

The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS

Number 214

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Radio Show

**TREAT YOURSELF
To Your Share of the
"JOY OF LIVING"**

**There never was a better time to buy a new radio!
Prices are low. Sets are marvelously improved.
Greater programs are coming.**

**Why miss the world's best entertainment, information and fun, when
you can have it each day for only a few pennies?
Nothing gives you so much for so little as radio.**

**Show Every Afternoon and Evening
Display Rooms of**

Utica Gas & Electric Company

featuring

Atwater Kent
Bosch
Crosley
General Electric
Gulbransen
Majestic
Philco
RCA Victor
Sparton
Zenith

[1933]

Membership Information

New member processing, \$5.00 plus club membership of \$15.00 per year from Jan 1 to Dec 31.

Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing, and a monthly newsletter.

Memberships are as follows: If you join Jan-Mar, \$15.00; Apr-Jun, \$12.00; Jul-Sep, \$8.00; Oct-Dec, \$5.00. 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. The **Old Time Radio Club** is affiliated with The Old Time Radio Network.

Club Mailing Address

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

Back issues of the *Illustrated Press* are \$1.50 postpaid. Publications out of print may be borrowed from our Reference Library.

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Tape Libraries

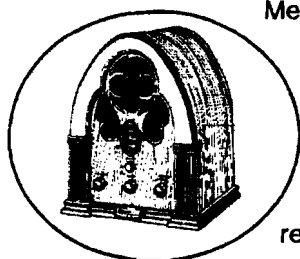
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Reel to Reel and Reference Library

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Cheektowaga NY 14225

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.



The Shadow Knows!

By Dom Parisi

The date was September 26, 1937. A new and exciting radio program was heard over the airwaves for the first time. The name of that show was called *The Shadow*. This program immediately became one of the most listened to broadcasts in the history of radio. This was primarily due to a writer named Walter Gibson.

Mr. Gibson wrote the Shadow novels and Street and Smith magazines published them. The stories were so good that fans couldn't get enough of the stuff! And of course, it wasn't long before the Shadow series started to appear on radio, sponsored mostly by the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Coal Company, makers of Blue Coal (you remember coal, don't you?). Blue Coal continued its sponsorship in its distribution area until 1949 when the anthracite market collapsed. Later on, top radio writers including Arch Oboler and Ellery Queen contributed scripts.

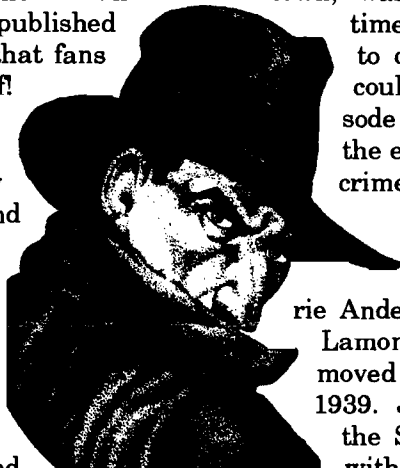
A young and talented twenty-two year old lad named Orson Welles was the first to play the Shadow. Agnes Moorehead became his lovely companion Margo (I've also seen it spelled Margot) Lane, "the only person to know to whom the voice of the invisible Shadow belongs."

Miss Moorehead was to become one of the most popular actress on radio as well as in the movies. She appeared in a number of *Suspense* radio programs, and is especially remembered for the classic "Sorry Wrong Number," which became the most successful *Suspense* program ever.

Each week the chilling rendition of Saint-Saens "Omphale's Spinning Wheel" introduced the

opening of the Shadow program..."Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?" And we always knew that..."the Shadow knows." The words were uttered in a voice that sent chills up and down your spine. Then that laugh! Pure radio drama!

Lamont Cranston, "wealthy young man about town," was the Shadow's alter ego. A long time ago Cranston learned the secret to cloud men's minds so that they could not see him. And as each episode unfolded, the Shadow taught the evil wrongdoers that "the weed of crime bears bitter fruit."



Bill Johnstone, the Shadow from 1939 to 1944, and Marjorie Anderson became the new voices of Lamont and Margo when Orson Welles moved his company to Hollywood in 1939. John Archer was another to play the Shadow, but I'm not to familiar with him. In 1944, Bret Morrison, who also wrote some of the scripts, became the Shadow. In my opinion, I think Morrison was the best to play the part. He had a nice sounding voice and his laugh was better than Welles. Bill Johnstone sounded a lot like Morrison, in fact I sometimes get confused between the two.

I have heard some Shadow episodes with the opening lines..."who knows what evil lurks..." read by Morrison or Johnson and then when the announcer comes on to introduce the program, it continues with Welles as the Shadow. These shows may have been altered by dealers or the manufacturer of the tapes. I'm not sure. If someone knows otherwise I'd be happy to hear from you. Anyhow, I still like Morrison's opening better.

Bret Morrison, as pointed out, took over the

title role in 1944. He continued as the Shadow until the final broadcast on December 26, 1954. A very sad day for Shadow lovers. I know there are a number of early Orson Welles programs (1938-1939), but where are the broadcasts from the early 1940's, the late 1940's and the 1950's? Who knows? By the way, the final program on December 26, 1954 was "Murder by the Sea" written by Judith and David Biublick.

Till next time, "Bye-bye, buy bonds!"
"Say Good night Gracie..."
"Good night Gracie!"

**NO NEED TO GUESS OR
GAMBLE
WHEN BUYING FUEL**

SAVE and BE SURE with **blue coal**
tinted blue for your protection



The Shadow

Radio's Master Detective
Tune in every Sunday
Afternoon at 5:00

WEBR 970

(ed. note: All members should be aware that Conde Nast Publications won their copyright lawsuit against the OTR dealers/hobby as pertaining to *The Shadow* radio program. There was no monetary judgement, but all the defendants are required to destroy their *Shadow* programs and inventory. In order to sell/distribute *The Shadow* program you must be licensed by Conde Nast Publications.

OTR clubs should not have *The Shadow* program in the libraries or listed in their catalogs unless authorized by Conde Nast Publications. It also appears the *Nick Carter, Master Detective* will be the next program to be pulled out of circulation by Conde Nast.)

RADIO MEMORIES

by Francis Edward Bork

A favorite radio comedian of our entire family during World War II was Bob Hope. I liked Bob Hope a lot but my real favorite on his radio show was Frances Langford. This was the blonde who was voted America's number one female singer in the year 1938. Born in Florida in 1914, she was the daughter of Anne Newbern, a concert pianist.

Frances majored in music at Southern College and sang with the school's Glee Club and also sang and acted in most of the school's plays. Her dream was a singing career in opera, but a tonsillectomy operation in 1930 changed her voice from lyric soprano to contralto.

She signed to be on a Tampa radio station for thirteen weeks in 1932 for a cigar manufacturer, soon after the owner had heard Frances sing at an American Legion party. In turn Rudy Vallee heard her on the radio show which was broadcast from New Orleans. This was to be her first coast to coast hookup, sponsored by Phillips Milk of Magnesia.

The following year on November 7, 1933 she opened on Broadway in the Pete Arno musical, "Here Goes the Bride" which ran for seven performances. Her luck picked up when shortly after that, she was asked to perform at a party honoring Cole Porter. It was said of Frances that she sang, "Night and Day" the way Porter wanted it to sound.

So impressed was Walter Wagner that he signed her to a movie contract without even being tested. Some of her many movies were, "Every Night at Eight" in 1935 which was her movie debut. It also starred Alice Faye and George Raft. Frances starred in 1936 along with Jack Oakie and Joe Penner in "Collegiate." Next she did "Broadway Melody of 1936," "Too Many Girls" in 1940 with the upcoming Lucille Ball and Richard Carlson, followed by "Hit

Parade of 1941" with Johnny Downs, "Girl Rush" in 1944, "Bamboo Blonde" in 1946 and "The Glenn Miller Story" in 1954.

Miss Langford was much bigger in Radio than she was in the movies. She was the singing star of *The Texaco Star Theater* in 1939 with Ken Murray (who later made a hit TV series with his *Hollywood Home Movies*) and Henry Baker. That year the Radio Editors picked Frances as the "All American Girl." Then in 1941 she began her long and very successful association with Bob Hope. She was the featured vocalist on Bob's Pepsodent radio show and also toured all the theaters of the war with Hope's famous globe trotting troupe, from Cape Horn to Algiers, to Bizerte the Pacific Islands, to Leyte in the Philippines.

Frances was chosen by American GI's as the number one girl singer of World War II. In New York City she was picked Queen of the Campus at City College in that city. The midshipmen of Annapolis honored her by selecting her to be an honorary Midshipman. As the war neared its final end and the dogs of war slowly became silent, Frances wrote a national news column called "Purple Heart Diary," telling of her experiences interviewing our wounded servicemen around the world.

Frances said that her most treasured award was a citation which read, "To Miss Frances Langford, with appreciation for a grand job in North Africa." It was signed by Dwight D. Eisenhower, General of the Army of the United States of America.

After the war she entertained in night clubs across the country and also had great success on radio and later in a radio series she did with Don Ameche entitled *The Bickersons* (The club has dozens of *The Bickersons* radio shows in the cassette library and several reels in the reel library). She was the star and host of two spectaculars on TV. The first in 1959 with Bob Hope, her old boss, and Julie London. The second was in the following year, featuring

Johnny Mathis and none other than Mr. John Bickerson himself, Don Ameche.

Frances Langford a singer who began her career as "The Moonglow Girl" and was once described by a radio critic as the "Dream Girl" is now retired and spends her time in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Jensen Beach, Florida with her second husband, Chairman of the Board of Evinrude Outboard Motor Company, Ralph Evinrude. The couple usually spend their winters at their Florida resort, where on occasion Frances is coaxed to go on stage and sing just once more at their nightclub, "The Outrigger." Of course the audience wants to hear Frances sing her popular songs of the World War II era. Some of the favorites picked were, "You Are My Lucky Star," "I'm In The Mood For Love" and "Music Maestro, Please."

Frances was divorced from actor Jon Hall, (who stayed in the Hollywood area near Malibu Beach) in 1955 after seventeen years of marriage. She married Ralph Evinrude that same year. Frances never had any children in either marriage. She had said that she wasn't completely retired and would get together with Don Ameche for a guest spot on TV as the Bickersons (Don Ameche passed away early this year). Back in 1952 she had returned to entertain American troops in Korea and later Frances once again came back to sing for the troops in Vietnam.

Now back at home the Evinrudes do a lot of deep sea fishing and travel in their yacht, The Chanticleer. In those later years audiences were always amazed at Frances' striking figure, which she explained was due to her constant exercise program and a long swim each day.

An interesting thing about the Evinrude's yacht is that it was once owned by a would be artist by the name of Adolf Hitler.

Well that's about it for now.
Till next time, Happy Radio Listening.

**OPENING
TONIGHT!**

Blue Ribbon Town

starring
Groucho Marx
and
Virginia O'Brien Donald Dickson



SPECIAL GUEST STAR
★ **BARBARA STANWYCK** ★

brought to you by
Pabst Blue Ribbon

WJR 10:15
Every Saturday Night

[1943]

Additions to the Cassette Library

- 1949 JUST A MINUTE - MY FOLLOWING
JUST A MINUTE - FOOLS
- 1950 JUST A MINUTE - CUSTOMS
JUST A MINUTE - BACCHUS
- 1951 JUST A MINUTE - FUN AND GAMES
JUST A MINUTE - HUNTING
- 1952 JUST A MINUTE - FOURTH EARL ROSS
JUST A MINUTE - DOPPELGANGER
- 1953 JUST A MINUTE - ATLAS
JUST A MINUTE - JERRYBUILDING
- 1954 JUST A MINUTE - COCONUT SHELLS
JUST A MINUTE - JAMS
- 1955 JUST A MINUTE - ETHIC
JUST A MINUTE - CHRISTMAS PARTY GAMES

◆ ◆ ◆ **Tuning In** ◆ ◆ ◆

by Tom Heathwood

**COUNTRY AND WESTERN MUSIC
ON EARLY RADIO**

One of the staples of early radio was the "live" music program. The thought, early on, in the late 1920's that radio was to be an electronic juke box of sorts has persisted to this day. This was not an altogether erroneous idea, since the earliest days, radio presented all manner of studio productions involving music. Everything from the playing of recorded Edison cylinders into a microphone, to the classics provided by, perhaps, a well-endowed contralto and her piano accompanist who could "entertain" on and on and on.

Soon, other live talent arrived on the radio scene to take up more of the expanding schedules. Among the different categories of singers and musicians who were given regular weekly or even daily spots both on local and national radio, were the country music performers.

Single performers sang "western" ballads, country songs (then called "hillbilly" and folk tunes and hymns). Groups like the Monroe Brothers, The Delmore Brothers, The Blue Sky Boys and the Carter Family all made the transition to radio from the personal appearance circuit and records. Many performers became extremely well known through their radio shows even though they were often aired early in the mornings, presumably because "real" country people and farmers would be up at that hour to listen. There was a kind of "pecking order" in radio music, and apparently the hillbillies were not high on it. But that didn't matter to the listeners, who were often devoted to their favorites. "Uncle" Dave Macon, The Mainer Brothers and Jimmy Martin all had shows. One of the most successful of this type was Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs and the

Foggy Mountain Boys. From one local station their show was bought up my many stations in the south. The Martha White Flour Company became their sponsor for many years, and they were heard far and wide and closely identified with the Martha White products, with their theme song, "Bake Right With Martha White" becoming almost a household favorite below the Mason-Dixon line. It was so popular in fact, that they were asked to sing it frequently at personal appearances, and Columbia Records made that number part of an album. The show paved the way for many live performances, and got them work in Hollywood as musicians on the *Beverly Hillbillies* TV show, whose theme became a best seller on the country charts.

Of course, the granddaddy of them all was (and still is) *The Grand Ole Opry* developed by George B. Hay for WSM over 60 years ago. Bill Monroe, "Cousin" Minnie Pearl, Rod Brassfield, Red Foley, and the late Roy Acuff and dozens of others were welcome guests in homes across America every Saturday night on the network portion of the show presented by Prince Albert Pipe Tobacco. *The Louisiana Hayride*, *The Wheeling Jamboree*, and *The National Barn Dance* were also favorites regionally and when portions were aired on the coast-to-coast networks. Essentially, these big shows heard weekly rounded up most of the best talent and showcased them to a national audience.

The local country-western (C&W as it became known and classified) singers certainly had their place. Perhaps the fact that they were not known nationally endeared them even more to a local audience who felt more personally connected. It was common to dedicate songs to folks on their birthdays, anniversaries and "to sick and shut-in neighbors."

WSM still has the Grand Ole Opry, and we can enjoy it on the Nashville Network on cable-TV every Saturday. Aside from that, most of the good old "down-home" shows have gone the way of most of old time radio. Luckily there are still some fine recordings of C&W performers from

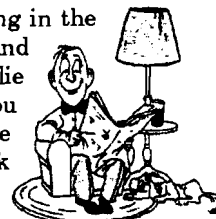
the early radio days.

That's it for now. Join us on satellite radio/The YESTERDAY-USA SUPERSTATION for our show, HERITAGE RADIO THEATRE. If you're interested in old-time radio on TDK cassettes, send four (4) first class-stamps for a catalog with over 550 hours of the best from the "Golden Days." As they used to say on the country shows, so long friends and neighbors until we come your way next time.

TOM HEATHWOOD
HERITAGE RADIO
PO BOX 16 BOSTON, MA 02167

From the Editor's Chair

I was reprimand (gently) by some members who felt that I should have named the Great Radio Comedians shown on last month's cover. So here they are running clockwise, starting in the upper left corner, Gracie Allen and George Burns, Fred Allen, Charlie McCarthy, Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Jimmy Durante, Eddie Cantor, and in the center, Jack Benny. The cover was from Ed Wanat's vast collection of OTR memorabilia, but in the original the ear and some of Eddie Cantor's head were missing. But through the magic of computers, Charlie McCarthy's ear was enlarged and rotated to give Mr. Cantor a new ear and some hair. Did anyone notice?



TONIGHT—FROM HOLLYWOOD

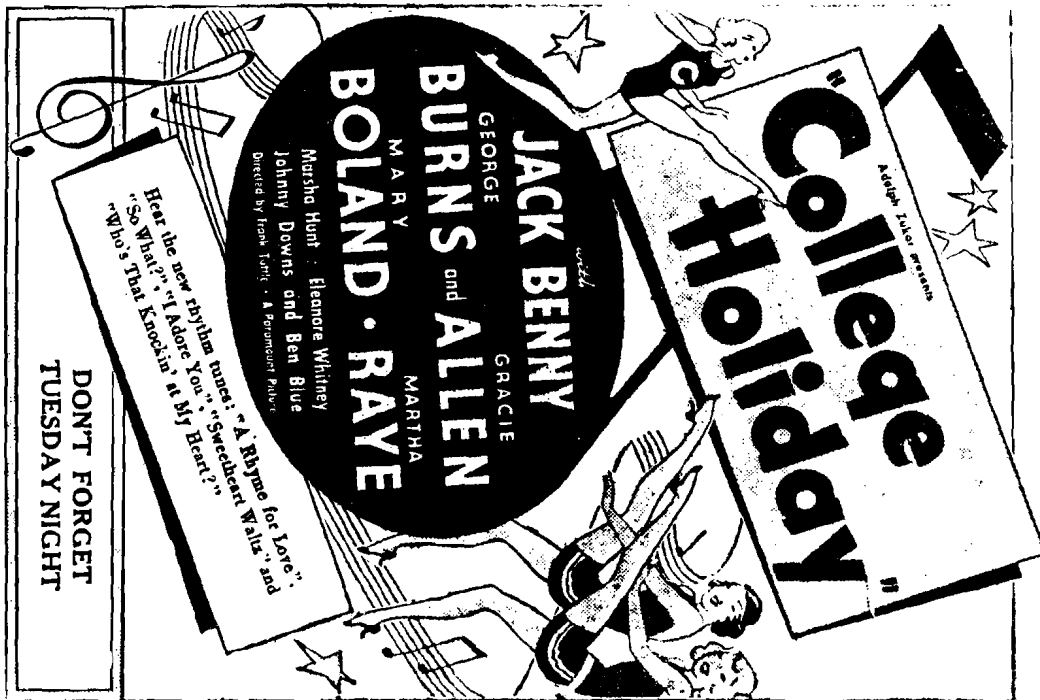
★ **TUNE-UP-TIME** ★

ANDRE KOSTELANETZ
TONY MARTIN
KAY THOMPSON
and her Rhythm Singers

WIBX 8:00 P.M.

[1939]

Presented by
ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION



Old Time Radio Club
Box 426
Lancaster, NY 14086

FIRST CLASS MAIL

