

The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

The Illustrated Press

Number 349

April 2007

“JUMBO-SIZED ISSUE”



—A Saga Of Aviation—

The Illustrated Press

Membership Information

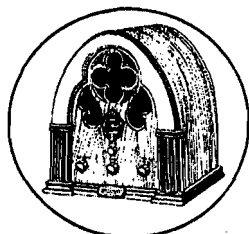
Club Membership: \$18.00 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and the monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$18.00; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing newsletter issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The **Old Time Radio Club** meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 PM during the months of September through June at St. Aloysius School Hall, Cleveland Drive and Century Road, Cheektowaga, NY. There is **no** meeting during the month of July, and an informal meeting is held in the month of August.

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
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086

E-Mail Address:
otrclub@localnet.com



All Submissions are subject to approval prior to actual publication.

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

The Illustrated Press is the newsletter of the **Old Time Radio Club**, headquartered in Western New York State. It is published monthly except for the months of July and August. Contents except where noted are copyright © 2007 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

E-Mail address: AnteakEar@aol.com

Web Page Address:
members.localnet.com/~robmcd

Club Officers

President

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

Vice President & Canadian Branch

Richard Simpson (905) 892-4688
960 16 Road R.R. 3
Fenwick, Ontario
Canada, L0S 1C0

Treasurer

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
pmb1620@worldnet.att.net

Membership Inquires and OTR Network Related Items

Richard Olday (716) 684-1604
171 Parwood Trail
Depew, NY 14043-1071
raolday@yahoo.com

Technical Manager

Bob McDivitt (716) 681-8073
109 Poinciana Pkwy.
Cheektowaga, NY 14225
robmcd@verizon.net

Cassette, CD and Reference Librarian

Frank Bork (716) 835-8362
209 Cleveland Drive
Cheektowaga, NY 14215
frankbork209@yahoo.com

Library Rates:

Audio cassettes and CDs are \$1.95 each and are recorded on a **club supplied cassette or CD** which is **retained** by the member. Rates include postage and handling and are payable in U.S. funds.



Basil Rathbone

by
TOM CHERRE

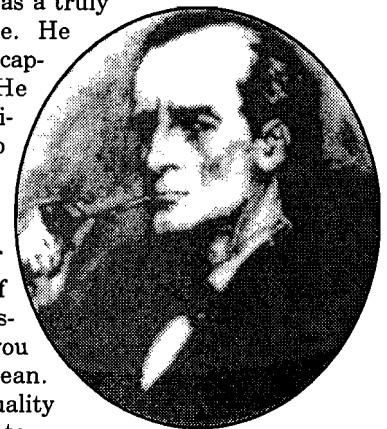
Since I recently wrote about Nigel Bruce there was no question that Basil Rathbone was soon to follow. Rathbone a superb actor and close friend of Nigel Bruce was likewise stereotyped for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes. For those of you who do not possess the familiarity of the greatest fictional sleuth ever created, may I enlighten you? Sir Arthur Conan Doyle started writing short stories of Mr. Sherlock Holmes. His medical practice was suffering and he needed extra funds just to make ends meet. He received about \$175.00 for each story he wrote. These stories were published in London's Strand Magazine. The first story was written in 1891. After he completed his sixth story he decided to kill off his character. He felt writing detective stories was keeping him from writing quality material. Upon killing Holmes he met with severe opposition. He even received threats of death unless he brought Holmes back to life. I can't give you the whole story, but if you have the time between listening to old time radio I'd suggest you get into Sherlock Holmes. Start out with "A Study in Scarlet" and you'll probably get hooked like Frank Bork and myself. To get back to Basil Rathbone, he was as fine an actor as ever to come out of Hollywood.

He was born Philip St. John Basil Rathbone in Johannesburg, South Africa June 13th, 1892. The family had to flee to England when Basil was only three. It seems his father was accused by the Boers of being a spy near the beginning of the Second Boers War. In his autobiography Rathbone admits that he doesn't know whether his father was a spy or not—he never asked him. Rathbone grew up in England and attended the very fine Repton School from 1906 to 1910. While in school he developed a love of the theatre. He married Marion Foreman in 1914. That marriage would end in divorce in 1926. Rathbone did have a son from the marriage named Rodian. Like his friend Nigel Bruce, Rathbone served his country in World War I making Captain and was part of the Liverpool Scottish 2nd Battalion. Basil received the British Military Cross for outstanding bravery. Rathbone's service in the military

and the passing of his younger brother John in the war largely contributed to his decision to remain a loyal subject to England even after many years living in America.

After the war Rathbone's theatre career picked up, and he did much Shakespeare in Stafford on Avon and in London. He decided to travel to New York in 1923 and started performing on Broadway. It was here he met his future wife, Ouida Bergere, a scriptwriter. They were married and stayed together until his death in 1967. In 1939 the Rathbones adopted a baby girl named Cynthia. By all accounts Rathbone was a devoted father and husband. Rathbone continued to work in theatrical productions and was highly acclaimed as an actor. He eventually ended up in Hollywood and made a movie called "The Last of Mrs Cheyne" which was a huge success due in part to a fine performance by Rathbone. Producers took note and he was in demand for several films. He starred in "The Adventures of Robin Hood" and other swashbucklers. He was a fantastic villain, and also became an accomplished swordsman. Rathbone enjoyed swordsmanship to the point of being the most skilled fencer in show business. During Rathbone's career he was twice nominated for Academy Awards for supporting actor, both times losing to Walter Brennan.

1939 was the year Rathbone began playing the character that he would forever be enshrined for—Mr. Sherlock Holmes. With his buddy Nigel Bruce, they went on to make 14 Sherlock Holmes films together. After doing "The Hounds of the Baskervilles" and "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" they started doing Sherlock Holmes on radio until 1946. Listening to Rathbone on radio was a truly enjoyable experience. He had one of the most captivating voices. He always sounded dignified and seemed to possess a superior intellect. He brought this forth perfectly in his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes. If any of you have listened to him, then you know what I mean. Despite the poorer quality of some of the later Holmes films, Rathbone still captured the essence and flavor that Doyle would have relished. In fact Rathbone bore a striking resemblance to Sidney Paget's illustrations that appeared in the Strand Magazine.



Sidney Paget Illustration of Sherlock Holmes for the Strand Magazine. circa. 1892

Despite the poorer quality of some of the later Holmes films, Rathbone still captured the essence and flavor that Doyle would have relished. In fact Rathbone bore a striking resemblance to Sidney Paget's illustrations that appeared in the Strand Magazine.

The Illustrated Press

In 1946 Rathbone tired of playing Holmes in both the movies and on radio. He was quoted as saying that he yearned to create new characters rather than endlessly repeat a character he had already created and developed. He was annoyed doing Holmes because he was always infallible and never once did he fail. He echoed that couldn't he be wrong just once like the rest of us.

After 1946 he still continued to do movies, but he longed for his true love—the theatre. He moved back to New York and was very successful winning two Tony Awards.

Basil also had a love for dogs. He owned seven of them. From his biography comes an amusing story. While walking his favorite dog Moritz down 46th Street there was no fire hydrant in sight. Moritz relieved himself on the leg of a lady walking down the street. Rathbone flushed and embarrassed couldn't apologize enough. Luckily the lady was a fan and walked away smiling.

In 1951 Rathbone was once again ready to put on the deerstalking cap and play Sherlock Holmes again. This time he asked his wife Ouida to write a play. Using the elements from several of Doyle's stories and with the approval of Doyle's son Adrian, the play opened in 1953. Rathbone had wished Bruce could play Watson, but at the time he was too ill. The play received poor reviews and closed after three performances.

Through the 1950s and 1960s Rathbone continued to appear in some decent movies and then some he very much regretted. It seems Basil's wife loved to spend money and she spent it as fast as he made it so he had to keep working. He appeared in some forgettable duds such as "Queen of Blood" and "Ghost in the Invisible Bikini" in 1966 with the inevitable wisecrack from comic Harvey Lembeck saying "That guy looks like Sherlock Holmes". Later in life he did enjoy visiting colleges giving lectures and doing one man shows. It was at this time his movies were being shown on TV and he became popular again with a younger generation.

On July 1st, 1967 at the age of 75 Basil Rathbone passed away in his den apparently from a heart attack. In 1969 his daughter Cynthia passed away at age 30. His wife Ouida died in 1996. She was 88. Rathbone has three stones in Hollywood's walk of fame.

I'll end the article with a bit of trivia. There is a Hollywood legend that Margaret Mitchell's first choice for Rhett Butler was Basil Rathbone in "Gone With the Wind". The reliability of this story is suspect since on another occasion she also chose Groucho Marx, apparently in jest. I myself can't see anyone else but Gable in the role. Of course "It's all very elementary".

Illustrated Press 4

The Year 1941 in Review

by JERRY COLLINS

I wish to thank the Seek Publishing Company in Millersville, Tennessee for providing much of the information for this article. Additional information was gathered from various radio related web sites, such as jimsradio.com. The year witnessed my birth on May 1st. The biggest story of the year and possibly the biggest story of the century was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Over 2,000 American seamen died that fateful day. Within a day the United States was at war.

The year is also famous for a variety of other reasons:

1. M&M candies and Cheerioats are introduced
2. Franklin Roosevelt is inaugurated for a record third time
3. Bob Hope performs his first USO show at March Field in California
4. Ted Williams is baseball's last .400 hitter with a .407 average
5. Joe DiMaggio hits safely in 56 consecutive games
6. Frank Caruana from Buffalo bowls two consecutive perfect games on his way to a record 29 consecutive strikes

The year 1941 produced the following champions:

1. The New York Yankees win the World Series 4-1 against the Brooklyn Dodgers. Tommy Henrich is the game's hero
2. The Chicago Bears win the NFL championship with a 39-9 victory over the New York Giants
3. The Stanley Cup champions are the Boston Bruins
4. Wisconsin wins the NCAA Basketball Championship
5. Bruce Smith from Minnesota won the Heisman Trophy
6. The University of Minnesota continues Big Ten dominance winning the NCAA football title

The year 1941 featured the following prices:

1. A new house - \$4,075.00
2. A new car - \$850.00
3. Average rent - \$32.00 per month
4. Tuition to Harvard - \$420.00 per year
5. Movie ticket - \$.30
6. Gasoline - \$.12 per gallon
7. Fresh baked bread - \$.08
8. Average income - \$1,777.00

The year's top songs were:

1. Chattanooga Choo Choo
2. Green Eyes
3. Amapola
4. Elmer's Tune

The Illustrated Press

The years top movies were:

1. How Green Was My Valley
2. Citizen Kane
3. Sergeant York
4. Meet John Doe
5. The Maltese Falcon

The highest rated Daytime shows were:

1. Ma Perkins - 10.0
2. The O'Neills - 9.6
3. Pepper Young's Family - 9.4
4. Life Can Be Beautiful - 9.3
5. Road of Life - 9.2
6. Kate Smith Speaks - 8.9
7. Jack Armstrong, the All American Boy - 8.8
8. The Woman in White - 8.8
9. The Story of Mary Marlin - 8.5
10. Young Dr. Malone - 8.5
11. Our Gal Sunday - 8.3
12. The Romance of Helen Trent - 8.2
13. Vic and Sade - 8.2
14. The Right to Happiness - 8.1
15. Stella Dallas - 7.7

The following radio shows premiered in 1941:

1. Duffy's Tavern
2. Bulldog Drummond
3. The Thin Man
4. The Great Gildersleeve
5. Norman Corwin's *We Hold These Truths* was first broadcast on December 8, 1941

Next month I will comment on the year 1942, America's first complete year in World War II.



A BOOK REVIEW

RADIO SPEAKERS

A Biographical Dictionary

By JIM COX

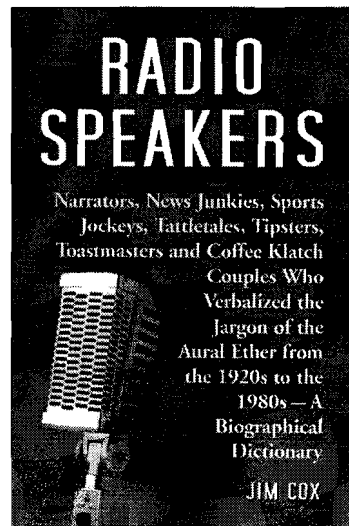
Reviewed by JERRY COLLINS

President of The Old Time Radio Club

Some authors write for fame and glory, others for wealth. Some write for all these reasons knowing that a big movie or television contract will soon follow. As I make preparations to begin writing my fourth book, I fully realize that I fit into a fourth category. Although I appreciate the notoriety that I receive at my local bookstore and nearby Tim Horton's, I write for other reasons. I write out of a need to preserve things that might

otherwise be forgotten. I feel the need to write about those things hidden in old dusty scrapbooks and on all those old microfilm reels at my local libraries. Although I know that I will never attain fame and fortune, I have this compulsion to save these little stories that are so vital to preserving our culture.

I feel honored that Jim Cox joins us as a very prominent member of the final group. Although Jim has been more prolific and probably more successful than those of us that toil in those dark recesses of our local libraries, we gladly welcome Jim to our group. I believe that this is Cox's tenth book as he continues to preserve the many vital vestiges of "Old Time Radio."



Due to the nature of radio; announcers, narrators, sportscasters and news reporters played an extremely vital role. Frequently the voice of a Fred Foy, Mel Allen, Bob Trout, Dan Seymour, Andre Baruch and Ken Roberts became as famous as the shows that they performed on. Some of these individuals even ignored opportunities to become actors.

Jim Cox does a great job of assembling close to 604 biographies of the best announcers, narrators and reporters. That part of radio history has now been preserved and for that we are eternally grateful to Jim Cox. His goal was a very worthy one and once again Jim did it well. Dust off that bookshelf and add another book by Jim Cox. I know that the volume will be well used.

368 pages, hard cover (7 x 10)


Appendix, bibliography, index - Price \$55

Published by McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers
Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640

Orders 800-253-2187 — www.mcfarlandpub.com

PERSONAL COLLECTION FOR SALE

Lots and lots of new items for sale: Shadow paperbacks, OTR books, Old TV books, comic strip reprints (Dick Tracy, Little Orphan Annie, Gasoline Alley among many others), Golden Age comic books and hardcover reprints (DC & Marvel). Write, phone or e-mail Dick Olday at raolday@yahoo.com 171 Parwood Trail, Depew, NY 14043; 716-684-1604 Free shipping on all orders OVER \$50 and 10% discount on all orders OVER \$75

“Through the  Eyes
of a Twenty-two Year Old”

By B.D. Bookhagen

When I was first introduced to something old, it was Smokey Robinson & The Miracles on Sesame Street where Smokey was singing “You Really Got a Hold of Me.” Growing up, I found out that song was an oldie which happened to open my eyes to old things such as songs, trends, technology, etc. I say this because on the outside I am twenty-two years old, but inside I feel a lot older. The point of this is that I enjoy things people liked back in their day. Now I am glad to see that old time radio has come back better than ever.

If there was a time when I was first introduced to old time radio; it'd be when I was in my dad's workshop and while going through his cassettes I came across *The Shadow*. I didn't listen to it, but I did ask my dad about it. I also remember going to Big Lots where they had these tapes and a CD called “Harry Nile” and I got them for dad and once he was done listening to them I gave them a try. That was my introduction to listening to old time radio. Then as Father's Day was approaching, I decided to check out B.J.'s to see if there was anything available that would work. That's when I saw it. A twenty cassette tape collection of “Old Time Radio's Greatest Detectives” from Radio Spirits. At the time they went for twenty dollars which wasn't a bad deal. After seeing my father's eyes light up with joy and having memories flow back to him, I started to look for more collections when the holidays approached. I guess I can safely say that I helped my dad start his collection of OTR. I can remember going along with dad to Barnes & Noble or Borders where they had shows, but were asking way too much which was why I stuck with B.J.'s. Even libraries that we went to had some old time radio collections which made his eyes look like a child in a candy store.

Then came the day when dad had seen Kevin “Why Guy” O'Neil on TV interviewing Jerry Collins and talking about the Old Time Radio Club. I know it was established in 1975, but to dad this was a brand new thing and once again his eyes lit up with joy to see others having the same interests as him. See he knew others might still have their own OTR collection, but felt that his interest was seen as no one else doing such thing. I was either in school or elsewhere because he told me about the interview and the website. When I checked out the site it was still under construction (still is), but it had all the information that he was looking for. Dad was the

first one in our little group to join the Club. Then I tagged along for some meetings including a the Club's Christmas Party. The atmosphere was like when I volunteer at the surgical waiting room. People were nice, peaceful, and full of life. I always say that no matter how old you are outside; there's an inner child reliving life once again. I know that I've said that on the outside being twenty-two, but on the inside older; but I feel that the younger feel older and the older feel younger. It's not by any means of offending anyone; it's just how I look at life while others may feel different.

When Dad and I convinced one of the volunteers (Marion Raimond) at the hospital we work at; to join the club she was ecstatic. Marion and I officially had joined the club back in May. Each and every meeting we three get to attend is really very interesting. I don't know when I say this, but at age twenty-two, I think I am the youngest member in the club and enjoy it very much. I am glad I was accepted at such a fun establishment that has no problems with anyone joining. Our next volunteer/friend to join because of our enthusiasm was Charlie Gaglia.

I think one of the best memories of old time radio was last year in that October “surprise” storm. I know dad had elaborated on it in the November I.P., but that night was really cool. Especially the episode from either *Inner Sanctum* or *Family Theater* (not sure which one). He played it while trying to get warm and we hoped day by day, night by night that we'd get our power back. Both shows were great and all we had was dad's walkman and a cheap speaker from Dollar Tree. Now that's the true meaning to growing up again or being introduced to how life was before television.

I am truly amazed that the Old Time Radio Club has members all over the country and the world. You know when your club is getting more and more interesting when you get to broadcast an internet radio segment. I have to hand it to Dick Olday, Bob McDivitt, Frank Boncore, and all the others who helped spread the word about the club. Without them the only word of mouth would be handouts and every so often interviews, but hey if it worked for my dad it'll work for anyone.

As of writing this at twenty-two (twenty-three on Saturday) I am glad to be able to help out the club with the raffles and also working on the OTR Catalog. I hope sometime in the future when I have kids I'll be able to get them interested in Old Time Radio.

Thank you for letting me join the club, thank you for the funny stories, thank you for everything. I will never forget the Old Time Radio Club for the rest of my life.

The Illustrated Press

Adventures in Research:
Howie Wing, A Saga Of Aviation
by *Kathy Hammel*

*Updated and Revised from a first printing in the
Old Radio Times, February 2006*
(Published with permission of the Author)

Researching an obscure radio show is an exacting and exciting process. A little over two years ago, my husband, Jim, and I found four 16-inch radio transcriptions from 1938. One of the disks turned out to be 14 commercials for Kellogg's All Bran cereal, which was pretty neat, but the real prize was the six 15-minute episodes of a nearly forgotten (and never circulated) children's serial, *Howie Wing, A Saga of Aviation!* The show aired in the US from February 14, 1938 through June 30, 1938.

To give a little background, the original World Broadcasting System transcriptions were discovered in the dark recesses of a vintage records shop during an otherwise dreary February 2005 afternoon. Since then, researchers—in three countries—have been busily digging through online and off line archives to find any information we could for this little show that was all but lost.

More than two years later, we're still looking for additional bits and pieces. We've had the good fortune to locate a wealth of information about the show, but much more remains undiscovered.

What we knew about *Howie Wing* as we started our research was that, in the US, Kellogg's Corn Flakes sponsored the 15-minute juvenile serial, which recounted the adventures of young aviators at a flying school. Beyond that, we had very little to go on. So, the team rolled up our sleeves and got to work.


The team, along with me, includes veteran researchers Jack French, Ian Grieve and Archie Hunter. Premier OTR researcher, Karl Schadow, joined with us for the first year of our research, and made many exceptional contributions to our store of information. We also had an occasional hand from other OTR folks along the way, and we were exceedingly fortunate to have Jerry Haendiges volunteer to do the sound restoration. The recordings were old, worn, the sound muffled and full of pops and clicks, but Jerry was more than equal to the task, and the results were stunning.

Early in our research efforts, Karl and Jack located probable air dates. While most of the usual references say the show was broadcast from October 1938 through June 1939, both Karl and Jack found radio ads that proved the show was on air in February 1938 . . . a full season before previously thought.

In the first two months of research, Karl turned up references to series runs in both Australia and Canada. That info is what pulled OTR Researchers Ian Grieve (Australia) and Archie Hunter (Canada) into the

February 14, 1938, Los Angeles Times

new show
TONIGHT



Howie Wing, real American youth, meets high adventure at the airport tonight. Meet him there. You'll thrill to his exciting career. Tune in each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at the same hour as Kellogg's Corn Flakes presents—Howie Wing.

KHJ - 5:30 p.m.

An exciting program for the whole family.

research group. Each of them quickly confirmed the show was on radio schedules in their respective countries starting in 1938. In fact, Archie's information indicated that *Howie Wing* made it to Canada a full two weeks before it first aired in Los Angeles. The Canadian premier was January 31, 1938, as opposed to the LA run, which started February 14, 1938. The

Australian run got a later start, premiering in September 1938, running through May 1940.

As we continued our search, we came to realize how very popular this show was in all three countries. Kellogg's actually promoted the show with a rather extravagant publicity stunt which involved two airplanes racing around the world to see which would be the first to deliver a suitcase full of *Howie Wing* related memorabilia to a pre-determined destination. Kellogg's continued to promote the show by producing dozens of cereal premiums. *Howie Wing* (and Kellogg's) were so successful that *Howie Wing* clubs sprang up all over the three countries. Boys and girls sent in box tops to get membership certificates, handbooks, small metal wing pins and an amazing variety of other odds and ends.

It's not difficult to understand how exciting this type of show would have been to youngsters in the late 1930s. Airplanes were the rocket ships of that day, and had been instrumental in winning World War I. Pilots were jaunty, devil may care and dashing figures. Youngsters of the day couldn't be blamed for aspiring to be like these larger than life heroes. Kellogg's capitalized on that hero-worship as well, by teaming up with famous pilots such as Jack Knight, Robert MacKenzie and Jacqueline Cochrane. These heroic figures offered greetings and advice to young would-be pilots and airline hostesses via the handbooks and commercial spots during the broadcasts. All of these flight-minded personalities, of course, confided that their favorite breakfast cereal was, you guessed it . . . Kellogg's Corn Flakes!

The Illustrated Press

The show itself offered youngsters high excitement and adventure. There were out and out bad guys, suspected spies, and the usual line up of mean spirited and sneaky fellows, most of who required some pretty tricky flying to overcome. Howie, himself, was properly clean cut, a good student and an honorable cadet, but willing to take a risk in a good cause, which kept him from being 'namby-pamby'.

Because of the huge popularity of the show, we were puzzled that it only lasted two seasons, especially after Karl located another episode (the last of the second season, #395) in the Library of Congress. At the end of the second season, the announcer reminded all the boys and girls: *Attention, Howie Wing fans! . . . this marks the last broadcast of the Howie Wing program until next fall.* While it's certain a third season was planned, we know for sure, that it never materialized. Sadly, a few months later, we found the reason. The author of *Howie Wing*, Willfred G. Moore, had died, suddenly, of a heart attack shortly after the second season wrap.

Captain Bill Moore, who'd been a military pilot during the war, turned writer after. He teamed up with Robert Burt to write *The Air Adventures of Jimmie Allen*, and *Captain Midnight*, but had gone solo on *Howie Wing*. He was in his early 40s and left behind a wife and four school age children.

Speaking of the people involved, one area where we have a lot of digging still to do is in regards to the cast. We've yet to identify all of them, and apparently there were some changes between the two confirmed seasons. Our current infor-

mation appears to indicate that William Janney played the title character, *Howie Wing*, during the second season only, but Howie's girlfriend, Donna Cavendish, was, we recently discovered, played by three different actresses. It's commonly held that Donna was played by a young actress named Mary Parker. However, in January 2006, Karl found information that indicated Audrey McGrath (of *The Romance of Helen Trent* and *Chandu* fame) played Donna. I was able to confirm that she was in the role of Donna Cavendish in July of 1938 (and presumably had been throughout the first season), but she took a lead role in another radio serial, *Grandma Travels* in September 1938—just a month prior to the start of *Howie Wing's* second season. We also found other notices in entertainment magazines that showed Barbara Weeks spent some time in the role as well.

Currently there are six episodes of this show in circulation. All six are first season shows, and we can't yet say who the cast members are, other than for Audrey McGrath as Donna. We have some clues; Karl Schadow found the following news clipping in a Dec 22, 1937 *Radio Daily* that lists the first season cast of *Howie Wing* as: Billie Rose, Audrey McGrath, Bill Bouchey and Hugh Studebaker for the upcoming WBS transcribed series.

These names confirm that this first season was broadcast from Chicago, while we know the second season was aired from a New York studio (CBS). However, we're not sure which of the people played which roles, and also think that the Billie Rose listed here is not the same Billy Rose who was a famous showman and was, at this time, getting a divorce from his wife, Fanny Brice. Again, still more opportunities here to continue our research.



Howie Wing *Donna Cavendish* *Capt. Henry* *Typhoon Tottle*



Though there are currently only the six found episodes in circulation, we do know of two additional episodes—one in the Library of Congress and the other at the Library and Archives Canada—that are not available for circulation. We also have located another transcription disk in an archive at the Texas Tech University, but so far have been unable to confirm what the episode numbers might be on that record or to obtain a copy.

Though we still have a lot left to uncover about this series, we have already found a plethora of bits and pieces which are slowly telling us a great deal about the author, actors, the history of the show and the youngsters who tuned in each afternoon to listen to the aviation adventures of Howie and friends. We're always looking for more, and are hoping to find someone who may have been a fan of the show when it was originally on the air who may be able to recall listening to the thrilling adventures of *Howie Wing, A Saga Of Aviation!*

SIDE BAR: Were you a Howie Wing fan as a youngster? Do you recognize any of the actors in the images or have any other information from your own research files about *Howie Wing, A Saga Of Aviation*? If so, we'd like to hear from you.

"I will do my best to be brave,
honest, obedient and dependable,
and to live up to the highest traditions
of American Aviation."



Kathy Hammel the author of the preceeding article on *Howie Wing* can be reached at the following e-mail address: haml@sbcglobal.net

BEING THERE: Collecting Radio Broadcast Admission Tickets

By RICK PAYNE (All Rights Reserved 2007)

During the golden age of radio, networks and sponsors invited the general public to attend live performances of many popular programs. For the performers, the presence of the studio audience provided encouragement, laughter and appreciation. For the audience, the experience was an unforgettable opportunity to see their favorite entertainers at work. Tickets from some broadcasts survive today . . . waiting for collectors like me.

Spring has arrived . . . and as the gloom of another long cold winter thankfully fades into memory, nature's natural cycle of renewal arouses primal urges deep within Man.

Spring, when God's creatures awaken from hibernation or return north from winter refuge.

Spring, when huddled masses seek the warmth of the long-awaited sun.

Spring, when men of all ages again feel the passion of their youth, as they pledge anew their commitment to their one true and eternal love . . . Baseball.

It is the happiest of coincidences that the Golden Age of Radio was at its peak during the Golden Age of American Sport. Radio played a significant role in building the popularity of several sports in the first half of the 20th century. Pioneer sportscasters Graham McNamee, Ted Husing, Clem McCarthy and others became major celebrities as they dramatically brought the exploits of our greatest athletes to the living rooms of an eager American public.

Thankfully, legendary sports figures occasionally crossed paths with our beloved stars of the airwaves. In this edition of *Being There*, we take a look at the evidence of these "star crossings" as documented on broadcast tickets. In most cases, these occasions arose when a sports star made a guest appearance. Scarcity of such events, coupled with the popularity of vintage sports memorabilia in today's collecting marketplace, equate to high demand and value.

The Illustrated Press

SEC. 19	ROW 3	SEAT 6																				
FIRESIDE SEAT																						
Radio broadcast Red and Blue network N.B.C.																						
RAIN CHECK If postponed for any cause this check will be honored on postponed date only.																						
YANKEE STADIUM TUESDAY EVE'G. SEPT. 24																						
PRINTED IN U.S.A.																						
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Tuesday Evening, SEPTEMBER 24, 1935</td> <td>JOE</td> <td rowspan="2">LOUIS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MAX</td> <td>vs.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAER</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">ALL-HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING CARD</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> <small>Notice and Agreement: This ticket is issued for the sole purpose of providing an exciting entertainment, with the completion of Buick and Buick dealers. No other use is intended. It is not to be used for any other purpose and is not to be sold, transferred, or otherwise disposed of. It is valid only for the Buick showrooms on September 23rd, and viewing the automobile show 1935 Buicks.</small> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">FIRESIDE SEAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">N.B.C. RED AND BLUE NETWORK</td> </tr> </table>			Tuesday Evening, SEPTEMBER 24, 1935	JOE	LOUIS	MAX	vs.	BAER			ALL-HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING CARD			<small>Notice and Agreement: This ticket is issued for the sole purpose of providing an exciting entertainment, with the completion of Buick and Buick dealers. No other use is intended. It is not to be used for any other purpose and is not to be sold, transferred, or otherwise disposed of. It is valid only for the Buick showrooms on September 23rd, and viewing the automobile show 1935 Buicks.</small>			FIRESIDE SEAT			N.B.C. RED AND BLUE NETWORK		
Tuesday Evening, SEPTEMBER 24, 1935	JOE	LOUIS																				
MAX	vs.																					
BAER																						
ALL-HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING CARD																						
<small>Notice and Agreement: This ticket is issued for the sole purpose of providing an exciting entertainment, with the completion of Buick and Buick dealers. No other use is intended. It is not to be used for any other purpose and is not to be sold, transferred, or otherwise disposed of. It is valid only for the Buick showrooms on September 23rd, and viewing the automobile show 1935 Buicks.</small>																						
FIRESIDE SEAT																						
N.B.C. RED AND BLUE NETWORK																						

We begin with a ticket that isn't really a ticket at all. In June 1935, the boxing world was shocked when "Cinderella Man" Jim Braddock won the heavyweight championship of the world by knocking out Max Baer. When the flamboyant Baer was forced to fight the sensational young Joe Louis before earning a rematch for the title, interest in the fight reached fever pitch. The fight generated the first million-dollar gate since the 1927 Tunney-Dempsey rematch, despite being a non-title bout. Louis proved to be too much for Baer, knocking him out in the fourth round after thoroughly pummeling him.

Baer later said that "Fear is standing across the ring from Joe Louis and knowing he wants to go home early." Baer never got another title shot.

Smelling an opportunity, ten days before the fight the Buick Motor Company mailed out two tickets for a "Fireside Seat" to readers of The Buick Magazine. These orange-colored tickets are about the same size and dimension of genuine boxing tickets, but are basically just invitations to listen to the NBC Red and Blue Network broadcasts in your home and to visit dealer showrooms to see the new 1936 Buicks. Lending an air of authenticity, the two tickets sent out bear different seat numbers! They are beautifully done, and properly commemorate the popularity of boxing broadcasts.

I suppose a genuine ticket to the fight would correctly serve as a broadcast ticket. The Buick Fireside tickets, on the other hand, today routinely cause confusion as ebay sellers and buyers continually mistake them for the real thing. Unused Louis-Baer fight tickets are worth several hundred dollars each, while a fair price to pay for a Buick ticket is in the \$50-75 range. With the accompanying Buick letter and mailing envelope, you

can triple that. At least once a month, I notify an ebay seller of their mistake, hoping they will notify bidders. About half choose to do so. Caveat emptor!

NATIONAL BROADCASTING CO., INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS :: SUNSET & VINE		STUDIO B N B C
THE ARMED FORCES RADIO SERVICE presents "JUBILEE" ANNIVERSARY SHOW		
Lena Horne Joe Louis Slapsy Maxie Rosenbloom Delta Rhythm Boys Lennie Hayton	Lionel Hampton & Orchestra Eddie "Rochester" Anderson Maxie Baer Four Blazes Ernie Whitman	MONDAY NOVEMBER 19 1945 6:30-7:30 P.M. Doors Close 6:25 P. M.
Children Under 14 Will Not Be Admitted		

Here, on the other hand, is a REAL broadcast ticket featuring The Brown Bomber and The Livermore Butcher Boy. On this anniversary special broadcast of the AFRS program *Jubilee*, Joe and Max were joined by former light heavyweight champion Max Rosenbloom for a bit of banter. After his last fight in 1939, "Slapsy Maxie" went on to operate a popular nightclub. Running bars, restaurants and/or nightclubs was a popular career choice for former athletes... and it continues to be true today! In the early 1950s, Baer and Rosenbloom teamed up in film comedy shorts. Still the undisputed champ at the time of this broadcast, Joe Louis remains one of the most beloved figures in sports history.

This specific broadcast doesn't appear in the online logs of available recordings. With a lineup featuring Lena Horne, Rochester and Lionel Hampton, the show might have been too hot for vinyl! I'm a little mystified at the reference to Jubilee's anniversary. Most logs indicate the program started broadcasting in October 1942. In fact, Joe Louis appeared on the second broadcast.

COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM COLUMBIA SQUARE PLAYHOUSE 6121 SUNSET BOULEVARD — HOLLYWOOD		PREVIEW SATURDAY JUNE 7 1947 at 8 p.m.	N: 30
STUDIO B CBS	CBS Presents "THE ACADEMY OF SPORT" Starring CHRISTY WALSH With Special Guests JACK DEMPSEY CLARK SHAUGHNESSY BILL SHROEDER	CHILDREN UNDER TWELVE WILL NOT BE ADMITTED	

After boxer Frankie Campbell died as a result of injuries suffered in their 1929 fight, Max Baer lost a few fights. He regained his form under the guidance of the great heavyweight champion of the Roaring Twenties, Jack Dempsey. In that era, Dempsey was one of the five giants of the sports world, sharing that status with Babe Ruth, Red Grange, Bill Tilden and Bobby Jones. Dempsey later operated a famous bar across the street from the old Madison Square Garden in New York, remaining close to his fans.

The Illustrated Press

At the 1939 New York World's Fair, many current and former athletes appeared at The Academy of Sports, conveniently located next to the Distilled Spirits Exhibit. They ran clinics for youngsters and signed souvenir certificates that are highly prized by collectors today. The talent for the Academy was coordinated by Christy Walsh, best known as Babe Ruth's publicity man. Walsh was the ghost-writer for most newspaper and magazine articles attributed to the Babe, but eventually became a leading sports authority in his own right.

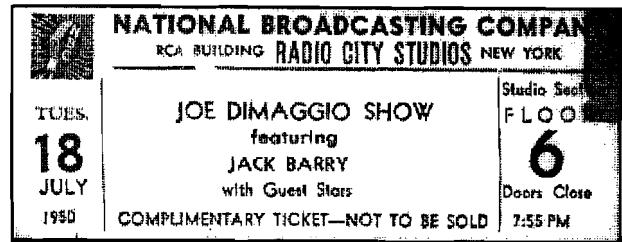
Here's an interesting ticket for a program that I've not been able to track down in reference books. This preview ticket from 1947 features Dempsey and football coach Clark Shaughnessy along with Walsh. The World's Fair closed in 1940, but did Walsh keep the concept alive? Do any readers have any additional information?



While the Babe hosted several series of his own, I'm sad to say that tickets for those have eluded me as of this writing. However, this 1936 episode of the *Lux Radio Theatre* offers a baseball theme and a rare radio appearance by Ruth's most famous Yankee teammate.

Joe E. Brown was a popular film comedian with a passion for baseball. He made three baseball-themed comedies: "Alibi Ike", "Fireman Save My Child", and "Elmer the Great". Based on a play by sportswriter Ring Lardner and George M. Cohan, "Elmer the Great" features Brown as the improbable rube ballplayer who leads the Chicago Cubs to a World Series victory. That was 74 years ago, and they're still waiting.

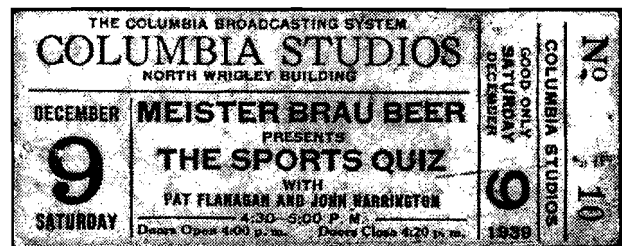
Joining this broadcast from New York City was Yankee first baseman Lou Gehrig, who just the day before had homered for the second time in the 1936 World Series in lifting the Yankees to a 5-2 win over Carl Hubbell and the New York Giants. On October 5th, the Giants had won to extend the series to a sixth game . . . but the next day Gehrig and the Yankees pounded out 17 hits at the Polo Grounds enroute to a 13-5 victory.



Before we leave the legacy of Yankees and broadcasting, let me submit this ticket for *The Joe DiMaggio Show*. DiMaggio inherited the role of great Yankee hero after Gehrig's premature retirement due to ALS (now known as Lou Gehrig's Disease). He was, in turn, followed by Mickey Mantle.

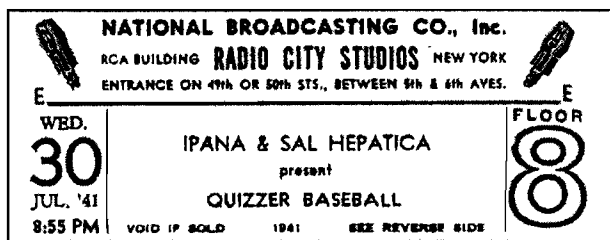
On first glance, this would appear to be a radio program ticket. However, I think it's actually from The Yankee Clipper's brief NBC television series. Early TV tickets were often formatted exactly like those for radio broadcasts. You can't always tell from the front of a ticket whether a show was for radio or television . . . and sometimes it was for both, as a few programs were simulcast. The answer is usually contained on the reverse, where the legal release language authorizes the network to televise your image. That's the case here . . . although the Tuesday performance day doesn't jive with some published histories of the show.

Host Jack Barry moderated this show featuring Joe promoting fair play, giving baseball tips to young players and talking with sports guests. Barry and his partner Dan Enright produced this program, but eventually forgot that part about fair play when operating the *Twenty-One* program a few years later. The Quiz Show scandals forced them out of television.

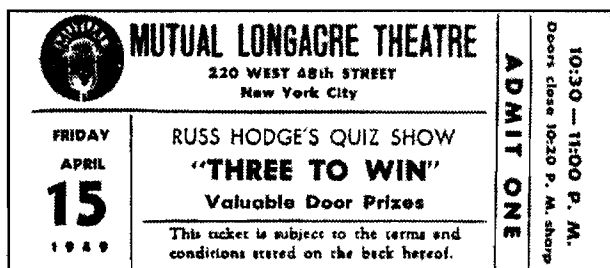


Sports proved to be a popular subject for quiz shows in radio's golden age, and thankfully no questionable behavior has been documented. This 1939 program originated from the Wrigley Building in Chicago. I believe it was a local program despite the references to CBS; I can verify that the program appears in Chicago radio logs for station WBBM. Pat Flanagan and John Harrington performed sportscasting and announcing duties in Chicago.

The Illustrated Press

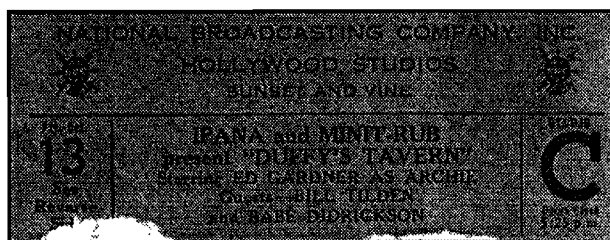


Here's another example of a quiz show dedicated to a sports theme. *Quizzer Baseball* ran only two months on the NBC network, but featured some familiar names. Harry Von Zell, best known for his association with George Burns and Gracie Allen, provided his services as umpire for two teams of contestants. Movie actress Glenda Farrell (star of the *Torchy Blaine* film series) and Budd Hulick (of *Stoopnagle and Budd* fame) led the teams in this summer series originating from NBC's New York studios. No programs are known to exist, but at least we have a ticket from this forgotten series!



This quiz show featured one of the most famous voices in recording history! *Three to Win* has faded into obscurity, but the sounds of New York Giants baseball announcer Russ Hodges shouting "THE GIANTS WIN THE PENNANT! THE GIANTS WIN THE PENNANT!" after Bobby Thompson's dramatic home run in the bottom of the ninth sent the Brooklyn Dodgers to a crushing defeat in the deciding playoff game of the 1951 National League season.

Hodges hosted this 1949 series on the Mutual Network. In 1941, he served as a panelist on Gunther Beer's *Quiz of Two Cities* on Baltimore's WFBR.



Big Bill Tilden was the dominant tennis player of the age, winning major championships from 1913 to 1930. He was 51 at the time of his appearance on this broad-

cast of *Duffy's Tavern*, yet he was still a formidable challenger to younger players. Like golfer Bobby Jones, he remained an amateur during his peak years.

Many say that Babe Didrikson was the greatest woman athlete who has ever lived. An Olympic champion and world record holder in several track and field events, it seemed no sport was beyond her ability to excel. When she finally turned her attention to golf, she won 55 tournaments. The Associated Press named her the greatest female athlete of the first half of the 20th Century.

Tilden and Didrikson appeared with Ed Gardner on this 1944 broadcast of *Duffy's Tavern*. The 1944 tickets for the series identify guest stars; a feature I wish had been more common. In this case, they misspelled Babe's last name. This ticket is a deep red in color, accounting for the low quality of the reproduction here. I can't explain the reason, but tickets for this series are pretty scarce.



Finally, here is one of my earliest ticket acquisitions, and one of my very favorite. This wonderfully-designed Lux ticket features most of the original cast of the great Warner Brothers film based on the life of Notre Dame's legendary football coach, featuring Ronald Reagan as George Gipp ("the gipper"). I certainly don't object to the substitution of King Kong's favorite squeeze, Fay Wray, for the film's Gale Page in the role of Mrs. Rockne.

And speaking of Lux tickets . . . I'm pleased to report that just a few days after finishing last month's article on movie adaptation tickets, I acquired a ticket for the very first *Lux Radio Theatre* broadcast from Hollywood, featuring Clark Gable and Marlene Dietrich. What a great way of reminding us that great tickets are out there waiting to be discovered!

And that's the final out for today's game, sports fans. Thanks once again for your support and kind comments on this series. Next month, we begin our second year with a look at broadcast tickets for great comedy teams. Gee, I wonder who's on first?





ALL THE WORLD LOVES MELCHIOR

If this story sounds as twisted as a pretzel you're right, but blame it on "Pasternak's Pretzels." That's what gave a new twist to the career of Lauritz Melchior, the gargantuan tenor of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Melchior had been proceeding along his merry, robust way, a pillar of opera—in fact, a very big pillar—when he was invited by Fred Allen to appear on his radio program. Lauritz was supposed to sing a commercial for an imaginary sponsor, a mythical pretzel-bender named Pasternak. He performed this chore in such laudatory fashion that the mouths of his listeners watered throughout the country and many people were affected by the broadcast, especially one Joe Pasternak, a Hollywood producer. Get it? The song went straight to Pasternak's heart and thence to his pocket and he made Melchior a fabulous offer to perform in "Thrill of a Romance." Lauritz accepted, went over big, in the movies, and now he is one of the outstanding triple threat entertainers of the United States. What distinguishes him, however, is that he is one of the few people who started in opera who still retain a sense of humor.

Ever hear about him and Lohengrin? In that famous opera, Melchior plays a scene in which he bids a sorrowful farewell, then steps into a swan boat to be pulled into the wings by stage hands. One afternoon signals were crossed, and Melchior discovered that the swan had been moved before he had time to enter it. Piped up Melchior, "Say, what time does the next swan leave?"

Melchior also indulges in practical jokes. During a rehearsal of the radio show, *The Metropolitan Opera Presents*, soloist Rise Stevens and conductor Wilfred Pelletier were madly rehearsing a tidbit from the opera, *Carmen*. Their backs were to Melchior who could be seen by the orchestra. He began a pantomime of *Carmen* that had, the orchestra in stitches. Rise observed the laughter and thought her show was slipping. Both Miss Stevens and Pelletier finally turned to discover that Lauritz was putting on an act.

Lauritz, who is sometimes laughingly referred to as the Great Dane, made his debut in 1923 at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen at the beneficent salary of four dollars a week, with overtime. Now he earns a thousand dollars for a Metropolitan Opera appearance and his radio and concert work merit three times that amount. His remuneration for the movies is as astronomical as his figure.

Melchior is popular because, while he is a man of vast and unusual talent, he has never lost the common touch. He makes no demands for special consideration from his employers, save that he will make no appearances the week before Christmas. Once he declined a \$10,000 concert offer because it fell a week before Christmas.

He loves food with a deep, abiding passion. Whether he is in his permanent home atop a mountain which overlooks Beverly Hills in California or at his New York residence in the Hotel Ansonia he gravitates almost automatically to the center of culinary activities. Rich Danish pastries, cinnamon, burnt sugar, cheese, herring, brandied fruit, butter cookies and roast goose are among his favorites. Because of his intake of calories the manager at the Ansonia Hotel has installed a double-sized bathtub in his suite so as to accommodate the Melchior rotundity.

His eagerly awaited next step is, of course, television. There you will see him, hear him, watch him, perhaps even observe him eat a pretzel. The man who captured Pasternak will yet capture a nation.

Everybody loves a fat man, and Lauritz Melchior proves the point. His chatter on Edgar Bergen's show, his performance on *Duffy's Tavern*, his success on *Command Performance*, his burlesque of Frank Sinatra on the *Fred Allen Show* are but a few of his triumphs. His success in "Thrill of a Romance," where both he and Van Johnson won the bobby soxers is a testimonial to his truly phenomenal appeal.

(Article originally published January 1946)

Special Thanks to HOAG SCHMELE for his recent monetary contribution to The Old Time Radio Club.

The Old Time Radio Club's Catalog has been completed and contains a listing of available Cassettes, Audio CDs and MP3 CDs each in separate files.

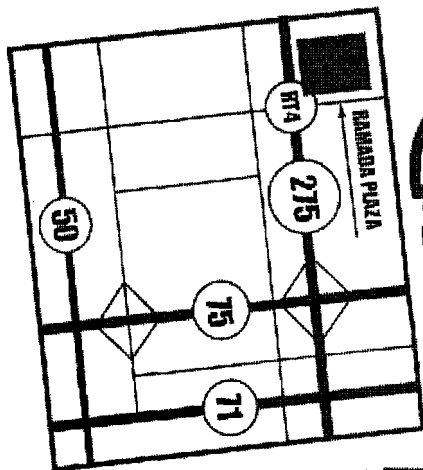
Our Librarian Frank Bork is waiting for your order.

The Old Time Radio Club

49 Regal Street
Depew, NY 14043



FIRST CLASS MAIL



OLD TIME RADIO & NOSTALGIA CONVENTION

**21st ANNUAL
CINCINNATI'S
SPECIAL
GUESTS**

APRIL 20-21, 2007
HOURS: FRIDAY 9AM-9PM
SATURDAY 9AM-4PM
RAMADA PLAZA
11911 SHERATON LANE 513.671.6600
CINCINNATI, OH 45246
ROOMS \$74 SINGLE or DOUBLE
(MENTION SHOW AND ASK FOR BETTY WHEN
MAKING RESERVATIONS)
\$8 PER DAY SATURDAY DINNER \$38
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
BOB BURCHETT 888.477.9112