

The Old Time Radio Club

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

They're giving away crazy things on Old Gold's riotous new show! Contestants who detect the clues given by quiz masters Fred Uffal and Wendy Barrie can win anything .. from a pretzel to pushcart .. from a lollipop to a limousine! Tune in tonight and every Wednesday night!

PRESENTED BY **OLD GOLD** CIGARETTES

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WIBX

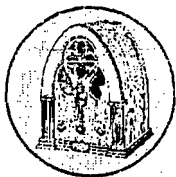
[1945]

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P.O. Box 426
Lancaster, NY 14086



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RICHARD WANAMAKER, Radio Child Star

by Jerry Collins

Richard Wanamaker was born January 4, 1921. He was the son of George Wanamaker, prominent local attorney, instructor of military law at Canisius College and later a professor at the University of Buffalo. He would also become a Buffalo City Councilman, Council President, City Comptroller and an unsuccessful candidate for mayor in 1949.

In studying the early childhood of Richard Wanamaker, the term child prodigy comes to mind. Young Wanamaker began speaking in public at the age of four. He even studied elocution under Mrs. John H. Stocker of New York City.

As a young boy, Richard Wanamaker was known throughout Western New York and was in great demand for his speaking skills. In August of 1929, "The Boy Orator," as the Courier Express called him, officially opened the carnival at the Church of the Most Precious Blood in Angola. He was only eight at this time. The Wanamaker's summer home was located in Angola. Young Richard loved to fish and ride his bike in this rural upper class community. He was also a very faithful altar boy, pedaling his bike to Most Precious Blood Church for daily mass.

As early as February 23, 1930 Richard Wanamaker was listed as the master of ceremony at the Catholic Business Women's Club. Later that year he gave a recitation at a WCTU meeting in Kenmore. He frequently performed at church musicals, minstrel shows, dinners, luncheons, club meetings and other programs. In almost all cases young Wanamaker gave recitations. In November of 1930 Richard Wanamaker had a break in his entertainment career. He won the first ten weekly auditions in the WEBR Child Artist Contest (Courier Express, November 27, 1930). Some 3 months later young Richard was selected the overall winner from fifty original contestants (Courier Express, February 8, 1931).

Soon after he won the talent contest, Richard Wanamaker began his acting career on radio. In March he had a small part in a dramatic production on the *Boy's Club on the Air Show* (Courier Express, March 29, 1931). On November 11, young Wanamaker played the part of Samuel Wilkeson's son on the *Buffalo Makes History* series. The show was directed by Herbert Rice and dealt with Wilkeson's role in building Buffalo's Harbor (Courier Express, November 8, 1931). In May of 1932 Richard Wanamaker received a part in the WGR serial *Little Feller*. Herbert Rice wrote the show and also

played a part in the serial. It told the story of a modern city boy and his companion (Courier Express, May 29, 1932). Richard Wanamaker's big break came in the summer of 1932. The BBC won the broadcasting rights to the *Bobby Benson Show*, a western adventure to be sponsored by the Hecker HO Company of Buffalo. The show would originate in Buffalo in the studio of WGR. The show was broadcast on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 5 PM and then transmitted to New York City.

Ten year old Richard Wanamaker, of 5 Beverly Place in Buffalo, was chosen from more than forty applicants to play the part of Bobby Benson (Courier Express, August 7, 1932 and Buffalo Times, July 14, 1932). The show was scheduled to begin September 26th, but for some unexplained reason did not premier until Monday, November 14, 1932 at 5 PM (Courier Express, November 13, 1932, Buffalo Times, November 11, 1932 and Buffalo Times, November 14, 1932). Some very recent research by Jay Hickerson has helped to clarify some of the confusion that exists. Apparently on September 26, *The H Bar O Ranger* or *The Ranger* debuted on WGR. On Monday, November 14, 1932, the name of the show was changed to *The Bobby Benson Show*. The show aired three times a week until its final local episode on Friday, March 24, 1932 for a total of seventy-eight episodes (Courier Express and Buffalo Times). The *Bobby Benson Show* resumed the following October 5th with Billy Halop in the lead role. To quote an updated newspaper, "No reason is given for the shift, though, if you'd ask anyone, you'd probably be told the origination in the New York studio will facilitate the hookuping." (Courier Express updated scrapbook article).

The break between Richard Wanamaker and the Hecker Company appeared to have been quite amiable. A series of letters between the Hecker Company and Richard Wanamaker attest to this friendship (March 28, 1933, April 4, 1933 and September 29, 1933). A letter from Herb Rice to young Wanamaker refers to the fact that he is being considered for the role of Bobby Benson when the show resumed in New York City (April 4, 1933) A member of the Wanamaker family revealed to me that Richard Wanamaker was offered the Bobby Benson part when the show moved to New York City, but was forced to turn it down for family reasons.

Richard Wanamaker's radio career continued to flourish even after the departure of *The Bobby Benson Show*. In the fall of 1933 he received the role of Jimmy Fenton in the adventure show *Ghost Train*, written and directed by Herb Rice.

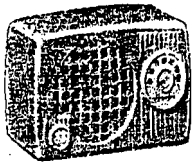
In the spring of 1934, Wanamaker received the part of Buzzy Bear in the show of the same name. Next Young

Richard played one of the orphans in *The Modern Saint, Father Baker Show*. Herbert Rice played Father Baker in this seven part series that was held in conjunction with the local Catholic Charities Appeal.

On Sunday, September 29, 1935, Richard Wanamaker began a thirteen week run in the role of David Copperfield on WGR. In February of 1936, Roger Baker and Richard Wanamaker began their run as co-stars in the highly publicized, *The Adventures of Roger and Jimmy Show*. The program was broadcast every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6:00 PM on WKBW. Richard Wanamaker also played in a show titled *The Green Family*.

In February of 1938, Richard Wanamaker turned to the live stage, playing in *Excursion*. The play was staged at the Studio Theater and was produced by Jane Keeler's Studio Theater School. By this time Richard had graduated from Mount St. Joseph's Academy and Canisius High School. Following a stint in the army during World War II, Richard Wanamaker entered Ithica College. He graduated with a degree in drama. Unable to find employment in the entertainment industry following graduation, Wanamaker entered the business world.

Richard Wanamaker died very unexpectedly as a result of complications following abdominal surgery. Death came on October 24, 1961. He was only forty at the time of his death.



SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

WELCOME, TRAVELERS

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, a wave of human interest programs appeared on the daytime airwaves. In an effort to maintain their hold on loyal audiences largely comprised of homemakers, the networks began to cancel long established soap operas, music groups and quiz shows that had been a mainstay in the sunshine for nearly two decades.

To fill some of that air time, they turned to human interest features in an effort to hold their listeners. Shows like *Bride and Groom*, *Queen for a Day* and *Ladies Fair* began to appear everywhere except CBS. All seemed to want to build on the phenomenal success enjoyed by *Art Linkletter's House Party* at CBS. In some cases, this may

have been the wise thing to do. A faithful following for that genre was born just as there had been for its predecessors.

Among the more successful of these daytime real-life tales of drama and inspiration was *Welcome Travelers*. Debuting on ABC at 12 noon EST June 30, 1947, this half-hour bag of mixed emotions brought actual travelers to the microphone for live interviews.

Created by Les Lear and Tommy Bartlett, the latter *Travelers'* host during its 7-year run, The show broadcast from a studio in Chicago's Sherman Hotel. Produced before a live audience of about a thousand guests, it was based on the belief that people on journeys are more anxious to tell about themselves than are those at home.

To prove the point, Lear and Bartlett sent scouts to Chicago rail depots to meet citizens of all walks of life arriving in the city. They kept an eye and ear out for any type of dramatic flair that might win an audience's attention. When they stumbled upon interesting subjects, they would invite those travelers to go with them to the broadcast studio for coast-to-coast interviews.

As time went on, and the program became well known, these scouts showed up at bus stations and airports in Chicago, too, broadcasting their search for the gifted or unusual vacationer or businessperson. Daily, six or seven people were given chances to tell their stories to millions of enthralled listeners.

They often spoke of small town life. They gave glimpses of gratifying love stories, told of the agony of family separations, mentioned troubles with teens and spouses, their inability to find work and other circumstances in the ebb and flow of life. afterward, they were showered with parting gifts for having shared their moments of inspiration with America.

In the process, it was inevitable that *Travelers* got taken for a ride a few times itself. More than one guest claimed to be down on his luck and stranded. A runaway youth gained a sympathetic following by pretending to be an orphan enroute to a relative's home. Bartlett had to separate fact from fiction among some of the show's guests.

Meanwhile, audiences were readily recruited at *Welcome, Travelers* booths set up at train, air and bus terminals, where free studio tickets were given away. As a result, most audiences were composed of folks just passing through the Windy City on their way to somewhere else.

Within a year of *Travelers'* debut, Procter and Gamble picked up the show, until then under multiple sponsorship, and carried it the rest of its run. By 1949 the immensely popular daytime feature had moved to NBC where it went head-to-head at 10 o'clock EST (through 1954) with the first half hour of CBS enormously popular *Arthur Godfrey Time*. Even at that hour it did well, reaching a Nielsen rating of 6.3 in 1951, exceedingly high for a daytime feature.

MC Bartlett had had a very lackluster career in radio prior to his success on *Travelers*. In 1939 he was the announcer on a short-lived CBS show called *News and Rhythm*. In most OTR annals, he is not mentioned otherwise.

But interestingly, the man who announced *Welcome, Travelers*, often in train barker style, Jim Ameche, earned far more radio credits than the show's host ever did. Ameche played the lead in a daytime serial on the Blue network in 1938 called *Attorney at Law*. Later, he was an announcer for CBS' popular soap *Big Sister*. He played the role of Jack Armstrong for a time, starred in one of radio's last juvenile dramas, *The Silver Eagle* (ABC, 1951-55), and had recurring roles in more than a half-dozen other series. He was tapped as an announcer or narrator of several lesser known shows, also.

The demise of *Welcome, Travelers* in 1954 came shortly before NBC made a decision to clear much of its daytime lineup for a completely different format — including music, news, variety, light comedy and interviews — all within a single show. Called *Weekday*, it encompassed several hours of NBC's Monday-through-Friday daytime schedule. But partly because the established listening patterns of faithful audiences of decades had been disrupted, *Weekday* failed to meet its intended promise. Just as the networks had banished programs like *Welcome, Travelers* which had developed strong identification with listeners for their human interest touches, a seemingly inevitable end of an era was hastened.

★ ★ ★

Lady Crime Fighters

by Jack French

(Continued from last month)

During World War II no more women sleuths arrived on the scene, but immediately after, 1946 was a banner year for three new ones debuted on network radio. One was as much comedienne as crime solver, *Meet Miss Sherlock*. This was a CBS sustainer for the summer of 1946 that recounted the adventures of Jane Sherlock, a

scatter-brained amateur detective, and her boyfriend, Peter Blossom, a civil attorney who occasionally fainted.

In late 1989, the Gassman brothers of SPERDVAC put me in contact with the star of that series, an engaging lady named Monty Margetts. She advised me that she got the role in *Meet Miss Sherlock* after her friend, and fellow actress, Betty Moran did the first episode but her voice was not "dithery" enough. Monty was brought in and she played the rest of the series shows. Bill Conrad, then in his mid-20s, was the voice of Captain Dingo of the NYPD.

The show's writers were Don Thompson and E. Jack Neumann while David Vail produced it. It had a live orchestra led by Milton Charles and the announcer was Murray Wagner. Unfortunately none of the cast were ever mentioned in the closing credits. Two episodes have survived to the present; "*Wilmer and the Widow*" and "*Dead Man's Chest*". The latter has Jeff Chandler and Sondra Gair in supporting roles.

Preceding *Meet Miss Sherlock* by two months was *Policewoman* which ABC began in the spring of 1946; it would remain on the air until June 1947. This series was sponsored by Carter's Little Liver Pills and was purportedly based upon the cases of Mary Sullivan, an NYPD officer for 35 years. Betty Garde did an excellent job portraying Sullivan and she was backed up by crisp plots in this 15 minute show. Walter Herlihy and Dick Dunham were the announcers; Jesse Crawford handled the music responsibilities. In summary, the good news is that *Policewoman* can rightfully claim to be the first female crime fighter on radio who was pure sleuth — devoid of comedy, whimsy, or soap opera roots. The bad news is only two episodes have survived.

The third feminine crime solver to begin in 1946 had the services of one of the most well-know ladies in radio, television and stage: Arlene Francis. Her show, produced in Hollywood for ABC, was *The Affairs of Ann Scotland* and it ran from October 1946 to January 1947 under the sponsorship of the Hudnut Corporation. Ken Niles was the announcer, Helen Mack directed, and Del Castillo provided organ interludes.

Since no audio transcriptions have surfaced yet, we have to rely on the memories of Arlene Francis. In her 1978 autobiography published by Simon & Schuster, she recalls: "I was playing a sexy girl detective, sort of a private eyelash . . . (who) trapped her quarry with guile and feminine wiles . . . I was very pregnant at the time . . . so I could hardly get close enough to the microphone . . . I could have been called Scotland Yard, because that's how wide I was. But my voice still dripped with the

breathy nuance of the 'Come up and see me some time' variety. My friend Claire Trevor, listening to the show in New York, sent me a wire saying, 'You don't sound the least bit pregnant, but you do sound as though you might be at any moment'."

It would be three years before the arrival of the next female sleuth, in the summer of 1949, but it was worth the wait because this show is what most OTR fans consider the best of the lady detectives on network radio. It was *Candy Matson* and it was produced by a West Coast NBC affiliate. The series was created by Monty Masters, who originally intended this San Francisco detective to be a man, but then changed the gender (at the suggestion of his mother-in-law) and put his wife, Natalie Parks Masters, in the title role.

This husband and wife team had long-term supporting roles in the popular soap opera *Hawthorne House* and later starred in their own series, *Those Mad Masters*. but it was in *Candy Matson* that their collaboration achieved true excellence. Under Monty's direction, Natalie played a sassy, sexy and sensible private eye who provided listeners with 30 minutes of exciting entertainment.

Candy's understated love interest was Lee Mallard, a homicide inspector, played by Henry Leff, and her chief source of information, aptly named Rembrandt Watson, was the voice of Jack Thomas. The theme song was appropriately "Candy" and was played on the organ by Eloise Rowan. Most of the dozen surviving episodes have the same opening signature: a ringing telephone is answered by Natalie saying, "Yukon 2-8209, yes, this is Candy Matson" and the organist going into the theme.

The writers worked in plenty of real locations in the Bay area into the plots. Sound effects were handled by two pro's, Bill Garnell and Jay Rendon, and the engineer was Clarence Stevens. Despite the superb quality of the show, and it was definitely the best of the nine series, *Candy Matson* ran for two years, never attracted a sponsor, and went off the air in May 1951.

That same month, the last of radio's lady crime fighters originated on NBC, a 15 minute Saturday morning series entitled *The Lady In Blue*. An OTR collector in West Virginia, John Cooper, provided me with copies of the only two episodes in circulation. Clearly aimed at a juvenile audience, *The Lady In Blue* is an attractive socialite who goes forth from her posh penthouse to combat crime, attired in blue mask, blue dress, and blue sapphires. She is somewhat assisted by her cockney maid, Harriett Higgins. The plot-writing is a bit childish, i.e. her real identity is supposed to be super-secret

but everybody (cops, victims, even cab drivers) know where she lives.

Lady In Blue is probably is a steal from a character in the comic pages (created by the Will Eisner team) who was called *Lady Luck*. She was an attractive socialite who went forth to combat crime attired in a green veil and green dress. This emerald-clad heroine attracted enough attention in Eisner's Sunday supplement to eventually get her own comic book in December 1949 but it lasted only five issues. While I can't prove that she was the genesis for *The Lady In Blue*, the similarities are compelling. The cast members of *The Lady In Blue* are not set forth in the credits and I've been unable to identify their voices. The series went off the air on December 8, 1951, thus bringing down the curtain on radio's lady crime fighters.

Authors Note: *Portions of the material in this article have previously appeared in past issues of NARA News. However this article contains substantial data being published for the first time and it represents the most up-to-date information on this particular genre. The author welcomes additional pertinent information at his residence, 5137 Richardson Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032-2810.*

RADIO MEMORIES

by Francis Edward Bork

Ah, Yes There's Good News Tonight. During World War II a very gifted News Announcer would seem to lighten our fears of the war news he would relate to his listeners. Almost every family had a son, father, brother or uncle in the service, and many female members of American families were doing their share for the war effort by wearing a uniform and serving America in camps all across our great country. Yes, it was difficult for all Americans to listen for news of our fighting men via the radio.

In 1909 when William Randolph Hearst, the late publisher was running for the office of mayor of New York City (although being a multimillionaire) for what was pennies at the time, he hired a teenage kid from New York's lower east side to precede him at the political rallies as a boy-orator. This was a fad at the time among both Evangelists and politicians. The teenager's name "Gabriel Heatter." Hearst lost the election but the kid won a job on the Hearst paper The American as a messenger boy and then as a cub reporter, until a few years later as a full-fledged reporter.

By the end of World War I, Gabriel Heatter had learned his trade so well that he was appointed the Paris Representative for several American newspapers. In the early 1930s he was back in the United States where his debates with Norman Thomas on Socialism, which were published in The Nation, made a highly regarded name for him among his fellow newsmen and colleagues. Heatter's star had not yet risen to the public, for at this time in his career only his fellow newsmen were aware of his abilities.

In 1936, Gabriel Heatter's name became a household word when in that year he reported over the radio the electrocution of Bruno Richard Kauptman for the kidnapping and murder of Charles "Lucky Lindy?" Lindberg's baby son. Something had gone wrong with the apparatus that circulated the electricity into the electric chair in New Jersey's Death-house. Gabriel Heatter, caught with no script, no preparation of any kind and of course no warning, did an amazing 53 minute ad-lib, describing the tenseness across the nation. He gave the background of the hideous crime, the trail of evidence that led to the capture of Kauptman, and his lawyers last minute legal maneuvers to free him. Heatter's colorful, although somewhat distasteful, description of the prison, the Death-house and the atmosphere that prevailed that night held his radio audience spellbound until the apparatus was repaired and the execution could proceed. Minutes went by, then in a low, strained voice Heatter announced "Bruno - Richard - Kauptman is dead."

This was a time that radio was really beginning to come into its own as a major news medium. The press of course did not appreciate radio as such, mainly because they considered it a threat to their newspaper reporting and called radio reporting a bastard form of journalism and therefore treated it with great contempt, if they mentioned it at all. The Gabriel Heatter scoop of the Lindberg - Hauptman kidnapping murder trial did not help make friends between the two forms of news reporting, nor did it endear him personally to his fellow reporters or the newspaper industry in general. Trying to ignore radio news broadcasting at first even the hardest of the diehard newspaper reporters had to finally accept radio as a prime news media.

The news breaking events in Europe along with the mad ravings of one Adolph Hitler, then Chancellor of Germany, sounded loud and clear across the mighty Atlantic Ocean. Most of the major news agencies now had a staff of reporters ready to report the days events via radio, as radio now emerged as the prime news media. Now in the late 1930s history was being made and reported over radio almost as soon as it happened and in

many cases the moment it did happen. Radio was at last taking its place in history.

Gabriel Heatter's extremely personal friendly type delivery made him seem just like a family friend, one whose every word could be trusted as the truth, who could be counted on to tell his listeners everything, as day after day thousands would wait for his broadcast to hear the news. Heatter's salary was for a time as high as \$3,500 weekly. Broadcasting over Mutual Network with a hook-up of well over 450 stations, his 15 minute dinner hour news broadcast was now heard from Monday through Friday in well over a million homes. Although his down-home type of approach made him the brunt of many jokes during those years his popularity was every bit as great as that of his contemporaries, such as Lowell Thomas and Graham McNamee.

Heatter was the Mutual Network's man on the spot for all special events such as the political conventions, famous jury trials and any and all news breaking happenings of the times. During Heatter's network days he did many "remotes," broadcasting from the depths of a coal mine in Virginia, the roof of a skyscraper in the heart of New York City and even from an airplane while it was in flight across the country. His distinctive voice was also familiar to the moviegoers as he narrated many of the movie picture newsreels of the day during the late 1930s and 1940s.

At the grand old age of 70, Gabriel Heatter gave up his network program and moved to Miami Beach, Florida in 1960. Just to keep his hand on the wheel he did a broadcast over Station WIOD heard across the length and width of the State of Florida. With failing health, Heatter gave up broadcasting altogether and spent his remaining years with his wife Sadie in Miami Beach enjoying his new found hobby fishing, along with an old hobby of Martinis at cocktail hour.

During World War II there were many, many news broadcasters, some were good and some weren't. The big name broadcasters, the ones who made it to the big time, I guess we all remember. Oh, I think I could rattle off 6 or 8 names of the newsmen we would remember for they all had a style of their own. Just mention their name and pop goes a message from the depths of your memory, yeah I remember him he used to say "Good evening Mr. and Mrs. North America and all the ships at sea," right, that's him. See, you did remember. Ah yes, there's good "RADIO" news tonight.

*Well, that's it for now,
till next time,
Happy Radio Memories*

Those Gossip Reporter Shows

by Dom Parisi

Back in the past; back in the golden age of radio, when things were simpler, (as the saying goes) people loved to sit along side the radio to soak-in all the juicy gossip that came out of the speaker. They wanted to hear about the big screen stars; they wanted to hear about Communism and Russian spies; they wanted to hear about corruption in industry, the government, and other places that smelled rotten. Well, the listener got what he wanted. The men and women reporters told it like it was; no holding back. They didn't care whose feet they stepped on! They were the famous "Gossip Reporters."

The radio version of the movie star Carmen Miranda with the strange head gear was Hedda Hopper. I think Hedda owned more hats than Macy's. Her show is well remembered as being one of the most famous of the gossip broadcasts.

Hedda started in radio somewhere around 1938 as a local fashion reporter. In 1939 she appeared on *Brent-house*, an NBC serial. She played a housewife. Her Hollywood reporting was much better than her acting.

Miss Hopper knew everyone who was anybody in Hollywood in the early days of World War I having run away from a Pennsylvania Quaker home, she found work in the film industry as a supporting actress. Because she was so close to many of the famous people in Hollywood she knew a lot of juicy gossip. She collected all this stuff and salted it away like a pack rat until she landed in radio.

Hedda appeared as a guest on the *Rudy Vallee Show*. A short time after this she had her own show on CBS in 1939. It broadcast three times a week, 15 minutes per show. Hopper ripped apart the famous with accounts of their behind the scenes escapades. The show lasted until 1942 and re-appeared again in 1944 as a weekly Monday night broadcast. This continued until 1946 when Miss Hopper started a 5 minute interview show. The famous like Bing Crosby, Mickey Rooney, Lew Ayres and others appeared in these 5 minute spots. Hopper was heard in a final broadcast on a 30 minute Sunday variety show over NBC in the 1950-51 season.

In 1928, on a local Hollywood talk show, Louella Parsons was heard for the first time. The show was an interview type, and it was a failure! Louella was a Hearst newspaper columnist in Hollywood and also served as hostess for the *Hollywood Hotel* and *Hollywood Premiere* shows.

In 1945 with Jergens Lotion as the sponsor, Louella broadcast her Sunday night show over ABC until 1951. She landed the job after she substituted for Walter Winchell. Winchell went on at 9:00 PM for 15 minutes; Parsons went on right after him at 9:15. Winchell did his broadcast out of New York with his blend of gossip and Louella reported from Hollywood. I read that Walter made Miss Parsons angry every time he beat her to a west coast little bit of gossip news!

Walter Winchell's Journal was heard over the Blue Network beginning on December 4, 1932 as a Sunday night gossip show. It ran for more than 20 years.

Before Walter broke into broadcasting he was involved for twelve years with a vaudeville career. He was born on April 7, 1897 in New York. He never completed grammar school and went into show business at thirteen years of age. Shortly after this, Walter, George Jessel and Eddie Cantor formed a singing usher act at the Imperial Theatre in New York. In 1910 Gus Edwards hired the boys for his Newsboys Sextet.

After a hitch in the Navy during World War I, Winchell went back into vaudeville; but not for long. He left the theatre and went into journalism. He began to do some write-ups for *Billboard*. Winchell then went on to join *The New York Evening Graphic*. This is where he began to make a name for himself. In 1929 he landed a position with the *New York Daily Mirror*.

Everyone was reading Winchell's stuff. It was just a matter of time before he broke into radio. His *Jergens Journal* was like no other show on the air at that time. Walter blasted or praised the biggest names in the land. He sat behind the radio mike with his hat on and his hand on a set of telegraph keys. Rapidly tapping the keys Winchell began, "Good evening Mr. and Mrs. North and South America and all ships at sea, lets go to press — FLASH!"

Walter attacked Adolph Hitler, and called his Nazis "Ratzis." He loved President Franklin Roosevelt and could say no bad words about him nor his actions. Mr. Winchell went after the Communists with a vengeance. Although he admired Roosevelt, he didn't care for Truman. Walter became a serious supporter of Senator Joseph McCarthy in his bitter fight against the "Commies." After Winchell called the voters "Damn Fools" in 1943, the network and the sponsor began censoring his scripts.

The show was sponsored by Kaiser-Frazer autos in 1948. Then cosmetic giant Richard Hudnut took over as sponsor in 1949, still on Sunday nights. Gruen Watches

came aboard in 1952. In 1955 Mutual aired his final radio show. Although his radio career was over, Walter Winchell went into television and narrated the popular series *The Untouchables* over ABC-TV from 1959 thru 1963. Mr. Winchell passed away in Los Angeles on February 20, 1972.

Dorothy Kilgallen had a short run on her *Voice of Broadway Show*. It went on the air over CBS in the middle of 1941. Miss Kilgallen was a writer, commentator, a producer, and a newspaper columnist. She offered all her knowledge about the bright lights of New York's *Great White Way*. The show ran for one season for Johnson and Johnson, first on Saturday, then on Tuesday, ending up on Mutual. Anyone have more information on this show? Anyone ever hear a broadcast of *The Voice of Broadway*? If so, please write.

Jimmy Fidler, in his 20 years of reporting gossip, was one of the most "tell-it-like-it-is" Hollywood Broadcaster. His first broadcast was in 1932 and by 1934 he landed his own show — a 15 minute spot over the Blue Network. At one time Drene Shampoo had him going on CBS on Tuesday night and on NBC on Friday.

Jimmy's fights with studio and film personnel resulted in him being off the air around 1934. He made a comeback in 1941 on CBS and Mutual. Then in 1942 he went on the Blue ABC Network on Sunday for Arid Deodorant and lasted until 1948. Mutual picked him up next. His final Sunday shows were over ABC from 1949-1950, still with Arid as sponsor.

Fidler appeared on the Hollywood scene in 1919. He wanted to be an actor. No luck! In the 1920s he edited movie magazines and did some public relations work for the film industry. In the early 1930s his broadcasting career started to take on speed and he dumped the editing job.

At around this time, Hedda Hopper and Louella Parsons were well established reporters with many followers. Fidler inched along and became one of radio's top gossipers, feared by many movie people. He told it the way it was! If a movie "stunk" he said so! If a movie star was "lousy" he said so! Jimmy Fidler continued with his style of Hollywood gossip into the 1970s! Who can ever forget his famous sign-off "Good night to You, and I do mean You!



Of all life's sad surprises, there's nothing to compare with treading in the darkness, on a step that isn't there.

Member's Mike

Dear Mr. Parisi,

Enclosed please find my check for my 1996 dues. I would like to take this opportunity to say that I have enjoyed being a member of your group for the last several years. The *Illustrated Press* has been a very interesting and enjoyable paper. The only problem I can see with it is that it is not long enough! Ed Wanat Sr. has been or I should say is - an excellent librarian and a real credit to the club. I enjoy the short notes that he sends with each order and the "turn around time" could not be better. I can almost predict to the day when my next order will arrive. One of these years I would very much like to be able to make it to one of your meetings to meet you all in person. Thanks again for a great organization.

Sincerely,
Grant R. Brees



Dear Dom,

Just finished reading your series on "Science Fiction on the Air" in the *Illustrated Press* and thought I would drop you a line and tell you how much I enjoyed same.

One show that you mentioned, *Tales of Tomorrow*, is listed in *The Handbook of Old Time Radio* (Swartz & Reinehr - authors) as follows:

TALES OF TOMORROW - ABC, CBS 1953 A 30-minute science-fiction anthology that first appeared as a television program in 1951, moving to radio in 1953. After appearing on ABC for only three months, it moved to CBS for the final five weeks of the run. The program was hosted by Raymond Edward Johnson and featured stories appearing in *Galaxy Science Fiction Magazine*. At least five episodes are available.

You might assume that it was similar in content to "Dimension X" or "X Minus One" as they also used stories from *Galaxy Magazine*.

One other show you mentioned, "Think," also listed in the aforementioned handbook states the show was only on radio in 1953.

The "CBS Radio Workshop" show that you mentioned, "Brave New World" is a well done show that I have listened to many times. My favorite however was "The Space Merchants" a two-parter on February 17th and 24th in 1957.

I noticed that you made reference to "Flash Gordon" and the fact that you never heard the show. I have only one show myself, but I am making you a copy and hope you enjoy same and I will throw in some other shows to fill the cassette.

Best regards,
Gene Dench

The Last Word . . .

Cincinnati's 10th Annual "Old Time Radio & Nostalgia Convention" gets under way Friday and Saturday, April 12 & 13. They have an impressive line-up of stars, and looks like a good time is in the making. We'll be expecting the usual fine reports from any attendees.

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SUNNY JIM



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