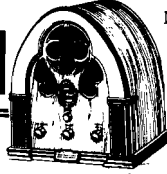


NUMBER 56-April 1981

Illustrated Press



THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB

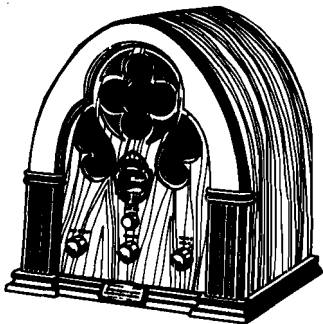
SINCE 1975



Agnes Moorehead was one of radio's most active and versatile actresses for many years. Here she is as Marilly in the forties series, MAYOR OF THE TOWN, starring Lionel Barrymore.

RATING THE OTR DEALERS....

SEE PAGE SEVEN



THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Club dues are \$13.00 per yr. from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. Members receive a membership card, library lists, a monthly newsletter (The Illustrated Press), a semi-annual magazine (Memories), and various special items. Additional family members living in the same household as a regular member may join the club for \$2.00 per year. These members have all the privileges of regular members but do not receive the publications. A junior membership is available to persons 15 years of age or younger who do not live in the household of a regular member. This membership is \$6.00 per year and includes all the benefits of a regular membership. Regular membership dues are as follows: if you join in Jan. dues are \$13.00 for the year; Feb., \$12.00; March \$11.00; April \$10.00; May \$9.00; June \$8.00; July \$7.00; Aug., \$6.00; Sept., \$5.00; Oct., \$4.00; Nov., \$3.00; and Dec., \$2.00. The numbers after your name on the address label are the month and year your renewal is due. Reminder notes will be sent. Your renewal should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be certain to notify us if you change your address.

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COLUMNISTS THIS ISSUE:

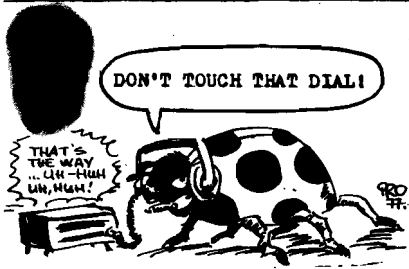
Bob Davis
Jerry Collins
Jim Snyder
Monte Wilson

DEADLINE FOR IP #57 - April 13th
FOR IP #58 - May 11th
FOR IP #59 - June 8th

BACK ISSUES: All are \$1.00 each, postpaid, except where noted. Out-of-print issues can be borrowed from the Reference Library.

MEMORIES: Vol. 1 #1 (\$2.00), #3, #4, #5; Vol. 2 #1, #4 (\$2.00); Vol. 4 #1.

IP: #3 (with SHADOW script), #5A (RH AC/OTRC Special #1), #8 (50¢), #10 (with part one of LUX RADIO THEATER Log), #14 (50¢), #15 (50¢), #16, #17, #18, RHAC/OTRC Special #2, #19, #20, #21, #23, #24, #25, #26, #27, #28 (RHAC/OTRC Special #3), #29, #30, #31, #32 (\$2.00), #33, #34, #37, #38, #39, #40, #41, #42, #43, #44, #45, #46, #47, #48, #49, #50, #51, #52, #53, #54, #55, etc.



JERRY COLLINS

Once again it is time to delve into the days of Radio past.

Once again I return to radio's great actors and actresses and the many roles that they played.

In my opinion radio's greatest female stars were Agnes Moorehead and Mercedes McCambridge.

To many young people, Agnes Moorehead was one of the stars of the television show, Bewitched. For those of us with some gray in our hair, radio was the medium Miss Moorehead excelled in. Among the many shows she starred in were: The Adventure of Mr. Meek, The Aldrich Family (Mrs. Brown), Bringing Up Father (Maggie), the Gumps, Life Can Be Beautiful, Mayor of the Town, The March of Time (Eleanore Roosevelt), The Phil Baker Show, Terry and the Pirates (The Dragon Lady) and the Shadow (Margot Lane).

Who could ever forget the melodious voice of Mercedes McCambridge. She played in such shows as Abie's Irish Rose, Betty and Bob, Big Sister (Ruth Wayne), The Guiding Light (Mary Rutledge), This is Nora Drake and I Love a Mystery.

One of the best character actors on the radio was John Brown. His popular voice could be heard on such shows as Ozzie and Harriet (Thorny), Amanda of Honeymoon Hill, A date With Judy, A day in the Life of Dennis Day, The Fred Allen Show, The Life of Riley, (Digger O'Dell), Lorenzo Jones, My Friend Irma (Al), The Saint and Tillie the Toiler.

Fans of early television remember Marvin Miller on the Millionaire. Many fans of old radio have come to the conclusion that Miller played on a million radio programs. He played on such shows as Backstage Wife, The Billie Burke Show, Captain Midnight, Great Gunns, The Guiding Light, One Man's Family, The Right to Happiness, The Road of Life, The Romance of Helen Trent, Sacttergood Baines, and Woman in White. He also was the narrator, announcer, or master of ceremonies on such shows as Beat the Band, The Cisco Kid, A Date With Judy, The Don

Ameche Show, Dreft Star Playhouse, Father Knows Best, First Nighter, The Joe Stafford Show, Ma Perkins, The Railroad Hour, Songs by Sinatra and the Whistler.

Recently Les Tremayne played Mentor on the Shazam Television show. Many older viewers remember Les as one of radio's leading actors. He played in Abbott Mysteries, Betty and Bob, The Falcon (Mike Waring, the Falcon), Joyce Jordan Girl Interne, Ma Perkins, The Second Mrs. Burton, The Thin Man (Nick Charles), Wendy Warren and Woman in White.

Early television viewers might remember Beat the Clock and its host Bud Collyer. Prior to its television days he was a popular soap opera star. Among his many credits would be Young Widder Brown, Pretty Kitty Kelly, Abbie's Irish Rose, Just Plain Bill, Kate Hopkins, Angel of Mercy, Kitty Foyle, Life Can Be Beautiful and The Man I Married. He was also the announcer on the Guiding Light, The Road of Life and other shows. To the surprise of many who remember a tall thin Clayton "Bud" Collyer with a bow tie, he played the parts of both Superman and Clark Kent on the Superman show as well as Patrick Ryan on Terry and the Pirates.

Until next month "Goodnight All".
(((This is a good spot to acknowledge our appreciation to Jerry Collins for the use of his typewriter over the past 3 months. We probably used it more than him during that time. Jerry came to our rescue when it became apparent that our typewriter with small type would not reproduce as well as we would like. Since we now have a new electric typewriter, we won't have to bother Jerry any more. Jerry—thank you very much from both of us. Dick and Arlene)))



TAPE LIBRARY RATES: 2400' reel-\$1.25 per month; 1800' reel-\$1.00 per month; 1200' reel-\$.75 per month; cassette and records-.50 per month. Postage must be included with all orders and here are the rates: For the USA and APO-60¢ for one reel, 35¢ for each additional reel; 35¢ for each cassette and record. For Canada: \$1.35 for one reel, 85¢ for each additional reel; 85¢ for each cassette and record. All tapes to Canada be mailed first class.

Broadcast Beat

2/27/81



Radio Strikes Back With 'Star Wars'

By MARY ANN LA ROCCELLA
News TV-Radio Critic

"Star Wars" is coming soon to a radio near you.

George Lucas, who made a fortune on the film — the biggest box-office success in history — has given the radio rights to a public station associated with his alma mater, the University of Southern California.

That station, KUSC-FM, has produced 13 half-hour programs for distribution to 24 National Public Radio affiliates on a weekly basis.

Two stations in Buffalo will carry the series. FM88 (WBFO) begins airing the special at 4:30 p.m. Sunday. Each of the episodes will be repeated at 11:30 p.m. Mondays on the All dial. WBER (970) starts its "Star Wars" schedule at 7 p.m. March 7 and will continue airing the episodes once a week on subsequent Saturdays.

Mark Hamill, who portrayed Luke Skywalker in the science-fiction film, and Anthony Daniels, who was the busybody robot, C3PO, recreate their roles in the radio series.

THE PROJECT represents an interesting challenge — to tell what was a highly visual story using audio only. It's also the most ambitious among the current efforts to revive radio drama.

Lucas made the movie's sound effects and the original John Williams music available to producer Richard Tuscan, who employed new stereo equipment, highly sensitive omnidirectional microphones and multitrack technology.

Director John Madden reports that while the series is based on the movie's characters and situations, new events take place and new characters are introduced.

Some of the new material chronicles Princess Leia's visit to her father, the adventures of Han Solo and Chewbacca in the underworld, how C3PO and R2-D2 met, and Luke's bond with his best friend, Biggs.

"This is a labor of love," Hamill said of his radio work. "It's an opportunity for me to work in a medium that has been denied me simply because of my age. I wanted to be in-

volved in the radio series from the minute I heard about it."

DANIELA, WHO read the part of C3PO, did much of the production from an isolation booth to add echo to the robot's voice. The production crew was amazed to see Daniels going through the characteristic mechanical gestures, acting as he spoke.

Daniela is a big fan of radio, which he considers one of the most creative media. "In radio, you can sit there and make the scenery just how you want it," he said. "Therefore, it's stimulating."

"The amount of enjoyment you get is reciprocal to the amount of effort you put into it. The sound effects will be stunning. You can sit at home and have the whole galaxy whizzing around your head."

Producer Toscan adds, "We've tried to make the shows sound different from other radio dramas, to make them evocative of the revolutionary sound that was heard in the film."

This series may bridge the gap between the generation that experienced the wonders of old-time radio and its children, who use radio only to tune in rock music.



STAR WARS COMES TO RADIO

Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker and his famous band of space adventurers blast off with a radio version of STAR WARS, premiering Saturday night, March 7 at 7 p.m. on WBER Newsradio 970. The series of 13 half-hours is being brought to the public through the courtesy of George Lucas, the producer and owner of the rights to STAR WARS. Lucas donated the rights to KUSC-FM, a public radio station associated with Lucas' alma mater, the University of Southern California. (Photo © 1977, 20th Century Fox Film Corporation).

RETURN WITH US TO... by Bill O'Neil
Dip...
Journalist

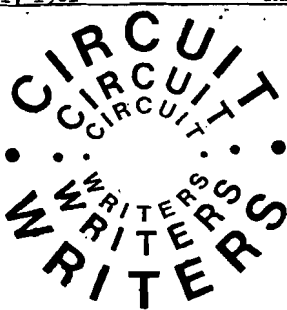
Bride and Groom

BRIDE AND GROOM, ONE OF RADIO'S MOST UNIQUE PROGRAMS, WAS FIRST HEARD OVER ABC IN 1945. ACTUAL WEDDINGS WERE PERFORMED ON THE SHOW. NATURALLY, THE COUPLES TAKING PART WERE SHOWERED WITH GIFTS. JOHN NELSON MCD AND DIRECTED THIS POPULAR PROGRAM.



FURNITURE... SET OF CHINA... SILVERWARE... LINEN... WRISTWATCH...

COMPETITION WAS KEEN FOR SELECTION AS THE LUCKY COUPLE BECAUSE OF THE PUBLICITY, EXCITEMENT AND GIFTS THAT CAME TO THE BRIDE AND GROOM.



JR. HIGH STUDENTS "TUNE IN"
WITH OLD TIME RADIO CLUB

By: Monte Wilson

"It's a fact! If you are a member of our OLD TIME RADIO CLUB you can put your courage to the test. Listen to tape #292 and then try to keep calm when your mother asks you to go the basement for a jar of pickles. Oh, that shadow? It's nothing...or is it? To be sure, we suggest you stop by the check out desk and pick up an information sheet that will open up a world of great entertainment for you: THE PIONEER JR. HIGH OLD TIME RADIO CLUB".

When September rolls around, the school doors open, and classes begin, we find the daily announcements bidding a friendly invitation to join the hours of great listening entertainment being offered as a new service of our library. Current members are delighted to receive a free tape of their choice from the collection when they encourage a new member to join for a one time fee of \$2.00.

Each new member is provided with a packet of printed information including a certificate of membership, complete catalog of 330 cassette listings, I.D. Card, a brief outline and history of OTR, a "feedback" form for members or parents to comment, and a TDK guide for care and handling of cassettes. The catalog contains sections divided into appropriate categories including one entitled: "Heroes Of the Media" where fictionalized heroes win their battles apart from the more realistic characters we've come to know and love. Tapes are checked out one at a time for a 3 day period. Overdues mean a ten cent fine which clears the record. The 5th overdue means automatic suspension. When a 7th grader joins the club, no additional membership fees are assessed in 8th or 9th grade.

At this point we are in the 2nd full year of operation with 43 members. The MYSTERY-FANTASY and COMEDY categories lead the popularity

of highest circulations with favorites including: Suspense, Hall of Fantasy, Inner Sanctum, Mysterious Traveler, Fibber McGee & Molly, Jack Benny, Our Miss Brooks, Ozzie and Harriet, Phil Harris-Alice Faye, and the Stan Freberg Show.

When enough activities can be organized, the members may choose to elect officers and establish regular meetings accordingly. New video tape equipment will allow us to produce some informative programs relating to any or all areas of interest to members. We are aware that some old movies featuring well known radio entertainers are beginning to surface on video tape format which we hope can be added to our materials.

Thanks to the generous support and donations in the way of both programming and materials from thoughtful collectors, 2 years of time to organize and dub cassettes, and a gift from our student council of 250 blank cassettes, we were able to launch our new service. We have been commended by parents and teachers in other schools for providing an excellent source of enrichment materials and we stand ready to encourage and support other schools and civic groups who may also be interested in providing this type of service.

In the meantime...who knows what sound effects are lurking in the corner waiting to be turned into a creative listening activity? Will the English class in room 3 listening to "Sorry, Wrong Number", discover the actress later appeared on television in a comedy role as "Endora"? Is it true that Miss Willow is giving extra credit in her Reading class for any student who can identify what "Kemo Sabe" means?

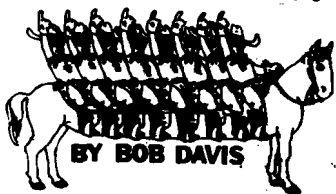
Be sure to be with us again next time, same place, same school, for the further adventures of a Loan Cassette and the thrilling adventure entitled: "There's A Long, Long, Tape A'Winding!"

(Mr. Wilson recently completed his degrees in Media Technology and Library Science at San Jose State University in California and is currently serving as Library-Media Specialist in the Jr. High where he previously taught English, Reading, and Social Studies. He is a professional musician and considers Old Time Radio Collecting to be one of his most enjoyable hobbies.)



SAY!

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?



This time around we thought that we would try to bring you up to date on some of the doings of your favorites from Radioland. Our crack research team has come up with some unknown and interesting tid-bits that we are sure will make you the best informed collector on the block.

ITEM...There's trouble in the Shadow household. Wife Margo is suing for divorce. She claims she never sees him anymore....

ITEM...Trouble also brewing in the Superman household. Wife Lois claims that the only thing strong about him lately is his breath.... Well Lois, bad breath is better than no breath at all.

ITEM...The Britt Reids are expecting. If its a boy they'll call him Buzzy. They were out celebrating the other night and wouldn't you know it, they were both drinking their favorite drink...Stingers!

ITEM...As if Paul Whiteman hasn't had troubles enough lately with the Womens Lib Activities wanting to change the name of his show to the Paul Whiteperson Hour, now this reporter has found out that the N.A.A.C.P. is preparing a case against him. Lotsa Luck Paul...

ITEM...Probably the most shocking news of all came recently with the arrest of Henry Aldrich. After intensive questioning, Aldrich has admitted that he is indeed the infamous "Son of Sam" (think about that one). He admitted the crimes charged to him and said that he was guided by the works of Homer. Police are investigating.

LEGIT ITEM...The radio version of Star Wars started locally here last night and all I can say is that I, for one, am very much disappointed with it. The potential for it was tremendous but the actual execution of the show is wooden and high-schoolish. It could had been so much better. Lets hope that in the upcoming weeks that it does perk up.

LIBRARY NEWS

Ah, so sweet, the sound of more additions to the OTR Library. This time its's 5 more albums and one cassette, all donated by Ken Krug. C-50 (only 1 show) The Shadow "Death from the Deep" w/Orson Welles

Record #4-Themes Like Old Times-90 of the Most famous original radio themes

Record #5-The Adventures of Tom Mix Two Episodes (a George Garabedian Production)

Record #6-Blondie-One complete show (a George Garabedian Production)

Record #7-Radiola Record Release #10 Spike Jones Show of 6/25/49 Vic & Sade Show of 10/26/46

Record #8-Radiola Record #24 Duffy's Tavern Show 7/29/40 My Friend Irma Show 4/11/47 (First Show)

The current growth spurt of our library since October has seen the total additions of 21 reels, 8 records, and 1 cassette. I feel we should take a bow, but not feel satisfied, not yet anyways. Lets try to keep this up and make it habit forming.

Norm Giesler

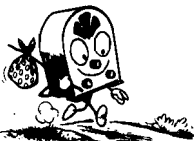
((Please see pages 2 & 3 for Sound Library rental information. Also, a reminder, any donation of programs entitles the donor to one free month (including postage) of a similar item, be it cassette, reel, or records. We could especially use more cassettes. Ed.))

* * * * *



"It'd be wonderful for radio reception."

Wireless Wanderings



JIM SNYDER

In the past, it seems that my most popular columns (April '78, Aug. '78, April '79, Feb. '80) have been the ones where I have talked about dealers who sell OTR materials. So, once again, I will wander into this field with five more dealers. I want to remind you that what I say here is based on my own rather limited purchases from these companies. Your own experiences may or may not match mine. Why not write in and tell us? While some of these outfits sell cassettes, my review is based on the purchase of 1800' tapes. Be sure to check current prices, by the way, as there is a six month lead time from when I start placing orders to when you finally read this. As in the past, each dealer has been sent a copy of my first draft, and has been invited to respond.

Dick Judge, 362 Browncroft Blvd., Rochester, New York 14609, offers a 10,000 show catalog for \$4.00. While I am certainly not going to count them, that figure would appear to be roughly correct. With the catalog is an offer to send additional pages detailing another couple thousand reels for an additional \$6.00. All together, this makes a listing of over 500 pages. His price is \$14.00 (plus shipping) for a six hour, pre-recorded tape. He does offer sound ratings for each show in a reel, but it should be noted that his top sound rating says that there may be "flaws," which is not the usual pattern of other sound rating guides. It is, as always, necessary to read all the information that accompanies a catalog. The reels he sent were on Capital tape. I found the response time very quick, four days for the catalog and a week for the tapes. I ordered two tapes and found one to be graded accurately. The other reel, which was mostly rated VG or G/VG, was really terrible, parts being completely unintelligible. With the list of shows in that box he included a note of apology, acknowledging that the ratings were not correct. After listening, I returned the reel, and requested another to replace it.

I received the replacement promptly, which was acceptably graded, along with another gracious note of apology. A recommended source for those of you who buy.

The Great Radio Shows, P.O. Box 254, Woodinville, Washington 98072, has a 500 page catalog for \$2.50, to be refunded with the first order. It took a couple of weeks, and when it arrived it appeared to be a bit longer than advertised (the numbering system is a little complicated). At least it was a massive document. Each separate show has a complete description, giving date, network, sound rating, personal comments, and an explanation of the show that goes beyond simply listing the title. This is by far the most detailed listing I have seen. Certainly the catalog is worth the price if you don't buy a single thing. There are no set reels made up; this is strictly a custom taping operation at \$5.50 an hour, including shipping. The Tape used was Scotch. The order took a little less than two weeks to fill and return to me. There are a couple of negative notes, however. Using their own grading scale, I felt that more than half the shows I received were overgraded. This could be a subjective decision on my part for some, but two had such a heavy line hum that there is no question but what they are overgraded. I ordered an Amos and Andy that was described as their final broadcast at 30 minutes in length. Well, it wasn't Amos and Andy at all, it was the Amos and Andy Music Hall which is an entirely different show. It ran only 18 minutes. For this I paid \$2.75 when I already had a fine copy of this program. This could well be an isolated instance (and errors are certainly going to happen). Over all, an excellent source for you to look into, if you can pay the prices.

I am afraid that I wasn't completely satisfied with the material I received from Burton Wilson, 1137 Newby Street, Glendale, California 91201. His ad offered a catalog of 20,000 programs for \$2.50. A sampling page count gives me an estimate of a maximum of 15,600, which is still a large listing. His is a custom taping operation at a price of \$2.50 per hour, plus a postal insurance fee. The tape was Ampex. Unlike most catalogs, he does not list the shows by reel, but has listed the shows alphabetically, which should make it very easy to find what you want, but there were problems with that. Most of his Lux, for example, carry no

dates. In with them are twelve from the South African Lux series (which) is a terrible series, by the way) but they are simply identified as Lux. Unless you have an alphabetical listing, you would have to go through the entire 927 shows in a chronological list simply to find that they aren't there. In another series I found two shows, two entries apart, with different titles, that turned out to be the same show. He gives no sound ratings, and has the usual disclaimer about "quality is in the ears of the beholder." I have already expressed my feelings on that in my February, 1980 column. To point out the problem this causes, he has a long list of Amos and Andy. I found one I didn't have, so I ordered it. He put a note in the box that it was so bad that he wouldn't send it. Instead he substituted another show from that series, and of course I already had it. A sound rating would have prevented this problem. I ordered 24 programs from widely separated portions of the catalog, and found three of them to be of such poor sound, that I discarded them. He does give a time for each listing, but again there were problems. All 24 shows that I ordered were stated to be 30 minutes. But, ten of the 24 turned out to be only 15 or 20 minutes in length. Two of the 15 minute ones were only the last half of the program. The first half was missing. He tried to offset all of this by putting in a number of "extras," but more care in the catalog would have prevented the problem in the first place. Both catalog and tapes were sent promptly. It was apparent, from the extras, that he does try to please, and although I didn't check it out, I would guess that he would have corrected what I was dissatisfied with. His price is a good one, but when ordering I would strongly suggest that you include alternate program choices, and include a statement of your own sound requirements.

Omega OTR, P.O. Box 39253, Redford, Michigan 48239, has a rather small catalog; I would estimate that it contains a little over 400 reels, but he does have some new stuff. The catalog cost is \$1.00. A 6 hour, prerecorded tape is \$10.00 and that includes shipping. While a couple of tape brands are mentioned in the catalog's introduction, there was no brand identification of the box or reel. It did appear to be good quality tape. I have not talked to anyone who has received tapes

from Omega, but for some reason I anticipated receiving superior quality material. I was not disappointed in that. All the shows were in absolutely sparkling sound. I am always uneasy when I don't have some kind of rating when I make my choices. I do have a complaint about my order. It took 6 weeks, and I received no notice of the delay. Federal consumer protection laws state: "If no date is stated by the seller, you have the right to have your merchandise shipped within 30 days. (If he fails to do so) the seller must notify you of a delay and give you a free means to reply." While no one is going to take Omega to court, over this matter, it is a matter of simple courtesy to notify buyers of delays, (I do so in trading), even if they aren't quite the 30 day limit. I couldn't find an actual shipping date on the carton, but it would seem to me that a longer period was involved with my order. Other dealers that we have reviewed in the past have notified us of even short delays.

I am quite unhappy with the business practices of R.R. Schurch, 9370 Urban Drive, LaMesa, California 92041. His ad offered a catalog of 11,000 programs for \$2.00. What arrived was a catalog listing approximately one-third that number. I sent off an order for one reel and requested the missing pages. They arrived with a note that supplements were sent out with orders. I found a second tape to order in the supplements. More on that in a moment. His price is \$10.00 for a pre-recorded reel, plus postage. I could not find any brand name on the tape or box. There are no sound ratings, although in his note he said, "I listen to all my tapes before they are listed, so I can attest to their quality." In the first tape I found 5 of the 12 shows to be very bassy, including 2 that were definitely unusable. My show-by-show ratings ran from "poor" to "very good." The second tape was a series of WorldWar II documentaries. It was listed as being recorded at 1 7/8. Since his price was \$10.00 a reel, I felt that this would be an outstanding chance to get twice as much material for the same price; I was wrong. First of all they were TV documentaries, not radio, and his catalog did not state that fact. Two shows were recorded at such low volume that they couldn't be retrieved. On some shows Schurch, or whoever he got the tape from, gave a commentary of what was happening on the screen. This was over the show's narration

and was poorly done, as well as unnecessary, but they even went so far as to sing along with the music on 2 shows. Some shows were so bad they could not be understood. I wound up discarding one-half of the material on this tape. Then to top it all off, in with the tape was a note that all tapes recorded at 1 7/8 carried a double cost. I sent off the extra \$10.00 to him, and then searched the catalog and supplements, and nowhere can I find a statement to that effect. So, I wound up paying \$20.00 for a tape that was advertised at \$10.00, and then I had to throw half of it out because it was so bad. I found that on both his catalog offer, and his tape offerings, he did not deliver what he said he would.

REPLIES

Dick Judge, 362 Browncroft Blvd, Rochester, New York 14609--Thanks for the "plug"--what else can I say? The reel you picked (6-100) & replaced was early-on in the collection--later acquisitions are better.

The Great Radio Shows, P. O. Box 254, Woodinville, Washington 98072--It was both kind of you to send me a draft of your proposed critique, and more than fair to let us have an opportunity to respond before publication. I certainly do have some comments, and I hope I can at least persuade you in part to view things through our eyes.

Firstly, thanks for the kind comment about the catalog. It shows, I hope, that it is a labor of love, which is precisely the case.

As to the rapidity with which we complete our order, all tapes are mailed out within 48 hours of receipt. The only---and extremely rare---exception to this would be a huge order of three or four hundred dollars, and even then a portion of this is mailed within that 48 hour time slot. If your order took two weeks, I must lay most of the blame at the feet of the postal service. (For example, your last order bore the date of 11/3/80. Sent first class, it was received here and logged in on Wednesday, November 5th. Our records show it was mailed special fourth class on November 7th. I assure you this is quite typical of our promptness.)

Now as to titling the shows. Technically you are correct about the Amos & Andy Music Hall, which you correctly point out we show as Amos & Andy. But the point is it was a show in which Amos & Andy, between records, play out skits and have a plot, such as it is. To some extent, it's to preserve space in abbreviating the titles, but I'd bet almost anything if you asked 50 people at

random what was the name of the show in the late 50s with Kingfish and Sapphire, et al, 49½ would say "Amos & Andy." It might legally have born the Music Hall sobriquet, but it is remembered as "Amos & Andy" plain and simple. We also acknowledge, for instance, that "Fibber McGee" isn't technically correct either, it was really "Fibber McGee and Molly" but who remembers that? The best case in point happened at a party several years ago. I asked 25-30 people if they remembered what show began with..."Henry! Henry Aldrich! ...Coming, Mother". Every single one said, "Henry Aldrich". And they were all wrong. It was really "The Aldrich Family". Who remembers that Sgt. Preston and his much-smarter-than-him sled dog really starred in a show called "Challenge of the Yukon?" You might, but you'd be one in a thousand. This obviously is a drearily long way of pointing out that we label the shows what people remember, something that evokes nostalgia, not necessarily what the title of the program really was.

You're right about the length of the last Amos & Andy (Music Hall) show, however. It was originally a half-hour slot, but CBS began filling with 5 minutes of news and commentary, and extra commercials and public service announcements, and the end result was about 18-20 minutes. We plead guilty, but in a catalog of over ten thousand programs and listings, I seriously doubt there's more than 6-8 that are in appreciable error as to running time.

On the grading scale, you have a certain point, but if you'll forgive me, I'll have to assume your recorder is a comparatively modern one, properly cleaned and degaussed and capable of playing tapes with the maximum possible output. (I should mention this isn't always the case, because years ago I had a lady wax irate when she wrote claiming a tape was dull and lifeless. I asked the age of her recorder and if it had regular cleaning and demagnetizing. Incensed, she promptly wrote back her machine was only 3½ years old, she used it regularly, and not only did she not only not own a magnet, but couldn't see what a child's toy of that nature had to do with her tape machine. And as for cleaning, she'd have me know it was immaculate, as she dusted it regularly along with the other furniture in her living room. It explains, I think, why I cringe any time a woman orders tapes, but I digress I know.)

So anyway, assuaging your machine is flawless in every respect, you

probably have point almost well-taken, because in the first few years of our operation we did exhibit a tendency to overrate shows, probably more from the enthusiasm of finding them than for their actual sonic values. However, I'm prepared to lay another bet that the programs in the last 4-5 years supplements are very accurate indeed in the sound rating. So, I'll plead guilty for the first few supplements, and clearly not guilty since about 1975 or so. I frankly think you have made some assumptions that might not be warranted if you had a broader spectrum of our programs, and could hear a wider range of broadcasts we offer.

And yes, \$5.50 is fairly steep these days, but it didn't come from greed, it came from postage (up 79% in the past 3 years), raw tape (up almost 100% since 1976), equipment repair (up almost 200% - when I am reincarnated I am going to come back as a high fidelity repairman, it's better than being an orthodontist) and so on. Radio Yesteryear charges \$12.00 an hour and up, and I'd dearly love to know their profit margin. Mar-Bren, who also does custom recording (as opposed to bulk reels) charges \$7.00 an hour, a 21% difference. To my knowledge, we are the lowest-priced custom-reel company around.

This is far too long a rebuttal and you'll probably have to whittle it down, but we do care about our product and while we appreciate your thoughtfulness in including our name, want to take every opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings there may be where our tapes are concerned. We love the business and we love the product and we take exacting (and often persnickety) care in trying to let that show.

Thanks again, and best wishes.
George G. Fowler,
President

Burton Wilson, 1137 Newby Street,
Glendale, California 91201

Enclosed you will find a remittance of \$11.25. This is not to be construed to be a bribe in any way. I know that your integrity will demand that you call things the way you see them, and I respect you for it. I am taking your letter as a letter of complaint that must be honored to keep my own business integrity. The \$11.25 was computed via the following: (1)-Amos and Andy show you did not with--30 minutes: 3 shows you discarded due to sound quality; 90 minutes; 10 shows of 15-20 min. instead of

30 min.: 150 minutes; This equals 270 min. or 4 hours and 30 min. @ \$2.50 per hour equals \$11.25. I am refunding this sum to prove that when I say I will refund monies to dissatisfied customers I sincerely mean it. (Please see enclosed guarantee).

I will not bore you with business factors pertaining to my functions other than to submit the following: Catalog Cost: \$11.72 each for printing plus packaging and mailing \$12.71 Total, Minus \$2.50 charge, Equals \$10.21 loss. Minimum order Cost: \$1.80 each for blank tape plus packaging, mailing, and Electricity Cost: \$4.13 cost. Charge for six hours @ \$2.50 per hour \$15.00 charge. Profit: \$10.87. Time Used: approximately 8 hours hunting for shows, winding, rewinding, testing, recording, etc. to do 6 hours equals \$1.36 per hour (Less than Federal minimum wage). If the catalog loss were to be considered, it would be 66¢ profit divided by 8 hours or a little over 8¢ an hour!

In order for me to give true timing and sound quality designations to each and every program I would have to sit with a stop watch and listen to every single show. I have, at last count, 10,782 hours of programs. There is 8,760 hours in a year. If I could disregard sleep and listen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, it would take me 1 year 3 months and 6 hours. If I decide to sleep and only listen 8 hours a day, 7 days a week, it would take me 3 years, 9 months and 6 hours.

Pertaining to sound ratings, although I have not read your article about same, I still maintain my stand. It would do little good for customers to indicate their sound standards because they would naturally request perfect sound and even experts in the recording business cannot agree upon what is perfect sound. You cannot please everyone. That is why I have my guarantee.

Burton Wilson
(NOTE: The refund check was returned to Mr. Wilson without being cashed.)

Omega Audio, P. O. Box 39253, Redford, Michigan 48239 I want to thank Jim Snyder for writing about Omega OTR in his column, and for offering me the opportunity to reply. Having come in contact with old time radio collectors several years ago as a supplier or recording supplies, I have since become an avid collector myself. Jim raises several points, I will address each one separately. 1. SOUND QUALITY--Jim mentions that I do not give sound ratings to my reels. The reason? I simply believe

That sound rating, such as "excellent", "very good" and the like can all too often be misleading. There are too many variables, particularly when one is dealing with a wide variety of collectors, as I do with Omega OTR. A blanket rating that would be accurate for all readers of the catalog is impossible.

There are technical differences among playback systems. For example, some speaker systems exhibit a boost in mid-bass frequencies to make up for a lack of deep bass. Unfortunately, this characteristic often makes a reel sound "muddy" and not exactly crystal clear. Another collector might rate the same reel as excellent when played on his system.

Then there's subjective interpretation as to what is good sound. I have some reels that are crystal clear, and rated as "excellent" by the collector from whom I obtained them...but that I could not honestly rate as excellent. So much bass has been filtered out and so much boost has been added at other frequencies in the interest of clarity that the sound is unnatural and, in fact, irritating to listen to. I spend many hours listening to my collection...sound that is aggravating to listen to is certainly not desirable.

This is not to say that one should abandon sound ratings. In trading, they are much more useful. In this situation, one is dealing with a limited number of collectors at any one time. One gets to know what is desired both in terms of program material and sound quality. Specific defects in sound on a particular reel can be discussed as they relate to each others interest, etc.

It should be pointed out that I do not, as a rule, list any "poor" sound reels. If I should do so, it will be clearly stated and listed only due to a program's rarity.

2. TAPE--I use factory fresh Columbia Magnetics tape. (Note: Catalog says "Columbia Magnetics and Ampex" tape) This is specified in my catalogs, etc., and in fact, nowhere is a price given for ordering reels that is not accompanied by a statement as to what tape is used. Over many years of doing recording work, I have found it to be a very reliable product. I have never had a problem with it...I have had problems with many other major brands. I buy the Columbia tape from the factory on 7200' pancakes, winding down to 1800' reels and package it myself. Columbia Magnetics (part of CBS) manufactures primarily for the high speed duplication industry, meaning that quality control is extremely tight.

3. TIME--It took 3 weeks for Jim's order to be processed. I don't know exactly when he sent it or received the merchandise, so I cannot speculate why it took longer for him to receive it. It was not the recorded reels that delayed the order, but the fact that used blank tape had also been ordered. This used tape was offered on a first-come first serve basis and was out of stock at that time. Since Jim made no alternate selection, and since additional supplies were expected shortly, Jim's order was held back. That he was not notified was a clerical error and not a usual practice. Generally, I notify anybody whose order cannot be filled within a week that the order will be delayed. If I know there is a real hurry for the merchandise, I may phone them within 24 hours.

* * * * *

REFERENCE LIBRARY: A reference library exists for members. Members should have received a library list of materials with their membership. Only two items can be borrowed at one time, for a one month period. Please use the proper designations for materials to be borrowed. When ordering books include \$1.00 to cover rental, postage, and packaging. Please include \$.50 for other items. If you wish to contribute to the library the OTRC will copy materials and return the originals to you. See address on page 2.

* * * * *

TAPES PONDENTS: Send in your wants and we'll run them here for at least two months.

Richard Olday, 100 Harvey Drive, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086--I am looking for the following shows on cassette and will trade on a two for one basis if they are at least Very Good sound: X-Minus One; And the Moon Be Still 4/22/55, The Man in the Moon 5/29/55, Something for Nothing 4/10/57; The Shadow; any show before 10/24/37, any show from 10/10/43 until 3/18/45 and 4/1/45 until 11/4/45, any show after 6/5/49. Lum & Abner-Mars Rocket Chapters 1-4 and 13-16. You may choose any show from my catalog listing of almost 4,000 radio shows.

NICK CARTER

THE CRYSTAL MYSTERY

OR

NICK CARTER AND THE MAGIC EYE

CHAPTER VII

THE MYSTERY ABOUT PERCY MONMOUTH

Percy Monmouth was what might be called a "man about town."

He had no visible means of support, but he was always well "heeled" and wore diamonds, for all that. He was a "good fellow," too, and while he did not live at the Imperial, he made the hotel a sort of headquarters.

Nick, therefore, had no difficulty in finding him at once, as soon as he entered the place; and Monmouth perceiving him at the same time came quickly forward with extended hand.

"The commissioner said he would ask you to look me up," he said. "I suppose he told you about the way I was touched, didn't he?"

"He told me merely that you had been robbed. The particulars I must obtain from you," replied the detective.

"Particulars! Huh! There aren't any particulars, Carter."

"How is that?"

"At least, if there are any I don't know 'em."

"When did it happen?"

"Oh, about two hours ago."

"Corner of Twenty-eight Street and Fifth avenue, the commissioner said."

"Near the corner, yes. It was a hundred feet or so this way from it."

"Tell me about it. Tell me just what happened."

"Why I was coming through the street when a man who was just ahead of me suddenly turned about, and I saw he carried a tripod in his hands. On the top of it was a miscellaneous collection of collar-buttons and such things, but in the midst of them

was the handsomest crystal I ever saw. The instant my eyes lit upon it, I was fascinated, for I have a great admiration for such things, you know."

"I didn't know; but go on, Percy." "I stopped to examine the thing, and bent over toward it a little, I think, but I don't remember that I asked him anything about it, although I know that I intended to do so. I do not know how long I was looking at it, but not more than two or three minutes at the most."

"Well?"

"That's all, practically--that is all for that part of it. There is more of another sort, however."

"Tell me everything, and don't jump about from one thing to another. Tell your story consecutively."

"All right. I left the man standing there in the middle of the sidewalk--I think I put a quarter on his little shelf--and came on here, to the hotel. I had been inside for some time, when Billy Boone came through and stopped where I was sitting.

"You're a nice one," he said. "What's the matter with you anyhow? Getting too good to speak to people on the street?"

"I asked him what he meant, and he swore that I had passed him--met and passed him, mind you, on Twenty-eight Street, near Sixth Avenue, half an hour, or nearly that, before, and that although he spoke to me, I would not answer. I told him that I had not been west of Broadway to-day, but it wouldn't go at all. He swore it was me and I swore it wasn't; and then, all of a sudden, he blurted out:

"Where's your diamond stud, Percy?"

"I put up my hand to feel for it, and it wasn't there. Then--it was funny I hadn't noticed it before--I found that my ring was missing, also. That led me to make further investigation, with the result that I found I had been touched pretty thoroughly. I hadn't a sou markee in my pocket, and when I started to come here I had fifty dollars. Now, what do you think of that?"

"It is rather odd, isn't it?"

"Odd? Well! Yes, it's deuced odd, if anybody should ask you."

"Is it your idea that the man with the crystal robbed you?"

"No, it isn't, for the reason that he couldn't have done it. He wasn't close enough to me for one thing, and I wasn't there but a minute."

"Then who did?"

"There you've got me. After I came into the hotel I sat down over there and didn't move till after I found I had been robbed."

"Are you sure that you were only a few moments examining that crystal?"

"Of course I am."

"How do you account for the statements of your friend Billy Boone?"

"Oh, it was somebody who looked like me, that's all."

"Did you suggest that idea to him?"

"Sure."

"What did he say to that?"

"Laughed in my face. Scouted the idea that he could be mistaken. Said that it was me, all right, and that I wore my usual clothes and my diamond stud--and that is just where he discovered that I didn't have the stud on; see?"

"Yes."

"Well, we argued the thing for some time, but I couldn't budge him, or he me. I suppose there is a gazabo bumming around town who looks like me, I'd like to see him."

"Where can your friend Boone be found?"

"Probably over at the Holland. Want to see him?"

"Yes; let's walk around there." Boone was found without trouble, and he reiterated the statements that Mornmouth had credited him with.

"There couldn't have been any mistake, Mr. Carter, and that's all there is about it. I know that it was Percy. Maybe he was walking in his sleep, and now that I think of it, he did look a little strange."

"Did you notice where he went?"

"No; only that he crossed Sixth Avenue and seemed to keep on through Twenty-eight Street. That is a new runway for him, and I thought it

"Did you see him speak to anybody?"

"Yes. Now that you mention it, I did. He joined with a man and walked along beside him, after he crossed the avenue."

"What sort of a looking man was it?"

"A dark-skinned man. To tell you the truth, I thought at the time it was a nigger, and I wondered what Percy was up to--or up against."

"Was that the last you saw of him?"

"Yes; until I met him at the Imperial. He made me sore there, denying that he had met me."

"I have listened very quietly to all this," said Mornmouth, speaking now for the first time, "and I want to say here and now that I haven't the slightest recollection of anything of the kind. I haven't been west of Broadway to-day, and I haven't talked with any niggers or walked on the street with one."

"Anyhow," said the detective, smiling, "if you have done either of those things, you do not remember anything about it. Is that the idea?"

"Precisely; and I'd remember it mighty well, if I had. The whole amount of it is that there is a chap around here somewhere who looks like me and who dressed enough like me to have fooled Billy."

"No, no, Percy. I wasn't fooled. I know you, all right all right."

"Well, anyhow, I'm out about five hundred dollars, and that's what's making me sore. Nick, the commissioner said that if anybody could get it back, you could. Do you think you can do it?"

"I don't know. I hope so."

"Well, I can't imagine where you are going to look for it, then. I have no more idea where those things got away from me than the man in the moon."

"It is quite evident to me, Percy," said the detective, "that you were the man who disposed of them yourself. I think you deliberately carried them through Twenty-eight Street and across Sixth Avenue, where you met a man to whom you gave them; and that man--"

"Hold on there! You're going much too fast, Nick. Do you think I would be such a jolly muttonhead as to go over there and give my diamonds and my wad away to a nigger?"

"Not if you knew what you were doing. As I was saying, the man you gave them to was either the same who showed you the crystal, or was confederate of his."

"But what the blazes would I do such a fool thing as that for? Tell me that."

"Because you were probably hypnotized."

"Eh? What's that? Hypnotized? Me? Not much! Nobody could play that bum game on me, and don't you forget it!"

"Your valuables are missing, aren't they?"

"They certainly are, Nick."

"And you don't know how."

"No."

"Then I have offered you the only explanation, Percy. And that man with the crystal has been doing the same sort of thing right along lately."

"Are you giving it to me straight, Nick?"

"I am."

"Say, look here! Do you think, honestly, that such a thing is possible? I would be willing to swear on a stack of Bibles as high as this hotel that I didn't stop there in Twenty-eight Street in front of that hawker three minutes altogether. Do you suppose that when I did stop he thru me into a hypnotic condition and then sent me over across Sixth Avenue to deliver the goods and waited there till I came back again? Why, I must have been gone almost half an hour."

"And yet it is all possible. In fact, I think it is exactly what occurred."

"You do?"

"Not that he waited there all that time for you, but that he followed along, then hurried ahead of you as soon as you were out of a neighborhood where you were well known. Then according to a suggestion or, rather, following out a suggestion he had given you, you turned the valuables over to him and started back again."

"And then what?"

"Then he hurried ahead of you again, took the same position he had occupied when you stopped to look at the crystal, and when you had assumed the same attitude he brought you to yourself again, and you were none the wiser."

"Well, by the great horn-spoon! I call that robbery made easy. Say, what do you suppose would happen if he should meet Rockefeller in the street? Eh?"

"Rockefeller never carries much money around in his pockets, Percy. Much less than you do, my friend."

"I suppose that's so. He doesn't have to. I do--when I've got it to carry. Just now I'm broke. I say, Nick, let's go out on a still hunt after that fellow."

"Do you think you would recognize him if you should see him again,

without the crystal in front of him?" asked the detective, smiling.

"No; I'm blessed if I do."

"That is what I thought."

"All that I remember about him are his eyes. I just peeped into them as I approached the crystal. They were quite remarkable, I think, although I had forgotten all about them."

"But you really do not recall his appearance; eh?"

"No; not at all."

** CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE **

■■■■■ CLEARING THE AIRWAYS ■■■■■

Welcome to our new members who have taken advantage of our special membership offer. The article on page 7 should be of special interest to you. Special thanks to Jay A. Hickerson for including our membership flyer with the March issue of HELLO AGAIN. Subscriptions are available from Jay for \$6.00 per year at Box C, Orange, Conn. 06477. The Old Time Radio Club also received a plug from Bob Cudmore in the 81 WGY CONTACT NEWSLETTER. Bob is the host of CONTACT heard Monday through Friday, 8 p.m. to midnight on 81 WGY, Schenectady, N.Y. Until next issue, "Peace":

R.A.O.



HAPPY EASTER



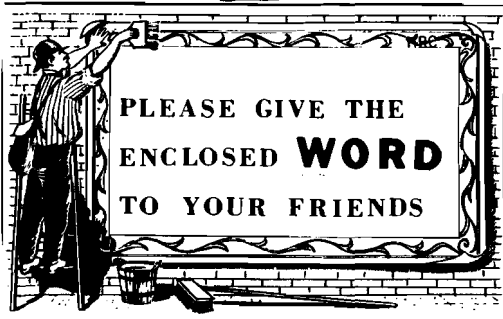
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A FIELD REPORTER

You can! Just write an article on a place, event, show, etc., dealing with old time radio that you think others would like to read. The article must be typewritten. Include a black and white photograph (no color, please).



Reaching the century mark

Thomas Baines Gremmer, known to his friends as "Toby," celebrated his 100th birthday Thursday in Frazer, Mich. The only Spanish-American War veteran living in the state, Gremmer blows out the candles on a cake marking the occasion. Gremmer played "Hermit" on Detroit's popular radio program in the 1940s, "Hermit's Cave," after a career in vaudeville. (UPI Photo)



MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Beginning March, 1981: SPECIAL OFFER
 Join The Old Time Radio Club for only \$10.00 for the 1981 calendar year and receive the following benefits:

The Illustrated Press-Monthly.

Memories Magazine-Biannual in 1981.

Access to our Reference Library.

Access to our improved and expanded Sound Library. BONUS-Special OTR related gift to: all new members.

SPECIAL NOTE-All existing members who bring in a new member will also qualify for the free OTR related gift!

Special Offer expires Midnight, May 31, 1981.



"Well----Sign me up for one month."

* * * * *

GOLD: GOLD:

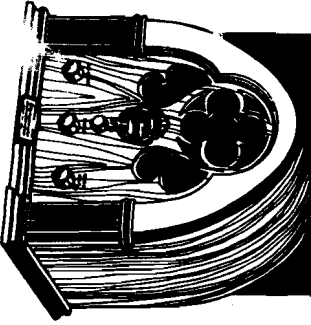
(1) POT O' GOLD was the best quiz show EVER, at least as far as the contestants were concerned. There were no questions, no answers. All you had to do was answer your darn phone and they sent you the moolah. Those were REALLY the good old days. Okay, who ran the show?

(2) Name the orchestra and conductor.

(3) The contestants were picked by what gadget?

ANSWERS: (1) Ben Grauer, (2) Horace Heidt and His Musical Knights, (3) The Wheel of Fortune.

* * * * *



OTRC



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