
ILLUSTRATED PRESS

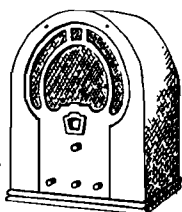
EST. 1975

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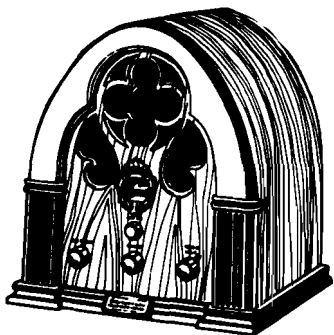
contest

THE OLD TIME



page 8

RADIO CLUB



THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Club dues are \$17.50 per year from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. Members receive a tape listing, library lists, a monthly newsletter (The Illustrated Press), an annual magazine (Memories), and various special items. Additional family members living in the same household as a regular member may join the club for \$5.00 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 \$12.00 per year and includes all the benefits of a regular membership. Regular membership dues are as follows: If you join in January dues are \$17.50 for the year; February \$17.50; March \$15.00; April \$14.00; May \$13.00; June \$12.00; July \$10.00; August \$9.00; September \$8.00; October \$7.00; November \$6.00; and December \$5.00. 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.

OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIPS are now available. Annual dues are \$29.50. Publications will be air mailed.

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BACK ISSUES: All MEMORIES and I.P.s are \$1.25 each, postpaid. Out of print issues may be borrowed from the reference library.
Dominic Parisi
38 Ardmore Pl.
Buffalo, NY 14213

The Old Time Radio Club meets the FIRST Monday of the month (September through June at 393 George Urban Boulevard, Cheektowaga, NY. Anyone interested in the "Golden Age of Radio" is welcome to attend and observe or participate. Meetings start at 7:30 p.m.

DEADLINE FOR IP #116 - May 5
#117 - June 2
#118 - July 7

ADVERTISING RATES FOR MEMORIES
\$40.00 for a full page (ALL ADS MUST BE CAMFRA
\$30.00 for a half page
\$20.00 for a quarter page READY)

SPECIAL: OTR Club members may take 50% off these rates.
Advertising deadline - September 1

NICK CARTER

II

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THE NINE O'CLOCK FIRES *May, 1935*

CHAPTER V CRASH

Nick returned home and had treatment for burns and monoxide in the small hospital atop his house. At his direction, Chick and Patsy were busy checking the countless details of the fire.

The originating fire had not been bad. Like the other fires, it had raced through the rickety structure, half gutted the building before an alarm was sent. It was a brick building the walls had stood. The smoke eaters had almost brought the fire under control with deflected streams, striking water against ceilings and walls over the fire so as to cause a spray of water over greater area than a solid stream directed straight at the flames.

The had managed to check the flames and open up the building, get ventilation through roof, and drafts carrying the fire upward. In a few moments a wall had let go inward. It had carried most of the burning portions of the building down to a flaming heap filling the cellar. The fire would have been quickly quenched and the gaunt ruins washed down had it not been for the exploding still. The fired alcohol had flown in all directions, and the small one-alarm turnout had more on its hands than it could handle.

It was Nick's hunch that the fire bug had set off that still purposely. Whether or not he was responsible for the other large fire which emptied the district of immediate apparatus to answer the three alarm the future would show.

Nick felt sure, now, however, that Cook was the fire bug. Catching him with the goods might be difficult. He had not been caught by the cordon of police although every soul in the block had been examined. Kyle might be in it too. The entire block in which the fire had occurred that night belonged to him. Insurance ran much higher than on previous buildings.

As dawn flooded the sky, Commissioner Updyke telephoned. Excepting for Nick's message and hearing Nick had been at the fire, he did not know how much Nick knew. He sounded pleased with himself. Due to daring and skillful police surveillance, the fire bug had been trapped, he announced. Either he had run back into the original building as patrol cars closed in, or he had stayed too long after setting the fire. He had been clipped on the head by a falling timber, his body charred almost beyond recognition.

But finger prints and an identifying scar showed him to be "Scar" Donnivan,

an escaped convict wanted for jail break, murder and felonious assault. That had automatically put the corpse under police powers.

"A dumb muscle lug," the commissioner finished in a self-satisfied voice. "On the lam from Elmira break. Wanted in five states. Must have been pen cracked."

The slight grin faded from Nick's face. A somewhat puzzled expression fitted through his eyes. "I suppose there'll be the usual superficial autopsy and inquest?" he asked, a tinge of hidden meaning in his voice.

"It won't be necessary to analyze the man's ashes for poison!" the commissioner said anticipating some upsetting Carter idea. "He's the human torch and he cooked in his own juice. Fair enough, isn't it?"

"Um. It would be if he were the one you thought he was," Nick commented dryly. "But you might have the coroner go over the stiff with a little more care than usual. I'd get photos from all angles before the corpse is moved, also."

"What are you driving at, Carter?" Updyke demanded. He was annoyed.

Nick was almost casual. "I wouldn't be surprised if that beam clipped your friend after he was done to death. You might possibly locate another gouge beneath the beam wound. Possibly made with a heavy blunt instrument from behind--such as the barrel of an automatic, a blackjack or even crow bar."

The commissioner groaned and swore.

"You might find a fresh set of finger or shoe prints on the fences or around the back yards somewhere. Those lots adjoining the building were fenced," Nick went on.

"I wouldn't be surprised if you put 'em there!" the commissioner hollered. He banged up the phone.

Nick leaned back to smile. Updyke couldn't stand to let subordinates handle cases without his presence. This would be one night's sleep the old codger would miss entirely--and one Nick would gain.

Chick came onto the hospital connection. He had listened in on the conversation. "How do you figure this is murder and Donnivan not the fire bug?" he asked.

"Donnivan's got four jail breaks to his credit and not a few murders," Nick said. "The longest stretch he ever served before he took a run-out powder was seven months. He's never had time to get pen cracked! He wouldn't get scared of sirens. He'd run or fight it out. Lastly, he isn't the type of

criminal to go around setting fires in empty buildings. A rod or piece of lead pipe is more in his line."

"This murder puts a new face on things, Chick. It means we're up against a man cool and ruthless enough to overpower a desperado who's a bad actor. To do that, he must be pretty tough himself. He must know his fires."

"That sounds like Cook," Chick said.

"Yes, excepting for one thing. Cook hasn't got the sort of guts to risk his neck in a burning building."

"Maybe we went after Donnivan, got caught in his own fire and was recognized by the dame while escaping that building. She may have put up a stiff fight and detained him," Chuck mused.

"That's one possibility," Nick admitted. "But this is no case to put all your eggs in one basket. This is planned crime, fellow. And whether it's a gang or one man, the head guy is smart, cunning, daring, merciless, and knows his fires. Don't forget the last. These buildings have gone up like paper."

"Orders?"

"Bed for you fellow. Unless I need a mausoleum over my head, we'll have hot telephone wires by nine o'clock. If the post-mortem on Donnivan pans out like I expect, you get detail work tomorrow."

Chick scowled. Hours of endless research, wading through piles of information, finger prints, photos, old notes, histories, criminal files. Standing around taking photos, waiting for them to be developed, boiling down theories and opinions, running over interminable spaces with a fine tooth comb for clues, questioning hordes of people, most of whom supplied dates out of vivid imaginations. And in the end, as often as not finding that none of the work was of any immediate value. Yet the routine was necessary.

Toward nine the next morning, Updyke called to announce the autopsy over. The charged felon had been murdered by a skull blow minutes before the fire. The beam smashed into his head was a blind. The house had been completely gutted, but there were remnants of the floors and gaunt lack skeleton which might help them to reconstruct the case.

The vice-president of the East Coast was on another telephone when Nick finished. He supplied one pertinent fact. Two months before, Kyle had raised the insurance on the tenement from a long standing two thousand to eighteen thousand dollars.

"It's all the building would bear," the vice-president said. "But for that class of structure it was a good risk. Kyle keeps his properties reasonably clean and well protected."

Chick had already left to join the battalion of Fire Marshal, Police and

Insurance Investigators combing the scene of the fires. There was particular information and photos, special places Nick wanted Chick to look for clues. "Field telephones" were already installed on the scene. Chick would keep in touch with the house.

Nick telephoned the flippant, charming and ingenious Roxy, the one female member of his gang. She would know any gossip and rumor on the One Time Cook Gang and Carlton Kyle.

Roxy answered her phone sleepily. The early hours was the middle of the night to her. As the publisher of the **TRIANGLE**, the smart tabloid covering Broadway, All Street and Park Avenue, she had her own methods of gathering information. Secretly, Nick had bought the paper for her for that reason.

"Oh, Kyle?" she yawned. "He's been trying to interest outside money to back some new apartment houses down in the Fourth Ward. The outside money wanted to see the ground cleared first. The plots were cluttered with old buildings. Same thing in three for four other sections of town. Kyle wouldn't gamble razing the old shacks until he saw the color of the cash."

"Then maybe you better wake up and listen to this," Nick said. He hastily explained the details of the fires. Roxy's very wide awake whistle came back over the wires as he finished.

"If Kyle's messed in it, it's going to be a hot trail and nasty," she said as she hung up.

She was already buzzing her maid furiously. Kyle was one within-the-law crook she'd like to see get life.

Nick put through a call to Kyle. The banker spoke suavely, showed no surprise at Nick's call.

"Assume it's about the tenements?" he said before Nick even questioned him. "Lucky I raised the insurance, Carter. I should have jacked it up on all that properly. But the premiums are to damned high."

"Mind telling me why you increased that particular parcel?" Nick asked.

There was a brief silence. Nick's keen ears detected a quickly drawn breath and slight clearing of throat.

"No, I don't mind," Kyle said after a moment. "I was trying to give as good a face to the property as possible. Insurance is impressive. If an empty building carries eighteen thousand insurance a prospective buyer can be sure that the LOCATION alone is worth double that. It's the location more than the buildings they're insuring on these times."

"Did you know it was arson?" Nick shot suddenly.

"No," Kyle said without hesitation. "But I don't give a hoot. If the East

Coast is trying to stall on payment, there'll be trouble. These recent fires are the first on my property in more than seven years. I keep the properties up. If somebody lights 'em, that's the East Coast's lookout!!!!

His voice raised a tone, his words hurried. He gave his opinion of insurance companies in no uncertain terms and banged up in Nick's ear.

Nick tapped the table with his pencil. One sentence, uttered with heat, had caught his attention particularly. "If they think they can pin this on me, they're nuts!" Kyle had shouted.

Nick had made no such intimation. but Kyle had been pretty quick to think they might have that in mind. It might very easily, be the defence statement of a surprised and guilty man.

Nick bracketed the conversation in his mind. He ordered Patsy to have all further conversations on the case tuned in, recorded by electrical transcription in the radio room. It might be well to have some of the voice inflections of excited people at a later date.

The first photos of Donnivan's charred head arrived. Placing them under his yard-wide magnifying glass with the "spot microscope" attachment, Nick studied the angles of the crushed skull.

Chick call in twice during the morning. He was to report again at twelve o'clock. At twelve-thirty, Nick noted the time. His assistant had not called. either some discovery of value must be in progress or something had happened.

Nick was considering running down to the scene of the fire when Chick, clothes covered with ashes and charred wood, flung into the office.

One of the private telephones installed on the scene had been tapped. The wires extended openly from the trunk line. It had been a simple job. Nobody knew what time he tap had been made, but at least three hours before.

"How do you know that?" Chick exploded.

"The mug sat on the front steps of the saloon down the street with a phone in his hand for that time! Five people saw him. Then he carefully wiped the phone off with ether, set it beside the door and walked away!"

"Description?" Nick shot.

"Same as usual. He was tall-short; thin--fat; had deep tanned freckles and a dead white pan! There isn't a clear description from one single witness. They all thought we was one of the police detectives!"

Chick's rage made a picture. Nick couldn't repress a grin. Chick cooled down some at his chief's amusement.

"Well, we got clues," he said. "Nothing very important. But something. A small thread of glove chamois picked off a back fence. May be old or new.

A piece of felt caught on a nail just below--the sort of felt gloves boys wear for shoe soles in open house work. And some iron dust. Must have been a whole bag to it. I can't figure that out. The cop tripped over it across the street last night. It was in front of an iceman's dump. The iceman didn't know anything about it. He's on the up and up all right. The bag was in the first building, though, when it burned."

Chick paused and a smile lit his face.

"But we found the fire bug entered from the back with a wrecking bar and we got the bar! That's about the only important thing."

"No finger prints on the bar, of course," Nick said.

"No," admitted Chick.

"Um-m. Well now come up to the laboratory and I'll show you how unimportant your iron dust is."

They ascended to the top floor where Nick filled a small, airtight iron chest with air of a particular humidity. Shaking iron dust into a bellows, he blew it carefully through a small valve into the chamber.

"Put your hand on top," Nick said as he lit a fuse. Chic, a little apprehensive, watched his chief push the fuse through the valve hole. It just filled it. A second later there was a muffled report. The iron chest leaped out from under Chick's hand.

"That's how unimportant iron dust is when it's mixed properly with air and brought into contact with fire," Nick grinned. "But it's a good clue fellow. We learn a lot about our fire bug from it. Let's shoot down and reconstruct the scene."

Dropping to the garage basement in the small elevator, the two jumped into a fast inconspicuous car. Nick switched on lights, threw it into gear, headed up the steep ramp. The headlights gleamed on a photo-electric cell. It set off mechanism to swiftly raise the heavy steel curtain door. Dousing the lights, Nick swung the car into an alley, honked his horn. It had a particular note. Instantly, the heavy door dropped back in place. The car was already heading south.

The fire scene was desolate. Before them were the gaunt, cracked and blackened skeletons of the gutted tenements. Thick brick walls with gaping windows and awry hanging iron shutters leaned precariously from the first fired building. A section of the front wall had fallen in.

The smell of recently burned wood and mortar filled the air. The neighborhood had made it a gala occasion to watch the army of investigators methodically examining charred timbers, shooting photos of fences, yards, hanging beams, carefully sifting ashes. The gawking crowd around those walls seemed peculiarly out of place amidst

the ruins of the gutted buildings, on the scene of such recent tragedy.

Brody, the Fire Marshall, was on hand, but Updyke had gone home to get a few hours sleep. "Thank heavens!" grinned Brody. "He wanted to call in the press! He finally swore to issue no statements, however."

"He has a weakness for news photographers," Nick Grinned. He glanced around at the forty-odd men thoroughly searching the wet ruins and vicinity. Here and there they uncovered places where beams still smoldered. "Anything new?" he asked.

Brody showed him the last set of photos and whatever data was on hand. For a few minutes they discussed the case, the Fire Marshal at last leaving. He had a full calendar of prosecution in court and left the case largely up to Nick.

Nick studied the photos, the remains of the building and points of incident. He could reconstruct fairly well. He walked over the ground picturing events to Chick.

"He had the iron dust for the purpose," Nick said. "No use trying to spot where it came from. It was probably hot--some factory foreman's gravy. But it got the fire going."

"Explosion?" asked Chick. "Then why didn't somebody hear or feel it?"

"Too much room to expand," Nick explained.

He paused to leap down beside the exposed furnace and open the door.

"The fire bug's plans carried perfectly. Even for the second fire--except for the murder.

That was a mistake," Nick finished.

"Yeah," Chick agreed absently, wondering if he'd have the chance to be in on a good three-alarm before the end of the case. He passed through the JOHNNY school, was finished with his ninety days of rookie probation and training. But he had yet to know the searing belch of a FLASH FIRE; the throwing power of a BACK DRAFT; the thrill of rolling out to a THREE-BAGGER; see water burst dust into flame or get a SNOOT FULL of carbonized carbon dioxide.

He watched Nick poking around the edge of the furnace and stooped over beside him. "We investigated that this morning. Nothing but some old ashes and melted pieces of metal."

Nick picked up a small hunk of twisted, blackened metal, examine it closely. Pulling out his cigarette case, his fingers darted into the secret compartment, came forth with a small tube of silver fingerprint powder. Blowing the metal clear of dirt, he shook on power slightly dusted it, brought out a magnifying glass.

"Like to know that the metal was used for?" he asked with a casualness

which made Chick redden. His assistant waited for the bombshell. "It's what's left of an old counterfeiting die," Nick said at length. He turned the piece of metal so that Chick could see. Thin traces of silver showed part of the familiar face of Liberty and the small letter **IN GOD W.**

"He examined about forty specimens," Chick said in a low voice.

Above them was a sudden groan and rip. There was a frightened holler of warning. On every side, men dropped sifting frames, scrambled toward the sides of the piled debris and exits.

Nick gave one look above, his face going white. With a maliciously cruel lack of speed, a large section of brick wall was slowly falling in upon them Chick started toward a ladder. With a lightning movement, Nick grabbed him by the neck, slung him.

The groan became a roar. Bricks rained. The roar grew into a strained, horrible rumble. The next instant there was a tremendous thud, a crash.

The chief insurance patroler, standing safely on street level, stared with horror stricken gaze. A moment before, Nick Carter and his assistant had stood talking directly beneath him. Now there was a pile of brick and whirling dust. The main body of the wall had crashed on that very spot.

* CONTINUED NEXT MONTH *

TAPE LIBRARY RATES: 2400' reel - \$1.50 per month; 1800' reel - \$1.25 per month; 1200' reel - \$1.00 per month; cassette and records - \$.50 per month; video cassette - \$1.25 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; 75¢ for each video tape.

CANADIAN BRANCH: Rental rates are the same as above, but in Canadian funds. Postage: Reels 1 or 2 tapes \$1.50; 3 or 4 tapes \$1.75. Cassettes - 1 or 2 tapes \$.65; for each additional tape, add 25¢.

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 \$2.00 to cover rental, postage, and packaging. Please include \$1.00 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.

I am sure that some of you have been trying, as I have, to obtain a copy of one or both of the hobbies two basic reference books: **TUNE IN YESTERDAY**, and **THE BIG BROADCAST**. These have long been out of print and are very difficult to obtain. My local Walden bookstore recommended that I try a book search firm for out of print books. The one recommended by them was "A BOOK SEARCH BY SUSAN," 7000 Arcanum-Bears Mill Road, Greenville, Ohio 45331. It works this way. You send a \$3.00 "UP FRONT" fee to "Susan" for each book you want. She sends out a "want list" to new and used book stores around the country. If one of them has what you want they notify Susan and she contacts you, giving you the price and condition of the book. You, of course, have the right to turn the book down, but if you do decide to purchase it the \$3 fee is credited to your purchase price. The price will vary from source to source. In my case, it took her about three months to locate an almost new hardcover copy of **THE BIG BROADCAST**. She found it in a used bookstore in California. Its price was \$23.15 which included shipping. Of course you have to realize it could take **MUCH** longer to find what you want, and for that matter she may never find it. There are several pieces of information that you must give her about the book you want. The first is the "category" of the book you want. I told her that it was a "historical reference book on radio." In addition, she needs full publishing information, which I have included here for both the hardcover and paperback editions of the above books. You might want to have her look for both the hardcover and paperback editions at the same time. That should increase your chances of finding the book you want.

THE BIG BROADCAST: 1920-1950 by Frank Buxton and Bill Owen - The hardcover edition was published by Viking Press in 1972. The paperback was published by Avon Books (Flare Printing) in 1973.

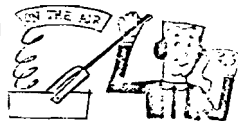
TUNE IN YESTERDAY by John Dunning was published by Prentice Hall in 1976 in both the paperback and the hardcover versions.

You might want to try two or three book search firms at the same time. Since they might deal with different bookstores around the country, this could increase your chances of finding what you want.

Another item of interest is that the National Lum and Abner Society will be holding its annual convention in Pine Ridge, Arkansas (that is where the "old boys" had their Jot Em Down Store in their long running radio series) on June 14 and 15. This convention is open to anyone interested, whether members of the society or not. That is all I know

about this convention, but you can get full information by writing Executive Secretary, The National Lum and Abner Society, Route 3, Box 110, Dora, Alabama 35062.

James Lehnhard



6-26-45

TONIGHT
at 9:30 WIBX

Schenley Laboratories, Inc.
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"THE DOCTOR FIGHTS"

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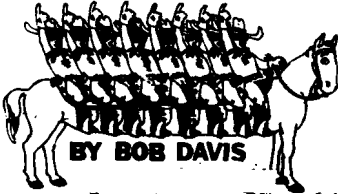
9:45 A. M.

Thousands of women tune regularly to **TOWER CLOCK TIME** for latest fashion news, beauty aids, and timely information about Sibley merchandise specials. Have you heard **TOWER CLOCK TIME** lately?

FOR MORNING NEWS... Clear! Accurate!
 Hear JACK HOOLEY AT 8 A. M. • DAVID E. KESSLER AT 9 A. M.

SAY!

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?



BY BOB DAVIS

Oh, the pain of it all!!!

There comes a time when, distasteful as it is, you have to start weeding out some reels from your collection. Everybody has them--reels that were played once and have never been played since. Nobody's ever requested anything off of them and, frankly, you wonder why you ever ordered them in the first place. OTR had more than it's share of great shows but it also had it's share of losers. These reels seem to be made up of nothing but losers. Only one thing to do...right? You would think so but it's amazing how painful this seemingly simple process can be.

First of all, if you intend to dump certain reels. **DON'T UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES LISTEN TO THEM ONE LAST TIME.** Chances are that you'll end up keeping them. You'll have second thoughts and start doubting your decision to dump them. You'll think back to how glad you were to get them in the first place and how you thought that they were going to improve your collection. Never mind that they didn't and have just been taking up space since you got them years ago, the doubt will remain. Believe me...I know....

Next you have to decide whether to try to sell them to some other collector or just bulk erase them and use the tape over again. Both ways have their good and bad points. Selling them would be great IF you can sell them. They might end up sitting on the self way longer than they already have. On the other hand, if you bulk erase them shortly afterward you will start getting requests for them from someone who has been looking for them for years. It's a form of Murphy's Law. Whatever you do, it will be wrong!

Hey, nobody ever said this was going to be easy.

Ok, you've decided what you're going to do and have done it. Now you've got to think about your catalog. It still lists thee shows, right? You bet. So

now you've got to either re-do your catalog or send out deletion sheets to those you trade with. Re-doing a catalog can be a nasty, time consuming job. Deletion sheets are fine if you trade or list by reel only. If you do either individually it can be a problem especially if you've dumped a lot of reels. In the long run you might be better off re-doing your catalog.

It's at this point that you start thinking that maybe you should have never started the whole thing and let the shows stay where they were. Sure you need the storage space but wouldn't building new shelves be easier than this??? It is also at this point that you swear to yourself that you will never again even think about going through this again. You'll NEVER again trade for shows that you don't know are good and enjoyable. You'll never again take a chance on something that is iffy. From now on you will stick to the tried and proven series.

This resolve disappears as soon as you get a new catalog from someone and see all those unknown goodies that have just surfaced. You haven't heard of any of these but...Man, they look terrific. Hey, I think I'll take a chance with these. After all, how bad can they be???

Five years later you'll be sitting there wondering what ever possessed you to order these shows. And believe it or not...you'll be thinking about weeding them out of your collection!!!!!!!

See ya next time.

Editor's DESK



CONTEST TIME-Name the motion picture represented by our cover picture AND the year it was made. The first correct entry received at 100 Harvey Drive, Lancaster, NY 14086, will receive free membership for 1987. **HINT:** Basil Rathbone starred in this movie before he played Sherlock Holmes in the popular movie series. **TIE BREAKER:** Name the studio that released this movie. Good Luck to all of you! THANK YOU to Grant Books, 1419 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 for allowing us to use this rare Basil Rathbone movie still.

SCIENCE FICTION ON RADIO

In doing research for my article on **DIMENSION X** and **X MINUS ONE** last month, I came across a reference to a Meade Frierson of Birmingham Alabama. I thought that he would be an interesting person to talk to. I called long distance information and I guess that it was luck that he was listed and the operator gave me his phone number. I called him and as luck would have it he was home. We talked for several minutes on different science fiction shows and he told me about his publication called **SCIENCE FICTION ON RADIO**. He said that he spent four years researching it and was now thinking about doing an update. I asked him for a copy; was I surprised when it came two days later.

It is twenty two pages long in a format similar to **MEMORIES**. It has a synopsis on **DIMENSION X AND X MINUS ONE** but then a log covering both of those shows is very easy to obtain. Continuing on it had two paragraphs on **BEYOND TOMORROW**. Next it had a log on **2000 PLUS** and a synopsis on 13 of the 24 episodes. Furthermore, it had four paragraphs on the series itself.

Much to the delight of this science fiction fan, it had a log on **TALES OF TOMORROW**, some interesting background information on it, plus a synopsis of 11 of the 15 episodes.

As I read on, it just kept getting better and better. There was an extensive article on **EXPLORING TOMORROW** plus a descriptive index of all 28 episodes.

A section on foreign science fiction shows included background on **SF 68** plus a synopsis of the 18 shows of the South African series. Reference was made to BBC's 1-1/2 hour series **THE MOEBIUS TWIST**, plus the 3-1/2 **THE MARS PROJECT**. It also referred to **ORBITER X**, **PROJECT LUNA (JOURNEY INTO SPACE)**, **HOST PLANET EARTH** and several other BBC broadcasts, including Ray Bradbury's **LEVIATHAN 99** which was broadcast in stereo.

Reference was also made to CBC's Theatre 10:30, Ray Bradbury's **THE PEDESTRIAN AND APOLLO 17** (done a year before the actual mission).

A lot of time was spent in making this one of the most complete reports around. The science fiction shows were even singled out on such series as **LUX RADIO THEATER**, **MERCURY THEATER**, **THE WITCHES TALE**, **LIGHTS OUT**, **ESCAPE**, **THE MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLER**, **SUSPENSE**, **INNER SANCTUM**, **MURDER AT MIDNIGHT**, **QUITE PLEASE**, **FAMILY THEATER** and **CBS RADIO MYSTERY THEATER**.

If you are a Science Fiction fan, you owe it to yourself to have this publication. Send \$2.50 to:

Meade Frierson
3705 Woodvale Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35223

Frank C. Boncore



'JAZZBEAU'—Al Collins, known to his radio audience as "Jazzbeau," poses at his first annual Al Collins Listeners' convention. About 8,000 persons attended the gathering which featured Collins who hosts a night show on San Francisco's Radio Station KGO.



**"I won it on that wonderful new
- Detect and Collect Program!"**

You're giving away every penny things on Old Gold's richest new show! Contestants who detect the clues given by quiz masters Fred Uval and Wendy Barrie can win anything ... from a pretzel to a porkchop ... from a lollipop to a limousine! Tune in—tonight—and every Wednesday night!

**LISTEN TONIGHT!
9:30
WIBX**

PRESENTED BY **OLD GOLD** CIGARETTES

7-11-45

**THE OTHER SIDE OF
H. EDGAR COLE II**

If you read the IP monthly, you have probably read a series of well written articles on taping techniques by Ed Cole. I am sure that we all can look forward to several more interesting articles by him in the coming months. As you may know, Ed is a Broadcast Engineer in Lakeland Florida. However, I would like to look at the other side of Ed Cole, a highly esteemed old time radio dealer.

In addition to being a member of the OTRC, Ed is a member of the Society of Broadcast Engineers, Tampa Bay Chapter, a professional society of expert broadcast engineers with expertise in electronics and an extensive knowledge of recording techniques. Ed is also a member of the Collector's Alliance, an OTR radio buying group with a small elite membership who purchase rare OTR shows that are not in general circulation, and very often the complete runs of specific shows.

A dealer/collector who owns all professional taping equipment and knows how to maintain it and keep it in top condition. All purchases from Ed carry a 30 days guarantee.

Reels are available for \$12.00 each. Buy three reels at the regular price and receive a fourth (bonus) reel free. Cassettes are available for \$8.00 a piece. Shipments are always made within 24 or 48 hours on orders paid by cash or money orders. Very large orders may require a slightly longer time.

Ed has several reels of Bing Crosby available. He also has 38 count em, 38 reels of the Great Gildersleeve available. Ed has a rare reel of Sherlock Holmes that might even make Frank Bork (our elderly Club Librarian) spend a few bucks.

Ed has several BBC productions (most in stereo) that are third generation (he obtained them from a collection in England who taped them directly off the air).

If you are an Orson Welles fan, Ed has the 1937 production of Les Miserables. He has available several reels from transcriptions.

For a catalog send \$2.00 to:
H. Edgar Cole
P O Box 3509
Lakeland, FL 33802

Make sure you look up Ed at the annual Friend of Old Time Radio Convention in Newark this fall.

Frank C. Boncore

NEXT MONTH: WE TAKE A LOOK AT AUDIO CLASSICS

TONIGHT at 9:30 WEAF DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME
A PROGRAM THAT IS DIFFERENT

ED WYNN

"The perfect fool"

35 PIECE

**TEXACO
FIRE-CHIEF BAND**

CHORUS OF 8 MALE VOICES



DON VOORHEES

Musical Director

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TUNE IN

"3-RING TIME"

CHARLES LAUGHTON

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COMEDY-VARIETY SHOW

DIRECT FROM

HOLLYWOOD

COAST-TO-COAST

SPONSORED BY

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ALE & BEER

EVERY FRIDAY EVE.

9:30 P. M.
STATION WKBW

9-12-41

**A LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND
A LITTLE BIT OF THAT**

The 1986 OTR convention will be in Newark, New Jersey on October 24, & 25. Cost is \$26 for Friday noon to 11 p.m. and \$35. for Saturday 9 am to 11 pm. The cost includes a buffet dinner on each day. For more information contact

Jay Hickerson
Box C
Orange, CT 06477

To those who receive **HELLO AGAIN**, I was informed by Thom Salome that there is an error in the flyer. It should read as follows:

Cassettes \$2.00 each C 90s After August 1, \$3.00 Thom's catalog is available for **\$3.50 IN STAMPS**. Thom will be at this year's convention with 5000, count em, 5000 cassettes for \$1.00 each. Thom can be contact at the following address.

Thomas Salome
Shadow Sounds of the Past
196 Lawrence Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11230

BRC Productions Spring 1986 Supplement is now out. It's dynamite. If you haven't received yours, contact

BRC Productions
P O Box 39522
Redford, MI 48239-0522

NOTE: It is renewal time for most of us that receive the **OLD TIME RADIO DIGEST**. If you haven't renewed, or are interested in subscribing, send \$12.50 to

Royal Promotions
4114 Montgomery Road
Cincinnati, OH 45212

Did you see the April-May issue of Nostalgia Digest? There is an excellent article on Fred Allen, The World's Worst Juggler.

Frank C. Boncore

**'Golden Age' of
radio is returning**

First National Bank of Shreveport is bringing back the "golden oldies" of radio in the 1930s, '40s and '50s. The popular old radio shows will be broadcast on KCOZ-FM 100, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7-7:30 p.m. beginning Monday, March 17.

A variety of the old shows will be aired on a rotating basis so that as many "favorites" can be included as possible

Among the shows to be included in the first few weeks of the program are *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *Burns and Allen*, *Inner Sanctum*, *The Jack Benny Program*, *The Whistler* and *Your Hit Parade*.

Coming weeks will include such shows as *Abbott and Costello*, *The Life of Riley*, *The Thin Man*, *Duffy's Tavern* and many others.

According to First National's Premier Partners Manager, Pat Ray, "Our sponsorship of these old radio programs serves a dual purpose. First, the show directly address those people 55 and older who grew up with these programs. Second, this is a real educational as well as entertainment opportunity for those who may be too young to have actually listened to them on the radio and have only heard about the shows."

"The old radio shows are an important part of our entertainment history and First National Bank is pleased to be bringing them back."

A schedule of the first weeks of the radio programs will be released prior to March 17.



**S BLANDINA
AT GENESEE ST.
UTICA, N. Y.**

Brings You

3-15-46

A New Nation-wide
radio program with

MARTIN BLOCK

(Radio's greatest Master of Ceremonies)

Introducing the latest Hit Records
Sweet and Hot! • With GUEST
STARS! • Presented by Columbia
Recording Corporation.



ALL SINATRA
PROGRAM
THIS SATURDAY!

5:30 P. M. ON
WIBX ... 1230 On Your
Dial

Records at Melody House

**BOAKE
CARTER**
NOW ON
NEW TIME
6:30 Monday
thru Friday
WKBW

Sponsored by Post Tension and Shingles

2-28-38

Hi Richard:

Here's a piece of new of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS. OTR is Shreveport, but not in New Orleans yet. I'm trying.

A local associate has copies of a 1939 book *Here They Are -- Amos 'n' Andy* by Correll and Gosden, a series of 25 sketches and a 1938 book, *Charlie McCarthy--So Help Me*, Bergen by Eleanor Packer - a series of adventure by the wonderful dummy. I xeroxed both books for my library. If anyone wants a second generation xerox, write me. The Amos 'n' Andy book is 95 pages and I'll go to the local xerox joint, get it copied for only \$14, postpaid. The McCarthy book is 48 pages, and I'll xerox it for only \$7.

John A. Barber
Box 70711
New Orleans, LA 70172

25 WORDS OR MORE

Tonight, (4/5) I almost let a young female performer borrow a few of my books which had scripts from shows like Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Easy Aces and Bob and Ray until two people in the room which included the performer, just started to make fun of it not really knowing they (the scripts) are true classics. Their ages were about 20 and 25 (the people in the room).

I'm 23 and really got hooked onto Jack Benny and other radio show classics when I attended Fredonia State College. I went to Barker's Free Library in Fredonia looking for T.V. Theme Songs to add to my collection (I have over 60 hours of television themes from the early fifties up into the 1980's.) Then I found about three tapes on Jack Benny, Jimmy Durante and The Life of Riley and I was immediately sold on old-time radio classics.

If it wasn't for one of my professors who told me to call Mr. Collins, I would never had known how popular old-time radio really is now. The professor's name was Mr. Berggren.

I have now 60 hours plus of old-time radio shows (1/4 of them Jack Benny) and I enjoy each and every program.

Recently I met a girl on the floor below me, whose name is Eilyn, who is also interested in old-time radio, mainly Fred Allen. I made her up a tape of Fred Allen and Jack Benny (when their feud started) and she really enjoys it and she is also going to take the tape with her when she see her grandparents who like Fred Allen.

I guess it takes the right person to use his or her imagination to listen to Old-time radio and get a good feeling about it and not NOT MAKE FUN OF IT.

Jay Wild
YM-YWHA
1395 Lexington Avenue
Box H-1
New York, NY 10128

"She took off her stockings and went to sleep again." When Gracie would take pepper and put it in the salt shaker and salt in the pepper shaker, she would look at you like you had two heads.

Her reasoning was people always get mixed up and now when they do they are right. She knew what she was doing. We called that illogical logic. It makes sense but it only made sense to Gracie.

WILDE: What appeal to the public did the act have to remain so successful for so many years?

BURNS: Well, Gracie had the appeal. I wasn't good for a lot of years. I was a bad straight man. I knew more about offstage than on. I would just repeat questions. My job was not too attractive.

I just timed the jokes for Gracie. Someone had to time them for her because Gracie wouldn't wait for a laugh -- to Gracie there was no audience.

Gracie's sense of concentration was so marvelous that she didn't know there was an audience. Those were not foolights. As far as she was concerned, there was a wall and even though she looked that way she didn't look at the audience... she talked to me.

If Gracie had an exit and you were supposed to stop her and say: "Wait a minute, Gracie, I want to ask you something," if you forgot your line, she would go right into the dressing room and take off her makeup. She only remembered her lines if you remembered yours.

Excerpted from "The Great Comedian: A Life About Comedy," by Larry Wild. Copyright 1984, Larry Wild. Published by Citadel Press Inc.

NEXT -- More talk with George Burns.

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

WANTED: Cape Cod Radio Mystery Shows (N.P.R.) on reel or cassettes, Will buy or will trade equal time from my catalog. VG+ or E only please.

H. Edgar Cole II
P O Box 3509
Lakeland, FL 33802

WANTED: ON CASSETTE-The following CBS Tarzan shows.

- Cathedral in the Congo 10/22/52
 - City of Sleep, 10/18/52
 - Small Packages, 11/1/52
 - Adventures on the Road to Timbuctu 11/8/52
 - Strange Island 11/15/52
 - Hunter's Jury 11/29/52
 - Congo Christmas 12/20/52
 - Siemba Hodari 2/28/53
 - Volcano of the Sun 3/14/53
- ALSO:** the following Tarzan not broadcast on CBS.
- Contraband, Congo Magic, First Prize - Death.

Richard Olday
100 Harvey Drive
Lancaster, NY 14086

WANTED: Looking to borrow any Fibber McGee and Molly's, Dragnets and/or Jack Bennys you may have; I will also lend to you any I may have.

Michael Varbanov
179 Abbingdon
Kenmore, NY 14223

WANTED: A copy of **THE BIG BROADCAST** by Frank Buxton and Bill Owen.

Frank C. Boncore
38-15th Street
Buffalo, NY 14213

Tapespondents is a free service to all members. Please send your ads to the ILLUSTRATED PRESS.

Mrs. Sergio immediately was given a contract with NBC as the first woman broadcaster to do news on a national network. She later joined WQXR in New York "and there, I had more audience than all of the male broadcasters put together," she said. Her friends were legendary names in broadcasting -- H.V. Kaltenborn and Lowell Thomas. A special friend was Milton Cross, commentator for the Metropolitan Opera for many years. "I used to do the interviews during the intermissions," she said.

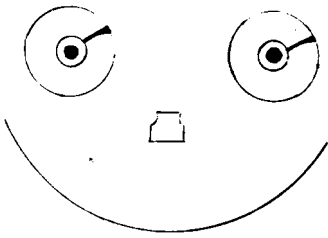
Although classified an "enemy alien" during World War II, she traveled the country selling war bonds and eventually was adopted by a close friend when she was almost 40, enabling her to become a U.S. citizen. When World War II ended, "and there wasn't a price on my head anymore," she returned to Europe "to see what was going on and visit my friends, but didn't stay too long."

She came back to the United States and broadcasting plus teaching graduate courses at Columbia University, lecturing and writing books. That hasn't changed too much today, except that the broadcasting is restricted to once a week. "It's a program I do for free, close to my heart," Mrs. Sergio explained, "called 'Prayers Through the Ages.'"

Her list of credits is impressive: honorary doctorates from three universities; medals from France, Italy and Jordan; seven books published and two in the works, and the never-ending personal battle to bring peace to the world.

"She's not very keen about television. "It's appalling," she said. "We know women are chosen for television because of looks. The way it is, someone else writes the news -- usually a man -- and it's put on a TelePrompTer, and any damned fool can read it. They don't put a woman on because she has brains.

"That affects the men, also. It just means that they don't have to try harder."



REEL-LY SPEAKING

Spring has sprung and the grass is riss, and I wonder where my tax refund is. As I sit here in my den at my desk and gaze out the window at green lawns and bright blue skies to pleasant breeze drifts through the open window, I cannot help but turn my thoughts to camping once more. This weekend my wife and I will drive down to Sleepy Hollow to check on our trailer and begin the slow process of setting up our camp. I've got a half a dozen spooky stories on cassettes already picked out for our lonely Saturday night camp fire. A dozen hot dogs and a bottle of Old Fily Bourbon will make the late night camp fire complete.

Once the camp is fully opened, the sewer hook up is made and the water and electricity turned on, Pat and I will stay out here most of the summer driving back and forth to our store on our work days and then back out to camp at night. Our youngest son holds down the fort until we come home Sunday evenings. He's twenty-four years old, so he does a good job of looking after the old place for us. The only problem is the Club reel library. It really suffers during the summer months from may until October. Well that life I guess, you just can't do everything you would like to. Very honestly, camping with my wife is more important to me than the reel library, what can I say? I guess only the campers will understand what I mean.

During the last month, the reel library has gained more reels. That's great gang, keep it up and thanks from all the members.

Well, till next time, good listening.
Francis Edward Bork



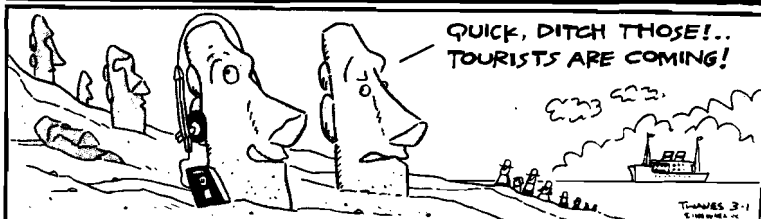
NEWS CHATTER

hello to all of you OTR fans. I'd like to intorduce myself. I am Linda DeCecco & I'm the new cassette & record librarian. I took over this part of the library to help Fran "The Elderly Statesman" Bork. This can only help & enhance our club members access to our tape libraries. Right now things are a bit on the slow side because we are still transferring some things. But as time goes on it will get better believe me. I am looking forward to hearing from all of you fine members. I'd like to remind you that when you request a list of tapes or records, please include an alternate list just in case the ones you originally wanted are unavailable. at the time you request them. We don't want any one to be disappointed or feel like their being ignore'd in any way. We want to be fair with everyone inthe club. Which brings me to a couple of points that I would like to make. First of all I would like to thank all the people who donated cassettes to the tape library. In particular Ralph Doty who donated 4 cassettes and Ed Coons donated 4 cassettes. And all the other friends of OTR who have donated tapes & records to the club recently.

It has come to my attention when I was going through the cassettes library that there are some missing or that people who have rented cassettes, have kept them for quite a lengthy period of time and have not returned them yet. Now I don't think its very fair of these people to keep cassettes, or records or even reels longer than they should. So don't embarras yourself or us by making us print your names in the IP for failing to return the tapes you've borrowed when you were supposed to return them.

Linda DeCecco

Frank and Ernest



COMEDIANS TALK ABOUT COMEDY—V

By Larry Wilde

They Laughed When George and Gracie Got Together as a Comedy Team

A BURNS AND ALLEN COMEDY ROUTINE:

GEORGE: Well, Gracie, Halloween is day after tomorrow. What do you think we ought to do?

GRACIE: What's the difference? No matter what we do, it'll be here day after tomorrow anyhow.

GEORGE: I mean . . . how are we going to celebrate it?

GRACIE: Oh . . . Well, when I was a little girl we'd go around the neighborhood ringing doorbells and run away before the people came out.

GEORGE: Well, I don't think I can do that. It might tire me out a little.

GRACIE: Then why don't you stay home and ring your own doorbell?

GEORGE: That I could do, but only one ring. I'll bet you played some awful tricks on people when you were kids.

GRACIE: Oh, we did. For instance, we'd take a wallet, put a five-dollar bill in it, and leave it on somebody's doorstep. Gee, that was funny.

GEORGE: What was the trick?

GRACIE: Well, we didn't put a name in the wallet, so the person who found it would never know who to return it to.

GEORGE: That was quite a trick.

GRACIE: If you think that

Bob Curran is on vacation. His daily columns will resume early in March.

was a trick, how about the one Aunt Clara played on her husband, Uncle Harvey.

GEORGE: Even better than yours?

GRACIE: Oh, yes. You see, every Halloween he came home late, after celebrating with his friends.

GEORGE: He would celebrate with his friends?

GRACIE: Yes. So she got a skeleton and put it in his bed.

GEORGE: Skeleton, huh?

GRACIE: Then we all waited outside his door and listened.

GEORGE: I'll bet he yelled his head off.

GRACIE: No, he just said: "Clara, I know I've asked you to take off some weight, but this is ridiculous."

George Burns was born, Nathan Birnbaum on January 20, 1896, in New York City. One of fourteen children, Burns left

ED'S WANAT CORNER: Remember back in 1969 when you could pick up a newspaper and read about your favorite comedite, well return with me back to yesteryear and laugh when George & Gracie got together as a comedy team.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

school when he was thirteen to help support his family. He organized a group of child singers called the Peewee Quartet, the members of which took turns passing the hat in taverns and backyards after performing. During the following years he appeared in vaudeville acts with many different partners.

IN 1923, BURNS met Gracie Allen. They formed the soon-to-be-legendary comedy team of Burns and Allen and soon were playing the nation's top vaudeville houses. They were married on January 7, 1926, in Cleveland. Their first full-length motion picture was "The Big Broadcast of 1932." Many others followed. In 1933 they were signed to do their own radio show and remained on the air without interruption for 17 years. The transition to television was made in 1950. Gracie retired in 1958 and died in 1964.

Upon my arrival at George Burns' office at the General Service Studios in Hollywood, Mr. Burns was seated at his huge desk, which was surprisingly cleared of all paper.

THE ROOM, expensively paneled and tastefully decorated in wainut, exuded an air of hospital neatness and careful organization.

Burns wore a dark blue beret, gray slacks, gray tweed sports jacket, and gray sports shirt. He was gracious, frank, and outspoken.

WILDE: How long after you started in show business did you begin doing comedy?

BURNS: Well, I couldn't answer that. I always had a natural sense of humor—even when I sang with the Peewee Quartet when we were kids. I was able to get laughs on the street corners but not on the stage.

I was self-conscious about being on the stage. If I was invited to somebody's house—to a party—I was very good.

WILDE: Did you ever do a single?

BURNS: I did all kinds of



GRACIE AND GEORGE
It All Started in 1923

singles. I did anything to stay in show business. If it had to be a single, I'd do a single.

If it had to be a two-act, I'd do a two-act. If I had to sing with a quartet, I would sing with a quartet.

WILDE: You were considered the straight man of the Burns and Allen team, yet many of the laughs came as a result of your split-second timing and comic attitude. What is the real function of the "straight man?"

BURNS: Well, anybody can be a straight man if he hears well. You just have to wait for laughs.

WILDE: Is that what is meant by "timing?"

BURNS: Yeah, that's timing.

WILDE: What is the difference between doing a monologue and feeding lines to someone else to get the laughs?

BURNS: The difference is that the monologist has no help—you have to get up there on your own two feet and tell your jokes. I use the cigar for timing purposes. If I tell a joke, I smoke as long as they laugh and when they stop laughing I take the cigar out of my mouth and start my next joke.

WILDE: Have you always used it?

BURNS: I thought if I smoked, I would look like an actor. So I started smoking cigars when I was sixteen and I have been smoking them ever since.

WILDE: When you and Gracie Allen first did an act, you were the comedian and she was the straight man and then you switched roles. How did the characterizations you both developed come about?

BURNS: The audience really finds the character for you. When we first started I had all the funny jokes and Gracie had the straight stuff, but even her straight lines got laughs.

She had a funny delivery. Very sharp and quick and cute, and they laugh at her straight lines—and they didn't laugh at my jokes. If she asked me a question, they would laugh and I didn't expect a laugh there.

WHILE I WAS answering her, I talked in on her laugh so nobody heard what I had to say. They would resent certain jokes—maybe a sarcastic joke. There was a feeling of something between the audience and Gracie.

They loved her, and so, not being a fool and wanting to smoke cigars for the rest of my life, I gave her the jokes.

Then I finally found out that certain jokes were not good for her. The audience would tell you. They would resent certain jokes—maybe a sarcastic joke.

They didn't want sarcasm from Gracie. And the first thing you know, the audiences picked out a character that she was off-center, and then that's the material I got. I used to dig it out of magazines.—Whizbang and College Humor—and I always had a sense of being able to take a joke and switching it.

I am sort of basically a writer, so I was able to always find material, and then when I could afford it, I bought material. I have always been a big believer in paying writers for material—if you don't buy material you can't stay fresh.

WILDE: What made Burns and Allen such a great comedy team?

BURNS: It was Gracie. She was a great actress. She was not funny. She was not a comedienne, she was an actress.

Gracie could do the wildest kind of jokes and make people believe them—no matter how mad the jokes were, when Gracie told them you would believe they were true.

If somebody else told them, you believed the jokes were funny, but you didn't believe they were true.

WILDE: Is there a difference between being a comedienne and being an actress who can do comedy?

BURNS: Yes, a big difference. Take Lynn Fontaine. She's a great actress, but she also played a dumb dame in "Dulcy" and she made you believe her. When Gracie played . . . Gracie wasn't dumb . . . in fact, Gracie thought she was terribly smart.

Gracie's character was different. Gracie thought everybody was out of step but her. She was always helping people. She was always sorry for you.

LIKE IF she would say: "My sister got up in the middle of the night, she screamed, she turned down at her feet and they looked black." You would say to her: "What did she do?" She was sorry for you for asking that question. She thought you were pretty dumb not to know what to do if your feet turned black.

Her Life Is Tale of Romance, History

Radio Pioneer Gives Women

Message

By AGNES PALAZZETTI

"There I was, sitting in the middle of all this magnificent antique silver, when I looked up and saw Mussolini coming toward me."

The year was 1932, when Il Duce, aided by radio inventor Guglielmo Marconi, made a decision that changed Lisa Sergio's life, eventually bringing her not only fame but also a new country.

Mrs. Sergio, the first woman broadcaster in Europe, came to Buffalo this week to speak at a joint meeting of the National Organization of Italian-American Women, Women in Communications and American Women in Radio and Television.

From the vantage point of a pioneer and more than 50 years of experience in broadcasting, Mrs. Sergio, now in her 80s, says the best advice she can offer young women today is: "Develop and use your brains and your skills, but never lose your femininity."

Although Mrs. Sergio was born and raised in Florence, Italy, her accent is polished English. From the time she was a very little girl, she has spoken Italian, English and French.

The daughter of an Italian father and an American mother, she was brought up in a home with wealth, culture and family friends whose names are in the history books. Her grandfather, an accomplished pianist, "studied with Saint-Saens. Puccini was a good friend of my father's. Marconi was a close friend of the family," she said.

Mrs. Sergio was only 15 when she "fell in love with a beautiful man who was a member of a very elegant cavalry unit. But my mother disapproved and would not give me the military dowry I needed so we could be married. Instead, she arranged for him to be transferred from Florence to Rome," Mrs. Sergio said.

The fortitude that carried Mrs. Sergio through the next decades gave her the courage to make trips to Rome to visit him and eventually move there.

"You must remember that back then, no respectable daughter left home until she was married," she said. By that time, "it was too late. He was suffering from cancer and didn't feel he should marry, but on his deathbed, we did."

Mrs. Sergio's first career interest as an archaeologist led to her meeting with Mussolini. During a dig near Pompeii, she said, "A sealed casket was discovered. When it was opened, it was full of magnificent silver pieces, one more exquisite than the other."

Mrs. Sergio was given the task of polishing the silver — "It turned pitch-black the minute it was hit by the air" — and arranging it for a major exhibit in Rome. That assignment, together with one she had done for Marconi a few years earlier, set the stage for her to initiate English broadcasts from Rome for Mussolini.



RONALD J. COLLERAN/BufBio News

Lisa Sergio describes how a number of famous men have figured in her career.

Marconi, whom she described "as the shyest man you ever met," asked her to translate some notes he had made for a major scientific speech into English. "It was all Greek to me," she remembered, "but I did it, and he even paid me a pound for it. Little did I realize at the time, but those notes and that speech was the first time that Marconi had talked publicly about his ideas for short-wave radio. Even worse, like a damned fool, I spent the pound-note he paid me instead of saving and framing it."

When Mussolini came up with the idea of telling the story of fascism to the English-speaking world, one of the first people he consulted was Marconi, to be sure that the broadcasts would reach England. Mrs. Sergio said she later learned that Marconi had suggested that she be the one to do the broadcasts, and so, the "chance" meeting amid the antique silver.

Mussolini, through his chief press aide, did offer her the job. "I turned it down. What did I know about broadcasting?" she said. But the offer was made again, more forcefully, and Mrs. Sergio had little choice but to accept. She became Europe's first woman broadcaster, and within a short time, Il Duce's remarks were being translated into 45 languages, with the whole show under Mrs. Sergio's direction.

Mussolini, she said, "never appealed to me. From the first, I really didn't like him. I certainly could never have fallen in love with him." He was, she said, "a brilliant journalist. His mother was a teacher. His father shod horses, but only to conceal what he was doing in the back room — distributing socialist tracts. He was a small man, but he carried himself well and looked much taller. In the beginning, he did good things for Italy, but things changed."

For Mrs. Sergio, the turning point began with the invasion of Ethiopia and the discovery that Mussolini "was putting lies into the speeches he was giving me to translate." Without telling anyone, she "either changed what he said or just left out some of the things." But she was discovered, immediately fired and sentenced to death.

"Of course, they don't execute women in Italy, but they made it uncomfortable for me. The telephone was cut off, I was followed."

Once again, Marconi came to the rescue. Learning that she wanted to move to United States, Marconi arranged for a passport, gave her money and a letter of introduction to his friend in New York City, David Sarnoff, the president of RCA.

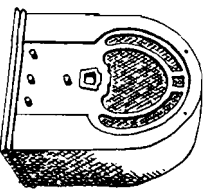
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