

The Old Time Radio Club

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Cincinnati's 11th Annual Old Time Radio and Nostalgia Convention

By JERRY COLLINS

Once again my wife and I made our annual spring trek to Cincinnati for Bob Burchett's annual convention. This is the third convention that we have attended and the crowd just seems to get bigger each year.

When you come to Cincinnati you know the convention will be smaller, with a much shorter guest list, few panels and less dealers. Still there is something very unique and special about the Cincinnati convention. Many of Bob Burchett's own special qualities seem to carry over to the convention, quiet, friendly and very relaxed. It is also so much easier to get to and from this lovely city on the Ohio River. Realize all this praise is coming from a driver who, two years ago was caught speeding by a police officer in a plane and then this year was delayed five hours by an Indian demonstration.

After spending hours in the dealer room on Friday, I sat down to watch another wonderful episode of *Ethel and Albert* featuring the incomparable Peg Lynch and Parley Bayer. This was followed by an episode of *Inner Sanctum*.

On Saturday morning John Rayburn reminisced with us about his radio experiences. This was followed by another excellent sound effects demonstration by Barney Beck.

In the afternoon the two old pros Lynch and Baer packed the house with another episode of *Ethel and Albert*. The line began to form from thirty minutes before the performance began and eventually extended outside. This was followed by an equally impressive performance by another old pro Fred Foy who played the part of Sgt. Preston in an episode of *Challenge of the Yukon*. Foy informed us that he had actually played the part of Preston in this episode when it was originally aired on the radio.

Following dinner Ed Clute entertained us on the piano. Ed took requests from the audience and played every song from memory. Next he accompanied the Boogie Woogie Girls as they took us back to World War II and the music of the Andrews Sisters

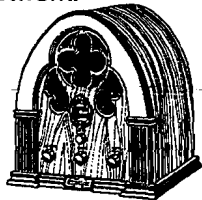
With the evening growing late Peg Lynch and Parley Baer returned for a final episode of *Ethel and Albert*. All three episodes were written by Peg Lynch. This was followed by an episode of *Gunsmoke* featuring Parley Baer, playing the part of Chester Proudfoot, a role that he created for radio. We will see everyone next year as the convention will return in bigger quarters in the same hotel.

Membership Information

New member processing, \$5 plus club membership of \$15 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing, and a monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$15; April-June, \$12; July-September, \$8; October-December; \$5. 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 PM during the months of September to June at 393 George Urban Blvd., Cheektowaga, NY 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

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The GREAT GILDERSLEEVE

— “OH-H-H, LEROY”

Reprint from TUNE IN, July, 1943

The Great Gildersleeve turned an idea and a laugh into a career. Rotund and jolly Harold Peary first introduced his infectious million-dollar laugh to the world while playing on the *Fibber McGee and Molly Show*, and a national character was born. That's *The Great Gildersleeve*. It's a comparatively new show, having begun August 31, 1941, which makes its estimated audience of 26,000,000 all the more remarkable.

But Hal Peary is far from new along the air lanes. Born in San Leandro, California, of American-Portuguese descent, he speaks both Spanish and Portuguese fluently. His great, booming laugh, with its slight touch of embarrassment, his wheedling cry, “oh-h-h, Leroy!” when he has some particular piece of domestic skullduggery to put over, have captured the fancy of people everywhere, and the feud he engages in endlessly with Judge Hooker is his effort to escape the matrimonial inclinations of the Judge's maiden sister, rouse an easy laughter that keeps sympathy always on the portly, workdodging Gildy's side.

Peary has acted so many radio parts that he himself claims to have lost track of all the characters he's played. He can use any dialect convincingly, and he has. Portly Hal Peary started in stock as a singer and actor, and grasped a lower rung of the ladder of success rather precariously when he became known as “The Spanish Serenader” over NBC in San Francisco. Radio was young then, and so was Peary. According to his own account, he became a radio utility man, that is, one who could be called upon to fill absolutely any kind of part. When the *Fibber McGee and Molly* engagement came along, he began to think along the lines of the Gildersleeve character, and writer Don Quinn wrote him into the show that way. The program moved to Los Angeles and Hal with it, and on the coast his big chance came.

Rotund Peary and Betty Jourdain, formerly a dancer, have been married for twelve years, and he claims she's the best cook in the country. No longer slender Harold Peary gained thirty-six pounds the first year of his marriage, but doesn't regret it. The Pearys have built their home in a one-acre walnut grove in Encino, California, where Jim Jordan (Fibber McGee) is president of the Chamber of Commerce. They live quietly, and Hal

plays handball and collects crime photographs, which have a strange and morbid attraction for him. His ranch is “stocked” with one dog, a hybrid Springer and Cocker Spaniel, offspring of prize dogs belonging to the Jordans and “Tuffy” Goff of *Lum and Abner*.

Walter Tetley, who does Leroy, the nephew of *The Great Gildersleeve*, has made a living out of being a brat since he was seven. Of Scotch descent, he was playing the bagpipes at lodge meetings at the age of four. At seven Madge Tucker had him appear on her *Children's Hour* variety show for NBC in New York. He was so good that Miss Tucker hired him to go into another show of hers. It was a scripted show, and that nearly put an end to the kid's career, because the only things he could read were the first grade primer, the comics, and *Variety*. However, with some assistance, he made it. After that he appeared with most of radio's great, including Fred Allen, with whose company he had five years, Walter O'Keefe, Ted Healy, Joe Penner, Jack Benny, Eddie Cantor, and many others. One day he played seven shows and went to bed with a temperature of 103. Walter likes the part of Leroy, though he thinks it's rather tame compared to some of the Dead End parts he's played. He thinks Leroy will grow up to be just like his uncle.

Lurene Tuttle, niece of *The Great Gildersleeve*, wanted to be an actress at the age of two, but did not make it professionally until she was seventeen years old. Copper-haired Lurene was born at Pleasant Lake, Indiana, on August 20th (year not given, though not too long ago), and has been in some of the famous shows of radio, including Arch Oboler's *Plays*, *One Man's Family*, *Sherlock Holmes* series, Edward G. Robinson's *Big Town*, and plenty of others. Has been a regular member of the cast of *The Great Gildersleeve* since the start of the program. Likes good music and collects figures of dogs. Her husband is radio announcer Melville Ruick, and with their nine-year old daughter Barbara Joan, they live at Toluca Lake, near Hollywood.

Lillian Randolph is the maid, Birdie, a favorite of the program's large audience, and if she didn't play the part her sister Amanda could. But the girls have divided the United States between them, in order not to compete with each other. Lillian stays on the West Coast and plays in *The Great Gildersleeve*, and Amanda rests content on the East Coast, where she plays Pansy, the maid in *Abie's Irish Rose*. Daughters of a Cleveland, Ohio preacher, Lillian and Amanda both play the piano, sing, dance and act, though neither girl ever had a lesson in her life. They taught themselves to play on the organ in the church where their father preached, and they learned to act in the dramatic sketches presented by the church. When their mother died the girls decided to

make a career for themselves. Lillian, being a bit more aggressive, went to the local movie houses and got her sister booked, which made her the manager. But one day Amanda fell ill and Lillian took her place to such good effect that she gave up managing her sister and started out on her own.

But the principle character of *The Great Gildersleeve* is no figure of flesh and blood. It is a great booming laugh that has gone rolling out on the air into the living rooms of millions of listeners, a contagious, heart-warming laugh that spells plenty of money in the bank.

* * *

Cinci OTR & Nostalgia Convention

By RICHARD A. OLDAY

On Thursday morning, April 17, Arlene and I left for Cincinnati driving through 2 inches of freshly fallen snow. We had great expectations of arriving with sunshine and warm temperatures. However, it snowed on and off all the way to Cincinnati. Upon arriving at the Marriott Hotel, we were greeted by a large group of friendly OTR enthusiasts and were invited to dinner with the group at the restaurant across the street. After checking in, we returned to the lobby to join the group. About 10 left immediately for the restaurant but our group waited for a few more people before we left. Finally our group of 24 people headed across the street for dinner. Needless to say the restaurant was not prepared for such a large gathering. A number of tables were joined, and as we maneuvered to sit at the large table, somebody bumped against the emergency exit setting off a shrill alarm. Management people came over to turn off the alarm but it took them several minutes to find the right key. Finally, the alarm was turned off and we settled in for an evening of food and OTR conversation.

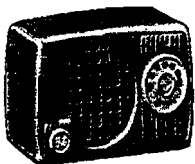
Shortly before noon on Friday, I wandered down to the Dealer's Room while Arlene headed to the mall for some serious shopping. Dealers were selling OTR cassettes, books, magazines, radio premiums and videos. The hardest part of visiting this area is trying to restrain myself from buying too much; something I didn't succeed at. Since most of the dealers are also old friends, the afternoon went very quickly. Late in the afternoon I returned to our room with bulging bags of OTR goodies. Arlene had just returned with many items from the local mall. We were both extremely pleased with our

purchases. After dinner we attended the *Ethel and Albert* and *Inner Sanctum* recreations. Peg Lynch and Parley Baer kept us in stitches as *Ethel and Albert*. The Boogie Woogie Girls were also on hand to entertain us in the fashion of the Andrews Sisters with *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, *Rum And Coca Cola* and a vocal version of *In The Mood*. They were accompanied by Ed Clute. After the entertainment, we returned to our rooms to rest up for another day.

Saturday started off early with another trip to the Dealer's Room at 9 AM and Arlene returned to the mall. At 10 AM, John Rayburn entertained us with OTR trivia and excerpts from several OTR broadcasts plus his specialty, Spoonerisms. John is a very entertaining person and I never tire of his performances. Following John, Barney Beck gave us a sound effects demonstration peppered with many anecdotes from his experiences in OTR. As Barney says, he may not have been the best sound effects man in the business, but they have gone to their final reward while he has gone to Cincinnati. Although I have seen this demo several times before, Barney always comes up with new stories to keep us entertained. Arlene returned from the mall in the afternoon to join me for more *Ethel and Albert* skits, a *Challenge of the Yukon* recreation (with numerous gunshots). Fred Foy recreated the role of Sgt. Preston which he played in 1954. Fred was also THE Lone Ranger announcer for the latter run of the series. The Boogie Woogie Girls also entertained. The Saturday evening festivities began at 6 PM with dinner at the hotel (could somebody explain to me why baked potatoes are served but nobody brings out butter until the dinner is almost finished). Following dinner, Ed Clute entertained with request time. After several tunes he was joined by the Boogie Woogie Girls for a few more songs. These girls are real troopers coming to the convention after an accident on route demolished one of their cars. Much to the delight of everyone, more *Ethel and Albert* skits were presented. A *Gunsmoke* show was recreated with Parley Baer again assuming his role as Chester. The recreations are fascinating to watch. The performers ACTING their roles (not just reading), the announcers and of course the sound effects men provide a great way to peek into the past and see how these wonderful old shows were originally produced. The sound effects could really set the scene with crickets chirping and dogs barking as well as the usual footsteps, spurs jingling, and other sounds pertinent to the script. Special awards were given to Jay Hickerson and Bob Burchett for their efforts in running OTR conventions. As Bob closed this year's convention, he told everyone that the convention is moving into larger rooms inside the hotel next year as the present facilities are being demolished. This was welcome news as the rooms were

very crowded (a good thing the local fire marshal was not present).

If you have never attended one of those conventions, mark your 1998 calendar for the first weekend in May when the 12th Annual Cincinnati OTR Radio and Nostalgia Convention will be held. Enjoy these great performers while they are still with us, every passing year finds less of these great people with us. (Thanks Bob for another great convention.)



SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

TODAY'S CHILDREN

Today's Children was the traditional "second banana" of soap opera. Had it not been for a locally-produced series called *Painted Dreams*, which eventually gained network status, *Children* would have been the "first banana" of the genre. Without *Dreams*, however, it never would have existed at all.

Two momentous decisions by the management of Chicago's radio station WGN occurred in 1930 which still influence the daytime programming seen on television today. The first was in adding a Dayton, Ohio school teacher, Irna Phillips, to its staff as an actress and writer. The second was a commitment to launch a fictionalized series, a six-day-a-week drama-by-installment, to its line-up, even though no sponsor was willing to underwrite such an unplowed project. *Painted Dreams*, written by Ms. Phillips, was the story of an Irish-American family in an urban Chicago neighborhood, headed by a widowed matriarch affectionately identified as Mother Moynihan. Phillips, herself, played that role, along with a couple of other parts, undoubtedly to keep production costs low. Not for a year, in fact, was a sponsor willing to shell out the cash for such a venture.

The ultimate contribution of *Dreams* to soap opera is that it is generally regarded as the very *first* serial of all; thus, the first to appear via any electronic media. It's true that other broadcast features achieved network status before *Dreams* initially aired on the Columbia Broadcasting System October 10, 1933. But the series was heard on a local station arguably long before any of its contemporaries.

In early 1932, Irna Phillips — whose later creations would include daytime TV series still being broadcast today — requested the rights for *Dreams* from employer, WGN. She wanted to take the program to a network for national airing. Phillips believed the show to be hers to do with as she saw fit. But the station refused, claiming the program was conceived under the station's direction and guidance.

A short time later, Phillips resigned from her position at WGN and filed a chancery suit against her former employer, seeking to prevent anyone from using "her" material. The dispute over copyright ownership would drag on in the courts for more than eight years before a judgment was rendered on behalf of the station and against Phillips. WGN, meanwhile, had continued broadcasting the series, using another writer and cast. It finally agreed to allow CBS to air it, starting October 10, 1933, where the program faltered badly in the ratings. It was canceled a mere 16 weeks later, February 2, 1934. Two later efforts to revive it — one on Mutual, the other on NBC Blue — proved equally unsuccessful.

The indomitable Ms. Phillips, on the other hand, was fully confident of her own creative talents and abilities. Even though she would eventually lose the lawsuit, she would not be thwarted by an on-going feud with a former employer. There was more than one way to tame a lion, and she would prove it.

Undaunted, she set about creating a "new" show, while borrowing heavily from *Dreams*. In fact, radio's "second serial" — titled *Today's Children* — came off sounding like a carbon copy of its first. Its principal action, too, centered around a Chicago neighborhood and featured an Irish-American family headed by a widowed matriarch. Sound familiar? Mother Moynihan was gone; in her place listeners heard Mother Moran, portrayed by none other than Phillips, who also played the part of Kay Norton (Sue Morton in *Dreams*), an adopted daughter. Meanwhile, daughter Eileen (Irene in *Dreams*) was portrayed by Irene Wicker, who appeared in that role in the other drama. Even Mother Moynihan's dog Mike, who barked to protest an occasional profusion of his mistresses' homespun philosophy, appeared in the new series, this time as Mickey.

Others in the cast included Walter Wicker, Bess Johnson (who would later run radio's *Hilltop House*), Lucy Gilman (also a veteran from the *Dreams* cast) and announcer Lewis Rowen. The theme on *Today's Children* was "Aphrodite" and "Autumn Nocturne." Even the message of the new show was the same as that of its predecessor drama: Marriage is a woman's finest career, and nothing must deter her from reaching her ultimate

reason for existence.

By the time *Dreams* finally arrived before a national audience via CBS, *Children* had already garnered a loyal following on NBC Blue via a month's head start, beginning on September 11, 1933. CBS's listeners outside the reach of WGN, where *Dreams* had been airing for three years, must have felt that the show was an imitation of a very similar story line that they were already hearing over NBC Blue.

After *Children* had aired on NBC for a few months, listeners were told that — in return for a flour label — its sponsor, Pillsbury, would send them a brochure recalling the history of the Moran family. Within a few weeks in excess of 250,000 labels arrived. Shortly after the mid 30s, the series, then with many rivals, became the most popular soap opera on the air. And at that juncture in 1937, Phillips announced that she was withdrawing the successful series from the air. She based her decision upon the death of her mother, who had been the inspiring catalyst for many of the ideas she had used in plotting the series. Despite a plea from Pillsbury, she decided to pull *Today's Children* and replace it with a new show, *Woman in White*, set in a small hospital. That series would soon climb to the top of the ratings charts, too.

To introduce it, Phillips crafted a simple, yet ingenious device to carry listeners from one show to the other without losing a large segment of the audience. The final 15-minute broadcast of *Children* aired on Friday, December 31, 1937. But in a stroke of brilliancy, Phillips brought the cast back to the microphone on Monday, January 3, 1938, at its same quarter-hour. As the Moran family gathered around the elderly matriarch, she bade listeners farewell, and urged them to do what she was doing then — turning on her radio to “hear another real life story” while the family listened to “Pillsbury's new radio program, *Woman in White*.” The announcer introduced the new soap opera and its action began as the Moran family (and millions more) listened in.

In 1942, Phillips unveiled another drama titled *Lonely Women*, set in a New York hotel that catered to females primarily waiting for husbands and boyfriends to return from the Second World War. It wasn't the phenomenal success of some of her other series, and of course its story line could continue only briefly. Late in the following year, Phillips decided to replace it, resuming *Today's Children* in its place on NBC. The program reappeared December 13, 1943 and included several of the *Lonely Women* characters, while transferring locales to its original Chicago neighborhood. This time around, action centered on a German family, the Schultzes, with par-

ents played by Murray Forbes and Virginia Payne (who simultaneously appeared together for 27 years on *Ma Perkins* as son-in-law Willy Fitz and Ma herself). Their grown children were played by Betty Lou Gerson and Ruth Rau (Marilyn), Patricia Dunlap (Bertha) and Ernie Andrews (Otto). Actors Willard Waterman and Herb Butterfield were in the cast.

A short time later, Phillips decided to arrange several of her popular serials into a unique NBC programming block. *The Guiding Light* (at 2 p.m. Eastern Time), *Today's Children* (at 2:15 p.m.) and *Woman in White* (at 2:30 p.m.) were referred to collectively as the General Mills Hour. The “Hour” employed a common announcer and cast members frequently interacted with those of the other serials. In yet another “experiment,” the General Mills shows moved from Chicago for broadcast from the West Coast in 1946, bucking a trend that transferred most other serials to New York City.

In its first three seasons on the NBC Blue network, 1933-36, *Today's Children* aired at 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time. From 1936-37, it broadcast on NBC Red at 10:45 a.m. In each of those years, the program was sponsored by Pillsbury. Returning in 1943 for General Mills, again on NBC, it was scheduled at 2:15 p.m. In 1946 it shifted to 2 p.m. In its final two seasons, 1948-50, the serial was heard at 2:30 p.m.

In its return to radio, *Children's* ratings were probably never as impressive as they had been during its earlier version. In 1944-45, the program reached 6.9, its highest number. By the mid to late 40s, the bloom was off the rose and *Children* was permanently canceled June 2, 1950.

The importance of the series in the annals of daytime radio history, having originated from a controversy surrounding broadcasting's very first soap opera, can't be easily dismissed. While its popularity faded in the come-back years, in its glory days *Today's Children* rode the crest of a tide that held the daytime faithful glued to their sets. And, furthermore, it established Irna Phillips as a formidable creator and competitor who would indelibly brand her profession to the present day.

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New Video Library Additions

#44 Big Broadcast of 1937

#45 Radar Men from The Moon

They Were the Most Active People in Radio — The Big 100 !

By **DOM PARISI**
(Part 8)

Frank Lovejoy was highly active in both radio and the movies of the forties and fifties. I remember two films he appeared in: *House of Wax* with Vincent Price in 1953 and *I Was a Communist for the FBI* in 1951. Dana Andrews, of course, played the spy on the radio version. Speaking of the FBI, Lovejoy was the first narrator for *This is Your FBI* which aired on ABC. He lasted for about one year.

We heard Mr. Lovejoy in a few cop shows. He played police Lieutenant Bill Wiegand on *Mr. and Mrs. North*, Neil Fowler on the 1950 crime show *Calling All Detectives* on Mutual and he was Detective McBride on the adventure series *Here Comes McBride* in 1949. Frank was reporter Randy Stone on NBC's *Nightbeat* and he was criminal attorney John Malone on the *Amazing Mr. Malone* an ABC crime show. In the daytime drama *We Love and Learn* it was Lovejoy in the part of Bill Peters. Lovejoy was a regular who appeared on *Deadline Drama* and *The Damon Runyon Theatre*. In the juvenile crime series *The Blue Beetle*, it was Frank playing the part of Beetle. He was the first to play this part. He appeared on *Five-Minute Mysteries* and of course acted on *Escape*.

The Silver Theatre, *Backstage Wife*, *Modern Cinderella*, *Just Plain Bill* and *Stepmother* all had one thing in common: The announcer for these serial dramas was **Roger Krupp**. He announced for *Famous Jury Trials* where real court cases were heard; *Jungle Jim*, *Scattergood Baines* and *The Quiz Kids* on all the networks at one time or another during 1940-1953.

Willard Waterman appeared in the movie *Auntie Mame* with Rosalind Russell and Forest Tucker while he was doing *The Great Gildersleeve* show. Willard took over after Harold Peary left. He played a former magician turned private detective in *Easy Money* on NBC in 1946.

On the *Tom Mix Show* he played Sheriff Mike Shaw and he was George Webster on *Those Websters*. Waterman had starring roles in *Too Many Cooks* a comedy on CBS in 1950, and he was Harold's father on *Harold Teen* a comic strip that developed into the radio show. He appeared on *Me and Janie* over NBC, *Lonely Women* as John on *Stepmother*, and as Chula on the air freight

adventure show on CBS in 1945-1946 called *Island Venture*.

Harry Sosnik composed and directed the musical selections for the country music show *Sunday on the N-K Ranch* heard over ABC in 1945. He was on *The Realsilk* variety program, sponsored by Realsilk Hosiery Mills, and on *Beat the Band*. We listened to him on *Danny Kaye* and *The Falcon* shows.

Sosnik was on the comedy shows *Olsen and Johnson* and the *Joe E. Brown Show*, both on CBS in the thirties. He appeared with Dorothy Kirsten on the concert music program *Keepsakes* over ABC in 1943-1944, *Hildegard's Radio Room* in 1944-47, and *Guest Star* a show that promoted the sale of U.S. Bonds.

I found three movies in which the radio actor **Cliff Soubier** appeared in: *Black Legion* in 1936 with Dick Foran and Humphrey Bogart, *They Won't Forget* in 1937 with Lana Turner and Claude Rains and *Tovarich* also in 1938, with Charles Boyer and Basil Rathbone.

On radio he was Mayor Boggs in *Uncle Ezra*, a country music show; he was foreman Jim Bell on *Sky King*, and Uncle Louie on *Meet the Meeks*. Cliff played Marryin' Sam on *Lil Abner* copied after the comic strip by Al Capp. He was a regular part of the cast on *Lonely Women* and he played the Colonel on *Doc, Duke and the Colonel* an NBC comedy. He also played Herman Branch on *The Bartons* a juvenile drama show.

The popular ubiquitous announcer **Ed Herlihy** was on *Dick Tracy*, *The Falcon*, *Mr. District Attorney*, *Vic and Sade* and on *Rosemary* the story of a struggling secretary who lived with her mother and a young sister.

He appeared with Tallulah Bankhead on *The Big Show* in the 1950s and hosted *Coast to Coast on a Bus*. Ed appeared with *The Army Hour Show*, a public service program and he announced for *Brave Tomorrow*, *Just Plain Bill*, *Life Can Be Beautiful* and the two serial dramas *This Small Town* and *The O'Neills*. Lastly, we heard him on *That's A Good One*, *Melody Puzzles* and *Inner Sanctum*.

Clayton (Bud) Collyer was another guy that was actively involved with the soap operas. He was with *The Guiding Light*, *Young Widder Brown* where he played Peter Turner, *Road of Life*, *House in the Country* and on *Kate Hopkins*, *Angel of Mercy* where he played the son, Tom Hopkins.

Bud didn't announce and act only on the soaps, he was in other radio shows as well. In the early 40s he played

the heroic man-of-steel *Superman* and Pat Ryan in *Terry and The Pirates*. Collyer was Michael Conway the New York Police Inspector on *Pretty Kitty Kelly* and Adam Waring in the Hummert drama *The Man I Married* (Van Heflin also had the part).

Collyer and Bret Morrison shared the host spotlight in a drama featuring stories pulled from the Saturday Evening Post Magazine on ABC in the 40s called *Listening Post*. I located five quiz shows hosted by Clayton: *Winner Take All*, *Times A-Wastin*, both on CBS, *Truth or Consequences*, *Three for the Money* on Mutual in 1948, and *Break the Bank*. In closing, I'll just add that Collyer announced or hosted *Stage Door Canteen*, the *Philip Morris Playhouse*, *Cavalcade of America* and *By Popular Demand* the music variety show heard on MBS in 1946.

Ray Bloch and his music makers presented the tunes for some radio productions that featured great stars and singers. Helen Hayes was on the CBS 1949 show called *This Is Broadway* with Bloch providing the music. We heard Ray on *Let Yourself Go* hosted by Milton Berle. On the *Milton Berle Show* the music was again by Bloch.

His listing runs on and on. Little known performers got a break for stardom on *The Big Break* over NBC during 1947. Buddy Clark, then Dick Haymes, starred on *Here's to Romance* a music variety show on CBS. It was Buddy Clark again on *Musical Toast* with Ray Bloch. He performed for *Johnny Presents*, *The Philip Morris Playhouse*, *By Popular Demand*, *Celebrity Club* on CBS, and *Sing It Again* a music-quiz variety program over CBS in 1948-1951. Going on we find that Ray was with *Gold and Silver Minstrels* another variety show, *Pipe Smoking Time*, sponsored by Model Pipe Tobacco, *Songs for Sale* with Rosemary Clooney and Tony Bennett, *The Gay Nineties Review*, a nostalgic CBS show, and finally the quiz show *Quick as a Flash*. This man was booked solid!

Fred Uttal, host/announcer, was involved with the soaps, drama, quiz shows and a kiddie show. He was spokesman for *Buck Rogers* and *Big Sister*. Contestants tried to identify the guilty party from three musical clues that were provided for them on *Kelly's Courthouse* on the Blue in 1944. Fred was one of the several co-hosts on *What's My Name?* He also hosted the audience participation game show *You're The Expert* heard in 1941. Host again, this time on *Melody Puzzles* and for *Money-Go-Round* a quiz show heard in 1944. And he was announcer for *Mr. District Attorney*.

Dick Powell had the lead role in the film version of *Murder My Sweet* in 1945 along with Claire Trevor, Otto Kruger and Mike (tough-guy) Mazurki. Powell was

also featured in the 1947 *Johnny O'clock* with Evelyn Keyes. On radio we again heard him doing the same leading parts. It was on the *Lux Radio Theatre* on June 11, 1945 for *Murder My Sweet*, and on Lux again, on May 12, 1947 for *Johnny O'clock*.

Powell was the only guy to portray *Richard Diamond, Private Detective*. He was the original Richard Rogue of *Rogue's Gallery* followed by Barry Sullivan and Chester Morris. In the first version of *The Old Gold Program* Dick had the singing role. He was the featured star on *Campana Serenade* and a regular actor to appear on *Miss Pinkerton, Inc.* Dick hosted *The Fitch Bandwagon* in 1944 and was master of ceremonies for *Hollywood Hotel* and *Your Hollywood Parade* on NBC in 1937-38, a variety program that featured Warner Brothers Studio stars.

The radio host and announcer **Ben Grauer** was the narrator for *American Portraits* in 1951 on NBC and for *Home Is What You Make It*.

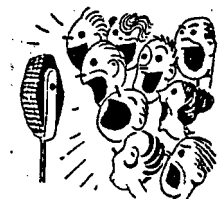
Ben hosted *Atlantic Spotlight* and the *Pot of Gold* show. In addition he hosted or announced for *Battle of the Sexes*, *Circus Days*, *Chesterfield Supper Club*, *Henry Morgan* and *The Magic Key* a Blue Network variety show. Grauer was also with *Yvette Sings* a musical-variety show over NBC in 1940 that featured the singer Yvette Harris.

To continue, we discover that it was Ben Grauer doing the honors on the quiz show *Information Please*, *Salute to Youth*, *Service with a Smile*, another variety program, and for *The NBC Symphony Orchestra*. Lastly, it was Mr. Grauer on the Blue Network 1940 audience participation show, *What Would You Have Done?* and the *Nelson Olmstead Show* a 15 minute program where Mr. Olmstead read short stories on a variety of different subjects. (To be continued.)

Member's Mike

Dear Ken,

In the late 1930s and early 1940s I was a frequent listener to a weekly serial drama entitled *Those We Love* which aired at night during the week and later on Sunday afternoons. It was the story of Father Marshall, his twin children, Kit (Christopher) and Kathy, Kathy's fiancé and eventual husband, Dr. Leslie Foster, the doctor's daughter, Amy, by a previous marriage — and the family dog, Rags! The cast included Francis X. Bushman Alma Kruger, Nan Gray and Donald Woods.



I'm hoping you or a reader of The Illustrated Press might remember this program. I would especially like to know if recordings or any other information regarding this show are available.

As a new member of The Old Time Radio Club I'm very much enjoying my issues of The Illustrated Press.

Sincerely,
Richard Nowack
601 Woodmill Drive
Holley, NY 14470

Bob & Debbie Burnham

BRC Productions

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Livonia, MI 48151

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These are the dealers who support this club. These are the dealers that you should support.

THE DEALER'S CORNER

By **FRANK C. BONCORE**

I have always said that it is the dealers who have preserved old time radio by donating shows to various libraries.

At the recent Cincinnati Convention they came through again. Several years ago we started by asking the dealers in Newark for contributions to our library. Over the years other clubs picked up on our idea. It seems that there were three or four clubs soliciting donations in Cincinnati and the dealers still came across.

A big THANKS and a tip of the cowboy hat to Cowboy Don Aston and his sidekick Terry Salmonson of:

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Just the Facts Ma'am

By **FRANK C. BONCORE**

I first met Bob Burchett several years ago at the OTR Convention in Newark, New Jersey. At that time, he was just starting his OTR Digest. Bob was a likable guy so I subscribed. At a later Convention Bob told me he was going to have the 1st OTR Convention in Cincinnati and invited me to come. Well spring is a very busy time for me and for one reason or another I just didn't make it for the next nine years. I really made a big mistake. Last fall I once again got tied up at work and did not make the Newark OTR Convention and I decided that no matter how much was going on at work I was going to Cincinnati.

I drove from Buffalo to Cincinnati, approximately a 7 hour pleasant drive. The Marriott Hotel was very easy to spot from the Interstate and in no time I was checked into a very nice room. I immediately went to the dealers room.

As I walked in, there were several of my old friends from the FOTR Convention in Newark. The first person I recognized was Jay Hickerson, I thought I must have made a wrong turn in Pennsylvania and wound up in the wrong city. I also saw Garry and LaDonna Kramer, Bob and Debbie Burnham, and several other friends. There were several dealers who had a very good selection of OTR shows on cassette. There was no one selling shows on reels. However, for the past few years I have been switching to the cassette format so it was ok with me. Cowboy Don Aston, his wife the lovely Jeanette and his sidekick Terry Salmonson were right at the main entrance to the room and he had four episodes of *Life with Luigi* that I did not have. In the other corner was the Sci-Fi Guy who had a lot of great material. Also there was Radio Memories and Leo Gawroniak. I could go on and on about the dealers, however I will talk about them in a later column.

Let's get back to the convention. Cincinnati is a really great place to have a convention. You will find that Bob Burchett and his staff go out of their way to make you feel welcome in their home, as do the people in Cincinnati. The hotel had an inside swimming pool and a jacuzzi. The hotel staff even spoke English which was something hard to find in Newark. There were several restaurants in the area. Special guests at the convention were Parley Baer, Fred Foy, Peggy Lynch and "The Boogie Woogie Girls and Company E." There were recreations of *Sgt. Preston* and *Gunsmoke*. Prior to each recreation we were treated to special recreations of *Ethel and Albert* with Peggy Lynch and Parley Baer. As I was listening to *Ethel and Albert*, I thought it would be great if some radio network would have these as a regular segment. "The Boogie Woogie Girls and Company E" were a take off of the Andrews Sisters, Company "E" was Ed Klute who accompanied them on the piano. Ed also provided the background music to the recreations. I bought their cassette and enjoyed their music as I drove home. I would hope this group goes national, and could someone please let me know if they have other cassettes available?

Saturday night there was a dinner for the convention guests in the hotel. Hats off to the chef! The food was really great and everyone had a good time.

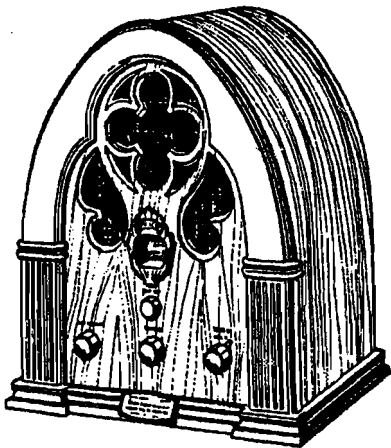
Prior to the last recreation Bob Burchette was presented with an award named in honor of Parley Baer. Jay Hickerson was also presented with a well deserved award namely in honor of Willard Waterman and Ezra Stone. Let's face it, if it weren't for Jay's dedication and hard work, there would be no Newark or Cincinnati convention.

If you are an OTR fan, the Cincinnati convention is a must, whether or not you attend the Newark convention.

In closing, let me once again thank Bob Burchett and his staff for all of their hard work in putting on a great convention. I'll be there next year, and I hope to see you in Cincinnati.



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