

THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS

TODAY on WHEC..



BURNS AND ALLEN-10:00 P. M.

Radio's most hilarious comedy team—George Burns and Gracie Allen—will again keep you laughing, from 10:00 to 10:30 P. M. this evening. Gracie's featherbrained ideas and zany schemes result in making of George certainly one of the most harrassed husbands in America. Block Drug Co. is the program's sponsor. Listen and laugh tonight at 10!

Other Highlights Tonight:

- 7:00—Beulah
- 8:00—Mr. Chameleon
- 8:30—Dr. Christian
- 9:00—Grouche Marx
- 9:30—Bing Crosby Show
- 10:30—Lum and Abner



Yesterday on WHEC..

1947—On March 8, 1947, Clarence Wheeler in Florida pressed a key which increased the power of Station WHEC to 5,000 Watts, day and night. Thus, 22 years from the date of its founding, WHEC acquired a new, greater, clearer voice with which to reach



the ears of new thousands of listeners! The men, women and children for whom listening to WHEC had become a habit learned that henceforward their listening pleasure would be still further enhanced. WHEC, the station listeners built, had reached a new milestone in progress. Although pleased with our new acquisition of power, WHEC realized that it is not how loudly you talk but what you say that really counts. Responsibility increased with power.

Yours at 1460,

Clarence O. Wheeler
General Manager

WHEC

The Station Listeners Built!

Membership Information

New member processing, \$5 plus club membership of \$15 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing, and a monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$15; April-June, \$12; July-September, \$8; October-December; \$5. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The *Old Time Radio Club* meets the first Monday of every month at 7:30 PM during the months of September to June at 393 George Urban Blvd., Cheektowaga, NY 14225. The club meets informally during the months of July and August at the same address. Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome. The *Old Time Radio Club* is affiliated with The Old Time Radio Network.

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

**Membership Inquires and OTR
Network Related Items**

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

Tape Libraries

Cassettes

Don Friedrich (716) 626-9164
21 Southcrest
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

Reel-to-Reel and Reference Library

Ed Wanat Sr. (716) 895-9690
393 George Urban Blvd.
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

Tape Library Rates: All reels and video cassettes are \$1.85 per month; audio cassettes and records are \$0.85 per month. Rates include postage and handling. Canadian rates are the same as above, but in Canadian funds.

That Little Irishman "LUIGI"

by DOM PARISI

A curly-headed Irishman named J. Carrol Naish played the "lil" immigrant Luigi in the popular and very funny "Life with Luigi" show. Naish's Italian dialect was so good that one could believe he just came down the walkway of a boat that sailed from Italy. I remember Naish in a black and white movie, "The Black Hand" which also starred Gene Kelly, where Naish played an Italian cop. He was a very good actor.

This classic comedy program was first heard over CBS radio on September 21, 1948. It aired without a sponsor for approximately one year. Wrigley's, the chewing gum people picked-up the show and carried it in a Tuesday night spot until 1953, the last year of broadcast. (The handbook of OTR lists 1952 as the final year)

The show was headed-up by a group of talented performers. Alan Reed was Pasquale; Hans Conried played Schultz; Jody Gilbert was Rosa with her silly laugh; Mary Shipp played the teacher Miss Spalding. Others in the cast included Joe Forte who played Horowitz and Ken Peters as Olsen. Gil Stratton, Jr. played Luigi's young friend Jimmy. Alan Reed Jr. also played Jimmy's part from time to time.

Luigi came to America to the little Italy section of Chicago in September 1948. His friend from the old country, Pasquale, the owner of a restaurant, was his sponsor for entry into the United States. Pasquale of course, was trying to hatch a plan he had in mind. He wanted little Luigi to marry his fat daughter Rosa. Luigi was astounded by Rosa's bulky frame, her high pitched voice, and that repulsive laughter that burst forth whenever Pasquale called her. "Oh Roooossa! Roooossa! Rosa.!!!" The Pasquale routine of calling for Rosa became one of the shows top running gags. Of course Luigi didn't want to marry Rosa. What he really wanted was to become an American Citizen and in order to reach this goal he studied for it in Miss Spaulding's class at night school.

Under the teacher's patient tutoring Luigi learned about George Washington and the constitution of the United States. In night school he became friends with Olsen the Swede, Horowitz, and Schultz the cantankerous German who always complained of his Rheumatism. Many of the story lines developed inside the classroom. The majority of the action however, was portrayed out-

side the school room and usually involved Rosa and her father Pasquale.

After Luigi's arrival in Chicago he was able to rent a store next door to Pasquale's spaghetti palace. It was here that he opened an antique shop and went into business for himself. Gullible Luigi often sold items under their true value and even gave things away. He never could make a profit from his venture into antiques. It didn't take him long to realize why his friend Pasquale sponsored him to America. Pasquale rebelled against every enterprise that did not aid and promote the cause of Rosa's marriage. Pasquale masked his sinister motives against Luigi with his cheery greeting, "Luigi — Mah — Friend! Ello, Luigi, Ello, Ello!" And it seemed that whenever Luigi's ambitions were smashed, Rosa always was there to help mend his broken heart.

The show went forward week after funny week and told about Luigi's adventures in America. His letters to his Mama Basko in Italy started with: "Dear -A-Mama-Mia! today in Chicago the . . ." the letters were also a lead-in for the shows story line. He tried in his correspondence to make Mama understand how well he was doing in America. In reality we all knew in our hearts that he missed his mother and perhaps the old country too.

Music for the program was provided by Lyn Murray and Lud Gluskin. The theme song was a mix of "Chicago" and "Oh Marie." A soft accordion rendition was heard over the program's closing credits and the "Lil immigrants" ending line in his letter: "So long Mama-Mia, your lovin-a-son, Luigi Basko, the lil immigrant!" J. Carrol Naish died on January 24, 1973 in Lajolla, California. He died three days after his 73rd birthday. (According to "the handbook of OTR" there are at least three dozen episodes of the show available.)

Match the Star and His Radio Show

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Brian Donlevy | A. Box 13 |
| 2. Lionel Barrymore | B. His Honor, The Barber |
| 3. Wendell Corey | C. Mayor of the Town |
| 4. Herbert Marshall | D. Front Page Farrell |
| 5. Ralph Bellamy | E. Dangerous Assignment |
| 6. Alan Ladd | F. Man Against Crime |
| 7. Dick Powell | G. McGarry & His Mouse |
| 8. Richard Widmark | H. A Man Called X |
| 9. Ronald Colman | I. Final Edition |
| 10. Barry Fitzgerald | J. The Halls of Ivy |

Answers: 1-E, 2-C, 3-G, 4-H, 5-F, 6-A, 7-I, 8-D, 9-J, 10-B

OTR Becomes TV for the Blind Nationwide

by *JIM DOLAN*

Because OTR was written for sound alone, we believe that old time radio programs are the best form of entertainment for the blind and people with poor vision. This is the idea behind the radio entertainment network. REN is a joint effort of old time radio collectors and broadcasters. We are a non-commercial / nonprofit organization that supplies a weekly format of OTR radio series for radio reading service stations to broadcast free of charge.

Radio reading service stations are on the air to provide news / information and entertainment for people who are blind or cannot read well. These RRS stations are on the air in most parts of the US. They typically broadcast on your local public "non-commercial" FM and TV stations. These signals are hidden in the signal of your public broadcast station. To hear the radio signals called (SCA) you will need a special radio receiver. These sets can be purchased by mail order.* (If you know of someone who is blind or has poor vision, they may qualify for a free receiver.) In some parts of the country your local radio reading service station may be broadcasting these program on your area's PBS television station. These signals are also hidden in the regular television program. They are called (SAP) or second audio program. Listening to TV SAP audio is not as complicated as listening to (SCA) because you may already own a stereo TV that can receive (SAP) audio. To find out if your local PBS station rebroadcasts your areas radio reading service, find the audio button on your TV, VCR, or remote control and select the (SAP) option. If the sound is different from the picture on your TV, you are probably listening to the radio reading service.

The Radio Entertainment Network has been on the air for approximately one and a half years and is typically one of the most popular programs on the station that broadcast it. The REN programs are available as a two or ten hour weekly program and are distributed on tape or by satellite weekly.

If you would like to assist us in promoting dramatic radio or if you would like to listen to REN on your local radio reading service station please contact your radio reading service or library for the blind and ask them to contact us at our address below or call us on our comment line at (206) 689-1708 and we will contact your local station.

If you have a satellite receiver or a computer with sound, you can listen to REN on the Yesterday USA Super-station on Sundays from 6 AM (eastern) to 4 PM on C band satellite at Galaxy 5 channel 76.8 MHz audio. You can also hear it on the Internet at the same times www.yesterdayusa.com or www.audionet.com (all small letters) click on "HOT NEW STATIONS." To listen to this live audio, you will need to have a rate of 14.4.

At some time in the future we hope to expand the Radio Entertainment Network into a full time service. If you would like to help put OTR back on the radio where it belongs, please call your local radio reading service and ask them to consider scheduling the REN programs, and help bring about a renaissance for old time radio this time as theater for the blind.

If you would like to contact us our address is:

REN
P.O. Box 51161
Seattle, WA. 98115

These RRS stations are current REN affiliates:

Seattle, WA	Grand Rapids, MI
Portsmouth, OH	Yucaipa, CA
Portland, OR	Los Angeles, CA
Dalton, MA	Roanoke Rapids, NC
Harrisburg, PA	York, PA
Champaign, IL	Omaha, NE
Chicago, IL	Billings, MT
Asheville, NC	

* SCA Technology - 1 (800) 944-0630
FM Atlas - 1 (800) 605-2219
Credit Card orders accepted.

HE BELIEVES IN KIDS

by **Ruth Waterbury**

The stories of kids and how they react with rapture to the sight and sound of Bill "Hopalong Cassidy" Boyd could reach from Christmas day to the Fourth of July — but the nicest stories concern Bill, himself.

He's that rarest of actors — a happy man with a sense of responsibility to the public. He is passionately in love with his beautiful wife who is just as passionately in love with him. Her name was Grace Bradley and when she was just a sassy-faced little girl she fell in love with him at first sight, when he was the star of "The Volga Boat-

man." She never dreamed she'd grow up to marry him, but now that she has, she is just as fascinated by him as the enraptured thousands who sit enthralled, watching him on their television screens.

His wildfire success today as Hoppy didn't just happen. He almost went broke trying to retain the rights to his Western character — and do you know why? Because it was a good part? No. That was a proportion of it, but the real reason, in Bill's words, is, "I knew Hoppy was something I could do good with."

Bill now heads the seven companies it takes to keep Hoppy in full circulation. On the radio, his Hoppy series is just starting over five hundred and sixteen stations. Last year the Hoppy comic books sold more than fourteen million comics. All the movie rights are his. Topper is his personal property and as for those Hopalong Cassidy guns, shirts, lassoes, neckerchiefs and the like, Bill personally oversees every bit of them. He won't tolerate anything shoddy. He believes in the kids just as much as they believe in him.

If Bill had been willing, five years ago, to make quick money with Hoppy, he could have saved his great ranch down in the Santa Monica mountains, overlooking the Pacific, which he loved completely. He sold the ranch at a loss rather than turn Hoppy into a series of cheap gangster pictures.

Then if he had been willing to put out clothes for kids that weren't fireproof, sunproof, color proof and boy proof, he could have saved the fine apartment to which he moved, and Gracie wouldn't have been so long between dresses. Gracie learned to cook, instead, and they went into a tiny three-room house, just living room, bedroom and kitchen. They say they'll never go back to a big one again.

Bill is always stubborn where an ideal is concerned. On his recent personal appearance tour, in Atlanta, Georgia, they asked him to hustle up the line of children with whom he was shaking hands in a department store. If he did, they said, they could get a few of the waiting Negro children in. Bill told them to make two lines. It never happened in the deep South before but Bill stood in the middle — one hand to the white children on one side, the other to the dark children. Everybody was happy.

In Brooklyn the cops were afraid the vast crowds would get out of hand and crush Bill standing in the middle of them. Bill prevented that by saying, "All of you, turn to the person next to you, shake hands, say Hi, Neighbor, and smile."

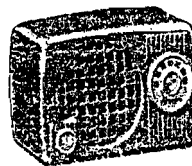
In Oklahoma City, the store in which he was supposed to appear was so packed he couldn't get in and the police got scared for the safety of the whole building and asked Bill to do something. He climbed on top a police car, called to the crowd and circled the block twice. They ran laughing out after him, like kids after the Pied Piper — and the danger vanished.

Bill never drinks or smokes because, he says, "I'll never willingly disillusion one person who believes in Hoppy." He's been thirty-five years in show business and claims this past one is the happiest. "It's gone to my heart," he says. "What makes me the happiest is that Hoppy's success proves this country is beginning to settle down again. It's a great thing when a wholesome cowboy can keep a whole family together, watching his antics on a screen in their parlor."

You don't wonder, do you, when you hear things like that — that the young in heart — no matter what the dates are on their birth certificates — all love him.

Little boys and girls cluster around their television sets on a Sunday evening bug-eyed. It's an event that they wouldn't miss for worlds. Their elders are equally enthusiastic, if somewhat more controlled, for Hoppy strikes a chord that lurks in all human beings, even in those whose childhood is but a nebulous memory. And it's no wonder, for Hoppy believes in people. But most of all, he believes in kids.

Reprinted from Radio and TV Mirror, February, 1950



SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

THE BRIGHTER DAY

In the postwar era of the late forties, the last three radio soap operas to successfully attract audiences for a sustained period made their debut. The first was *Wendy Warren and the News* on CBS in June 1947. It was followed by *This is Nora Drake*, initially appearing on NBC in October 1947, later moving to CBS. Both have been featured here in previous columns.

The third new serial — actually the last of the era that can be included based on longevity — was *The Brighter Day*. Initially heard at 10:45 a.m. on NBC Oct. 11, 1948, it was also the end of the highly acclaimed radio serials produced by creative genius Irna Phillips.

Perhaps you will recall that one of Phillips' distinguishing techniques was an intense emphasis on character development. Another was of putting her principals into recognizable, believable situations. She was also the first to bring dramas about professionals to the microphone (and later, before the cameras). She originated the medical-related soap opera, some of which still thrive on TV today.

But in *The Brighter Day*, her protagonist was a minister, not a physician or a nurse. Phillips had successfully been down this road before as she placed a clergyman in the center of her well received soap, *The Guiding Light*, in 1937. Now it was to be Reverend Richard Dennis' turn to face the crisis developing in the little village of Three Rivers. It was there that he pastored a small nonsectarian congregation.

A widower, 'Poppa' Dennis (as he was affectionately called by his own brood), was the father of four daughters (Elizabeth, Althea, Patsy and Bobby) and a son (Grayling). Despite the fact that the reverend was the avowed protagonist, a woman's plights contributed heavily to the action, as was true of almost every soap opera.

In this case, it was the eldest daughter, Liz, who at age 25 was attracting plenty of suitors. Lots of material there. At the same time, she was attempting to fill a self-appointed role of "keeping the little family together" following her mother's untimely death. With her feet planted firmly on terra firma, Liz was a confidant to her father, a counselor to her siblings and a worrier about unbridled, headstrong ambitions of her impetuous sister, Althea. The serial proved to any disbelievers that ministers' children also have feet of clay.

Unheralded Bill Smith starred as 'Poppa' Dennis — he had no other memorable roles in radio aside from this one. Margaret Draper (later Fay of *Ma Perkins* fame) and Grace Mathews (a leading lady on *The Shadow* and *Big Sister*) were cast as Liz. Other regulars, mostly unknown outside *Day*, included Jay Meredith as Althea, Pat Hosley as Patsy, Lorna Lynn as Bobby and Billy Redfield as Grayling.

There were three announcers — Ron Rawson was the best remembered; others were Len Sterling and William Rogers. William Meeder played an original theme on the organ while Procter & Gamble sponsored the series for its first seven years on the air (for Dreft dishwashing suds, new blue Cheer detergent and other products).

The Brighter Day shifted to CBS July 11, 1949 at 2:45 pm remaining through July 1, 1955. It then disappeared

for a month, returning Aug. 1, 1955 at 2:15 p.m. on CBS where it was heard until cancellation May 28, 1956.

The program debuted on CBS -TV in 1954 featuring a different cast from the radio series. It continued there with similar plots until September 1962.

While *The Brighter Day* was created by Irna Phillips and was written for a time by *Ma Perkins'* author Orin Tovrov, for most of its life its author was John Haggart.

The program's epigraph is well remembered by its faithful listeners: "Our years are as the falling leaves; we live, we love, we dream, and then we go. But somehow we keep hoping — don't we that our dreams come true on that brighter day."

BRIGHTER DAY



Liz Dennis heard on CBS 2:45 P.M.

CAST: Liz Dennis, daughter of Reverend Richard Dennis of Three Oaks, who—though she's only twenty-six—mothers the rest of the family; Althea, now Mrs. Bruce Bigby; Patsy, the sharp-tongued teen-ager; Bobby, the baby; Grayling, the only boy.

BACKGROUND: Althea's marriage to young Bruce Bigby, student son of the very wealthy Bigby family,

seemed like a real success story. So Liz believed when glamorous Althea, evidently prepared to be the perfect wife, went off with Bruce to the college town in the East where he was Scheduled to complete his studies.

RECENTLY: Now, however, Althea is back in town for a visit—a visit after which none of the Dennises will ever be the same. For it is shockingly apparent now that Althea married Bruce only for his money, and is so determined to get some that she finally provokes Bruce's father into ordering her out of his house. Undaunted, Althea starts using Bruce's love for her as a goad to make him fight for money. Even Liz, who believes ill of nobody, now sees her sister as the callous person she really is. *Radio & TV Mirror, February 1950*



Listen when
**KATE
SMITH
SPEAKS**

15 Minutes with Radio's charming personality
Noon D.S.T. Monday-Friday
Mutual Stations

Amos 'n' Andy Team Started By Chance Meeting of Two Amateur Producers

Amos 'n' Andy. Radio listeners have always been extremely curious about these two and the manner in which they began their career. One boy hails from Peoria, Illinois. His name is Charles Correll and he had been a newsboy, clerk, bricklayer and technician in an arsenal. But at last he found his real love — show business. Starting as a piano player in a picture house, he went on to producing amateur shows.

The other boy, Freeman Gosden, whose father fought under John Moseby's command during the Civil War, came from Richmond, VA. He tried selling tobacco and automobiles and had been a wartime radio operator in the navy. But he too, acquired an itch for the theater and, after the war, his success one amateur night in Richmond won him a job in the same company that employed Correll.

On August 17, 1919, young Gosden was ordered to Durham, N.C. where Charles Correll was rehearsing a production to the tune of How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm? Correll was fagged. "Sorry to interrupt you Mr. Correll," said Gosden. "I just started with the company and they sent me down to pick up some scripts and start a show over in Elizabeth City." "Oh sure," Correll said. "I had a wire about you. Say, you don't happen to know the dance routine I'm trying to show these people, do you?" "Sure," Gosden said, "I know that one." "Oh, boy!" Correll said. "You wouldn't want to give me a hand would you?" "You bet," Gosden answered. "Where'll I put my coat?" Thus was the partnership of Correll and Gosden formed — a partnership that has continued unbroken for 23 years. The two boys traveled all over the south producing amateur shows — learning, working together. It was six months after their first meeting that they found themselves rehearsing a show in New Orleans, where someone suggested that they try a performance on a somewhat mysterious device known as radio . . . "All right, gentlemen if you're ready," came a warning from the announcer, as they stood in a studio. "We go on the air in just a few minutes."

"Say," Gosden remarked, "this is kind of different from navy radio." "Yes," agreed the announcer "radio has made tremendous strides since the war." "What," Gosden said "is the megaphone for — a cheerleader?" "That's what you talk into," the announcer told him. "And people can really hear it, eh?" "They sure can. Why this morning we had a call from a woman who lives a mile away from the station." "No fooling?" "Stand

by." the announcer said "You're on the air." "Let's go," said Correll . . . and the boys sang "Whispering."

Nothing came of their first broadcast, but a few months later they were brought into the home office of their company in Chicago and made department heads. Two years of this and one evening the boys sat in their rooms and talked things over. "Charlie," said Gosden, "I've been thinking — will we ever get anywhere producing these amateur shows." "That," said Correll, "has been on my mind too, Freeman." "You remember," Gosden continued, "a few years ago down in New Orleans"— "Yes I know," Correll cut in. "I know exactly what you're going to say. Radio." "Yep, that's right. You know, radio is getting better and better all the time. It's going places. Why, they got sets now that you can get New York on. You know this fellow Bob Boniel, up at the Edgewater Beach Hotel — Station WEBH?" "Yeah. Wonder what he'd charge us to let us broadcast?" "I don't know what their rates are." "Well it might be a good investment."

They saw Boniel and sang "Yes Sir That's My Baby" with ukulele accompaniment. "Well," said Boniel when they had finished, "you boys aren't bad, but we've a lot of singers on this station. Tell you what you do. Drop around tonight about 11:30 and I'll put you on the air for one song. You understand, we don't pay for talent." "Oh, sure, Gosden said. "That's all right." "We understand," Correll put in. "But after we sign the station off at midnight," Mr. Boniel said, "the hotel gives all the artists a plate luncheon. You don't want to miss that." "Gosh no!" Gosden said. "Okay, then. See you tonight. And — thanks."

Outside the office Gosden said, "That's great, Charlie. We don't have to pay and we get a free lunch besides. Now let's go home and practice." "No," Correll said. "No! Let's call up all our friends and get em to send telegrams to the station after we've finished tonight!"



Tonight
**THEATRE GUILD
 ON THE AIR**
 Rosalind Russell co-stars
 with Wendell Corey in
SKYLARK
8:30 TONIGHT
WHAM dial 1180



Old Time Radio Club
Box 426
Lancaster, NY 14086

FIRST CLASS MAIL

