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# ILLUSTRATED PRESS

EST. 1975

#117 JULY, 1986

**kate smith**



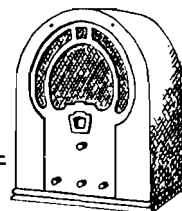
With Jack Miller (on podium) and David Ross (in white tie).

"Hello, everybody!" Thus melodious Kate Smith opened her tremendously popular broadcasts. "The Songbird of the South," as she was called, started her radio career in 1929 after having appeared as a comedienne and singer in Honeymoon Lane and other Broadway musicals. Her broad-

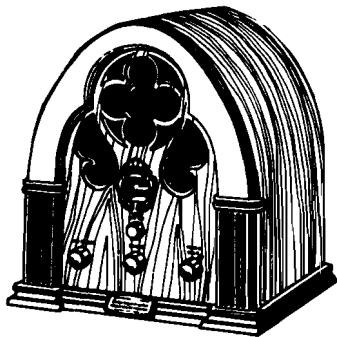
casting career was carefully guided by her friend and manager, Ted Collins. Next to her famous signature song "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain," Kate Smith is probably most closely identified with the wartime "God Bless America," written by Irving Berlin.

6-17-86

THE OLD TIME



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, due 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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Dominic Parisi  
38 Ardmore Pl.  
Buffalo, NY 14213

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**DEADLINE FOR IP #119 - August 4**  
#120 - September 8  
#121 - October 6

\*\*\*\*\*  
**ADVERTISING RATES FOR MEMORIES:**  
\$40.00 for a full page (ALL ADS MUST BE CAMERA READY)  
\$30.00 for a half page  
\$20.00 for a quarter page  
**SPECIAL:** OTR Club members may take 50% off these rates.

Advertising Deadline - September 1

# NICK CAR

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## THE NINE O'CL

### CHAPTER VIII FIRE FIEND

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Upstairs in the bunk rooms, dark-shirted smoke eaters read the wild care stories of the evening papers and talked in low voices. Most of them were barefoot. Alarms had been coming over the telegraph all evening, but for uptown zone. Things had been unusually quiet in lower Manhattan. They read the news stories again with grim looks. That wouldn't hold for long. This was the lull before the storm.

"After nine thirty begins the riot", summed up Battalion Chief Foley.

Nick, a captain and two lieutenants nodded silently. They all knew what those scare stories meant. First, the fire guys would get drunk and wild on the visions they created. Next, every bonfire in the street would cause a hysterical alarm to be sent out. And last, people would be petrified with fear at the smell of smoke, the sight of flame.

There was enough hysteria at fires usually. Tonight it would be intensified. Men as well as women would run in circles madly, clutch each other, stand still and shriek, fight the firemen when they came. There would be little order and increased chaos. People would jump from the sixth and seventh floors of buildings not yet on fire. Others would frantically be trapped by flame on the first floors of burning buildings from which they could have fled ten minutes earlier.

Nick glanced through the office door into the bunk room. The grim expressions of the smoke eaters told its own story. There were many among them who had seen flames take sad toll, who knew the swath of misery, death and suffering the human torch left behind.

Heaven help the fire bug if some of those men should spot him! The powerful blast of a high pressure hose--he might be lifted and knocked a hundred feet. There were other things besides immediate death, too. A timber could fall and pin a man to watch the fire demon slinking toward him with red flicking tongue and suffocating breath of smoke and fumes. Sometimes there were streams of molten metal snaking in slow streams below.

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# NICK CARTER

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## THE NINE O'CLOCK FIRES

May, 1935

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Or smoldering bales behind which a body could be "caught" and slowly baked to death.

Those fire eaters were law abiding citizens. In no other branch of local government was the rating of esprit de corps so high. More than any other service, the fire department called for guts, sacrifice, brains and discipline. Not once, but many times each week every one of those men faced death, saw death, in protection of life and property.

But there was no leniency in their hearts for a pyromaniac, that dreaded, silent murderer of the night.

The clock showed nine thirty. Then it came. Expected, yet startling. Eagerly awaited, yet horrible. 33-211. The gong beat out the signal with a rasping clatter. The signal of a three alarm!

The bunk room leaped to life. Men hit the brass as fast as they could leap. They slithered down the shining brass pole, barely tightening the crook of their arm in time to break their fall and land with balance on the two inch rubber mats at the bottom. A Johnny, at the barn for his first assignment to a regular company, forgot himself in the excitement, came down the pole clamping it high between legs and with his hands. He landed with bleeding hands and burned-through pants.

Below there was a spurt and roar. Sirens screamed. Bells clanged. The doors were thrown wide.

Upstairs, the chief's aid snatched a file box, ran for the pole. Nick, the chief, other officers were already dropping the pole, swinging onto starting cars and engines of assignment. The rescue company roared out first. A pair of shoes were thrown back as it swept through the door. Smoke eaters, picked and chosen men, stood in the high well of the wagon pulling on boots, slopping on helmets and donning rubber coats. As the engine turned up the street a fireman leaned over the left side behind the driver, jerked off the jacket of the foamite pump mixer.

Nick leaped into the red car behind the chief. The chief's aide was at the wheel. The car spurted forward as the doors were slammed, screamed up the street, swung a corner on two wheels. Less than fifteen seconds after the preliminary number of the alarm and the barn was rolling!

33 that preliminary had rung. A three bagger, third alarm for box 211. The car hurtled screaming across town. Behind thundered the heavy engines of battalion barn. From other sections of town came the distant cry of other

sirens. Many companies would turn out for the three-alarm, each arrive in its prearranged order. For a "first to" company to arrive second was to be guilty of a cardinal sin of the department.

Nick was already in boots and rubber coat. At his feet was the helmet of an honorary chief. Subject only to the orders of the commanding officer, he could use his discretion in movements at the fire. For the occasion he was attached to the Fire Marshal's office.

The chief opened the fire box, thumbed out a ten by four inch file card. Nick glanced over his shoulder, saw the number 211 on the upper left hand corner. Beneath were ten lines across. Not all were filled in. They gave the street numbers and classification of buildings served by fire alarm 211.

In bold type at the top of the card was the street corner the box was on. On each line following the building number, was specific information. The alarm service, whether on the HP-high pressure water system--or not, Engine Company numbers answering call, hook and ladders, companies of battalion. There was typewritten information on some of the buildings.

The chief pointed to the fourth line down. It gave the address followed by the work "Furs". He grunted.

"May be a touch off," he spit. He was a veteran fire-fighter with iron-gray hair and square jutting jaw. Nick nodded. Often enough a fire in a fur loft was a touch off to collect insurance.

The chief pointed to the tenth line. "Toy factory," it read. That could be dangerous. Toy factories were filled with highly combustible fluids and usually a disordered jumble of fast catching wood and material. The other buildings at that alarm box were tenements.

The chief flipped open a call book. In it were listed all companies and officers answering all fire calls of various nature throughout the day. A third alarm in the Fourth Ward called out most of the companies answering to that zone. Transverse number one would be busy relocating companies, bringing in the other engines from other zones if the fire burned long. Fire alarm headquarters would be awaiting the signals over the Morse key from box 211 telling whether to relocate or not. No zone must be allowed to be stripped of engines for one fire without having reserves pulled in and idle in case of another in the same zone.

Nick glanced back at the building card, his heart suddenly going cold. That district was one of tenements surrounded by lofts, furs and combustibles. And in the water pressure column was a row of Bs!. A borderline zone! There was no high pressure hydrants within

a block, perhaps further!

They slithered into the street from which the alarm had come, jerked to a halt. Engines stretched by them before they could snap open the doors. Helmeted men leaped from the engines with hose coupler and lengths under arm. The engines went on a few yards, the hose, gray or black, uncoiling and slapping to the ground as the widening distance unlapped it.

The last of the first companies stretched in. The chief, "the Big Boy," raced to a stoop, sized up the fire. His aide pulled on boots, and slapped heavily to his side, the boots weighting him down. Nick watched the fast work with admiration. He had been expressly forbidden to enter any building by his old friend Foley until the latter had sized things up.

The order galled Nick, but he knew its importance. The chief could not be worried by the whereabouts of a man. If it was necessary to mine a wall, to open up or lay on water, a life must not be endangered thereby. Yet a wait, while warning the man if he were inside, might be fatal for many.

The next companies began to stretch in, sirens and bells silencing as they came up. The sound of police patrol cars came from three directions. The insurance patrols streaked in.

Across the street from Nick the burning building gave out puffs of dense heavy smoke. It was black and sullen, showed no sign of flame as yet. There was little light along the street. At the two distant corners dim lights glowed, but their rays did not come down to light the slum stoops.

"Searchlights!" The Big Boy rapped out. His aide raced to tap 18-211 over the Morse key in the alarm box. It would bring the giant department searchlight apparatus within minutes. He followed the message with the signal to relocate. That dense smoke promised a fire. And the building would be a ram job.

The waiting seemed interminable. Hours had passed since the first sharp gong of 33. The chief was still sizing up. Would he never get through? What was holding back the smoke eaters? Their movements were fast. Yet not a hose was yet completely coupled.

Nick glanced nervously at his watch. Not a minute and a half had passed since the first rap of the preliminary signal! Engines still streaked in. The aide clunked back.

"She's rolling," the chief said, Nick remembered the term. The fire, held in, would be rolling back under itself, gathering pressure and momentum.

The chief's voice sounded distant and quiet, but his words were clipped to time saving abruptness. "Surround

the fire, lay on water. It's the fur loft. Lay lines to the HP hydrants three blocks away. Get water started from the river. Hook up pumps in relay, jack the pressure, tandems from river."

The Aide turned to order officers, his voice clear, deep, staccato. They ran off with crews to do their duties. Nick, as well as he knew fires from old days, was surprised at the speed and order with which jobs were carried out. The high pressure lines would not be hard to hook up. One, at the most two, pumps per line would hold the pressure.

But sucking water from the nearby river was a complicated operation. Thirty-five pounds per square inch pressure was required when the water hit the fire. An effective stream of water was one in which ninety per cent of the liquid would strike within a ten inch circle. Eighty to eighty-five feet from nozzle was the maximum throw possible under full pressure of the big pumps from the high pressure system.

The fire looked as if the heat might hold the men far back when opened up. The small pumps could supply seven hundred gallons per minute at one hundred and twenty pounds pressure per square inch. The large pumps, one thousand gallons at one hundred and sixty-five pounds pressure. Those, of course, would be used on the last step of the relay. But the question was, could the tandem pumps along the hose line from the river suck water fast enough and jack it up sufficiently to keep the big pumps supplied?

Nick did some fast figuring. There were enough pump engines on hand. Say six in tandem to a line. The first two would require full power to suck and throw the water along at around five pounds pressure. The next two would take both streams, jack it to thirty as it threw at along. The next would jack it to around eighty. The big pump would raise it to around a hundred and forty. But it would have to be some ways back from the fire. There would be a loss of pressure through distance, friction, turns and twists. If the steam was thrown from a fifth story height at sixty-five feet range from the flames, it would strike with just about its required effectiveness.

Men, dark gleaming shadows in black rubber coats, ran in all directions, hauled hose, broke out axes, wrecking bars, tools and nets. Two wooden, seven story tenements stood on each side of the burning building which was seven stories, but high. It gave forth a distant suppressed roar like the voice of a volcano before it spit through the earth.

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"Pressure on!" a voice shouted.

"Hit the fire!" roared the chief. "You, Killbrook," turning to his aide, "get in there and find out what's happening before I open up. Come out the roof if she needs ventilation and down over the tenement. Take a line. You, Carter, go in with the first line. Watch out for a flashback. Get those people moved out of the tenements."

Nick had been unconscious of the tenements until now. Now he looked, saw screaming women leaning from windows, yelling, hysterical, making no effort to leave the buildings, but holding bawling infants out over the sidewalk and screaming for help. There was no danger to them yet.

He saw a man through an open window two tenements away hugging his wife and children, standing rooted to the floor and gesturing wildly. A mixed chorus of cries "Fire fiend!-Fire!-Help!" and shrieks and prayers blasted through the growling murmur of the fire, cry of orders and moving apparatus.

The fire horn was no longer used. But Foley's voice roared over the sound of everything stentorian, sending officers and men about their work. Killbrook, the aide, had gathered seven men and a hose. He signaled Nick. At that moment, Chick ran upbooted and coated.

"Let's go," Nick shouted. They stated toward the building, reached the door, rammed it through with a rush. There was a long low whine within, a slight suck of air past them. No smoke belched out. But inside they could see it twisting, heavy, writhing like some huge tortured body. Far back through it was a dim red glow, an eye of flame showing through a whirling body of fumes and smoke.

"Watch her!" Killbrook shouted. "Backdraft!"

The suck and whine increased. The men backed away, stood huddled against the building, hose line in hand. Nick was trying to straighten a kink, had a partial view of inside.

There was a violent roar. A terrific suck almost pulled him in the door. Chick peered past him. Nick threw out an arm, knocked him to the ground fell flat himself. Inside the whole place lit up. Blinding light followed by a sound like a giant sucking soup. The next instant smoke belched out, flames leaped in all directions. A gust of wind burst out, hitting the two and sliding them three feet backward.

"Get going!" Killbrook shouted to his men, already leaping in the door nozzle in hand. The others followed, snaking the hose.

Inside, the dim murmur had increased to a crescendo, ear splitting, cracking

NEWS CHATTER

Those lazy, hazy days of summer are finally here. Time for all those great barbecues and picnics and family gatherings. Whether a person goes camping or stays in the city to entertain its handy to have some old time radio shows on hand. They are as fun listening to on the beach as they are by a blazing fire. Old time radio is as timely now as when the shows were first aired. And who knows maybe with all the outdoor activities going on we can get more people hooked on old time radio if they have the chance to hear it from our radios. After all it only takes one person to get others interested in things. I for one have gotten a few people hooked on OTR. Comedy shows seem to be a popular hit with them especially the Red Skelton Shows. I even got my cousin's kids involved with OTR with a couple of children's stories. And that's not easy to do especially with all the new shows on TV that are geared for the younger set. Now if we can only get our fearless club president, Jerry "No Show" Collins, to renew his interest in OTR, as the kids have and start attending again, meetings would be livelier than they already are. How about it Jerry? We'd really love to see your friendly face a lot more often.

Linda DeCecco

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

roar. Smoke poured and eddied. Flames leaped out. There was an explosion somewhere followed by the sound of falling weight and devouring fire. The draft gave life to flames. The heat was already unbearable.

But Nick was not thinking of these things. Followed by Chick, he had dashed past the hose crew, was leaping upstairs. His heavy boots slapped and slowed him down. He pulled on the hand rail to help him, his breath already coming hard from lack of oxygen and heat.

On the wall at the head of the stair just after that blinding first flash, Nick had seen a shadow. It was huge, monstrous, weird, thrown by a flame somewhere against that wall. It wavered against the flame. Then lengthened, broke, dissolved and disappeared.

That shadow had been the shadow of a man!

The fire fiend was in their claws!

CONTINUED NEXT MONTH

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ON THE AIR

There is a new book out that should be of interest to many of you. **MURROW: HIS LIFE AND TIMES** by A. M. Sperber is a 1986 publication of Freundlich Books. This 80 page book is really three things. First it is a biography of Edward R. Murrow, the famous radio war correspondent who many considered to be the "founding father of the CBS news team." He later became a television personality, and was the director of the United States Information Agency. Secondly, the book is in many respects a history of the CBS news department, and thirdly even of the CBS radio network itself. For those of us interested in old radio, the book is a fascinating study of the development of radio newscasting, and of this very important, perhaps the most important, figure in its beginning stages. The book should be available at your favorite bookstore. If not, I am sure they will order it for you.

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James Lehnhard

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**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 U.S.A. and APO, \$.60 for one reel, \$.35 for each cassette and record; \$.75 for each video tape.

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# SAY!

## WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?



Meaningless Meanderings From My Muddled Mind.

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You can get subscription info by writing Royal Promotions  
4114 Montgomery Rd.  
Cincinnati, OH 45212

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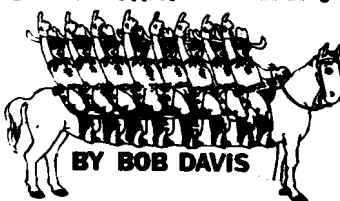
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Quiz...What's wrong with this sentence? "Jim Snyder am a nice guy." I'll let you figure that one out yourself. (yuk, yuk, yuk!)

A bit of seriousness..Although it's a lot more fun to pick on some of these guys and cast an occasional barb in their direction, I'd like to state that we in the Old Time Radio Club are lucky to have people in charge that know what they're doing. The club is in possibly the best shape that it has ever been. Aspects of the club that could have slid downhill into oblivion are now flourishing instead. Just look on page two of this newsletter you you'll see SOME of them mentioned. Others do their work with no mention at all. The best part of it all is that they care, they give a damn.

The voice of the Old Time Radio Club, The Illustrated Press, just doesn't happen. I sit by this typewriter and peck away a column but if it weren't for these caring people the column would never see the light of day (or the light of Olday...Sorry, I couldn't resist).

The I.P. is a monthly which in this field is almost unheard of. On top of this, **MEMORIES** comes out once or twice a year. These publications take a lot of doing and fortunately we have the right people doing them. This is probably the last time you'll see me writing something nice about these guys but I figured it was about time.

See ya next time.





# HY DALEY

## RADIO'S BIG BANDS

The late 30's and the war years of the 40's were the apex of big bands of radio. The following are tidbits of Big Band Lore.

In 1945 the Mutual Broadcasting System featured the Hal McIntyre Band on a thirty minute record album called "Memories of Manhattan" which was sent overseas. His band was the first to record the now famous V-Discs before a live audience. Some of his personnel were Joe Weidman, trumpets; Ralph Tilken, drummer; and Ruth Gaylor, lead vocalist. His 18 member group did a lot of overseas work towards the end of the war.

Who was Charlie Murray's Six Jacks? Funny you should ask. None other than Jerry Colona! None of his group could read music, however, which caused him some trouble on his first professional job. He was asked to play a trombone solo. He played a few choruses and was promptly laid off.

He then joined Chet Frost and his Bostonians which was touring in Bermuda. There he assemble a Dixieland band which did not go over with the British patrons who were looking for long-hair music.

Fortunately, a U.S. Convention group had invaded the hotel and wanted American jazz, thus the group was saved.

Jerry later played with Ben Pollack, the Dorseys and Bunny Berrigan before landing a job as a staff man on CBS for Ozzie Nelson and Freddy Rich. In 1938 he went on radio with Bob Hope and **DID NOT** have to play **ANYMORE**.

Established as a radio personality by his appearance on the Camel programs with Bill and Bob Crosby, Johnny Mercer to a show of his own in 1943 as a summer replacement for Bob Hope. His show was called "Johnny Mercer and His Music Shop."

Frankie Sinatra collected 70 cents for his first 18 appearances on WOR, WNEW, WMCA, and WAAE in the New York area. In 1940, as a member of The Dorseys, Several of his songs set new highs for sales--even for The Dorseys. In 1942 he left The Dorseys and got a sustaining program over CBS called "Songs by Sinatra."

Eventually the folks at the "Hit Parade" show heard "The Voice". With

a lot of publicity and flourish, they signed him.

In 1945 there were nine TV stations in operation and making their TV appearances that year were Betty Hutton, Frank Sinatra, Cab Calloway, Benny Goodman, and Louis Prima. Radio with pictures! Just think of it!!

\*\*\*\*\*

**TAPESPENDENTS:** Send in your wants and we'll run them here for at least 2 months.

**WANTED:** 1 reel of Sears Radio Theatre, 1 reel of Danger with Granger episodes. Any shows of Sears or Granger okay. Will trade equal time from my catalog of over 700 reels. Cassettes considered but prefer reels.

Ed Cole  
P O Box 3509  
Lakeland, FL 33802

**WANTED:** Any of the "Three Sheets to the Wind" shows with John Wayne (1943), "Horatio Hornblower"; and the "Six Shooter" Series. Please send list of shows to:

Mike O'Donnell  
9904 Greenview Lane  
Manassas, VA. 22110

**WANTED:** Any Brooklyn Dodger baseball game broadcast by Red Barber; Any broadcast of Warm-Up Time, a show that preceded the Dodger games; Any broadcast of Sports Extra, a show that followed all Brooklyn Dodger baseball games.

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70 W. 95 St.  
#276  
New York, NY 10025

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Linda DeCecco  
32 Shenandoah Rd.  
Buffalo, NY 14220

**TAPESPENDENTS** is a free service to all members of the Old Time Radio Club

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### OTRC PICNIC

It's picnic time again! Rich Simpson has once again arranged our annual picnic. This year it will be held on 8/17/86 at 1:00 p.m. at Queenston Heights Park in Canada opposite the Lewiston-Queenston International Bridge. Bring your own food and beverages, and be prepared to have a great time. Rich promises us a warm and sunny day this year. Hope to see **YOU** in Canada.

\*\*\*\*\*

### JUST THE FACTS MA'AM

When I started this column about OTR dealers, it was with the intention of introducing our readers to several dealers who are also members of our club. I hoped it would serve two purposes the first letting our readers know who they are and what they have to offer and second thanking the dealers for their support of our club. I have also tried to stress that most of these guys are hard working joes who have helped preserve several OTR shows and provide them at low cost. I agree with Jim Snyder's statement that most dealers work OTR as a second front and he doesn't know of a one who is getting rich off of OTR.

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2510 Johnathan Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Astons Adventures has all but 15 of the 481 Gunsmoke Shows available on 41 reels in chronological order. Most of the shows have a sound quality rated very good. All 41 reels can be purchased for \$500 plus \$30 shipping. Visa and Master Charge are accepted. A complete catalog is available for \$7.

Aston Adventures  
1301 No. Park Avenue  
Inglewood, CA 90302

Major Edward Boves of the original Amateur Hour was born in 1876 in San Francisco.

Some of the re-creations being considered for this years OTR convention in Newark are: QUICK AS A FLASH, X MINUS ONE, WITCH'S TALE, a soap opera, GREAT GILDERSLEEVE, ALDRICH FAMILY, ARCHIE

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ANDREWS; so if you haven't made your reservations yet for the October 24-25 OTR Convention or need further details, contact:

Jay Hickerson  
Box C  
Orange, CT 06477

Better yet, send him \$10 for a one years subscription to his bi-monthly newsletter.

Frank C. Boncore  
\*\*\*\*\*

**A FEW WORDS ABOUT STUART JAY WEISS**

How many times did you search for a show then finally one day you found it, took it home, put in on your recorder and then were utterly disgusted with the quality (or is it lack of quality) that came out of your machine? That would not have happened if you had obtained it from a guy like Ed Carr, Ron Barnett (Echoes of the Past) or Stuart Jay Weiss.

Send \$1.00 to Stuart Jay Weiss, 33 Von Braun Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10312 for a catalog and you certainly won't be sorry. In return you will receive his 52 page catalog (it is probably a lot larger by now). Stu has reel to reel shows available for \$3.50 per hour (Minimum order 3 Hrs.) cassettes at \$5.00 per order (Minimum order 2 hours) and 8 track cartridges available at \$10.00 per 90 minute tape (minimum 90 minutes.)

NB add \$2.00 per order for postage and handling. Stu also has a bonus policy: for cassettes 1 hour free for every 3 hours ordered \$15.00, for reels 1 hour free for every 4 hours (\$14.00).

Briefly, I would like to mention some of the unusual reels available: #33 and #42 - The Strange Dr. Weird, #41 Police Headquarters, #73 The 1st OTR Convention 12/04/71, #122 Convention in Connecticut including a 50 minute talk by Bret Morrison on his radio days-especially interesting his "Shadow" days. #88 Tales of the Foreign Service, #152 The Eddie Cantor Show, #323 The Guy Lombardo Show, #377, 378, 379, 380 the Kraft Music Hall, #418 Chickenman, #471 Dick Tracy, #275 D-Day Invasion News from CBS New York, Etc. etc. etc.

In closing, I would like to point out that Stu played a low key role at the convention last year (his stand was closed most of the time) I guess he wanted to see the convention for once; so this year I hope he has someone open his stand while he walks around.

Frank C. Boncore  
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5-3-47

CBS MYSTERY THEATRE

The date was January 6, 1974 at 10:07 P.M. EST when listeners to the CBS Radio Network via their local CBS affiliate got their first taste of what was to become one of the most ambitious projects in modern audio history--the beginning of the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre. Renown actor E. G. Marshall was at the microphone along with Agnes Moorehead and the cast of the first show "The Old Ones Are Hard to Kill". To the listener who had no advance notice of the series, the opening sounded remarkably like "Inner Sanctum" which was produced by Himan Brown and hosted for the bulk of its run by Raymond Edward Johnson. And why not? Himan Brown produced both series, and everyone remembers the famous creaking door used on Inner Sanctum. The opening works on the CBS Mystery Theatre by E. G. Marshall set the stage for drama and suspense. "Come in. Welcome. I'm E. G. Marshall. Welcome to the sound of suspense...to the fear you can hear". This was usually followed by a reflection of some aspect of human life, often in "what if" theme which sets the stage for the drama which is to follow. Himan Brown was certainly no newcomer to producing radio shows. He had in fact in his 40 years in the business produced and directed such serials as Dick Tracy, Joyce Jordan M.D., as well as the famous Inner Sanctum series of mysteries. It is not surprising that through Brown's associations, he attracted some really top-notch talent to the Mystery Theatre casts. To name them all would take pages, but to name just a few: Agnes Moorehead, Mercedes McCambridge, Larry Haines, Mandel Kramer, Santos Ortega, Bret Morrison ("The Shadow"), Ian Martin (Who also wrote many of the scripts), Fred Gwynne, Tammy Grimes and so many others. I think one of the reasons for the show's success is not only did it have top-notch talent but actors who were willing to try almost anything different. And this had to be the case when one stops to realize that not only did this show run more than nine years, but it did so 365 days a year, 7 days a week. Regardless of one's constructive criticism of the shows, this sheer volume of work is to be commended. It may be true that perhaps one-third of the scripts were horrible and not much could be done with them regardless of who the actors were, but the middle third were very good and highly entertaining works. Mystery Theatre featured some outstanding adaptations of classics by Edgar Allen Poe, Shakespeare, etc. There was once an entire week of shows devoted to the works of Poe, most of which were excellent. If you're like me you rarely get time to sit down with a book and read it through. Years ago I did read these Poe stories and I found the Mystery Theatre's adaptation of them excellent. I still think about the night I heard

Mercedes McCambridge in "Carmilla" (7/31/75) or the night I heard "Dracula" also with her (5/2/74). I had collected many versions of Dracula on videotape in later years, but the thrill of radio, of using your imagination, added a new dimension to the enjoyment of this Bram Stoker classic. Again, as usual, marvelously adapted by the Mystery Theatre. As for the last third of the MT scripts, they go in with the last third.

Most all of the shows were complete dramas in the one-hour length. There were, however, a few that were done in five parts. "The Legend of Alexander" starred Russell Horton and was presented on five consecutive nights beginning Monday, June 22, 1981. Mystery Theatre opened its sixth season in January, 1979 with a week of stories about Nefertiti, Queen of Egypt, starring Tammy Grimes in the title role. Another classic written by Victor Hugo that dealt with the poverty and injustice in Paris was Les Miserables, and Mystery Theatre presented that also in five parts beginning Monday, January 11, 1982 which starred Alexander Scourby. The Mystery Theatre version of Les Miserables was similar to the Les Miserables produced in 1937 and starring Orson Welles, but the Welles version was in (7) thirty minute parts and the Mystery Theatre version was in five sixty-minute parts.

As if CBS felt they didn't have enough at the outset of Mystery Theatre in 1974 with their acting staff and excellent scripts, they also began by giving away such things as clock radios, etc. to people who would send in a card with their name and address, and preferably comments about the new shows. This was in the form of a drawing, and probably several hundred prizes were awarded each week. And beginning August 4, 1975 someone won a seven day, six night all-expense paid trip for 4 persons to Disney World. This went on every week for four weeks.

The talents of the actors and actresses on the Mystery Theatre cannot be diminished by the fact that most earned only around \$100 per script. Like Hi Brown, they believed in what they were doing and they did it well. There were no demands for \$10,000 per script, or as we see it today in the movies, \$1 million per script, by top-rated personalities. And I believe that says something about the dedication of the staff of Mystery Theatre toward what they were doing. One of the main problems with getting more audience for the shows was the fact that most stations aired the shows late at night. CBS fed the shows over the network lines at 10:07 PM EST, and that excluded a good percentage of the possible audience for this excellent series. But, in retrospect, I doubt that anyone my age or older has ever driven down the highway at night on a trip without finding that marvelous

companion. CBS Radio Mystery theatre somewhere on the radio dial.

At the time of the 2,000th broadcast of CBS Mystery Theatre which was on Friday, June 29, 1979, there had been 1,035 first-run shows and 965 repeats of Mystery Theatre. I'm sure none of us will ever forget this excellent contribution to radio history or the appreciation we feel toward all who brought it to us. Executive producer Himan Brown has perhaps put it best in his comments during the last show "Resident Killer" starring Mason Adams, aired on December 31, 1982.

"These have been the happiest nine years of my 50-year career of creating radio drama. The response to all that we have been doing has been most joyous. The theatre of the imagination once again became a vital part of all that radio is and can be. Unhappily, this broadcast marks the end of the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre as part of the network's schedule. After 3,000 broadcasts, we hope we leave you with many fond memories. I want to say thank you to you our listeners, to CBS, and the station you're listening to for the support and encouragement, and most of all to the hundreds of talented writers, actors and technicians who helped stretch your imaginations. I hasten to assure you that, although this series draws its final curtain, radio drama lives. Until we meet again...and we will...thank you. Good night. Pleasant dreams. (CREAKING DOOR CLOSES)

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

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## Chats with Aunt Sammy

Aunt Sammy came to life with the first radio broadcast of *Housekeeper's Chat* on October 26, 1926. The character of Aunt Sammy, wife of Uncle Sam was created by the USDA Bureau of Home Economics and the Radio Service. Many women across the country played the part as they spoke into the microphones of local radio stations.

The highlights of Aunt Sammy's show were the menus and recipes, but Aunt Sammy also talked about clothing, furniture, appliances, and other family and household matters. Aunt Sammy wasn't just a homemaker, however. She commented on world affairs, reported the latest fads, and told jokes. The talk moved easily from one subject to another, always natural and entertaining, as well as informative.

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Mercedes McCambridge in "Carmilla" (7/31/75) or the night I heard "Dracula" also with her (5/2/74). I had collected many versions of Dracula on videotape in later years, but the thrill of radio, of using your imagination, added a new dimension to the enjoyment of this Bram Stoker classic. Again, as usual, marvelously adapted by the Mystery Theatre. As for the last third of the MT scripts, they go in with the last third.

Most all of the shows were complete dramas in the one-hour length. There were, however, a few that were done in five parts. "The Legend of Alexander" starred Russell Horton and was presented on five consecutive nights beginning Monday, June 22, 1981. Mystery Theatre opened its sixth season in January, 1979 with a week of stories about Nefertiti, Queen of Egypt, starring Tammy Grimes in the title role. Another classic written by Victor Hugo that dealt with the poverty and injustice in Paris was Les Miserables, and Mystery Theatre presented that also in five parts beginning Monday, January 11, 1982 which starred Alexander Scourby. The Mystery Theatre version of Les Miserables was similar to the Les Miserables produced in 1937 and starring Orson Welles, but the Welles version was in (7) thirty minute parts and the Mystery Theatre version was in five sixty-minute parts.

As if CBS felt they didn't have enough at the outset of Mystery Theatre in 1974 with their acting staff and excellent scripts, they also began by giving away such things as clock radios, etc. to people who would send in a card with their name and address, and preferably comments about the new shows. This was in the form of a drawing, and probably several hundred prizes were awarded each week. And beginning August 4, 1975 someone won a seven day, six night all-expense paid trip for 4 persons to Disney World. This went on every week for four weeks.

The talents of the actors and actresses on the Mystery Theatre cannot be diminished by the fact that most earned only around \$100 per script. Like Hi Brown, they believed in what they were doing and they did it well. There were no demands for \$10,000 per script, or as we see it today in the movies, \$1 million per script, by top-rated personalities. And I believe that says something about the dedication of the staff of Mystery Theatre toward what they were doing. One of the main problems with getting more audience for the shows was the fact that most stations aired the shows late at night. CBS fed the shows over the network lines at 10:07 PM EST, and that excluded a good percentage of the possible audience for this excellent series. But, in retrospect, I doubt that anyone my age or older has ever driven down the highway at night on a trip without finding that marvelous

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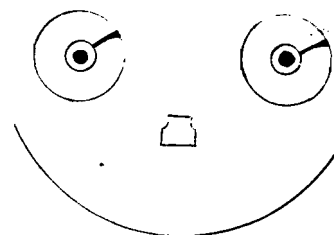
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### REEL-LY SPEAKING

Well another summer's upon us. Vacation time is a time to relax and review some of our old reels and cassettes. Last month I took some cassettes out to camp to listen to while enjoying our camp fire and a cool glass of Old Fitz Bourbon. Sure enjoyed some of those old mystery shows. One night we had about twenty people over by our camp fire listening to Dick Powell as Richard Diamond. I played the show's version of a Christmas Carol with Dick playing Bob Crachett. Everyone really enjoyed the show. Next came one of the Sherlock Holmes shows, my favorite with Basil Rathbone as Holmes, of course. We closed our evening with Red Skeleton. We plan to have a lot more camp fires with more old radio stories during our long summer of camping. I hope that all the club members have a happy and safe summer and an enjoyable vacation. So long till next season.

Till next time, good listening.  
Francis Edward Bork

\*\*\*\*\*

Aunt Sammy soon became popular. By the end of the first year her program was carried by 43 radio stations. By 1932, 194 stations were broadcasting Aunt Sammy's show.

Many listeners wrote for copies of the recipes, and the Bureau of Home Economics answered these requests with weekly mimeographed sheets. In 1927, the most popular recipes were assembled into a pamphlet. The demand was so great that it had to be reprinted after only a month.

Aunt Sammy's *Radio Recipes* was revised and enlarged three times between 1927 and 1931. In 1932, it became the first cookbook published in Braille.

Aunt Sammy faded out during the Great Depression. After 1934, the name Aunt Sammy was no longer used. The radio show became drier and more factual and was renamed *Homemaker Chats*. In 1946 it was discontinued.

Reprinted from Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes and USDA Favorites. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Home and Garden Bulletin No. 215.

Letters



As a member of the Old Time Radio Club over the past two years, I have had the opportunity of utilizing a variety of programs with my students in an educational setting. Test results, measuring listening vocabulary comprehension, have indicated growth from 1 to 3 years, in that area, over a period of 6 months. The students really look forward to the listening sessions and motivation is high during follow-up comprehension and vocabulary development exercises.

As a Student Services Consultant, I plan to expand the use of the Radio tapes next year and have made preliminary arrangements relating to in-service sessions with our teachers. The value and applications of these high quality listening presentations are limitless.

Dr. Carolyn M. Miehle  
3327 Wiltshire Blvd.  
Niagara Falls, Ontario L2J 3M1

I was going through the things on my desk. Trying to clean up a bit. I found a pile of stuff I have been accumulating to send to you. I was waiting for an appropriate time to write. Namely when I had something of interest to impart to you. But I do not have anything to say. I just ant to clear my desk, so I am forwarding them to you. I do not know whether these are the kind of articles you want to include in THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS. I will leave it up to your editorial judgment which as been pretty good so far. ((Thank you...Ed.))

There is one thing on which you might help me. I have been in touch with David Victor who helped product some of THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E. episodes on TV. He says that the episode, THE ALEXANDER THE GREATER AFFAIR was based on a story he did for radio. He scripted a story for the series, LET GEORGE DO IT. He does not have a copy of that script anymore. So does anyone out there have any scripts for LET GEORGE DO IT written by David Victor?

Albert Tonik  
3341 Jeffrey Drive  
Dresher, PA 19025

Lee Allman here...asking a favor. Monday night I had an interview with Gary Hodgson of WCAU Radio "Old

Time Radio" programs. I'd been there with him twice before and enjoyed each and every show. He usually runs two shows a night - Monday's were a "Green Hornet" and "Henry Aldrich". We talked before the shows and between shows- time out for commercials, and after the shows the line were opened for people to call in, talk, or ask questions,etc. If I remember correctly, there were 5 or 6 calls before Gary had to sign off. Two callers wanted to know where they could get more "Green Hornet" tapes. I told Gary I'd contact you (am sending him my last copy of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS)

and he can get information from you, right? One of the callers was a young man whose dad got him interested in OTR and he would like more "G.H." tapes. Gary took his name and will forward any information he receives from you if it's okay with you. Time ran out before the last call could be taken; a blind man who calls Gary occasionally wanted to talk to me so Gary took his phone number and had me call him after the show. I did, and after the "hellos" he said, "Lee, I have to tell you this...you have been my big sister all my life. I knew that whatever happened, when anything went wrong, if you were there, everything would be all right." The first call from a New York man opened with..."Lee, you won't believe this, but you were my teenage sweetheart. That's the truth." Imagine, Richard, a radio character created 50 years ago creating an impression that has lived in the minds of so many people for all these years! It's unbelievable, isn't it? I don't mean Lee Allman...nobody was interested in her. I mean MISS CASE, a secretary to a newspaper publisher. I recall one other incident when a young man came up to me at one of the Radio Hall of Fame induction ceremonies, took my hand and looked straight at the old lady standing there before him and said, "Miss Case, I have been in love with you since I was a small boy." It's so true, Richard, and I find it almost impossible to comprehend how this could happen.

Forgive me. I do get carried away, don't I? Prerogative of the old, right? All I wanted was for you to get some information to Gary Hodgson at WCAU so he can tell his listeners about The Old Time Radio Club and dealers, library, etc....It may help his how and your membership..... both of which are important to me as you must know.

Lee Allman  
P.S. Gary's programs "Radio Classics" run Monday - Sunday 8:00-10:00 PM on 1210 WCAU-AM, Philadelphia.

((Thank you for writing, Lee, I hope you don't mind that I printed your letter in the I.P. I always enjoy hearing from you and I wanted to share your letter with our members. I have to disagree

with one of your statements. There are quite a few of us who are interested AND care about Lee Allman but hat doesn't preclude our having fond memories of Miss Case, also. I have sent Gary Hodgson info. about the club as you requested. Thank you for your support.....  
Dick Olday)))

\*\*\*\*\*

Editor's DESK



It's summertime! While most folks are vacationing, many of our members are continuing their duties. Arlene and I will continue to bring you the I.P. each month during the summer. All four libraries are open, membership functions are continuing, Ken Krug is readying a new tape library supplement, Frank Boncore and Joe & Phyllis O'Donnell are working on MEMORIES '86 so you will have it by October and treasurer Dom Parisi is still busy counting the "coins". Enjoy your vacation and we'll be here to serve you when you get back.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Since the first Monday in September is Labor Day, our meeting will be held on Monday, September 8, instead. Please mark your calendar. The rest of the meetings will be held on the **FIRST MONDAY** of the month.

See you next month!  
\*\*\*\*\*

Don MacLaughlin, 79, Dies; TV 'Soap' Actor

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Don MacLaughlin, who portrayed attorney Chris Hughes for 30 years in the daytime soap opera "As the World Turns," died Wednesday at age 79.

MacLaughlin's first Broadway role was in "The Fifth Column," and he later played Commander Harbison for most of the run of the musical "South Pacific."

MacLaughlin found success on numerous radio shows during the 1930s and 1940s, including "Counter-spy" and "Road to Life," which made the transition to television in 1954.

The next year, he appeared in the original pilot for "As the World Turns" and was a member of the original cast when it premiered as television's first half-hour daily drama in 1956.

6-3-86

Deaths

ST. LOUIS

LURENE TUTTLE, 79, who lighted radio audiences as the mother of Red Skelton's "mean widdle" character and played both comedy and drama in movies and television has died.

She was the first woman to be elected president of the Hollywood local of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and she was voted Woman of the Year by AFTRA and the Pasadena Playhouse.

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She died Wednesday at Encino, Calif.

She was the first woman to be elected president of the Hollywood local of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and once was voted Woman of the Year by AFTRA and the Pasadena Playhouse.

**WOW!**  
WAIT TILL YOU  
**HEAR**  
WHAT  
**"That Brewster BOY"**  
IS UP TO NOW!  
TUNE IN TONIGHT

2-19-43

**WIBX-9.30**  
SPONSORED BY  
**MOTHER'S OATS**

**ARPEAKO MINSTRELS**  
Tune in on this new radio program  
**WHAM - WGY - WMAK**  
7:30-8:00 Tonight  
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5-3-29

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH  
5-31-86

### Oldest Features on the Air

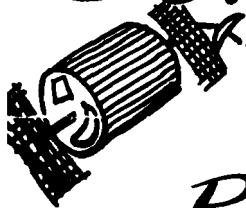
- NBC
- Major Bowes' Family, Nov., 1922.
- A. & P. Gypsies, March, 1924.
- Tower Health Exercises, March, 1925.
- Morning Devotions, Jan., 1926.
- Cities Service, Feb., 1927.

### CBS

- Evening in Paris, Oct., 1929.
- Sanderson and Crumit, Jan., 1931.
- Burns and Allen, Feb., 1931.
- Oxol Feature, Feb., 1927.
- March of Time, March, 1931.

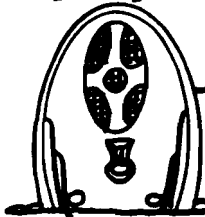
6-3-86

24 hrs. a day • 7 days a week  
*The*  
 National Broadcast Museum  
**SUPER STATION**



*Music from*  
**1899 - 1949**

*Plus*  
**Old Time Radio Shows**

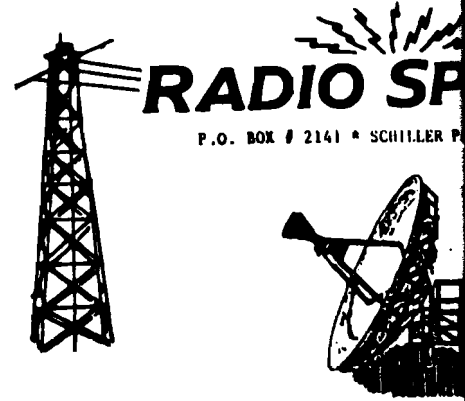


TUNE TO:  **SATCOM 4**  
 UP LINKING COURTESY OF THE NOSTALGIA CHANNEL **TRANSPONDER 21**  
**AUDIO 6.2**



**"The WORLD'S LARGEST BROADCAST MUSEUM"**

**2001 PLYMOUTH ROCK**  
 RICHARDSON TEX. 75081 (214) 748-1112  
 Opening SOON IN A NEW LOCATION  
 LISTEN FOR DETAILS...



**RADIO SP**

P.O. BOX # 2141 • SCHILLER P

Dear Station Manager/Program Director,

We know you receive Large quantities of mail requests of various kinds of programming. Well, this letter is no different.

We are RADIO SPIRITS working with the NATIONAL BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION (a Non-Profit Organization) producing a unique and delightful Old Time Radio program called WHEN RADIO WAS, featuring Bob Hope, Lights Out! and many more. THE NATIONAL BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION is broadcasting our WHEN RADIO WAS program via Satellite on Satcom 4.2 and is heard in the Continental U.S. and in parts of Canada. A major part of this plan is that it is distributed to you FREE by joining our tape network.

We offer stations up to three, one hour blocks a week of Old Time Radio programming but we don't stop there. We present the program intact and as originally aired. History on the program, Program/Club information, trivia contests with prizes, and much more. We also insert (3) 60 second P.S.A.'S to promote our program. We are also available to record commercial messages if needed. We are also available to be happy to record a custom tape of "Teasers".

If you would like to receive additional information or a program guide please feel free to contact us by mail or phone. Let's talk!

Many Thanks, Yours Truly,

*William Brasie*

William Brasie  
 Executive Producer



Eddie Fisher and Nat Cole...



every day • 7 days a week  
*The*  
 Broadcast Museum  
**RESTATION**  
*Music from*  
**1899 - 1949**

Radio Shows

TO:  **SATCOM 4**  
**TRANSPONDER 21**  
**ALSIAS CHANNEL AUDIO 6.2**

**LARGEST BROADCAST MUSEUM**

**101 PLYMOUTH ROCK**  
 DALLAS, TEX. 75081 (214) 748-1112  
 IN A NEW LOCATION  
 FOR DETAILS...



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If you would like to receive additional information along with a demo-tape and program guide please feel free to contact us by mail, or phone (312) 678-3821. Lets talk!

Radio's Lon Chaney

Many Thanks, Yours Truly,

*William Brasie*

William Brasie  
Executive Producer



• Teddy Bergman probably has more aliases than any man outside of Sing Sing Prison. One evening last week Teddy sat down and tried to count on his fingers the various roles he has played during the past two years over WABC-CBS.

From "no tickes, no laundee" Chinaman to "stick-em-up" Greedy Jake, Teddy has totaled 754 different characters during the past two years, which is probably more than any one individual has portrayed during the entire life of the radio industry.

Teddy Bergman is heard on many WABC-CBS network programs including Blue Coal Radio Revue at 5:30 P.M., on Wednesdays, and the Love Story program on Thursdays at 9:30 P.M.



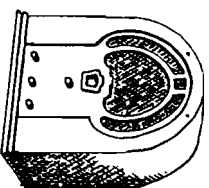
*Fddie Fisher and Nat Cole*

# FIRST CLASS MAIL

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THE OLD TIME

100 HARVEY DRIVE



RADIO CLUB

LANCASTER, N.Y. 14086