with different types of printing. We have even attempted to put the catalog on computer disk. I guess we are guilty of trying to do too good of a job.

Our printer has also fallen behind in her schedule. We have given her so much work to do lately that she has fallen behind. The Illustrated Press and Memories have to be printed first.

We have also been advised not to attempt to compete with the Christmas mailing and heavy commercial mailings that occur in January.

Taking all this into consideration we have decided to mail our catalogs in late January or early February.

I know it has been a long wait, but I have have seen the first run and I can guarantee that this catalog will be worth waiting for.

The Back Page

BACK ISSUES

I.P.'s and MEMORIES

\$1.50 ea. postpaid

Out of print issues may be borrowed from the reference library.

Contact--Dominic Parisi
38 Ardmore Pl.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14213

ADVERTISING RATES FOR MEMORIES

\$60.00 for a full page

\$40.00 for a half page

ALL ADS MUST BE CAMERA READY

SPECIAL - OTR members may take 50% off these rates.

Advertising deadline--Sept. 1

DEADLINE FOR THE I.P.-10th of each month prior to publication

WANTED

Any Bob & Ray material that predates their public radio show.

Contact;; Dick Olday
100 Harvey Dr.
Lancaster, N.Y.
14086

TAPE LIBRARY RATES: All reels and video cassettes - \$1.25 per month; cassettes and records - \$.50 per month. Postage must be included with all orders and here are the rates: For the U.S.A. and APO, \$.60 for one reel, \$.35 for each cassette and record; \$.75 for each video tape

CANADIAN BRANCH: Rental rates are the same as above, but in Canadian funds. Postage: Reels 1 or 2 tape \$1.50; 3 or 4 tapes \$1.75. Cassettes: 1 or 2 tapes \$.65; for each additional tape and \$.25.

REFERENCE LIBRARY: A reference library exists for members. Members should have received a library list of materials with their membership. Only two items can be borrowed at one time, for a one month period. Please use the proper designations for materials to be borrowed. When ordering books include \$2.00 to cover rental, postage and packaging. Please include \$1.00 for other items. If you wish to contribute to the library, the OTRC will copy material and return the originals to you. See address on page 2. Please include \$25 refundable security deposit for each book borrowed.



Jack Benny and Fred Allen, Texaco program, January 10, 1943

UNITE PRESS INTERNATIONAL

GOLDEN MEMORIES OF RADIO

HANG AROUND...

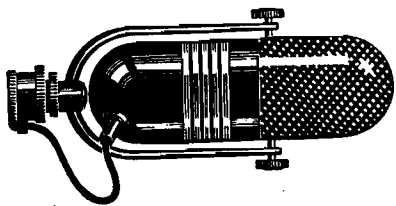
NEXT MONTH



Clem McCarthy
(Looking through glasses)



Old Time Radio Club
Box 426
Lancaster, NY 14086



FIRST CLASS MAIL