

The Old Time Radio Club

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Jimmy Durante
is Forced to Admit
He's a Great
Radio Star

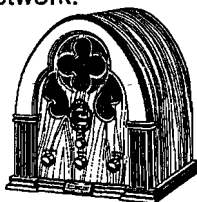
"Bing Crosby
took one look at
my Contract
and turned Pale"

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Lancaster, NY 14086



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

By DOM PARISI
(Part 9)

Actor, Producer and Director **Elliott Lewis** was doing films while supporting a bustling schedule in radio. He was in the motion picture *Story of Molly X* in 1949 and in *Saturday's Hero* in 1951 with John Derek and Aldo Ray.

Lewis took on the role of Sea Captain Philip Carney on *The Voyage of the Scarlet Queen* a seagoing adventure series on Mutual. He produced and directed *Broadway Is My Beat*; *On Stage* (where he along with wife Cathy, played leading roles) and *Pursuit*, all on CBS. Lewis was just one of many directors for the thriller show *Suspense*.

On the 1941 drama *This is Judy Jones*, Elliott played Mr. Peterson. He was Mr. Knickerbocker on another drama, *Knickerbocker Playhouse*. Lewis was the first to play the saloon owner on *Hawk Larabee*, and he, along with others, portrayed Mr. Hood on *Casebook of Gregory Hood*.

Elliott was Archie Goodwin the secretary to *Nero Wolf* when it aired in the 1945-1946 season. Mr. Presto, The Magician on *The Cinnamon Bear*, was played by Lewis. In 1944 it was Lewis playing the good Captain Friday on *Adventures By Morse*. But I think I'll always remember this man as the funny and sometimes bewildered Remley on *The Phil Harris / Alice Faye Show*.

Remember the *Olivio Santoro Show* of the early forties? It was a 15 minute musical program that featured Olivio as the guitar playing "Boy Yodeler." I never heard an episode of this show so I can't say anything about it except that **Glen Riggs** was the announcer.

Riggs announced for the musical shows *Stairway to the Stars* and *Lavender and New Lace*. He also appeared on *Philco Radio Time*. You heard him on *Hop Harrigan*, *Jungle Jim* and *My True Story*. Glen did the quiz show *True or False* and was one of the announcers for both *Vic and Sade* and *Ethel and Albert*.

We saw him in *Kings Go Forth* with Frank Sinatra, Tony Curtis and Natalie Wood; *Ice Palace* in 1960 with Richard Burton and Robert Ryan, and in *North to Alaska* with John Wayne, Stewart Granger, Ernie Kovacs and Fabian! (What a mix.)

On radio **Karl Swenson** was the Communism-fighting-radio-commentator Max Chandler on *The Whisper Men*. Swensen was Detective Priest *Father Brown* and in a change of character roles he was Joe on *Joe Palooka* of Ham Fischer's comic strip.

Back on the side of the law Mr. Swenson was Chameleon on the Hummert detective series *Mr. Chameleon*. He hosted the real criminal case stories show *Lawyer Q*. In the soaps he was Packy O'Farrell on *Rich Man's Darling* (by the Hummert's), Lord Henry Brinthrope on *Our Gal Sunday*, Danny Grogan on *Linda's First Love*. He was first to play Mr. Miniver on the *Mrs. Miniver Show*, and in its entire run on the air Karl was loveable Lorenzo on *Lorenzo Jones*.

Talk about movies, **Les Tremayne** was in a stack of them. Adventure, crime, and even Science Fiction. He was in *The Racket* with Robert Mitchum (Did this guy ever win an Oscar?), *War of the World's* in 1953 with Gene Barry, and in Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* in 1959, with Cary Grant, James Mason and Martin (*Mission Impossible*) Landau.

Les did *The Falcon*, he played Pat Abbott on *The Adventures of The Abbots* and he took over the male lead after Jackson Beck gave up the part in *Brownstone Theater*. When Don Ameche vacated the part of Bob in *Betty and Bob*, Tremayne stepped in. (Don Ameche passed away on December 8, 1993, Cary Grant on November 29, 1986, and James Mason on July 27, 1984.)

Tremayne announced for the *Edward Everett Horton Show*; was a featured star on *The First Nighter*; and a regular on both *Lonely Women* and *Grand Hotel*. He hosted *Radio Reader's Digest* in 1947, and in *Wendy Warren and the News*, a serial drama-news show with 3-minutes of actual news at the start of the program, Les played Gil the rich publisher of a newspaper. For a 15-minute show, Wendy had it all!

Musician and band leader **Lud Gluskin** provided the music for *Sam Spade*, *Al Jolson*, *The Frank Fontaine Show* and *Campana Serenade*. His music was heard on *Amazing Mr. Tutt*, *Block and Sully*, *The Ken Murray Show*, *My Friend Irma*, *My Little Margie* and *Sweeney and March*.

Lud was on *The Open House*, a music-variety-interview show that was hosted by Ona Munson. He played on *Grapevine Rancho*, *Passport for Adams*, *On Stage*, *The Orson Welles Theatre* (a prime drama show on CBS), and on *The Sea has a Story* a series about sea dramas that was hosted by Pat O'Brien.

Gale Gordon, who died on June 30, 1995, lived a life surrounded by movies and radio. The film *Visit to A Small Planet* in 1960 with Jerry Lewis is one that comes to mind. Gordon was District Attorney Miller on *Big Town* and Flash Gordon on the show of the same name.

Gale was the first Hood on *Casebook of Gregory Hood*; Mr. Patterson on *Crossroads*, and he played Judy Grave's father on *Junior Miss*. He had a leading part on *Irene Rich Dramas* a serial in 1933-44; he was Judge Beshomer Grundell on *The Penny Singleton Show*, Paradine the spy on *Stories of the Black Chamber*, and he was both Willie the Stork and the Ostrich on *Cinnamon Bear*.

In *Granby's Green Acres* on CBS in 1950, a story about city folks who moved to a farm, Gale played John Granby, a bank clerk who gave-up the banking career for a farming career. Gordon appeared as a regular during a summer broadcast of *Johnny Madero, Pier 23*. Besides Donald Crisp, Gale played Trimble, a newspaper man, on *Johnathan Trimble, Esquire* over Mutual during 1946, and he was a regular performer on *Miss Pinkerton, Inc.*

In his better known shows he was Mr. Scott, the executive of Rexall on the *Phil Harris / Alice Faye Show*, the Blanding's attorney on *Mr. and Mrs. Blanding* with Cary Grant, Rudolph on *My Favorite Husband* with Lucille Ball (she died on April 26, 1989), and of course Principal Osgood Conklin on *Our Miss Brooks*.

Frank Gallop, the one with the deep voice, was the first announcer for the soap *Amanda of Honeymoon Hill*. He also announced for *Stella Dallas* and for *When A Girl Marries*.

Gallop hosted *Cresta Blanca Carnival* on Mutual. He was one of many to speak for *Gangbusters* and *Texaco Star Theater*. You heard him on *Her Honor, Nancy James* in the thirties, on *Prudential Family Hour*, and on *Quick As A Flash*. Frank was featured in some of Milton Berle's comedy skits as well as being the announcer.

Michael Fitzmaurice was in the film *House of A Thousand Candles* in 1936. When Superman was on ABC Fitzmaurice had the lead role. He played Trooper Steve Taylor on Mutual's *Highway Patrol* in 1943. (Broderick Crawford starred in the TV version.)

On the soaps Michael was Brenda's husband on *Brenda Curtis*. He was the host on *Right to Happiness* and the snobbish banker Dick Grosvenor on *Stella Dallas*.

Fitzmaurice appeared on *Tales of Fatima* a mystery show on CBS with Basil Rathbone. He played Bob Hastings on *This Life is Mine*, Colonel Spencer on *Sparrow and The Hawk*, a children's adventure program and he announced for *Land of the Lost*. Mike hosted *Quiz of Two Cities* in 1944 and he announced for *Nick Carter*.

John Brown was in some great films. *The Life of Riley* in 1949 with William Bendix and James Gleason, *The Horn Blows at Midnight* in 1945 with Jack Benny *The Day the Earth Stood Still* in 1951 with Sam Jaffe, Michael Rennie and Patricia Neal, and the 1951 Alfred Hitchcock thriller *Strangers on a Train* with Robert Walker, Farley Granger, Ruth Roman and Patricia Hitchcock. (Yep! Alfred's daughter.)

In radio's *Life of Riley* John did dual roles: the neighbor Gillis and Digger O'Dell "The friendly undertaker." Brown was Irma's boyfriend Al on *My Friend Irma*, neighbor Thornberry on *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, and the character Broadway on *The Damon Runyon Theatre*. He was a regular on the *Mel Torme Show* in 1947-48, (I hope Mel recovers), the son-in-law on the *Gay Mrs. Featherstone* with Billie Burke in the 1945 season, and finally John Brown appeared as the city editor on *The Charlotte Greenwood Show*, and as Melvin the father on *Date With Judy*.

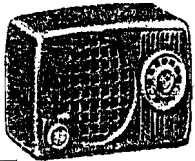
These are my selections for the "Big 100 in Radio" — writers, hosts, directors, producers, announcers, musicians, actors and actresses. I guess the only one's missing are the sound effects people.

I learned a great deal about OTR while researching this article. I never dreamed that there were so many different shows during the Golden Age. Quite a few are complete strangers to me.

Again, I wish to extend my thanks and gratitude to those giants of OTR writers John Dunning, Jon D. Swartz and Robert Reinehr. Were there others that were very active that are not included in this report? If you think so, let me know. I welcome any and all comments.

... And now, I have to be shoveling off! Til next time, don't turn that dial, stay tuned for more.

Footnote: According to research done by the above named OTR writers there were over 2,900 performers (The Big 100 included) that were active at one time or another during the "Golden Age." How do you compare this with radio today? ... You don't!



SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

PEPPER YOUNG'S FAMILY

When *Pepper Young's Family* debuted on NBC Red on June 29, 1936, it was the outgrowth of a rather formidable line of programs originating as a 30-minute light comedy series. The embryonic *Red Adams*, a tale of a middle class American family with a gregarious teenager closely resembling the infinitely more popular Henry Aldrich, first appeared on NBC Blue (forerunner of ABC) October 2, 1932.

This adolescent, who over the long haul would experience the ultimate identity crisis in radio, found himself just 13 weeks later as *Red Davis*. The name change resulted when the fledgling series landed Beechnut gum as its sponsor. That firm wasn't about to offer free advertising to its largest competitor, the Adams Chewing Gum Company — so the *Adams* title expired.

Three years later, when the series first saw the light of day, moving to NBC Red at 3 p.m. on January 13, 1936, somebody got the idea of calling it *Forever Young*. The male teen in the Young family was named Larry. But very soon everybody saddled him with the nickname 'Pepper.' Little more than five months later, the new daytime series made a final turn, reemerging under the auspices of Procter & Gamble as *Pepper Young's Family*. In less than four years it had been known by four monikers. It saw more name changes than any other washboard weeper experienced in the history of network radio broadcasting.

The Young family, in addition to Pepper, included father Sam, mother Mary and Peggy, Pepper's sister. They resided in the make-believe Midwestern city of Elmwood. Sam was a banker while Mary was a typical stay-at-home housewife. Peggy fell in love with dashing young Carter Trent, who had come to Elmwood from Chicago. And Pepper, aspiring to a career as a writer, grew up to become a newspaper journalist, the town mayor and a public relations specialist for an oil company.

When the Youngs faced trials like their peers in other contemporary dramas, the audience could assume that their problems were those any American family might encounter. The characters who encountered their foibles could actually have been *real* people. This was a distin-

guishing characteristic of all of the serials supplied by writer Elaine Sterne Carrington, one of radio's most prolific.

Listeners commiserated with the Youngs over the simplest things in life — including dates, social events and merely paying the bills in prewar depression. The family was referred to daily as "your friends, the Youngs" and this must have appeared so to millions who listened.

In the story line, in the early 40s Peggy Young married the invincible Carter Trent. His wealthy mother, Ivy Trent, became the subject of many an episode to follow. She was the typical meddling mother-in-law, who believed it her duty to manage the affairs not only of her son and his bride but those of her personal secretary and anyone else she felt she could control. She was more than just a domineering relative, however; over time listeners discovered that she was also mentally unbalanced.

Pepper, on the other hand, had been devoted to Linda Benton since childhood. For whatever reason, his 1945 engagement was instead to a co-worker at the newspaper, not Linda. In a poignant episode that summer Mrs. Young revealed that, while she certainly respected Pepper's selection, it had always seemed right to her that Linda become his wife. If Mary Young could be accused of trying to influence the outcome, fans could be sure that she did so out of loving kindness for the welfare of her son. Whether that was the case or not, Pepper ultimately married Linda, and that proved to be a very wise choice.

Meanwhile, the Youngs adopted a young girl, Edie Hoyt, and suffered with her for over a year when her husband, Andy, was lost in South American wilds. Then, Sam Young was accused in a bank robbery, and Pepper set out to prove his daddy's innocence.

But darker days were ahead. When an oil rig fire killed two people and burned half the town, Carter Trent, asleep at the site at the time, blamed himself. As a result, he wandered away from Elmwood, for more than a year living the life of a nomad. Before learning that Sid Grayson was convicted of starting the fire for which he held himself accountable, Trent committed suicide. You can imagine the effect on his already deranged mother. Fortunately, the Youngs were able to pull together and overcome their disastrous blow.

The part of Pepper Young went to three actors. Curtis Arnall, who since 1934 had played the leads in *Red Davis* and later *Forever Young*, initiated the role of Pepper. In 1942, he was succeeded by veteran radio thespian

an Lawson Zerbe. Only three years later, the actor for whom the series is best remembered arrived. Mason Adams, whose resonant voice is still heard as spokesman for Smuckers's jams and jellies and other commercial ventures, was Pepper for the remaining 14 years of the series' life — until it left the air in 1959. The versatile Adams had recurring roles on *Big Town*, *Gasoline Alley*, *Hearthstone of the Death Squad*, *Road of Life* and *Big Sister*, among radio favorites. Later, on TV, in addition to his commercial work, he was newspaper managing editor Charlie Hume on the 70s TV series *Lou Grant*. Adams also made many appearances on Broadway.

Three major figures in the *Pepper Young's Family* cast remained with it for the run. Betty Wragge played Peggy Young Trent; Marion Barney was Mary Young; and Eunice Howard was Linda Benton Young. Jack Roseleigh, Bill Adams and Thomas Chalmers each had a turn at playing Sam Young. And it took six actors to portray Carter Trent, the best known of whom were Michael Fitzmaurice and Chester Stratton.

Young's announcers included Alan Kent, Martin Block, Richard Stark, Bill Lazar, Stuart Metz and Bob Dixon. Its easily recognized theme, "Au Matin," was played simultaneously on the piano and organ by William Meeder.

The program aired in at least a dozen different daytime quarter-hours on all four networks across 23 years. For five of those seasons it was broadcast on dual networks. For one season (1937-38), the series was so popular that it was heard on three networks daily — NBC Blue at 11:15 a.m., Mutual at 1:30 p.m. and NBC Red at 3 p.m. — a feat believed to have never been previously or since repeated. The show's most enduring broadcast quarter-hour became 3:30 p.m., where it settled in for 17 consecutive years (1938-55) on NBC.

Throughout the 40s and until the mid-50s, the series' ratings never fell below 5.0. When it was broadcast on dual networks, the numbers soared into the double digits, reaching 14.4 in both 1938-39 and 1940-41. By 1949-50, it maintained a 9.4 with a single daily airing.

Young is best commercialized as "the Camay beauty soap program," but by the mid 50s it was also pitching for Fluffo shortening. Tide detergent and Joy dishwashing liquid. In the pre-Camay days, Procter & Gamble had advertised Duz detergent and P&G White Naptha soap on the serial. When, P&G bowed out as sole underwriter, multiple sponsors took over the void.



Member's Mike



Dear Editor:

The "Big 100" is now the "Big 101", Jack French, a steady writer for the IP, has submitted Craig McDonnell's name to the "Big List". Craig was the voice of Elmer the Bull on *The Happy Island* radio show heard in 1944-1945 on the Blue Network. Ed Wynn was featured as King Bubbles, the ruler of a Mythical Kingdom. McDonnell played Police Lieutenant Dan Britt on *Official Detective* with Ed Begley on Mutual that ran in 1946-1957. Craig was Captain John Drake on the police drama *Under Arrest*. The show was also on Mutual during 1947-1954.

Jack writes that Mr. McDonnell played both Harka and Irish on *Bobby Benson & The B-Bar-B Riders* radio show. He was Steve Graham on *Family Doctor*, Dave on *David Harum* a daytime Hummert serial drama, and he played Judge Watson on *The Second Mrs. Burton*, another serial drama, one of the last to appear on radio.

In addition to all this, Craig was Dinty Moore on *Bringing Up Father* based on the George McManus comic strip; Daddy on *Daddy and Rolo* and MBS comedy program; the editor of a little town newspaper in the comedy show *Gramps* on NBC in 1947 and lastly he was one of the announcers for a 15 minute drama called *The O'Neills* that was heard on CBS, MBS and NBC during 1934-1943. Thanks Jack for your input. Anyone else have other names that should be included in the "Big 100" plus selections? If so, please write.

Dom Parisi

Dick Haymes
HELEN FORREST • GORDON JENKINS' ORCHESTRA & CHORUS
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What's MY Opinion Against Millions of Others

Jimmy Durante

By Nan Campbell

"Well when I gets this wire telling me I'm to be a radio star I showed it to Bing Crosby. Bing took one look at it and turned pale. He turned pale, I tell you. I ain't saying nothing about it. I ain't saying I'll be the biggest crooner on the air — but what's my opinion against millions of others?"

I understand that Bing has saved his money. I'm glad. I'd hate to see him starving to death. It's a tough break for Bing — having me go on the air. But I ain't saying nothing about it. I just showed him the wire and he turned pale."

Ha-a-a-a! That's Jimmy! Jimmy Durante, the well dressed man. The bon vivant. The hoi polloi of society. Jimmy Schnozzola Durante. Clap hands and cheer three times. Like this — rah, rah, rah! They've captured the elusive pixie, Durante. He's going on the air for Chase and Sanborn. And, according to Jimmy, when he starts to croon into that microphone all the rest of the crooners might just as well book passage to Tiber and enjoy a long rest where there are no radios. But let Jimmy tell about it in his own words. "Now I ain't saying nothing about it. I don't want to get nobody in trouble. I just feel sorry for Crosby — that's all. You know how Joan Crawford has a radio on the set and one in every room in her house so she can listen to Crosby? Hot-cha-cha-cha — when she hears Durante's low tones come across the ether she's going to be wearing radios on her hat and in her shoes. She's going to throw rocks at Crosby. Maybe I'm wrong — but what's my opinion against millions of others? Crosby's worried. He looks sick. I'm worried too. It's about the radio. It ain't perfected enough. I'm afraid they can't get a mike sensitive enough to get the sensitive notes in my voice. Ha-a-a-a-a!"

"They want to gimme an orchestra with violins and oboes in it. Who wants an oboe? Who knows what an oboe is? Who'll hear a violin? All they want is Durante's voice. And think of Garbo. Poor Greta listening to me all by herself in the rain. Crying her eyes out. These dames can't leave me alone. I know this broadcasting game. I've broadcast a couple of times before. At Chinese Theatre premiers they always ask me to say a few

dignified and well chosen utterances to the poor people crying for the sound of my voice."

"Then I broadcast in Hollywood. They told me a picture *Broadway to Hollywood* is opening in New York and they want me. Polly Moran and a few others to assist in a national broadcast for it. What they meant was they wanted me, Durante, to make it a success. That touched my pride to the quick. I got a very tender quick."

"They told me my ancestors, Benvenuto Cellini, Casanova, Dante Aligheri and Lucy Borgia was listening in — together with Mussolini over in Italy. So I yelled extra loud so as they'd be sure and hear me."

"They said I shouldn't yell so loud. Me Jimmy the well dresses man. The Bon vivant. The hoi polloi of society. They says that to me. Then they told me to keep it down to the level of the other people on the program. Jack Pearl — he calls himself a baron which I know is right. He's barren of morals, barren of honesty, barren of soul, I played pinochle with him. Broadcasting is like stud poker. You find out what kind of guys you got around you when you get in it. When I start to broadcast they say 'The air is yours.' That is no treat to me. I've had the air in some of the finest places in New York and in the homes of the elite in Beverly Hills. I tells them so."

"Ed Wynn, who is in the audience, lets out one of them soprano cackles of his. I looks at him sternly. Like the basilisk I seeks to blast him with the fury of my eyes. But is he abashed? Is he confounded by the majesty of my look? No! He says he'll stick to his horse and I'd better stick to my love conquests around the studios. He mentions Greta. That cut me to the quick. Greta and me ain't like we used to be since she chose Jack Gilbert as her leading man instead of me. 'Those is things,' I tells Ed Wynn, 'that gentlemen don't bring up.'"

"At my first rehearsal they gimme a piano and a fellow to play it. We starts together. Then I lost myself in my music. I was inspired by the sensitive tones of my own voice. And I was thinking of Joan Crawford listening in. No piano player is going to make me forget Joan and Greta. I got a duty to my public. They kept telling me the piano player had finished. 'But I ain't finished,' I tells them. Then they tells me that I got to stick with the piano. 'Let the piano stick with me,' I says."

"I want to make a pledge to my radio public. I'll give them the best I got. I'll make them laugh and cry. Chase and Sanborn is lucky folks to have me. Now I don't think I'm so very good — but what's my opinion against millions of others!"

And that folks, is how Jimmy Durante feels about broadcasting. He doesn't want you to think him conceited. His great heart is touched by the sad plight of Bing Crosby — whose vogue will be over now that Durante has taken the air.

I wish you could have seen Jimmy broadcast the first time. Seriously, the microphone limits him. His impulse was to play to the audience in the studio rather than to the microphone. He kept looking up at it all the time to make sure he wasn't too far away. He had to be pretty far away on account of that schnozzle.

In songs he sticks to the letter of the text, but lines he ad libs. And no microphone will ever stop him from doing that. All they can do is call time on him when he has to quit. For when Jimmy gets going he has to be stopped forcibly. He goes mad before an audience. He almost destroys himself in an effort to please.

(Reprinted from *Radioland* - January, 1934)



MAE WEST TELLS HOW TO HANDLE MEN!

Frank advice for all girls from the screen's greatest charmer! Here you will find the answers to all the questions that perplex "dating" girls from one who knows her men! You'll find this story and other great features only in—

DECEMBER

HOLLYWOOD

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HOLLYWOOD'S SINISTER WEB OF LOVE!

Stars must make their choice —if they don't avoid Hollywood's most insidious evil, fame cannot be theirs! Read why in Ruth Biery's absorbing story.

Look for the fascinating stories on Constance Cummings, W. C. Fields, "Curves Don't Make Sex Appeal"—Pert Kelton, Harry Carr's story on the new shirtless movie that will worry censors, Toby Wing on "How to Become a Perfect Chorus Girl," Norma Shearer's True Love Story, a screen romance, "The Prizefighter and the Lady," the pattern service and other features too numerous to mention.

Do You Remember . . . ?

By Stu Mann

PENNY SINGLETON

The actress who became known the world over as *Blondie* was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her name is Mariana Dorothy McNulty and her real hair coloring is brunette.

After attending the Alex McClue School and Columbia University she performed as a singer and acrobat on Broadway in *Good News* (1928). Although she had contracts with both Warners and M-G-M, her only significant part before that of *Blondie* was in *After the Thin Man* (1936) in which she played a night club dancer.

Her name, hair and luck were all changed in 1937 when she married a dentist, Dr. Lawrence Singleton. And the girl originally signed for the part of *Blondie*, Shirley Deane, took ill.

Blondie (1938) the original film, was made by Columbia Pictures. The radio serial which went on the air in 1939 was a summer replacement. Penny in the meantime divorced Dr. Singleton in 1939 and in 1941 married Bob Sperks, who was for a time the producer of the *Blondie* movies.

The Bumsteads became one of America's favorite families. The show included a little boy, Baby Dumpling, who became Alexander and a daughter called Cookie. The radio show lasted over seven years. In the early fifties she worked in nightclubs doing songs and patter to good reviews but the audiences kept waiting for Arthur Lake (Dagwood) to come on-stage. In 1952 she headlined the show at the Thunderbird Hotel in Las Vegas. In 1962 she testified before a House Committee on union activities that The American Guild of Variety Artistes was writing "Sweetheart Contracts" which compelled girls working in strip bars to mingle with the customers, thus encouraging prostitution. That year Penny was suspended from membership.

In 1966 she came to New York where she led a strike by the famous Rockettes, the first in their history, against Radio City Music Hall. It lasted twenty-seven days. She had two daughters, neither named "Cookie".

THE COPYRIGHT EXTENSION TRAP

PLEASE READ! PLEASE READ! PLEASE READ! PLEASE READ! PLEASE READ!

The battle is starting again! Legislative attempts to extend current periods of copyright have failed in recent sessions of Congress. However, the pro-copyright extension forces (the major studios, the publishing industry, the music industry, etc.) are back for another shot at it. Bills were recently introduced in both houses of Congress to extend terms of copyright protection. Current terms of protection are:

WORKS BY AN INDIVIDUAL.....LIFE PLUS 50 YEARS
WORKS FOR HIRE (movies, newspapers, magazines, etc.).....75 YEARS

The proposed extensions are:

WORKS BY AN INDIVIDUAL.....LIFE PLUS 70 YEARS
WORKS FOR HIRE (movies, newspapers, magazines, etc.).....95 YEARS

Proponents of extension argue that the U.S. needs to be in "harmony" with European copyright terms. Yet, current copyright terms in Europe for "works for hire" (movies, magazines, etc.) are only 70 years. That's five years shorter than what we have already.

What copyright extension will mean to America:

There are literally thousands of works, particularly in the area of motion pictures, that are sitting on the shelf waiting for the freedom of the public domain. The large companies that own the rights to them have no intention of ever making most of these works available again on a widespread basis. Why? Because there's no real profit in it for them on the levels of commercial expectancy that they're used to dealing with. So what will happen? Copyrights on all works will be extended so that the major companies can continue to exploit the small percentage of works that are still profitable to them--the rest be damned!

You, as a citizen, author, teacher, documentary film maker, librarian, musician, historian, etc. will be denied access to most these works simply because there will be no one to make them available to you, or because the cost of obtaining them will be far too prohibitive. This means higher prices in the marketplace. This means less material to draw from to create new works. This means less availability of works for reference, historical, and other educational purposes. This means less availability of materials for *your own personal enjoyment*. Sadly, in the area of film, another 20-years of copyright will mean the destruction of many movies which will decompose and disappear forever.

That ain't all folks! If copyright extension is granted, you can bet your bottom dollar that DOMESTIC COPYRIGHT RESTORATION will come next. They've already done this with foreign works via the GATT accord (see page 14). Try to imagine someday having every public domain work from all or most of the 20th century--American and Foreign alike--blanketly restored to a state of copyright. This is *not* paranoia. This could and probably will happen if we don't collectively raise our voices.

The fact of the matter is that, collectively, the major media players are becoming *far too* powerful. Their ability to shape our world and influence the way we think is staggering. They want to control as much material as they can and be paid for all usages of it. All usages. If you think this is more paranoia, think back to the flap over the Girl Scouts of America being asked to pay royalties for songs sung around the campfire, or royalty demands made on private groups for singing "Happy Birthday." How would you, as a librarian, like to have to pay royalties on most of the books in your library? Impossible, you say? It's already happening in many European communities. Extension of copyright is just another enormous slice of influential power that we cannot afford to give away.

What can you do about it? **WRITE!** Don't delay. Write your Senator or Congressman today. Tell them that you oppose Senate bill S.483 and House bill H.R. 604, which will extend U.S. copyright terms. Address your letters to any Senator or Congressman like this:

The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

ALSO: Please send a copy of your letter to as many of the Senators and Congressmen below as you possibly can. They are members of the committees in Congress that initiate all changes in copyright law. We realize this is a lot of envelope addressing, but please, do as many as you can. It's very important. If you've written in the past, PLEASE, do it again. If you've never written before, please do so now. Each voice is important. **PLEASE WRITE!!!**

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If you have any questions at all, please call 541-773-6860. Ask to speak to Greg about copyright extension. You can e-mail us at slinister@magick.net, but it is better to speak in person because of the complexities of the issues. Send us copies of your letters! We'd love to read them. If you would like more informative reading on this subject, Go to ASU Professor Dennis Karjala's anti-copyright extension web-site:

<http://www.public.asu.edu/~dkarjala>

This will give you a much more thorough look at the issue and what's at stake. This site will also provide you with the e-mail addresses of all the Senators and Congressmen listed above should you wish to communicate with them via the net. Thanks so much, and remember--PLEASE WRITE!!

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