

*The Old Time Radio Club*

Established 1975

# THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS

Number 206

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**DON'T MISS TUNING-IN  
EVERSHARP'S EXCITING**

**"TAKE IT  
OR LEAVE IT"**

**SENSATION OF  
THE AIR TODAY!**

on **C.B.S.**  
**EVERY SUNDAY NITE**

*with*

**BOB HAWK**

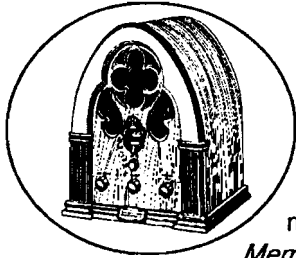
**RAY BLOCK'S ORCHESTRA  
DAVID ROSS**



The Old Time Radio Club

Club Officers and Librarians

**Membership Information**



New member processing, \$5.00 plus club membership of \$17.50 per year from Jan 1 to Dec 31. Members receive a tape listing, newsletter, and the yearly *Memories Magazine*. Memberships

are as follows: If you join Jan-Mar, \$17.50; Apr-Jun, \$14.00; Jul-Sep, \$10.00; Oct-Dec, \$7.00. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The Old Time Radio Club meets the first Monday of every month at 7:30 P.M. during the months of September to June at 393 George Urban Blvd. Cheektowaga, N.Y. 14225. The club meets informally during the months of July and August at the same address. Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome.

**Club Mailing Address**

Old Time Radio Club  
P.O. Box 426  
Lancaster, N. Y. 14086

The Old Time Radio Club is affiliated with The Old Time Radio Network.

Back issues of our publications are available as follows:

The *Illustrated Press* and *Memories* are \$1.50 postpaid. Publications out of print may be borrowed from our Reference Library.

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

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**Tape Libraries**

**Cassettes**

Don Friedrich (716) 626-9164  
21 Southcrest  
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

**Reel to Reel, 1-850**

Marty Braun (716) 759-8793  
10905 Howe Rd.  
Clarence, N.Y. 14031

**Reel to Reel, 851 and up**

**INACTIVE:** We are looking for a new librarian for this section of our tape library. If interested contact Jerry Collins at the address above.

Tape Library Rates: All reels and video cassettes are \$1.85 per month; audio cassettes and records are \$0.85 per month. Rates include postage and handling. Canadian rates are the same as above, but in Canadian funds.

**Reference Library**

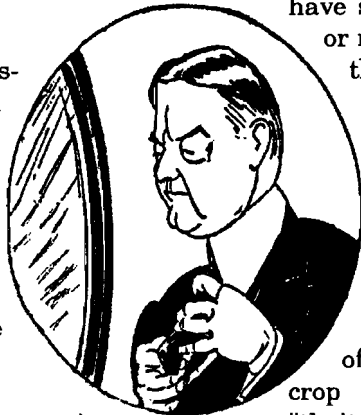
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# Radio and the 1928 Presidential Election

Election returns, nominating conventions, and political speeches all were broadcast prior to 1928. But the Presidential election of 1928 was the first time radio was used with any regularity by the candidates. The following article was reprinted from the *Niagara Falls Gazette*, August 3, 1928.

Politics this year leaves the realm of local spellbinding to attack the cold, dispassionate, undemonstrative radio.

Al Smith, Democratic presidential candidate, and Herbert Hoover, Republican choice for the presidency are going on the air as no aspirants have before them. Millions of people will hear them at one time where only thousands, at the most, have heard the address of others.



The radio microphone and the receiver take the place of the rear platform and the town hall. Only a few addresses and the country will be covered, the issues fully discussed and the candidates ready for the election.

It is said that Smith plans only 15 radio speeches, quite in contrast to the hundreds that had to be made in former years. Each of these 15 speeches, however, like those of Hoover, will be broadcast over the combined networks of the National Broadcasting Company and the Columbia System, besides as many additional independent stations as can be linked up.

### To Be Heard Around the World

More than 50,000,000 people will listen in, although not all will be voters, and even Canada, England, Australia, Europe and South America will get a taste of an American presidential campaign through the rebroadcasting of the candidates speeches on short wavelengths.

Both candidates are prepared for this sort of

campaigning. Both are what announcers call "microphone broke," for they have talked many times from various broadcasting stations.

There is quite a difference, however, in the candidates as radio speakers. Governor Smith feels just as much at home in the radio studio as he does in his own family circle. Hoover however, still shows signs of nervousness, say those who have seen him broadcast. Yet this nervousness, or rather fidgetyness, isn't at all discernible at the receiving end.

### Smith Remains a New Yorker

Smith is candidly rough. He makes no pretense of polish and because he does not pretend his colloquialisms, or rather his vernacularisms, are less offensive. The listener never questions the sincerity of the speaker. Occasionally New Yorkisms crop out, such as "dese" or "dose" and "thoity-thoid." Radio is pronounced by him with "a" sounding like "a" in radish.

### Smith Is Perfectly at Ease in Studio

It is my impression, in listening to Smith, that he sees a great audience while speaking and he addresses it with forcefulness and emphasis that he would use in addressing a visible audience. Some speakers at a microphone in an almost empty room become depressed, since they have only somebody's word that their voices are going outside the room.



An example of Smith's easiness before the microphone is cited in the visit of the Bremen fliers to the governor recently. The WGY announcer had difficulty getting them to speak a few words on the air, and finally appealed to Smith. The governor said he would get them. A few minutes later he appeared at the microphone

with the three fliers and gracefully, and at times facetiously, introduced them to the radio audience. Each airman responded briefly.

### Hoover Is Unmoved, But Fidgety

Almost in contrast is Hoover, despite his experience before the microphone. Hoover started out poorly on the radio, but by this time he has become a good subject, fidgety and shy as he still is. He is still nervous at the microphone, and beats time on the stand with all ten fingers. But this is only a reflection of his actions under other circumstances, such as drawing triangles when in conference and shifting uneasily when speaking to a large audience. Hoover's voice is regarded as very good, even better than Smith's, although both rank above the average as radio speakers. Hoover spaces his words and enunciates them distinctly, talking at the average radio rate of 120 a minute.

Although Smith seems to have a more colorful delivery, Hoover also has acquired the knack of putting variety in his voice, getting away from the monotone and driving over his points in good shape.

Curtis is also a good radio orator, and so is Robinson. There is, however, this distinction between both Republican candidates and the Democratic pair; neither Hoover nor Curtis will lose in effectiveness, because the radio has killed off old the sort of spellbinding, for neither of the Republican candidates can be called a spellbinder.

But Smith and Robinson, the governor especially, will miss the ballyhoo and battle cry of yore, although in a meager way, for they have had ample time to adopt themselves to radio.

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### Radio Mail Proves That Most Fans Are Highly Intelligent: Chicago, March 29, 1930

The majority of radio fans who write to radio stations are of medium intelligence, according to a survey conducted by WENR, Chicago.

Careful observance of more than 10,000 letters shows that 684 of the writers were "high" in literacy education and intelligence: 9,318 were "medium," and only 97 "low."

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## TONIGHT

GOVERNOR THOMAS E.

**DEWEY**

[1944]

Republican Candidate for President

**WBEN 11 P. M.**

Hear Nation - Wide Broadcast from Los Angeles

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### OTR Interview

Through the medium of imagination, the staff at the *Illustrated Press* have been able to interview a few radio personalities from the golden past. This month's interview is with Marie Wilson, who plays Irma on *My Friend Irma*. The question is ours, the answer is Marie Wilson's, 1954.

IP: Miss Wilson, there is a suspicion afoot that you are not entirely unlike Irma Peterson, the dumb blonde that you portray on the radio. Would you comment on this?

Wilson: I can't say I'm glad you asked that question, because it's very hard to answer it ... If I say, "No I'm smart" nobody will believe me because smart people usually don't admit it. If I say, "Yes, I'm as dumb as Irma" they think I'm just being smart because people who are dumb hardly ever admit it, either. You see? It *is* hard to answer. Maybe both answers are right: people who think I'm as dumb as Irma point out that I applied for my first acting job in Hollywood wearing an evening gown and tennis shoes. People who think I'm smart point out that I got the job. Actually, I'd spent so much for clothes I couldn't afford the shoes, so in being dumb about spending, I was also smart in getting the job.

Cy Howard, who invented Irma, asked me to play the title role and I told him I wasn't sure I was smart enough to play it dumb. "I know you're not," he said. "That's exactly why I want you, you're dumb enough to play it smart." Or maybe he said it the other way around. I must ask him someday exactly what he did say, or meant. Parker Levy, who directs my CBS Radio program, claims that if I had enough brains to be mental, I'd be a mental case. But Parker tells jokes all the time and some of them, surprisingly enough, are real funny.

Years ago, a dancing teacher gave me some good advice. "The woods," he said, "are full of girls who want to be dramatic actresses. You be different, be a clown." He also advised me to put my hopes for a great acting career in wraps. Perhaps that's why I have a mink coat, to wrap up my career as a dramatic actress. Well, being Irma pays well enough to have bought the mink coat. Even Bob isn't sure about me being smart or dumb. Bob is Bob Fallon, my husband. Talking about what he claims is a habit with me, Bob says that "giving away everything you've got is a noble idea but not exactly a practical one. You can't give away the bills that come attended of the month." Of course people do say that riding with me in Hollywood is an experience they'll never forget, but I get very few traffic tickets, and I meet so many nice policemen. Tell me, anything dumb about that?

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#### **Additions to the Cassette Tape Library**

- 1817 THE HAUNTING HOUR - LONESOME CORPSE  
THE HAUNTING HOUR - SKYSCRAPER MYSTERY  
1818 MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY - FREE PLAY - 11/23/49  
MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY - DEADLY DEVOTION - 5/17/50  
1819 SCREEN GUILD THEATER - GENTLEMAN JIM - 2/14/43  
SCREEN GUILD THEATER - HIGH SIERRA - 2/14/43  
1820 GANGBUSTERS - INCORRIGIBLE KILLER - 10/9/48  
COUNTERSPY - HOMECOMING HOODLUM  
1821 DID JUSTICE TRIUMPH  
NICK CARTER - THE TALKING TREE  
1822 CRIME DOES NOT PAY - SUMMERTIME TAKE - 11/22/49  
CRIME DOES NOT PAY - FEMALE OF THE SPECIES - 11/29/49  
1823 REX SAUNDERS - WORTH MORE THAN WEIGHT IN MURDER  
- 7/25/51

## ◆ ◆ ◆ Tuning In ◆ ◆ ◆

by Tom Heathwood

### Old-Time Radio In The Educational Setting

Radio drama challenges the imagination and intellect, and when presented in a formal educational setting such as an English course or perhaps within the context of courses in modern History or Dramatic Arts, radio drama can provide a singularly experience for the participant.

Teachers in various areas of academia are discovering how they can enhance their courses with the adjunctive use of vintage broadcasts. Secondary school and collegiate exposure to OTR is becoming more and more commonplace.

And English teacher in a Boston suburb had always met opposition from her students when introducing Shakespeare to her 9th graders. When she tried using a one-hour radio version of "Macbeth" she was astonished to see the youngsters listening with apparent high concentration to the well done radio version of the Bard's classic. When she asked students later what appealed to them the most, one replied, candidly, that the radio drama "painted pictures in my head." The teacher quickly explained the phenomenon of imagination. Of course, years ago, when we were growing up, we didn't need any such explanation. Our imaginations were given daily workouts by the magic of radio.

A middle-school civics class in Wellesley, MA, recently was discussing the democratic process and elections. The kids were fascinated with a tape cassette of the November, 1948 Presidential election results/returns. The "ancient" characters in the history book became real people. The students could "see" the reporters, and President Truman doing his famous imitation of H. V. Kaltenborn.

A high-school class in Westport, CT, had the unexpected pleasure of learning about the evolution of popular music in the United States by hearing (for a whole semester) weekly radio

broadcasts from the 1930's and 40's. The development of "swing" became very understandable listening to Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey. They also learned quite a bit about WW II as a "bonus."

The use of old-time radio as an adjunct to didactic classroom teaching can not only make certain subject material much more understandable, but fun too!!

If you're a teacher, consider integrating vintage broadcasts into your curriculum. There are radio shows pertinent to many areas of study: drama, English, history, religion, science, law enforcement, journalism, music appreciation, and theatre to name just a few. Maybe a little wisdom from the past will enrich the classrooms of today.

Join us for HERITAGE RADIO THEATRE on The Yesterday-USA Superstation. Write if you get work...and keep enjoying old-time radio.

Tom Heathwood  
Heritage Radio Classics  
Heritage Radio Theatre - Yesterdays USA  
Satellite Radio  
PO Box 16  
Boston, MA 02167

(ed note: Besides Tom's work at Heritage Radio he is also editing audio material for CBS and their JFK PROJECT, a two hour special to air on or around November 22nd on CBS-TV. It should be a great program, look for his name in the credits.)

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### THE ALDRICH FAMILY

The Favorite Show of Countless Radio Fans Stars Youthful Ezra Stone As "Henry Aldrich"

from *Radio Varieties*, April 1940

Like the proverbial Topsy, The Aldrich Family just grew. From a three minute comedy spot on the *Kate Smith Hour* a year ago, this neat little serial piece by Clifford Goldsmith already is close on the heels of the long established big

shot shows, and like Henry, its teenage hero, is far from having its growth.

When Goldsmith wrote the comedy *What A Life* and sold it to produced George Abbott they figured that with a fair amount of luck it was good for a year on Broadway. A nice little show about high school life as it can be found in most any old town if one dig around, it had Ezra Stone as its hero, "Henry Aldrich." When it was being cast, Ezra dropped over to the Abbott office for a reading. A line in the play called for his unruly red hair to be parted just so. No matter how hard it was brushed, it dropped unoblingly back where it was to begin with. The upshot was that the lines pertaining to hair were written out but Ezra wouldn't have cared much one way or the other.

He'd just concluded a highly successful run of a year and a half as the recalcitrant frosh in *Brother Rat*. Spanked through four hilarious acts every night with matinees Wednesday and Saturday, the young actor probably felt he had a rest coming.

However, it's safe to assume the Ezra wouldn't have missed that role for love nor money if he'd suspected that long after *What A Life* was gathering dust on the shelves, young Henry Aldrich would be marching on to new triumphs in radio.

Loud speaker addicts had their first taste of the Aldriches in the summer of 1938 when Rudy Vallee fired them into a guest spot on his then thriving Thursday variety hour. Author Goldsmith was hauled out of bed with instruction to write a three minute skit about Henry and his folks on just eight hours notice. Perhaps because he was nearest that room at the moment, Cliff's setting for the sketch, you may remember, was the bathroom. Henry ensconced therein refused to be budged through the required three minutes of comedy. When the Aldriches went on tour last month, the skit was dusted off and found good for the same hearty laughs it drew on the Vallee show. However, despite the evident appetite of the public for more Henry Aldrich, *What A Life* continued brightly along on Broadway, with no

more nibbles from radio for another five months. When Ted Collins, the *Kate Smith Hour* producer, was looking around for a mild hypo for his show last February, he happened onto *What A Life*. Clifford Goldsmith, learning through his agents that he was to make a radio serial character out of Henry Aldrich, he was scared stiff. The idea of plotting a set of new comedy lines each week was appalling to this quiet spoken lecturer and ex-school teacher. But just as he did with his Vallee assignment, Cliff came across.

His own youngsters, a better than average memory of his own adolescence and a vivid imagination turned the trick then, and has been turning it since.

His flair for dialogue makes for good reading even from script which is a feather in the bonnet of any radio writer. However, without Ezra Stone to put the lines across, it is doubtful if Henry Aldrich would hold the place that it does today in the hearts of his millions of listeners.

Ezra Stone is Henry Aldrich, or vice versa. Hardly out of the age group that would rather sip sodas with its best girl at the corner drug store than sup with kings, Ezra just 21, is, in a sense, living in radio an adolescence he never had time to enjoy in actual life.

Currently conceded to be Broadway's busiest young man, what with his work in *See My Lawyer*, his production activities in Reunion In New York, his teaching at the American Academy of Dramatic Art and his radio chores, it was much like this with Ezra as far back as he can remember.

Born in New Bedford, he would have no part of the fishing industry that had long been his family's business interest. He was transplanted at an early age to Philadelphia for his schooling which he picked up sort of catch as catch can fashion when not busy at something else. When most youngsters were thinking in terms how best to spend their next vacations, Ezra already had turned to the stage.

He didn't even wait to be graduated from the American Academy of Arts in New York. He'd more than matriculated before one of its teachers pushed him into a bit part in the Theater Guild's production of "Parade." It lasted only seven weeks but that was enough of a start for Ezra Stone.


That plays he managed subsequently to be cast for had a way of folding before they'd much more than started was part of the fun. He'd become so accustomed to flops that he was a little surprised when "Three Men On A Horse" showed signs of lasting a while. Before it had run its long and hilarious course, Ezra had advanced from understudy to the regular cast.

As if this wasn't enough, he was making it his business meanwhile to learn the angles of the producer's office routine. This involved reading scripts, suggesting actors whenever a play was ready to be cast and such little items as taking up slack in office expenses. Ezra's convinced that saving he made for Mr. Abbott in the cost of printing handbills led to his being made casting director.

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### *From the Editor's Chair*

I'm sure all the teachers out there enjoyed the article by Tom Heathwood on using OTR in the classroom. I have personally seen the positive results of using OTR in the classroom, and it does work, especially with the teaching of the classics, short stories and drama.

Received Jay Hickerson's *Hello Again* a few days ago, and would highly recommend it to members wishing to know more about the goings on in the OTR community. Included was an interesting proposal by Roger Hill of NARA. He is  suggesting a consortium or confederation of all OTR clubs. I have also had similar thoughts over the years. There are too many clubs offering much of the same materials to their members and that some sort of consolidation, working agreements, etc. should be considered. I'll keep you posted as more information becomes available.

