

The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS

Number 234

March 1996

The *Coca-Cola* Company

presents

**PUTTING THE
SPOTLIGHT ON
A DIFFERENT
BAND EACH
WEEK NIGHT**

This week's line-up ...

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WED - JAN GARBER
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[1941]

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Club Mailing Address

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

Back issues of *The Illustrated Press* are \$1.50 post-paid. Publications out of print may be borrowed from our Reference Library.

Deadline for *The Illustrated Press* is the 1st of each month prior to publication.

The Illustrated Press is a monthly newsletter of The *Old Time Radio Club*, headquartered in Western New York State. Contents except where noted, are copyright 1996 by the OTRC.

Send all articles, letters, exchange newsletters, etc. to: *The Illustrated Press*
c/o Ken Krug, Editor (716) 684-5290
49 Regal Street
Depew, New York 14043

Club Officers and Librarians

President

Jerry Collins (716) 683-6199
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086

Vice President & Canadian Branch

Richard Simpson
960 16 Road R.R. 3
Fenwick, Ontario
Canada, L0S 1C0

Treasurer, Back Issues, Video & Records

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

Membership Renewals, Change of Address

Peter Bellanca (716) 773-2485
1620 Ferry Road
Grand-Island, NY 14072

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--- Suspense ---

by Dom Parisi
(Source - Nostalgia Lane)

Radio's outstanding theatre of thrills, *Suspense*, was first heard on CBS Radio on June 17, 1942. It was on the air for the next twenty years and established itself as one of the most consistently professional broadcasts on the air. Early into the show, a format was established and stuck throughout as the show opened to the ringing of soft church bells and "The Man in Black" slowly intoning "and nowwww . . . another tale well calculated to keep you in . . . *SUSPENSE!*"

Suspense drew many talented directors and top actors of the day. The show had east and west coast broadcasts and many a fine Hollywood star was heard in the programs. William Spier as director set the guidelines that governed *Suspense*. The show dealt with life and death situations and developed a feeling of impending doom. As the noose grew tighter, the essence of *Suspense* was revealed.

Suspense always had the best directors like Anton M. Leader, and Norman MacDonnell, who was one of the best in the business, handling *Gunsmoke* and *Escape* as well. Some of the most distinctive work was done by Elliot Lewis who dealt with modern and classic themes. Even in its old age, the show was directed by top talent such as William N. Robson. Who can ever forget the number one classic broadcast "Sorry, Wrong Number," with radio's outstanding star, Agnes Moorehead. "Wrong Number" was one of the most requested *Suspense* shows. A favorite of mine. Another great show was "Dead Ernest"—it held you by the "guts" til the end! (Both of these shows, by the way, are available from our library.) *Suspense* lives today in collections of OTR buffs throughout the country. Our club has hundreds of broadcasts. Why not borrow a few today?

Til next time - "Bye, Bye - Buy Bonds"

This Is Your FBI

by Dom Parisi
(Source Jim Harmon)

During the war years, the dark forties, one of the heroes of just about every American lad along with F.D.R., Ike, The Lone Ranger and Tom Mix was FBI Director J. Ed-

gar Hoover. The Director was a figure above controversy and politics. We knew that no enemy spy within our borders or any local gangster had a ghost of a chance of escaping the crime lab and the big guns of Mr. Hoover and the Bureau.

It's no wonder that about as many boys wanted to grow up to be "G-Men" as they wanted to be cowboys. Hoover's face appeared in newspapers and magazines side-by-side with our comic book heroes like *Batman* and *Capt. America*. The FBI, of course, was not a one-man outfit. Mr. Hoover emphasized that it was a complex team of experts. We still wished Hoover had his own comics and radio series like our other hero *Dick Tracy*.

There were several radio series about the FBI. *The FBI In Peace And War*, and in the thirties, one by Phillips H. Lord, a series called *G-Men* (later to become *Gangbusters*.) It went on the air with some co-operation from Mr. Hoover's office.

Then in 1944, CBS started broadcasting *The FBI In Peace And War*. This program had to use the disclaimer, however, that "the broadcast does not imply endorsement, authorization, or approval of the FBI." There was really not a whole lot that the Bureau could disapprove of in this presentation of their heroic achievements on the home and war fronts.

Finally, Mr. Hoover apparently found the kind of show he could live with. The show was "*This Is Your FBI*," a Jerry Devine production which first aired over ABC on April 6, 1945. At last! Many of us felt that now—we could sleep better because our hero, J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI were on the job, protecting America from every evil out there.

Alan Ladd - Box 13

(Re-printed from a George Garabedian Production)

OK movie buffs, here's a question for you: who was the male star of "*This Gun For Hire*" with Veronica Lake?

Alan Ladd? No that's wrong. Officially, it was Robert Preston - but on paper only. The credits for the movie read: Veronica Lake and Robert Preston in "*This Gun For Hire*" and in smaller print - Laird Cregal and introducing Alan Ladd.

But there is no doubt that the real star of that famous thriller was Alan Ladd, 28-years-old and a newcomer to the big time. Ladd played Raven, a cold-blooded killer

who just about walked away with all the reviews. The audience loved him! It was the start of stardom for Ladd that lasted for 22 years. He remained one of the giants in motion pictures.

Born in Arkansas on September 3, 1913, Ladd had gone to California with his family sometime in 1921-22. Ten years later, Alan started pounding the streets in Hollywood searching for work. He landed a number of small roles plus an occasional good part on the up and coming media—radio. It took 10 years before he found a role like *Raven*. “Not since James Cagney massaged Mae Clark’s face with a grapefruit (pink or white? I don’t know) has a grim desperado gunned his way into cinema ranks as does Mr. Ladd,” rhapsodized the New York Times. Suddenly the whole world was Ladd—conscious.

The “*Gun*” movie was Ladd’s first success and his last time out as a villain; in the troubled forties and fifties the nation needed a hero—Ladd was it! “*This Gun For Hire*” set the pace for many of the movies that followed—*The Glass Key*, *Salty O’Rourke*, *Proud Rebel*, *Two Years Before The Mast* and my favorite *Shane* (“Don’t go Shane! Shane don’t go! I love you Shane”) Yes the whole country loved the guy.

In relation to *Box 13* on radio in the early 1950s, we were presented with the same kind of Ladd—a no non-sense guy like we first met in *Shane*.

☆ ☆ ☆

And Now . . . Some Radio Shows that You may have, or may not have heard of . . .

by Dom Parisi

Adventure Parade - Was a 15 minute daily serialization of the classics. It started in 1946 and ran for three years. Some of the stories included: *Moby Dick*, *Last of The Mohicans*, and *Swiss Family Robinson*.

The Adventures of Christopher Wells - Created by Ed Bryon (*Mr. District Attorney*). Premiering on CBS September 28, 1947, it ran for one season. Wells was a tough New York newsman with a flair for globe-trotting and an eye for a shapely leg.

The Collier Hour - NBC 1927 - 1932. A series of sixty minute shows divided into plays of 15 minutes each. These were stories dramatized from *Collier’s Magazine*. The best known *Collier Hour* show was “*Fu Manchu*.”

High Adventure - Mutual 1947. It ran only one season. This show was a copy-cat of the famous “*Escape*” series. The stories were told by members of a high adventure society—people who liked stories of “hard action, hard men and smooth women.”

Passport For Adams - CBS August 17, 1943, with Robert Young as Doug Adams, a wartime globe-trotting newspaper editor who’s been sent on a trip around-the-world. His mission—visit the cities and talk to people of the United Nations.

Pot O’ Gold - NBC September 26, 1939 - October 2, 1946. This program gave away \$1,000 Bills!! — to people who answered their telephones when the *Pot O’ Gold* maestro called. They didn’t even have to be listening to the show—all they had to do was answer the phone. Even if they weren’t home, the program gave them \$100 for being picked! (my kind of show!)

Roses and Drums - CBS May 8, 1932 - March 29, 1936. A series of early historical dramas that featured famous stars of stage and screen. Heard were dramas about James Madison, Nathan Hale, Valley Forge and the battle of the Alamo.

Shorty Bell - CBS 1948. Mickey Rooney was *Shorty Bell*, cub reporter for the Capital City Times. He was forever trying for a master scoop that would send him up the journalistic ladder in his dad’s footsteps.

“The Bobby Benson Show”

The Buffalo Connection

by Jerry Collins

Approximately 3-1/2 years ago Jack French sent a letter to Dick Olday suggesting that the *Bobby Benson Show* might have originated in Buffalo in the early 1930s under the direction of Herbert Rice. In that same letter Jack French and Clive Rice, the last person to play the role of Bobby Benson and the nephew of Herb Rice, asked for some local help in establishing the origin of the show.

Copies of this letter were distributed to all Buffalo members of the *Old Time Radio Club*. Initially there were no responses. Next Jack French contacted Dom Parisi, requesting information on Richard Wanemaker, who supposedly was the first actor to play the part of Bobby Benson. Dom Parisi responded by sending French a list of all the Wanemakers in the Buffalo telephone book.

I first met Jack French and Clive Rice at the *Friends of*

Old Time Radio Convention in Newark this past October. I offered to search the microfilm files back in Buffalo for information on the show. French agreed to continue to try to contact members of Richard Wanemaker's family.

Jack French was the first one to achieve success. One of his letters was passed around until it reached Richard Guarnio, a nephew of Richard Wanemaker. Guarnio has in his possession a scrapbook that will apparently establish the origin of the "Bobby Benson Show."

After I received Jack French's letter, I decided to continue poring over my reels of microfilm until I found some information on the "Bobby Benson Show." Finally, in early January I found the article that I had been searching for.

The article appeared on Sunday morning August 7, 1932 in the Buffalo Courier Express. It was titled "Buffalo Boy Starred, Will be Hero of Radio Play to Go on CBS from WGR soon." Richard Wanemaker was chosen from over forty candidates to play the role of Bobby Benson. Herb Rice was selected to write and direct the show. Lorraine Pankow, Mrs. Rice in real life, would have one of the few adult roles in the show. The sponsor was the Hecker H-O Company of Buffalo.

The show would originate in the Buffalo Broadcasting studios of station WGR. Other member stations of the BBC were WBEN, WKBW and WMAK. A later article in the Courier Express indicated that the show would premier on Monday, September 26. For some unexplained reason, the first broadcast of "The Bobby Benson Show" was Monday, November 14, 1932 at 5:00 PM.

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RADIO MEMORIES

by Francis Edward Bork

TERRY AND THE PIRATES

During the heyday of old time radio, I have had many favorites. Among them was "Terry and the Pirates," a fifteen minute after school cliffhanger. Terry and his pals Pat Ryan, Flip Corkin, Connie the Collie, Hotshot Charlie and their lady friends, Burma and Eleta, were fighting the Oriental Pirates in the South China Sea long before World War II. Their only enemy that I can remember was "The Dragon Lady," (no, not the lovely Linda DeCicco our Dragon Lady and former Illustrated Press editor.)

I can remember as though it were yesterday, walking to school with my school chums and talking about Terry and his pals and how last night on radio they had fought off the pirates in Shanghai or off the coast of Hong Kong or in China. What imaginations we all had. Every passing car would become a Chinese Junk filled with pirates which we would do battle with, (we always won, sinking the blood thirsty pirates and their ships to the bottom of the South China Sea.) Of course the merchant ships that dared sail into those dangerous pirate infested waters weren't as lucky as the boys of our fourth grade class (who always won the fight) no, most were not lucky at all, for most of the time their fight was lost and Terry and his gang would have to go to their rescue.

On a cold November day in 1937, Milton Caniff's comic strip "Terry and the Pirates" came to life on NBC's Blue Network broadcast three times a week with Dari Rich as the sponsor. The perils of the far off Orient as Terry and crew fought the South China Sea pirates. (Can you imagine in this modern age of 1937, there are still pirates sinking merchant ships and taking people prisoners as slaves to be sold?) That was the basis of this adventure serial.

Shanghai, Calcutta, Malay, Hong Kong, Singapore and a dozen other strange places they routed evil doers to the delight of thousands of juvenile radio listeners who tuned in their radios daily to hear how Terry and his pals got out of one jam after another. Alas all good things must come to an end, such as Terry and the Pirates. After only two years, "Terry" was dropped from radio forever. But, not to worry, not to fret, "Terry" is back on the Blue Network with Quaker Oats as its sponsor with all new adventures. Now with America in the middle of World War II, Terry's day had arrived. Like

Hop Harrigan, Terry and the Pirates attracted its largest audience as the gang not only fought in the Orient but now also went to the heart of Nazi land and gave Hitler a number size 10 boot where it would do the most good. Terry's greatest adventures were broadcast during these the war years.

The show started with a racket of gongs, drums, cymbals, and Chinese chanting which we could not understand. And now as I listen to *Terry and the Pirates* I think that's just a lot of noise, but back then as a child my pals and I thought that it was just great. Sometimes we would even pretend we knew what they were saying.

Terry was one of the first juvenile adventure serials to do battle against the Axis Powers and that small group of enemy spies. Once the war was officially declared and the battle lines clearly drawn, Al Barker, one of Terry's writers, lost no time in putting Terry and his pals into the midst of the fray. Although Terry and his pals operated mostly in the Orient, it's just a little ironic that their chief foe were the Nazis. The Nazi Brownshirts were sent by headquarters Berlin to oversee operations in the Pacific Islands some how occupied by the Nazis.

A real switch came when Terry in 1943 teamed up with the Dragon Lady. Who now was an agent for the Chinese government and assigned to fight the Japs. (See never judge a book by it's cover, the ol' gal was really a patriot, what? Well maybe.) Their mission, find and destroy the Japanese supply depot hidden somewhere on a Yellow River plantation and under the supervision of the (evil Prof. Boncore?) no the evil Baron Von Krell. For Terry it was a dangerous partnership, for he never knew when or if the Dragon Lady would stab him in the back and change sides again for her own profit.

The next year, 1944, found Terry and Pat Ryan drafted into the British Secret Service, the MI-5, to impersonate two ranking Nazi officers, and leave for a dangerous mission deep in the heart of the Japanese capital city Tokyo

With Italy defeated and now turned against its former Axis partner Germany, now a country near defeat itself, Terry and the gang were in the middle of a battle with a Nazi diehard spy ring, this time in Calcutta, India.

All through the war years *Terry and the Pirates* held a high spot among the other after school adventure serials but then in 1946, it happened, Terry's ratings began to drop. With the war over and won by the Allied Forces the show just wasn't the same anymore. No Japs and Nazi to fight and beat, no spies or double agents to expose, the show lost it's war-time excitement.

The Dragon Lady left the Chinese service and returned to reorganize her old gang of international pirates, then for another two years, Terry and the gang waged the battle against the Dragon Lady and her evil pirate gang all across the Orient and far east.

Owen Jordan was now cast in the character of Terry throughout this last season, the part played earlier in the shows run by Jackie Kelk and Cliff Carpenter. Bud Collyer, doing the part of Superman an another show also did the part of Pat Ryan, while Ted de Corsia was Flip Corkin. Cameron Andrews was just one of the many actors who played the part of Connie the Collie, the most popular being Peter Donald. For the ladies on the show there was Frances Chaney as Burma with Gerta Rozan as Eleta and two ladies did the part of the Dragon Lady, Agnes Moorhead and Adlaide Klein.

The Dragon Lady was Terry's most formidable foe. But nothing could bring back the excitement to the show like it was when Terry and the gang were fighting the Nazi and the Japs.

The show always opened with drums, gongs, cymbals banging away and Chinese gibberish which no one could understand. Then later there was announcer Douglas Browning with his "here comes Quaker with a bang-bang, rat-a-tat-tat, bang-bang commercial. Back then my school pals and I thought that was stupid, and I still do. But now when I re-listen to *Terry and the Pirates* and hear that commercial I have to smile and think back recalling my childhood days.

During the war years Browning threw around words like robustitude, marvalious and cleverkins. Somewhat like *Jack Armstrong's* Franklin McCormack pushing Wheaties. Browning pushed Quaker cereals as the food "Uncle Sam" wanted all boys and girls to eat to keep healthy and strong. "Don't forget kids to tell mom that she need not use her valuable ration stamps to purchase any of the Quaker products." Then in keeping with the shows patriotic theme he would close the show with a nifty daily "Victory-gram" such as:

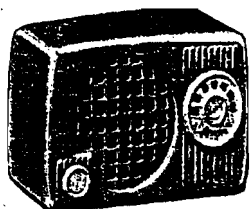
"Paper is a mighty weapon

Haul it in keep smartly steppin'

Turn every scrap you can

To help beat the Nazi and Japan"

Well that's about it for now, till next time, Happy Radio Memories.



SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

THE RIGHT TO HAPPINESS

She was the most married heroine in daytime radio. Across 21 years Carolyn Allen would be a bride four times, setting a precedent for *Search for Tomorrow's* Joanne Barron Tate Reynolds Vincente, who would match Carolyn's feat as the most married heroine of daytime TV. Carolyn would also be pursued by suitors whom she never took to the altar. At the end, while appearing contented with her fourth spouse, Carolyn's faithful listeners might surmise that — were her story, *The Right to Happiness*, ever to make a comeback — she could go on endlessly searching for happiness while looking for husband number five.

Happiness had roots in another important soap which is still going strong today, albeit on TV, *The Guiding Light*. Created by Irna Phillips, a former Ohio school teacher, *Light* debuted January 25, 1937. With popularity soaring, Miss Phillips and an unpublicized stable of writers spun off one of *Light's* leading characters (Rose Kransky, played by Ruth Bailey) into a serial of her own. *Happiness* arrived October 16, 1939. Its focus soon shifted to Carolyn Allen and the locale in its heyday was Meridian, Mississippi.

Miss Phillips, the show's creator, who churned out three million words annually for 4 highly successful daytime dramas, drew a salary of a quarter-million dollars annually in the 1930s. In 1942 she sold *Happiness* to Proctor & Gamble (with *The Guiding Light* and *Road of Life*) and all three moved from Chicago to New York. At that juncture, John M. Young (who years later would write two of radio's last dramatic series, *Gunsmoke* and *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*) became head writer on the *Right to Happiness*. He was still there at the end, almost two decades later.

Eloise Kummer had played Carolyn while in Chicago. In New York, Claudia Morgan assumed the role, a part she would play for 18 years. Miss Morgan was well recognized by listeners to several series including the female leads in *Lone Journey*, beginning in 1940, and *The Adventures of the Thin Man*, which ran from 1941-50. Subsequently, she would be featured in a character role in the daytime serial *Against the Storm* and as female lead

in *The Adventures of the Abbotts*, a weekly crime drama, in 1954-55.

But it was *The Right to Happiness* that brought Claudia Morgan's talents to the forefront. The daughter of a magazine editor, Carolyn Allen's quest for a "God-given right to happiness" led her to the altar four times, to a prison sentence and legions of sleepless nights at the hands of her rebellious son Skip.

Husband #1, Bill Walker, was self-centered and, by his own admission, "capable of anything." He died as Carolyn accidentally shot him. Charged with murder, she was able to beat the rap at the close of a four month trial. Carolyn Allen Walker's next marriage, to Dwight Kramer (played by Dick Wells), was doomed by the fickle nature of both, ending in divorce. In 1952, while exhausting husband #3, Gov. Miles Nelson (at different times played by Gary Merrill and radio's *Perry Mason*, John Larkin), Carolyn made herself an inmate of a women's prison. It was her way of saving her mate from political ruin. The governor did not comprehend her sacrifice at first, however, son Skip, born while she was incarcerated in the state pen, would become her greatest source of joy and pain. But that was still far in the future.

After that marriage, in which political intrigue was introduced to the plot, Carolyn settled down with husband #4, Lee MacDonald, a prominent attorney. In final moments of the last show, the two paused in the library of their colonial estate to reminisce over definitions for happiness that Carolyn had collected for two decades. Each one had been worked into the story line on previous occasions. Among them: "we are all born with the right to happiness, yet happiness depends on the thoughts we think, on the things we do, on how generously we live." Another: "It is human to make mistakes, but if rather than seeking to excuse ourselves we admit our mistakes, profit by them and honestly try to make up for them, we've come a long way in our search for our right to happiness." And this one which Carolyn ended the series with, the one she really liked best of all: "Happiness depends upon our relationship with those we love." Having lived with four husbands and a troubled son, she'd had lots of practice living that one.

Skip Nelson probably wouldn't have been a bad kid without lots of peer pressure. But it was group-induced traps he invariably was drawn to, particularly when no stable father-figure existed in his life. In the mid to late 1950s, with Skip needing more help than she could supply, Carolyn was between husbands, pursued by a Mr. Chalmers (whom she let get away), while telling Skip that he was primary in her life. The teenager be-

lieved otherwise, and — given his mother's history — why shouldn't he?

In late 1955, Skip was trying to make the adjustment to a new high school. He hoped to gain favor with coed Molly Jarvis and a gang of high school hoodlums who pursued all sorts of vandalism. Skip got caught after linking up with them and was punished for his actions by the school. To gain the gang's respect, he decided to try again. In January 1956, he mused over consequences of destroying the interior of the principal's car. As he did so, he recalled a recent admonition from his mother: "I've leaned over backwards trying to play according to your rules, Skip. I've made allowances. I've even given in to you. And where has it gotten me? You'll follow my rules now. You'll show more respect and consideration. You'll do what you're told. I will not have you getting in more trouble, Skip. We'll work this out together, dear. But meantime, you're going to do what I say." Carolyn was determined to keep her son on the straight and narrow. Any housewife faced with similar anguish in those days could clearly identify with her plight.

When Procter & Gamble bought *The Right to Happiness* in 1942 it had advertised its Crisco brand since the program's debut in 1939. But this serial is most widely remembered for its association with another P&G product, Ivory Soap. A typical opening by announcers Ron Rawson or Hugh Conover went like this: "Your favorite soap since baby days, it's got those gentle baby ways," (Theme chords on organ.) "Ivory Soap, 99 and 44/100ths percent pure." (More chords.) "Now, Ivory Soap's own story, *The Right to Happiness*." Organist William Meeder would break into full theme, Breil's "Song of the Soul.")

First heard at 10:15 a.m. EST on the NBC Blue (later ABC) network, *Happiness* moved to CBS at 1:30 in its second year. In its third year it was broadcast at 11:15 a.m. on NBC. By its fourth season (1942-43) it had settled at the time (3:45 p.m.) and address (NBC) it would occupy for the next 13 years. It would move only once more at NBC, to 4 p.m. at the start of 1956, now no longer sponsored by Ivory Soap but by two P&G detergents, Spic 'n Span and Cheer. By then, Hugh James, the venerable announcer on *Wendy Warren and the News*, *Voice of Firestone* and formerly of *The Second Mrs. Burton*, narrated *Happiness*.

Happiness had adopted a little-used format of a brief introduction without commercial, about five minutes of story line, first commercial, one or two more scenes of plot development, and two final commercials. It was a departure from the tried-and-true format widely practiced elsewhere of one or more commercials before each

episode. The experiment would be later used successfully and to this day by many TV drama shows.

When NBC dropped its daytime soaps in late 1957, Carolyn's pursuit of *The Right to Happiness* sustained such a loyal following that CBS picked it up without missing an episode. It was carried under multiple and sustaining sponsorship at 1 p.m. until daytime radio drama's demise November 25, 1960. *The Right to Happiness* was one of the final four soaps canceled (others were *Ma Perkins*, *Young Dr. Malone* and *The Second Mrs. Burton*). Underscoring its popularity and well deserved longevity.

☆☆☆

Lady Crime Fighters

by Jack French

Radio detectives were a mainstay in the Golden Age of Radio and, of course, most of them were men. As a reasonable estimate, there were about 120 radio series that featured a male crime fighter as the central character. The female sleuths, while in the minority, nevertheless provided us with many adventurous hours on the air. And a few of them were even better than their more well known male counterparts.

I've been researching this genre since 1988 and so far I've found nine series in which the lead was a woman crime solver. For purposes of definition, that would exclude any female sleuth who was merely half of a detecting duo, or a lady tagalong who helped her boss solve cases, i.e. *Mr. & Mrs. North*, *Two on a Clue* and *Results, Inc.*

Radio's first woman detective made her debut in September 1937 and the show was broadcast from Chicago. It also had the distinction of having the longest run for a female sleuth (four years) but that may be because it was a soap opera. *Kitty Keene, Inc.* sponsored by Drefit, told of the trials and triumphs of a former chorus girl who in mid-life opens up a detective agency. Over the four years it aired (one on CBS and three on Mutual) it went through three different actresses portraying Kitty: Beverly Younger, Gail Henshaw and Fran Carlon. Our title-heroine probably got her surname from the show's creator, Day Keene, who shared the writing responsibilities with Wally Norman. Four episodes are in trading currency; all are from the 1939 season.

The next woman shamus, chronologically, is *Carolyn Day, Detective* and I'm guessing her origin to be about

1940. Whether or not she actually reached the airwaves is yet to be determined, but there are four episodes in circulation, each 5 minutes in length. Their brevity would suggest they are audition shows, but I can't prove that either. Carolyn Day is both the star and narrator of each program. She and her father, Randolph Day, are detectives and her boyfriend is Larry Bixby, a homicide lieutenant of an unnamed metropolitan city. There are no cast credits nor can I identify any of the actors by their voices.



An Encyclopedia of North American

Network RADIO 1920's to Present

A - Z programs, theme songs, sponsors,
performers—CBS, NBC, ABC, Mut, NPR, CBC

SAME TIME... SAME STATION

by Ron Lackmann

Over 1,200 entries

Foreword by Norman Corwin

A reference source — network radio of the past (LONE RANGER, SHADOW, LUX, SUSPENSE) and present (Limbaugh, Stern, King, etc)
120 photographs

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In the summer of 1941 NBC aired an entertaining but short-lived series entitled *Miss Pinkerton, Inc.* Its leads were the wife and husband Hollywood team of Joan Blondell and Dick Powell. Joan played Mary Vance, a law school graduate who inherits her uncle's private detective agency. She is dubbed "Miss Pinkerton" by NYC police Sgt. Dennis Murray, played by Powell. Only the initial episode has survived but it's testimony to the strengths of the series. Even the supporting cast included talented veterans like Gale Gordon and Hanley Stafford.

Of special interest is how this series got its name. In 1932 Joan Blondell starred in a Warner Brothers movie based upon a novel by Mary Roberts Rinehart. The heroine of this book, and the movie, is Hilda Adams, a private nurse who solves crimes as a secret operative of a detective squad. Warner Brothers invented the title "*Miss Pinkerton*" for the film but it would be nine more years before Rinehart, who by this time had written four mysteries featuring Hilda Adams, would nickname her sleuth "Miss Pinkerton". This was in 1941, the same year the radio show began. Coincidence? I think not . . .

I learned of the next feminine private-eye through the assistance of a fellow OTR researcher in California, Norman Cox. He located an article in a December 1941 issue of the New York Times announcing that Una Merkel, then portraying a dizzy reporter on radio, *Nancy Brown*, would switch to an equally dizzy sleuth, *Susan Bright, Detective* in the same time slot. Neither of these Merkel assignments were a full program; they were segments within *Johnny Presents*, sponsored by

Philip Morris. This one-hour variety show, mostly music, usually included a 15 minute dramatic sketch. Over the years this portion changed from *City Desk* to *Psychic Detective* to the *Perfect Crime* to *Nancy Bacon Reporting* to *Susan Bright, Detective*.

Una Merkel is equally celebrated on radio, stage and screen. Her radio career included *Texaco Star Theatre*, *The Great Gildersleeve* (she was Adeline Fairchild for one season) and *Sweet Adeline* in which she co-starred with Gale Gordon. She was in dozens of movies and garnered a 1961 Oscar nomination playing the mother in "*Summer and Smoke*" while on Broadway she won the 1956 Tony Award for "*The Ponder Heart*." I don't believe any recordings of *Nancy Bacon Reporting* or *Susan Bright, Detective* exist today. (Continued next month)

The Last Word . . .

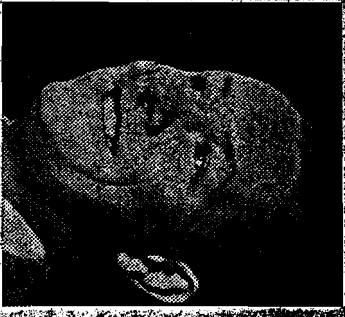
This issue marks the second under my guiding hand, and before we go any further I want to publicly thank Pete Bellanca for all his efforts as prior editor. During his tenure, he has set the standard for a "Quality" publication and will definitely be a tough act to follow. I'm hoping those of you who contributed in any way previously will continue to do so. Our collective goal should be to make the Illustrated Press the most interesting and informative publication in the OTR community. In this way we can stimulate further growth in our club and promote greater interest in the hobby.

The old Atwater-Kent has been handed down to yet another . . . lets see if together we can fine tune those dials and come up with a hit show.

WHEEL
BASIC CBS

THE STARS ADDRESS IN ROCHESTER!

JUST LISTENING FOR TODAY!

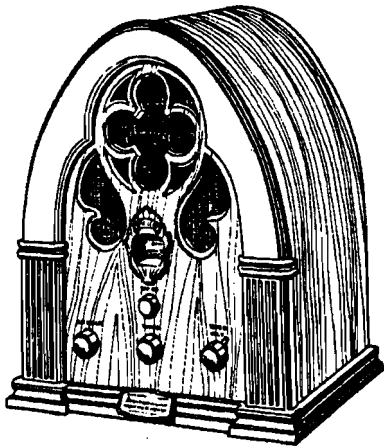
MORTON DOWNEY
10:30 A. M.

VAUGHN MONROE
7:30 P. M.

At Atlantic Downey's guest tonight, "Come Give us a Refreshment Time!" comes from Lewiston, Me.

JUNIOR TOWN MEETING — 7 P. M.
from Honeoye Falls Central School. Subject: "What Do You Think of the Movies?" Bill Adams, producer and director; Howard C. Seymour, moderator; and W. Kenneth Patterson, coordinator. 38 high schools participate in this series. Be sure to listen in!

Old Time Radio Club
Box 426
Lancaster, NY 14086



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