

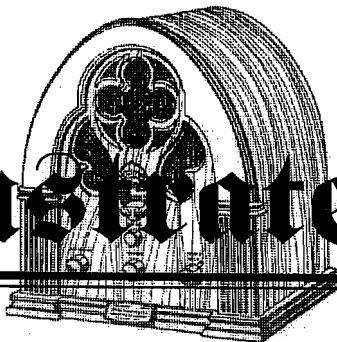
The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

# The Illustrated Press

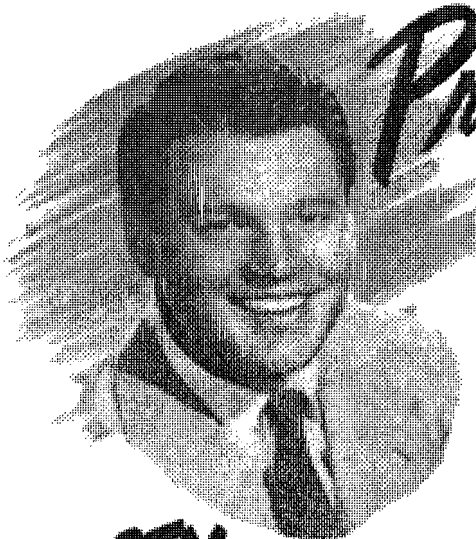
Number 351

June 2007



## WEBR'S "HI-TEEN Club"

*Presents*



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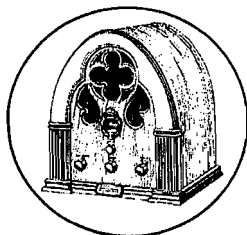
Club Membership: \$18.00 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and the monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$18.00; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should 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

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All Submissions are subject to approval prior to actual publication.

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## Groucho Marx

By TOM CHERRE

A few years back I had the occasion to do a piece on "The one the only". Since then I've come up with a few more tidbits, so I think

he deserves another mention. To be honest, I never cared much for the Marx Brothers movies. Heaven knows Gummo and Zeppo weren't funny. I couldn't stand that terrible Italian accent Chico had. Harpo could toot a horn or blow a whistle with the best of them, however the only talent he had was the ability to play the harp. On the other hand, Julius "Groucho" Marx was the only brother with a significant amount of talent. Some critics may venture to say their movies were somewhat zany and entertaining. I beg to differ. I thought they were overloaded with slapstick and moronic humor. Without Groucho there would probably have been no Marx Brothers movies, or for that matter, no Marx Brothers.

Groucho Marx was born on the upper East Side of New York City in a small Jewish neighborhood. As a child he had a desire to pursue the medical field and become a doctor. Somehow I can't imagine a Dr. Marx treating patients. The family's need for income forced Groucho to quit school at the age of twelve. Groucho always felt a sense of insecurity at not having a formal education. To overcome that feeling he became an avid reader attacking this task so voraciously that he read every book he could get his hands on. This ultimately helped him to acquire his gift of ad-libbing and wise-cracking in vaudeville, movies and radio. Despite his lack of education, Groucho wrote some very good entertaining books, including his autobiography, "Groucho and Me".

It was in vaudeville where he polished his art of wise-cracking, when many times an unhappy audience might hurl trash and abuse towards the act. Many is the time when they would have to make a hasty exit after he traded barbs with some unhappy patron. He toned this talent to perfection by the numerous times he lashed out at Margaret Dumont and anyone else who stood in his way. By the time *You Bet Your Life* came along, he was in a class all by himself.

In the 1940s the movie offers stopped. The Marx Brothers became stale. Groucho was in three different radio shows . . . all flops. During this dry period he was invited to be a guest on *The Walgreen Radio Show* hosted by Bob Hope. Groucho became so furious having to wait in the waiting room for almost an hour before going on. When he finally went on the air he vented his huge frustrations towards Hope. The show opened with Hope asking Groucho "What brings you here from the hot desert?" To which Groucho heatedly replied "Hot desert my foot. I've been sitting in a cold waiting room for almost an hour". Ignoring a pre-written script Groucho continued to verbally attack Hope throughout the show. Hope, no rookie at dishing out wisecracks himself could not take the barrage of insults coming out of Marx. As luck would have it producer John Guedel happened to be listening to the show. He had a unique quiz show in mind needing a host that could tenderly insult the contestants in an entertaining way. He made arrangements to talk to Groucho the very next day and asked him if he could ad-lib for a whole half hour. Groucho told him that he had ad-libbed an entire Broadway show many a time. When Guedel proposed the offer Groucho replied "Well I've had no success in radio, and I can't hold on to a sponsor. At this point I'll try anything."

*You Bet Your Life* premiered in October 1947 and ran until 1956 over three different networks. It continued on TV until 1961. The show was an instant sensation, and one of the most popular shows in the history of radio. Groucho also had one of the best straight men by his side, George Fenneman. In the show the quiz questions were secondary to the fun he had talking with the contestants. Groucho had the unique ability to get that certain interesting quality out of normal everyday people.

Bernie Smith, one of the producers said the show's success was due to our "escape hatch" that being it was recorded and dull spots were cut out with the funny and entertaining parts kept in. When Groucho had something good going on they would keep and edit whatever they wanted. In other words you only heard the good stuff. In my opinion Groucho was the best at what he did. The show was unscripted except for a few questions that were asked to all. I think the Groucho show was one of the best. I have 16 *You Bet Your Life Shows* in my collection and I think they have stood the test of time. Considering his lack of formal education I think Groucho Marx was a genius, and you can bet your life on that.



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### The Year 1943 in Review

by JERRY COLLINS

Similar to the previous year, most of the big stories of the year revolved around World War II. As part of the government's policies.

The following were the most important and newsworthy items of the year:

1. Mussolini resigned. This was followed by his imprisonment.
2. The Jefferson Memorial and the Pentagon were both completed.
3. Canned food and shoes were placed on the list of rationed items.
4. George Washington Carver, the famed American biologist passed away.
5. The American Broadcasting Company was formed.
6. The sale of pre-sliced bread is banned in the United States to reduce the demand for the metal equipment needed for the process.
7. The Rogers and Hammerstein musical "Oklahoma" opened on Broadway.
8. Singer Frank Sinatra premiered on *Your Hit Parade* February 6, 1943.
9. On May 13, 1943 Germany ordered the confiscation of all radios in occupied countries.
10. May 13, 1943 marked the date of the first of eight appearances by Agnes Morehead in the starring role of "Sorry Wrong Number."
11. Postmaster General Frank C. Walker invented the postal zone system.
12. Actor Leslie Howard is killed when German raiders shoot down his plane.
13. John F. Kennedy saved the crew of PT 109 after a Japanese destroyer split the boat in two.
14. Faced with shortage of professional players, the Cleveland Rams franchise folded and the Philadelphia Eagles and Pittsburgh Steelers combined to form the Steagles.
15. There was such a shortage of housing in St. Louis that bachelor members of the Cardinals and Browns shared the same apartments and hotel rooms. War workers did the same thing on a shift basis.
16. The board game "Clue" was invented by Anthony Pratt.

The following were the top songs of the year:

1. As Time Goes By
2. Brazil
3. In The Mood
4. It Can't Be Wrong
5. Paper Doll
6. Pistol Packing Mama

The year's top movies were:

1. Casablanca
2. For Whom the Bell Tolls
3. Phantom of the Opera
4. Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man

The following radio shows premiered in 1943:

1. Casey Crime Photography
2. Meet Corliss Archer
3. The Mysterious Traveler
4. The Adventures of Nero Wolfe
5. Nick Carter Master Detective
6. Archie Andrews
7. The Falcon

The following champions were crowned in 1943:

1. World Series Champion - New York Yankees defeated the St. Louis Cardinals 4-1. Spud Chandler was 20-4 during the regular season and 2-0 in the World Series.
2. NFL champion - Chicago Bears (Bronko Nagurski came out of a six-year retirement to score a touchdown in a 41-21 victory over the Washington Redskins. He played fullback and defensive tackle in his final game.
3. U.S. Open - Not Played
4. Indianapolis 500 - Not held
5. Stanley Cup Winner - Detroit Red Wings
6. NCAA Basketball Champion - W Wyoming
7. College Football Champion - Notre Dame
8. Heisman Trophy Winner - Angelo Bertelli from Notre Dame. When the announcement was made Bertelli was serving with the Marines in the Pacific.

The 1943 Cost of Living:

1. New House - \$3,600
2. New Car - \$900
3. Average Income - \$2,041
4. Tuition to Harvard - \$420/year
5. Movie Ticket - \$.35
6. Gasoline - \$.15
7. Postage Stamp - \$.03
8. Fresh Baled Bread - \$.10/loaf
9. Granulated Sugar - \$.75/ 10 pounds

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### Cincinnati's 21st Annual Old Time Radio and Nostalgia Convention — April 20-21, 2007

by JERRY COLLINS

With each passing radio convention death, ill health and family obligations have shortened the list of those great radio personalities attending these conventions. Hal Stone sadly was added to this list that also included such recent additions as Parley Baer, Sam Edwards and Jackson Beck, Ralph Bell, Lon Clark and Peg Lynch.

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Although Ms. Lynch is still alive family health problems have kept her from recent OTR conventions.

Of equal significance were the recent health problems suffered by Bob Burchett. He recently experienced cancer surgery and was too weak to make, even a token experience. He promises to be back next year. There were numerous problems with the Ramada Plaza Hotel and there just didn't seem to be one individual to deal with these problems. We sure did miss that folksy personality and southern drawl.

As always the recreations were the highlights of the convention. Bob Hastings, Rosemary Rice, Esther Geddes and Ruth Last joined members from the audience performing in episodes of *The Bickerons*, *X-Minus One*, *Fort Laramie* and *Candy Matson*. One of the most entertaining presentations was a spoof of *Dragnet* done by Rosemary Rice and Esther Geddes.

On Friday morning an excellent film titled "Radio in the Movies" was shown. In the afternoon Alfred Balk discussed his book *The Rise of Radio*. What made this fascinating was that I had reviewed the book for the *Illustrated Press*. He was pleasantly surprised when I introduced myself when asking a question.

I was also quite surprised on Saturday morning when representatives of the Old Time Radio Research Group made a very detailed presentation on the extensive work that their group is involved in. The time, effort and money that some of these people put into their volunteer work is unbelievable.

Not having attended a radio convention in four years I was quite shocked by the changes in the dealer rooms. I purchased CDs from two of the large dealers and MP3s from the four largest dealers in the room. Their products were inexpensively priced, attractively packaged and well displayed on racks. I also purchased cassettes from the only two dealers still selling cassettes.

If one can ignore the shortcoming of the motel, most people will be back next year. A lot of enjoyable things happened that weekend. Still we need Bob Burchett back to coordinate everything.

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### The HI-TEEN Radio Program

From the mid forties to the early sixties the Dellwood Ballroom at Main and Utica in Buffalo, New York rocked with a program called Hi-Teen. As a teenager during

part of this period I remember the radio broadcasts and going to the Dellwood Ballroom. The program was aired on Saturdays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and broadcast over station WEBR. The music played on the program was selected from popularity polls in various entertainment magazines, played in WEBR's studios at 23 North Street and piped into the Dellwood. The first emcee and the person that was most associated with the Hi-Teen program was Bob Wells. He was a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and did graduate work at the Eastman School of Music. After his graduate work at the Eastman School he became the Assistant Musical Director in the Batavia, New York school system. He then joined the staff at WEBR and went on to being involved with many radio/TV projects and a flutist with the Buffalo Philharmonic orchestra.



Emcee BOB WELLS at the microphone hosting WEBR's HI-TEEN radio program at the Dellwood Ballroom.

The following article pertaining to the Hi-Teen radio program was written by Jack Allen, a *Courier Express* (local newspaper now long gone) radio & TV critic on March 6, 1977. It was brought to my attention by Dan McBride, a local DJ (Saturdays at 1:00 p.m. on station WXRL, 1300 on the dial) and advertising executive. Dan has a long history in the Buffalo radio and entertainment business and was affiliated with Town and Glen Casinos and many radio enterprises including the Hi-Teen program.

Peter Bellanca

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### Move over Dick Clark, Buffalo had the Bandstand idea when you didn't know Rock from Roll in Utica

Even before everything that was then called "wrapped in green and made for a teen" . . . there were kids. There were guys who pulled and struggled to get the tight peg of their pants over ribbed white socks and gals who rolled their bobby socks down almost to the tops of their

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brown and white saddle shoes. And thus attired in the uniform of adolescent rebellion of that pristine period, they bunny-hopped, huckle-bucked, jitterbugged and fox-trotted to the sounds of—would you believe —Charlie Spivak, Vaughn Monroe and Sammy Kaye.

It wasn't the boyish countenance of Dick Clark (pushing that green wrapped chewing gum) that beamed out upon the sea of Brylcreemed pompadours and bobby-pinned curls in the beginning; it was Bob Wells - he now of "How's That For Value?" fame. Because before there was "Bandstand" of American (network) or even local Philadelphia variety, even before rock met roll, there was the "Hi-Teen Club" on WEBR, 1340 on your radio dial, right here in Queen City.

It all began on January 19, 1946 with a show called "Teen Time" at the U.S.O. club on Niagara Square, right where the new county courthouse now stands. "We took the kids off the streets and introduced them to the first radio record hop in America," says Wells, whose co-host was the late Billy Keaton, who, with wife Reggie, had a popular Mr. and Mrs. radio show in Buffalo for years. Wells had been a music teacher in Batavia. (N.Y.). He had the warmth and magic that brings shy kids out of their shells and out onto the dance floor, into the world of swing, bebop and then rock and roll. By 1949, Billboard Magazine rated Buffalo's Hi-Teen as the third most popular record show in America.

The live audience flocked in by the busload from all over Western New York and southern Ontario, (Canada) even from Toronto. When the crowds for these Saturday afternoon on-air parties mounted to a consistent 2,000, they moved the show to Kleinhans Music Hall, then to the Elks Ballroom, to the Eagles Club at Pearl and Tupper and finally to Harold Austin's Dellroom Ballroom at Main and Utica, where it remained for twelve years.

"When our show became one of the highest rated radio programs in the country, we had no trouble bringing in all the big names of the entertainment world to perform and sign autographs for our starry-eyed kids," says Wells, who recalls "Vaughn Monroe, the Racing with the Moon man with the muscles in his voice, was our first guest. But we got 'em all, the biggies and the beginners, and many a hit record was first spun on the Hi-Teen show."

The stars included people like Perry Como, Joni James, Pat Boone, the McGuire Sisters, Tony Martin, Tony Bennett, Les Paul and Mary Ford, Nat King Cole and Sammy Davis, Jr. Buffalo became known as a launching pad for hit Records and Hi-Teen a career booster for major personalities.

The show's fame even reached Philadelphia, where a fellow by the name of Bob Horn was looking for something that would win the young audience for the then fledgling WFIL-TV. Horn came to Buffalo, watched the kids come alive and jive for three solid hours (only two hours were broadcast from 3-5 p.m. Saturdays) and he realized he had found the magic format. Hi-Teen was wild, exciting, yet it had just enough decorum—boys had to wear ties and there was a rack of them near the entrance for those unfamiliar with the rules. Horn went back to Philly and "The Ted Horn Bandstand" was born.

The show was a near instant hit in the Philadelphia market, but the sweet smell of success proved too heady for Horn. He became involved in a teenage prostitution scandal that left WFIL-TV frantically looking for a replacement. This was 1950 and Buffalo's Hi-Teen was still near the top of the radio rating nationwide.

Bob Wells was asked to audition for the Philadelphia job, but meanwhile WFIL-TV found a good looking young fellow working in their own record library with whom they felt the kids could identify. He was in Philadelphia to learn the ropes in hope of eventually becoming a disc jockey on his father's radio station in Utica (New York). His name was Dick Clark, and he never got back to Utica.

Clark clicked not only in Philly, but, in 1952, his "America Bandstand" went network. Last month, ABC produced a prime time special commemorating 25 five years of American Bandstand on network television.

Back in Buffalo, Hi-Teen by no means packed it in just because Dick Clark and the kids from Philly were rockin' and rollin' on TV sets all over Western New York as well as the nation. Hi-Teen Club membership soared to 22,000 and Philadelphia's own Frankie Avalon made the Hi-Teen scene. So did Fabian and Johnny Ray, Jerry Lee Lewis, Ella Fitzgerald and a young singer by the name of Merv Griffin.

"But, more important than the big name fame," says Wells, "were the good things the show did for the kids and the good things the kids did for the community. We had clothing drives, food drives, all kinds of charitable ventures."

"The kids won the respect of the community. The show was an antidote to juvenile delinquency. We had a good environment in the Ballroom, loose and informal but still with a certain dignity."

"We never had trouble getting sponsors," says Wells. "Businessmen, parents, the Chamber of Commerce, teachers—they all supported Hi-Teen with the same

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enthusiasm as the kids. It was a happy time for all generations, really "Happy Days."

Wells had the kids dancing, singing, getting into costume parties, competing for prizes. Would you believe he even got them enthusiastic about a waltz contest? And not only did the kids launch out-of-town careers with their Buffalo cheers, new talent emerged from the ranks of the Hi-Teeners themselves.

Among the local talent was one John Amodeo, Buffalo's own "Wonder Boy" a pianist from St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute. He came on the show and played his own versions *Sabre Dance Boogie*, *Stella by Starlight*, *Nature Boy* and *Bumble Boogie*.

Hi-Teen contest winners reigned as Teen King and Queen. A boy and a girl were honored for having the healthiest teeth, others for the fittest feet, for dancing without saddle shoes or for the longest jumps on pogo sticks.

You can get some idea of the shows popularity when you consider that more than 10,000 teenagers and their parents jammed Memorial Auditorium for a celebration of Hi-Teen's first anniversary on the air in January of 1947. It was not only a tribute to Wells and Keaton but also to station manager Cy King at WEBR and to Margaret Russ, the show's chaperone and den mother who is still at the station now that it is part of National Public Radio. Producer-promotion manager Bill Schweitzer also took a well-deserved bow.

But Bob Wells is probably the name most often recalled by Western New Yorkers who were kids in the late 1940s and early and middle 1950s. He's part of the nostalgia they have for the carefree Saturday afternoons they knew as Hi-Teeners, either at the broadcasts or in front of the radio at home.

"I emceed 600 Hi-Teen shows," says Wells, "and I reveled in the joy and enthusiasm of the kids, the wild exuberance of their dancing. And I got as much of a thrill as they did out of the big time entertainers doing their thing in person in Buffalo."

"It makes you wish you were Peter Pan, able to stay young forever," Wells muses. "It also makes you yearn for that bygone day when relations between generations were less strained, and joy and music were more often shared by families, by people of all ages."

"Wouldn't it be great if Buffalo radio—or television—had something like Hi-Teen going today? Would it be possible. . . ?"



## BOOK REVIEW RADIO STARS

An Illustrated Biographical  
Dictionary of 953 Performers,  
1920 through 1960  
By Thomas A. DeLong

### Reviewed by DAN MARAFINO

I have been asked to do a review of a new book called "Radio Stars." This is a book that is a dictionary and it covers 40 years of the history of radio stars from 1920 - 1960. The title says it contains 953 personalities, a goodly amount for the time period. Undoubtedly there are more but let's not quibble. This leaves me with a puzzle; how does one review a dictionary? One doesn't, one accepts what the author, knowing more than I, has put down on paper. A big plus is the amount of photographs contained within. Also are the birth and death dates of each star, the programs they were on and a short synopsis, good for trivia.



Today we live in the age of the "hurry-up syndrome," where privacy (due to cellphones) seems to have gone the way of the dinosaur. Everyone seems to be in a hurry and we've forgotten how to relax. My solution for this dilemma is to procure a copy of this book and plant yourself in your favorite easy chair, put your feet up and go through this book slowly. Enjoy it, savor every page and remember the good old days of radio.

This book is highly (Four Stars) recommended by me.

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### COMIC STRIPS: FROM PRINTED PAGE TO MICROPHONE

by JACK FRENCH © 2007  
(Continued from last issue)

If you remember Buster Brown then you are remembering a comic strip that is 105 years old. This humorous newspaper strip of a 10 year old boy with a dog named Tige debuted in 1902, the creation of cartoonist R.F. Outcault. It was an immediate success and Outcault marketed the name and likeness of the lad and his dog to every business he could. By 1910, Buster Brown was featured prominently on cigars, bottles of whisky, children's clothes and shoes. Although the strip ended in 1926, Buster Brown shoes continued to release his adventures in free comic books. It took quite a while for Buster Brown to make it to radio. An ex-vaudevillian, Edward McDonnell, billing himself as "Smilin' Ed" was on radio at various times doing a kids' variety show from

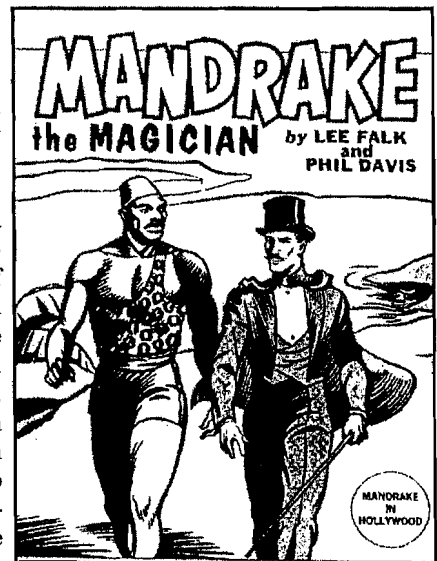


1932 to 1941. Then in 1944, Buster Brown Shoe Company hired him to return to radio with a kids series called The Buster Brown Gang. Accompanying himself on a honky-tonk piano, "Smilin' Ed" sang, told jokes and stories, and portrayed a host of imaginary characters with just his own voice. Both he and his sponsor were delighted with the listener response and the radio show stayed on the air for nine years, until 1953. A total of 27 audio copies of this variety show still exist.

Lee Falk created at least two comic strip heroes that became, and have remained, very popular with the American public. The Phantom, a purple clad, masked

man, brought justice to the African jungles, the surrounding seas, and other regions. While he has remained a familiar pop culture figure for over 70 years in books, movie serials, and movies "The Ghost Who Walks" never got his own radio show. However a second creation of Falk's, who with a 1934 debut predated The Phantom by two years, Mandrake the Magician did make the transition to network radio. Incidentally, Falk was the creator and writer on both of these strips, not the artist. He hired different people to do the actual drawing. In addition to the King Features syndication in hundreds of newspapers, Mandrake got his own comic book in the 1940s which ran through 1967, the latter issues being drawn by the wife of the original artist, Phil Davis, and later by Fred Frederick.

Mandrake the Magician came to the Mutual Network in 1940 and they aired it as a 15 minute show, five times a week. The senatorial tones of Raymond Edward Johnson made him a natural for the title lead. Two other main characters from the comic strip followed Mandrake to the microphone. His servant, a Black giant named Lothar, was played by Juano Hernandez and his "love interest", Narda was voiced by Francesca Lenni. The series lasted two full seasons, until 1942. Twenty-Eight episodes in audio form are in circulation today.



Today, seventy-seven years after it began in a newspaper strip, Blondie is as popular as ever and you can read of the antics of the Bumsteads in your daily newspaper. Murat Young, who preferred to be called by his nickname, "Chic", created this comic strip in 1930 which for the first three years told the tale of a high society bachelor, Dagwood Bumstead, pursuing the hand of social butterfly, Blondie Boopadoop. Their readers of the February 17, 1933 strip saw them get married and shortly thereafter it rose to great heights in popularity. After marriage, Dagwaod lost his inheritance and had to become a working stiff which immediately made him more relevant, and loved, by his fans. A total of 28 movies featuring the couple, their two kids, and their



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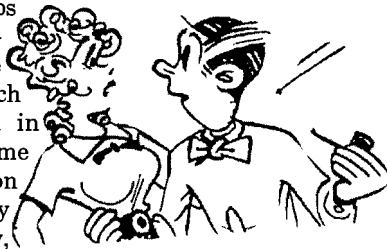
dogs were released from 1938 to 1951, with Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton starring in most of them.

The newspaper strips and the movies success resulted in the radio series, which fortunately started in 1939 with the same two leads. Singleton would eventually leave the radio show, but Lake remained to the end in 1950, achieving one of the closest relationships of actor and character. Their neighbor, Herb Woodley was first played by Frank Nelson and later Hal Peary. This half hour of weekly comedy had several announcers, one of whom was Harlow Wilcox. A total of 31 radio episodes survived. The radio series was followed by two television series, 11 years apart and both running only one season. NBC aired the show for the 1957-58 season with Lake and Pamela Britton as the Bumsteads. CBS brought it back for the 1968-69 season and it featured Will Hutchins and Patricia Hardy in the leads with Jim Backus playing Dagwood's boss, Mr. Dithers.

A gifted artist, Alex Raymond, was invited by King Features to create a strip to compete with the success of Tarzan, so in January 1934 Raymond produced the first appearance of Jungle Jim, a hero who was, essentially, Tarzan with more clothes and a larger vocabulary. Jungle Jim was as successful as King Features had hoped and they kept it in print until 1954, although it was drawn by Austin Briggs during WW II as Raymond had enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. The comic book of Jungle Jim was usually drawn by Paul Norris. In the 40s and 50s, Johnny Weismuller, famous for playing Tarzan, portrayed Jungle Jim in about ten movies and an unsuccessful television series.

The radio version never reached the networks but as a syndicated series it still reached thousands of listeners from regional stations. It was sufficiently popular to keep it in syndication in various markets from 1935 to 1954. Most of the time, Matt Crowley was playing the title lead and his sidekick, Kolu, was the voice of Juano Hernandez, who also played Lothar, the servant of Mandrake. Glenn Riggs was one of the announcers the series utilized. Since this series was a lengthy syndication, an exceptionally large number of shows survived and there are over 500 episodes in circulation now.

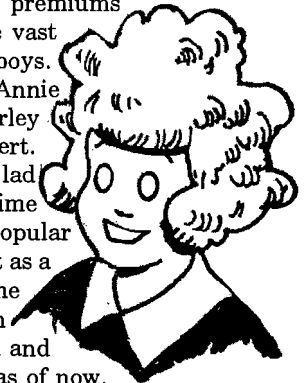
Another comic strip character with phenomenal staying power has been a little red-headed girl with no eyeballs accompanied by her dog, Sandy. Little Orphan Annie, whose first appearance was in The New York Daily



News on August 5, 1924. Harold Gray, who was born in Kankakee, IL in 1894, created the strip with a little boy in the lead, "Orphan Otto" but his editor had him change the gender and re-titled it, using one from a popular poem by James Whitcomb Riley, Little Orphan Annie. Gray wrote and drew the strip for 45 years until his death in 1968.

The radio series, sponsored by Ovaltine, began in 1931 and would run until 1942. Quaker Oats was the sponsor for the last two years. Ovaltine's advertising agency were fairly certain that the exciting adventures of a little girl would capture as many female juvenile listeners as young boys. They were quite surprised when the requests began pouring in for premiums advertised on the show and the vast majority were from little boys. Several girls played the role of Annie over the years, including Shirley Bell, Bobby Dean, and Jane Gilbert. Annie's frequent companion, a lad called "Joe Corntassel" at one time was played by Mel Torme, the popular singer who got his show-biz start as a child actor at WGN. Although the series was on the air for eleven years, it was seldom transcribed and only 31 episodes have surfaced as of now.

But not to worry, Annie will always be with us, in dolls, books, two recent movies, and a Broadway musical that will be revived for your grandchildren.



Depending on your age, when comic strip artist Mill Caniff is mentioned, you immediately think of either Terry and the Pirates or Steve Canyon. He created the first one in 1934 and gave it up in 1946 to create the second. Caniff, who was born in 1907 was an Eagle Scout as a youngster and after graduation from Ohio State became a full time comic strip artist. His first success was Dickie Dare in 1933 but Terry and the Pirates far exceeded it in syndication and readers. This adventure, set in China, later spawned a movie serial as well as a long term radio program and a short-lived television series.

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The radio show began in November 1937 and would run until June 1948. There were several different sponsors over the years, including Dari-Rich, Libby's, and Quaker Cereals. The program probably had the largest cast of unusual characters, most of whom began in the newspaper strip, including Burma, Pat Ryan, Big Stoop, Connie, Captain Judas, Pyzon, General Klang, and the Dragon Lady. There were many actors who appeared in the show over the years, but few of them were well-known then or now. A few exceptions are Bud Collyer, one of those who played Pat, and Agnes Moorehead who was The Dragon Lady for a short period. When Libby's was sponsoring it, the show was transcribed so a large number (180) of episodes still exist for us to enjoy today.

"America's Fighting Cowboy", Red Ryder, was created in 1938 by a cowboy artist, Fred Harman, who in the 1920s was a cartoonist for a small animation firm in Kansas City, working next to another young struggling artist, Walt Disney. Red Ryder appeared in newspapers



both in daily and Sunday editions. Set in the 1890s, it told of the adventures of a red-headed, broad shouldered cow poke and his young Navaho ward, Little Beaver. The strip spawned Big Little Books, several

movies, a brief television series, and over a hundred issues of Red Ryder comic books, beginning in 1940. However after a few years, Harman drew only the covers; the inside stories were by Dick Calkins, who also was the artist for Buck Rogers,

Red Ryder also sold more B-B guns than anyone in U.S. history. The Daisy Manufacturing Company, in business since the 1880s, never had a more successful salesman than Red Ryder. From 1940 on, both Red and Little Beaver (and frequently their horses, Thunder and Papoose) were prominent in full page ads extolling the merits of Daisy B-B guns which appeared on the back covers of juvenile magazines and comic books. The best selling model quickly became the "Red Ryder Saddle Carbine" with leather saddle thong; it sold for only \$2.95 in 1941. Daisy even sponsored marksmanship contests in which the winners were transported to Harman's ranch in Pagosa Springs, CO.

The Red Ryder radio series came to the airwaves about 1941 as a local show in the Los Angeles area and while it was picked up by NBC Blue, the network broadcast it

only on the West Coast. It was a 30 minute show, and aired either two or three times a week, depending on the year. It continued on for nearly ten years, folding about 1950. It's possible that as many as 900 episodes were produced, but virtually all were live and so today, we



have located only about 55 audio copies. The title lead was Red Hadley and later Carlton Kadell while at least four different boys voiced Little Beaver at different times: Tommy Cook, Henry Blair, Johnny McGovern, and Frank Bresee. "The Duchess," Red's aunt, who was prominent in the comic strip, found herself virtually eliminated from the radio scripts. The writers alternated with two other adult companions for Red, both male, "Buckskin" and "Rawhide" who were not in the comic strip.

The most popular, best selling novelist in 20th century America was not Zane Gray, Louis L'Amour, or even Danielle Steel. The author who has sold more than 100 million copies of his novels in 56 languages is Edgar Rice Burroughs, and of course his most famous creation was Tarzan. "The King of the Jungle" first came to print in the pulp magazines and followed this quickly in 1914 with Rice's first novel starring the white man raised by the apes in an African jungle. Tarzan was a tremendous success and he was the subject of dozens of motion pictures, beginning with the silent films in 1918. A total of over 40 moving pictures featuring Tarzan were produced from 1920 to 1970 and several more have been released in the past 35 years.

The comic strip of Tarzan began in 1929 when Campbell-Edwards got the rights to market it to United Features Syndication. They hired one of the most skilled artists, Hal Foster, and he did the strip until 1937 when he left to create and draw Prince Valiant. However Tarzan continued in both the newspaper syndication and comic books until the mid-70s, drawn by other artists.

# TARZAN



A syndicated radio version of Tarzan was marketed from 1934 to 1936 with the title lead played

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at different times by James Pierce and Carlton Kadell. The daughter of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Joanne, voiced the character of Jane. The hero of the jungle, played by Lamont Johnson, returned briefly to the air on Mutual from November 1951 to February 1952, but only for their West Coast affiliates. Listeners must have got a kick out of the commercials; the run was sponsored by Ross' Dog and Cat Flea Powder. When Mutual gave up the series, CBS picked it up, got Post Toasties to sponsor it, and aired it for about 15 months, ending in June 1953. There was also an Australian version of Tarzan which aired in the early 1950s "down under." Over 200 audio copies have survived, most from the syndicated series.



Probably no artist could have been more qualified to create and draw the Mark Trail newspaper strip than Ed Dodd. He was born in Georgia in 1902 and beginning as a teen-ager, worked at Dan Beard's Boy Scout Camp for thirteen summers. As an adult he was first a rancher and then a Park Service guide, all the time observing and drawing nature and its creatures. So he was steeped in the arts of the forest, rivers, and ranches when in 1946, at the age of 44, he began the Mark Trail strip for the New York Post. As a dedicated environmentalist and conservationist, Dodd actually predated the ecology movement by two decades with his champion of nature. His syndicated strip was soon being featured in hundreds of newspapers.

Mark Trail first came to radio late in the Golden Age, in January 1950 on Mutual. It was there as a half hour show three times a week for one year and then switched to ABC for the following season, ending in June 1952. The ABC version was only 15 minutes in length. Kellogg's sponsored it the first year, but ABC could not find one so they aired it as a sustainer. Matt Crowley was the first to play the title lead but later Staats Cotsworth took over. Scotty, Trail's junior sidekick, was played by Ron Liss, who was also "Robin" when the Dynamic Duo appeared on The Adventures of Superman. Liss would have known well the Mark Trail announcer, Jackson Beck, since he was also Superman's announcer. A total of 42 audio copies are in existence today. Although the radio series ended after only two years, the newspaper strip never ended. Dodd drew it daily until his death in 1991 at which time it was taken over by his longtime assistant, Jack Elrod, who is still producing it for today's readers.

### It's on the Tip of My Tongue

*I'll give you 2 or more radio stars' names for you to figure out the show they appeared in.*

1. Kenny Delmar, Peter Donald and Parker Fennelly.
2. Hal Perry, Gale Gordon, Cliff Arquette and Arthur Q. Bryan.
3. Orson Welles and Bret Morrison.
4. Bennett Kilpack and James Kelly.
5. Claudia Morgan and Les Tremayne.
6. Hugh Marlowe and Marion Shockley.
7. Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce.
8. Edward G. Robinson and Claire Trevor.
9. Lon Clark and Charlotte Manson.
10. John Todd and Brace Beemer.
11. Virginia Payne and Al Hodge.
12. Olan Soule and Barbara Luddy.
13. Don Wilson, Mary Livingstone and Phil Harris.
14. Hanley Stafford and Fanny Brice.
15. Arnold Stang, Florence Hallop and Art Carney.

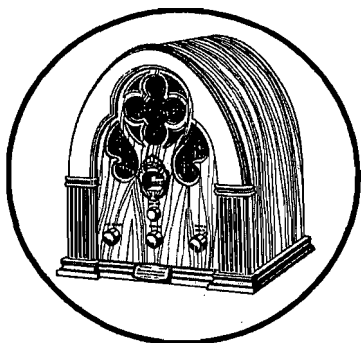
*Take your time, you've got all summer before I post the answers.*

**This is the last issue before the summer break.  
The next issue of the *Illustrated Press*  
will be published in September.  
Have a Great Summer !!**



***The Old Time Radio Club***

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