

The Old Time Radio Club

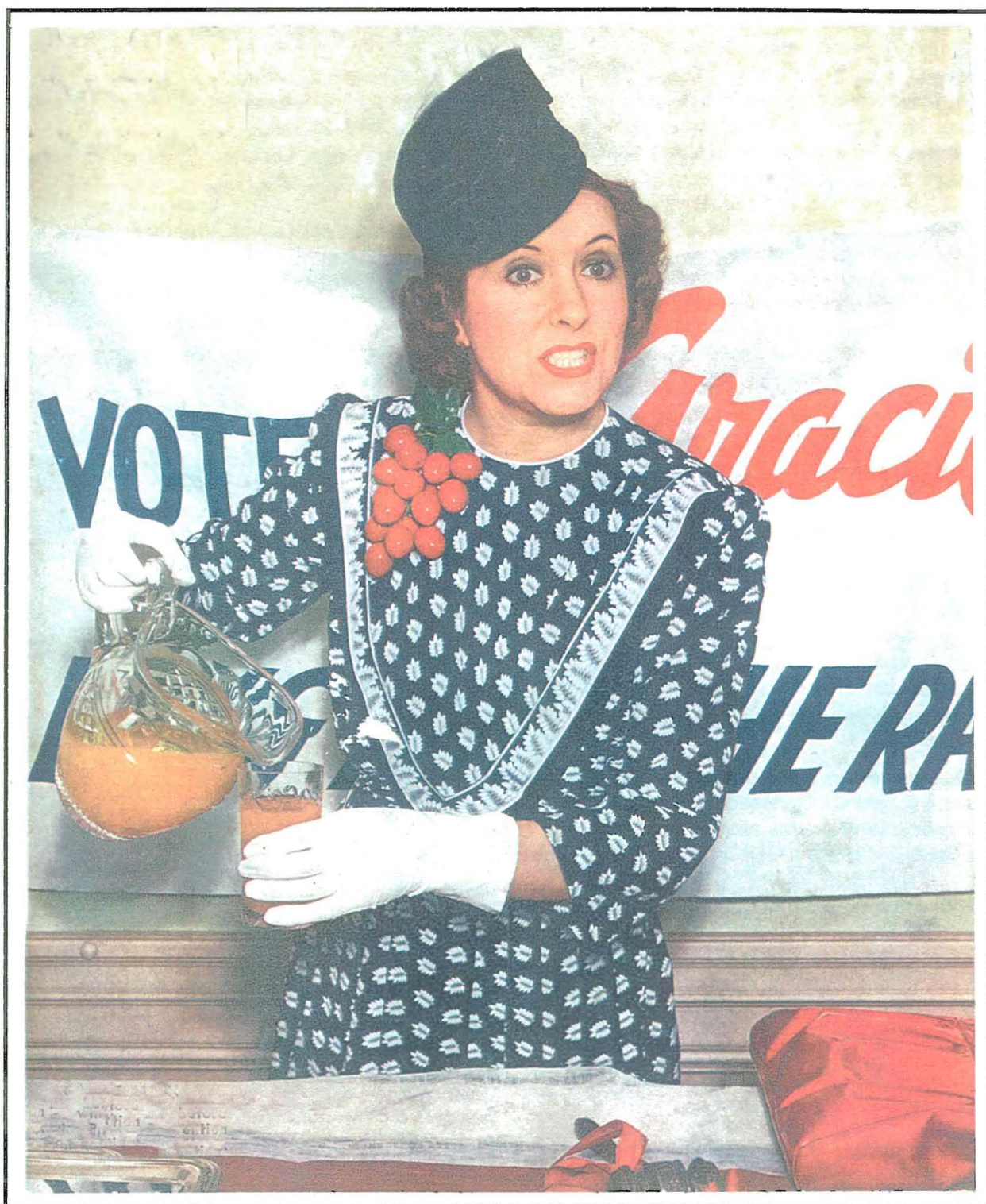
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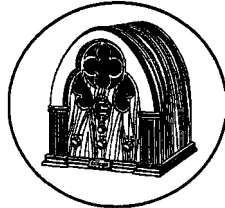


Membership Information

New member processing, \$5 plus club membership of \$17.50 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, \$17.50; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. 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

Old Time Radio Club
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086



Back issues of *The Illustrated Press* are \$1.50 post-paid. Publications out of print may be borrowed from our Reference Library.

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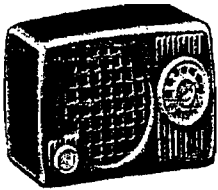
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SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by JIM COX

DR. CHRISTIAN

It was "the only show on radio where the audience writes the script."

Dr. Christian was perhaps the best-known light drama on the air. It has been portrayed as "the *Marcus Welby* of its day." But what really made this borderline anthology distinctive, setting it apart from all other homey dramas, was that its audience *did* write the scripts! They contributed around 10,000 of them annually in most years of the program's long run.

Launched in late 1937, the series [originally *Dr. Christian of River's End*] was specifically created for a soft-spoken Danish-bred movie actor named Jean Hersholt. The efficacy of his role in *The Country Doctor*, a 1936 motion picture, won him a radio drama that was to replicate a typical rural physician. It would also label him with this part for the remainder of his acting career. Hersholt's film character was based on the very real Dr. Allan Roy Dafoe. Overnight Dafoe had become an American icon upon delivering the Dionne quintuplets.

Meanwhile, in the mythical hamlet of River's Bend, Minnesota, Dr. Paul Christian was to become the beneficent character he had played on the screen, yet under a different moniker. When Hersholt was denied the rights to Dafoe's name on radio he created his own: he took the middle name of Hans Christian Andersen, whose stories he loved as a boy. John Dunning observed: "Christian was a strong named: it had obvious biblical strengths and a long heritage in Hersholt's native Denmark. It would work well with Hersholt's Scandinavian accent and would have strong appeal in middle America, where Dr. Paul Christian's practice . . . would be set."

The show was to focus on the interaction of the rural physician and his nurse, Judy Price, in meeting the physical, emotional and social challenges proffered by the citizens of River's End. The series, in fact would permit Christian to live his life helping others in need—"much like *Mayberry* with a doctor instead of a sheriff," media chronologist Martin Grams, Jr. attested.

Paul Christian and the people he appealed to were viewed as hayseeds by industry insiders, most of whom limited their ilk to an attitude of "do-goodism" that was perceived across the nation's heartland. When he wasn't restoring a patient to physical health (at times this seemed but a mere fraction of his pursuits), Dr. Christian was helping those he encountered to find greater meaning in life. He was the kindly philosophical thinker—sort of a community senior advisor—who could put all things in their proper perspective for those people who held even the most jaundiced views. He loved to play cupid and did so frequently. Often he encountered compromised relationships, romantic or otherwise, for which he was called upon to unravel thorny issues separating diverse parties. He even performed acts of heroism, like saving people from burning buildings. Yet when murder became the focus in a single episode listeners protested vehemently to the network. They wanted their homespun tales to remain on the lighter side. [Even Hersholt, the show's star, acquired many of the traits that were synonymous with the role he played. He refused acting jobs that could have left him choosing directions contrary to his categorical character. The actor also took part in numerous helping-hand efforts and philanthropical endeavors, just as Paul Christian did. When listeners contacted him for medical advice he wisely referred them to their local physicians.]

Christian, a never-married encourager (he was an active member of the River's End Bachelor's Club) resided and maintained his practice in a big white house at the corner of State Street and River Road. The waiting room could be directly accessed through a side entrance to the home. From time to time Mrs. Hastings, the good doctor's housekeeper, appeared before the microphone, although she wasn't heard in most installments. Aside from nurse-secretary Judy Price, Hastings was the only other regular supporting character in the drama. Most of the patients and others were heard from only once. That allowed greater variety in casting the show, drawing upon a large entourage of West Coast actors and actresses.

Dr. Christian, also known as *The Vaseline Program* (because it was underwritten by a single sponsor for the duration of its 16-year run and introduced weekly by that phrase), began slowly. Every year for the first three years it was on the air the show doubled its home audience to an estimated 15 to 20 million listeners. By January 3, 1940, when it moved to 8:30 on CBS Wednesday nights—a timeslot it would control for the next 14 years—*Dr. Christian* had become one of the most popular dramatic programs to air. It continued to dominate its time period virtually for the remainder of the run.

Ruth Adams Knight and other scribes penned the show in its early years and obviously did so successfully as the growing audience demonstrated. Somewhere along the path, however, the producer, director, advertising agency and sponsor became enamored with a new notion: the audience might be swayed to take an even greater interest in the drama if they could directly participate in some meaningful way. How about inviting them to submit manuscripts to become the basis for future broadcast stories? It hadn't been done before; at least, not with any fanfare nor established success. It might be just enough novelty to infuse yet greater interest in this little narrative.

In 1941 they unveiled plans for the future of *Dr. Christian*. Manuscripts would be solicited that must adhere to specific guidelines. Authors of any selected for airing would typically be compensated with a check for \$500, a rather tidy sum for unpublished writers in the 1940s and 1950s. Furthermore, each manuscript would compete against all others aired in a given year. A panel of judges would select the story it deemed the best submission each year. The grand-prize winner would be sent an additional \$2,000 for his or her literary efforts. The cash and that recognition were the *ultimate gain* sought by each author—the Dr. Christian Award.

Was the concept successful? Aspiring wordsmiths came out of the woodwork. The first award was announced on June 17, 1942. Subsequent honors were bestowed annually even though neither Hersholt nor the show took summer vacations (although there were rare breaks in 1938 and 1939). The program racked up more broadcast chapters than almost any other weekly radio dramatic series. While *Newsweek* reported that 7,697 submissions for the Dr. Christian Award were received in 1947, in most years that number approached or exceeded 10,000. Over 100,000 manuscripts were collected in the dozen years the competition was held. Those plays that made it to the air espoused traditional values. Interpreting Dr. Christian as the typically altruistic, good-natured figure he had portrayed since the series debuted in 1937. If his saintly qualities couldn't be readily discerned by script readers (and ultimately, the listeners) there was a strong chance that an entry into the contest would never be selected.

Actress Lurene Tuttle, who had the good fortune of playing nurse Price about the time the competition was launched, remembered that some of those submissions were less than satisfactory: "The real [ghost] writers on the show had to fix them quite often . . . because they were really quite amateurish. But they had nice thoughts, they had nice plots. They just needed fixing; the dialogue didn't work too well." [One of the ghost writers, incidently, then freelancing for *Dr. Christian*

was a promising novice named Rod Serling who was eventually destined for greater elevation.]

Despite the fact that what audiences heard might not have been precisely what creatives at home submitted—word for word, at least—some of those so-called "amateurs" were quite good. A few even launched professional writing careers as a result of their humble beginnings. John Dunning allows that this competition, which was absent on other dramatic fare, "may have been the most important single factor in the show's long run." It certainly sustained interest, whether an individual listener ever wrote a script for it or not. It was *different*. It surely contributed to the favorable ratings that *Dr. Christian* enjoyed across the final dozen years the program was on the air.

Jean Hersholt played Paul Christian for the entire run, missing only two episodes across 16-plus years. The part of nurse Judy Price was initially awarded to Helen Claire, then to Lurene Tuttle, who was succeeded by Claire and finally Rosemary DeCamp. Kathleen Fitz was called on to fill in for the part occasionally. The role of Dr. Christian's housekeeper, Mrs. Hastings, was played by Maide Eburne. The show's announcers included Andre Baruch, Perry King and Art Gilmore.

Always a CBS property, with the exception of a brief hiatus in 1938 and 1939 *Dr. Christian* never took a summer vacation.

AN ENDORSEMENT



EDITORIAL: *The Old Time Radio Club, in this Presidential Election Year, proudly endorses Gracie Allen, the Surprise Party candidate, for President of these United States. Her ideals and leadership abilities are clearly outlined in the following arti-*

cle on the next page published in May 1940. To help celebrate our Twenty-fifth Anniversary we have placed her picture (in full color) on the cover page of our newsletter. Please join with us in helping to stuff the ballot boxes in her favor.

"My Friends and Fellow Candidates"

Candidate Gracie Allen Invites you to con Presidential Issues from the Screwball Point of View

By Francis Chase, Jr.

A couple of months ago Gracie Allen was just the feminine half of the Burns and Allen radio team, pioneer radio comics with a large following. This week Gracie will be the official nominee of the "Surprise Party," which holds its first national convention in Omaha unless some smart Aleck throws a monkey-wrench into her smooth-functioning political organization. A few months hence—say, next November—Gracie may be the first woman ever to become President of these United States—to hear her tell it.

If Gracie, rising from the depths of something-or-other to the heights of something-else-again, does manage to nose out both the Democratic and Republican nominees for the presidency come November, then the saga of her rise will be the sort of saga which can be written only here in America. Whether it will necessarily prove that the American way is the best way—well, we'll leave that up to you.

We are able to positively assert that Gracie will be the Surprise Party's nominee at its convention on May 17 because the indomitable Gracie has permitted no other candidate to so much as drop an ostrich feather into her own private campaign ring, much less a hat. In fact, the twenty-five thousand delegates who will cast their ballots in the Surprise Party Convention in Creighton University Stadium on May 17 are not only instructed to vote for Gracie but woe betide them if a dissenting voice is heard. That goes for hubby George Burns too.

If anyone has the idea that Gracie is not taking her campaign seriously, they have but to follow her through the minutiae of a campaign which has rapidly spread to the four corners of the land. Gracie is doing everything that the other candidates do and have done in years gone past—kissing babies, making speeches, making promises—and has added a few wrinkles of her own to boot. In the matter of kissing babies, for example, she is happy to plant a smack on the brow of all girl babies, but when it comes to men babies, Gracie is waiting until they grow up.

"I will make no fireside chats from the White House between April 15 and October 15," Gracie promises voters and radio fans, "It is asking too much and I don't know how President Roosevelt stands it. Washington is

awfully hot in summer, and to make the President stay at the fireside after April or May seems a crime." Which just goes to show that Gracie's approach to matters political is entirely new and wholly refreshing. Walter Winchell was led to remark that the only flaw in her political armament is the fact that her campaign speeches and promises are not half so funny as those of the Republican and Democratic seekers after the same honor.

"If you get to be President, will you let George Burns write for the papers?" we asked Miss Allen. "Don't be silly," she retorted, irked. "He won't have to write for them. We'll just call up and have them delivered." We felt it was time to get down to serious matters involving her candidacy and leave personalities out of it. "How do you think you and the Senate will get along, Miss Allen?" "Well, I've always admired his brother, Mack Sennett, and I don't know why we should have any trouble."

Miss Allen has been giving her attention of late to a study of foreign affairs in view of the grave problems involved in a Europe at war, so our next question concerned the Neutrality Bill. "If we owe it, let's pay it" was her illuminating view of this touchy business. Miss Allen is particularly concerned about the Die Committee. She is heartily in favor of continuing its work. "If we didn't keep the Dies Committee going, who'd color our Easter eggs?" She had us there, so we turned the subject to the matter of the national debt, the Republicans deploring it, the Democrats explaining it. But not Miss Allen. Miss Allen is downright proud of our national debt. "It's the biggest in the world, isn't it?" We were beginning to get a slight idea of why Gracie has become such an important national figure—a threat, if you'll take a liberal definition of the word, to all other candidacies for President in 1940. And make no mistake about it, Gracie is a threat. In St. Louis last month, she received one write-in vote for the presidency although her name wasn't on the ballot. The same thing happened in Chicago. In Menominee, Mich., voters—a bit confused about what Gracie was running for, elected her mayor. Later the city fathers disqualified her because she wasn't a resident of Menominee. "See what I missed," Gracie said. "But then, a person can't live everywhere."

Troop 11, Boy Scouts of America, Mankato, Minn., writes to ask: "What can we do to help your campaign?" Down in Beaumont, Tex., Miss Allen will share the speaker's platform at a young Democratic convention with Elliott Roosevelt and Vice President Garner. ("He's another candidate," Gracie said disparagingly.) In Salem, Oregon, the *Oregon Republican*, a newspaper "for Republicans of Oregon," invites Miss Allen to use its columns in disseminating her platform. You see, party

lines are crumbling before her, and in every part of the land millions—well, thousands—anyway hundreds of voters are getting on her bandwagon.

Meanwhile, Gracie's campaign goes on apace. At the moment, she is busy preparing her keynote address for the national convention in Omaha. Omaha, incidentally, is rolling out the barrel for Gracie, and plump mayor Dan Kelly promises the Allen delegates that the lid will be off May 14-18, period of the convention. The convention, incidentally, coincides with Omaha's Golden Spike Days, a celebration commemorating the completion of the first transcontinental railroad, the Union Pacific. This accounts for the fact that Omaha citizens will turn out to greet Gracie and political machine in beards and old fashioned dresses and for the fact that business establishments in Omaha will wear false fronts reminiscent of the old days.

At first Gracie was rather insulted when she heard about this. "It's like saying grass will grow in the streets of American cities if I'm elected," she insisted to her brother-in-law, who is also her campaign manager. But when it was explained to her, she thought it was a swell idea. As for grass growing in the streets of cities ruled by an Allen, Gracie was emphatic: "Grass? Never! We'll plant pretty flowers instead."

Actual details of the convention are not yet known. "It's a surprise," Gracie insists, "even to me. How can I tell you what will happen there if I don't know myself." The Surprise Party delegates will convene in Creighton University Stadium on the evening of May 17 before an audience expected to be in excess of 80,000 souls . . . and registered voters. Gracie claims that she has the same sort of radio pull that President Roosevelt has, and in addition to what the President gives out on radio, Gracie will have Ray Noble and a hot band. Gracie is thoroughly enjoying the spotlight. She'll tell you about the special train the Union Pacific is running from Hollywood to Omaha for her party. "It's almost like the President's train," Gracie enthusiastically bubbles. Her campaign tour will compare favorably with any yet made by a presidential candidate. First step will be in Las Vegas, Nevada, where Gracie will address the citizens on behalf of her campaign from the steps of the city hall. Next day, in Salt Lake City, Allen supporters will stage a gigantic parade and old-fashioned political rally for her; in Denver, she will speak at a huge luncheon; in North Platte, she will be guest of honor at a political soiree. At some thirty other stops, Miss Allen will address crowds from the rear of her train.

In Omaha, one of the features of the five-day celebration will be the oddest torchlight parade in the history of American politics. Twenty-five thousand heavily

bearded citizens will parade through downtown Omaha with the only light coming from electric torches hidden in their beards.

Whether she is elected or not, Gracie is convinced that the Surprise Party is no flash in the pan but a live and potent political group which will make its effects felt for years to come. Well at least for weeks. To this end, Gracie has busied herself with togging up the party in regular trappings, including a party song, a party slogan and a party symbol. The party song, given largely to urging voters to cast their ballots for Gracie, ends with the lines:
". . . So, vote for Gracie,
Keep voting all day long!"

The Democrats have a donkey as their symbol, the Republicans, an elephant. "Gracie isn't content with anything so commonplace. The Surprise Party has adopted the kangaroo as its symbol—or, to be more exact, two kangaroos. There is a mother kangaroo and, in the mother's pouch, a baby kangaroo. "That ties in so well with our slogan," Miss Allen explained. The slogan: "It's in the bag" The Surprise Party was born at a luncheon in Hollywood—the Brown Derby was the exact site, for the enlightenment of future historians—late in February. Not even Gracie, who announced its formation that day, had any idea where it would lead. In fact, she doesn't yet know where it will lead, although she's fervently hoping the end of the trail will be No. 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C.

"If the voters of America see fit to elect someone other than me to the presidency," Gracie said on the eve of the convention, "then it won't be my fault—" and it won't either. "They'll only have themselves to blame for what they get." On that foreboding note, we leave Gracie to the mercy of the American electorate. Or vice versa.

OUR 25TH YEAR !!

Without the loyal dedication
of our members, we would
not have reached our 25 years as
a club. To them go the honors.
Thank You one and all.
Happy 25th.

. . . *Dom Parisi*

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



JERRY COLLINS

Here I am again with another millennium trivia contest. This one will be more challenging. List your ten favorite supporting actors in radio (Ed Lattimer) and your top ten male supporting personalities (Digger O'Dell). Then switch genders and list your ten favorite supporting actresses (Grace Mathews) and your top ten female supporting personalities (Patsy Bowen).

LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE CASSETTE LIBRARY

- 2663 Boston Blackie "The Sword Swallower"
- Boston Blackie "Master Diamond Murder Case"
- 2664 Boston Blackie "Disappearing Body"
- Boston Blackie "The Jim Williams Case"
- 2665 Boston Blackie "Murder With an Alibi"
- Boston Blackie "Color Blind Accomplice"
- 2666 True Detective Mysteries "Who Killed Bonnie Collins?"
- True Detective Mysteries "Murder in the Horror House"
- 2667 True Detective Mysteries "Shipboard Beauty"
- True Detective Mysteries "Repossessed Wife"
- 2668 True Detective Mysteries "Horror in a Hospital Ward 3/25/37"
- True Detective Mysteries "Rattlesnake and the Barefoot Bride" 3/8/37
- 2669 Challenge of the Yukon #433 5/30/46, #434 6/6/46
- Challenge of the Yukon #435 6/13/46, #436 6/20/46
- 2670 Challenge of the Yukon #437 6/27/46, #438 7/4/45
- Challenge of the Yukon #439 7/11/46, #440 7/18/46
- 2671 Challenge of the Yukon #457 11/14/46, #458 11/21/46
- Challenge of the Yukon #459 11/28/46, #460 12/5/46
- 2672 Challenge of the Yukon #461 12/12/46, #462 12/19/46
- Challenge of the Yukon #463 12/26/46, #464 1/2/47
- 2673 Independence Day BBC 8/4/96
- 2674 Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar "The Hapless Ham Matter" 1/3/60

- Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar "Burning Desire Matter" 12/27/59
- 2675 The Big Show #20 3/18/51 (60 min.)
- 2676 It Pays To Be Ignorant #106 10/13/44 #107 10/20/44
- 2677 You Bet Your Life - Secret word is "Clock" 10/19/49
- You Bet Your Life - Secret word is "Radio" 12/27/49
- 2678 Mayor of the Town "Crush on Joan Andrews" 9/13/42
- Mayor of the Town "Tom Andrews Wants to Enlist" 9/6/42
- 2679 It Pays To Be Ignorant w/Kate Smith 12/8/44
- It Pays to Be Ignorant "Duck" 12/15/44
- 2680 Suspense "Last Letter From Dr. Bronson" 8/15/46
- Suspense "Blue Eyes" 8/29/46
- 2681 Suspense "The Operation" 1/27/55
- Suspense "A Killing in Abilene" 2/3/55
- 2682 Suspense "The Shelter" 10/28/54
- Suspense "Last Letter from Dr. Bronson" 11/4/54
- 2683 Theater Five "Wonderful Stamps from Eldorado"
- Theater Five "Subject Number 428A"
- 2684 Theater Five "Incident at Apogee" 8/24/64
- Theater Five "Outside Time" 9/1/64
- 2685 Theater Five "The Hostage"
- Theater Five "I've Got Your Number"
- 2686 Theater Five "Outside Time" 9/1/64
- Theater Five "The Noon Star"
- 2687 The Lone Ranger "Sign of the Broken Thumb" 11/29/43
- The Lone Ranger "Rats, Lice and Chinatown" 12/1/43
- 2688 The Lone Ranger "Voice in the Tunnel" 11/15/43
- The Lone Ranger "Rats, Lice and Chinatown" 12/1/43
- 2689 The Lone Ranger "Stingaree" 11/19/43
- The Lone Ranger "Dan tells a Story" 11/22/43
- 2690 Mayor of the Town "Amy Lou Goes to War" 9/20/42
- Mayor of the Town "Papa Dear Contest" 9/27/42
- 2691 Mayor of the Town "Susie Roberts/Amateur Contest" 5/5/43
- Mayor of the Town "Susie's Engagement to Star" 5/7/43
- 2692 Walk Softly Peter Troy "Winsome Wildcat"
- Walk Softly Peter Troy "Too Many Maids a Mopping"
- 2693 Walk Softly Peter Troy "Lady Who Loved Larceny"
- Walk Softly Peter Troy "Vulnerable Vixen"
- 2694 Walk Softly Peter Troy "Blue Eyed Brazen"

- Walk Softly Peter Troy "Doll with the Dreamy Disposition"
- 2695 Walk Softly Peter Troy "Blond With the Delicate Air"
- Walk Softly Peter Troy "Repentant Redhead"
- 2696 Rocky Jordan #93 "Broken Wing" 8/6/50
Rocky Jordan #94 "City of Baksheesh" 8/13/50
- 2697 The Whistler "Hired Alibi" 12/5/48
The Whistler "Stormy Weather" 12/12/48
- 2698 Sherlock Holmes "The Noble Bachelor"
Sherlock Holmes "Stock Broker's Clerk"
- 2699 Boston Blackie "The Worthington Ghost"
Boston Blackie "Pierre, The Designer"
- 2700 True Detective Mysteries "Rattlesnake/Bare-foot Bride" 3/8/37
True Detective Mysteries "Horror In A Hospital Ward" 3/25/37
- 2701 CBS Radio Mystery Theatre "Somewhere Else" 4/3/89 (60 min.)
- 2702 Mr. District Attorney "Blackmail Killer"
Mr. District Attorney "Frying Pan Murder"
- 2703 Challenge of the Yukon #431 "Shrimp Togan"
Challenge of the Yukon "Chap"
- 2704 Have Gun, Will Travel "Like Father"
Have Gun, Will Travel "Contessa Maria Desmoulins"

"Pluckin' Memory Strings"

(from the book "Sounds Like Yesterday")

Did you know that Charlie Chan, Nero Wolfe, Perry Mason, Bulldog Drummond, Inspector Queen and Commissioner Weston were all the same man? Or that Mrs. Wearybottom, Geraldine, Old Lady Wheedleduck, Lady Vere-de-Vere, Sis and Molly McGee were all the same lady? You would if you belong to that growing group of nostalgic fans who grew up in the golden days of radio and recapture those days with thousands of tapes of the original programs. These radio buffs can turn on their tape recorders and once again Ivan Shark and his daughter Fury have captured Captain Midnight and his young sidekick Chuck Ramsey. They reach for the Key-O-Matic Code-O-Graph to decode the special message from the Captain to all his Secret Squadron Members. And those of us whose decoders have not yet arrived must sit and listen in agony as the message is spelled out number by number, and we can only guess at what those magic numbers might reveal.

Captain Midnight is alive and well, in hundreds of homes where his programs are a part of growing tape libraries collected by those of us who prefer the enter-

tainment offered by old-time radio to what's available on television or in the movies today. We close our eyes and years roll away . . . back to a time when a twist of the dial could send us wing-on interplanetary adventures with Buck Rogers or off to the T-M Bar Ranch with Tom Mix and his Ralston Straight-Shooters. Giants ruled the airwaves in those golden days. I first heard the Lone Ranger in the mid-1930s and the actor playing the part at that time was Earl W. Graser. John Todd a former Shakespearian actor was the faithful Indian companion Tonto who nursed the Ranger back to health after an ambush. Remember when Tonto made a black mask out of the Ranger's vest and dubbed him the Lone Ranger. Remember when Tonto would refer to the Lone Ranger as "Kemo Sabe?" According to the story the words meant "Faithful Friend". Something else you might not have known about the Lone Ranger. He was a blood relative of the Green Hornet's father!

That program like many of the other great shows, was broadcast live for more than 20 years. The pounding of horses' hooves were created with coconut shells hitting different surfaces, and the gun shots were rat traps hitting an empty tin drum. But they were far more real to us than the blood-spattered shoot-outs of "The Godfather" or "Bonnie and Clyde". The first national radio programs went crackling out over the airwaves in 1921, but what was an average radio day at the height of it's popularity in the 1940s? For one thing the time was different then. Had you forgotten that we were on Eastern War Time, Central War Time, and Pacific War Time? Or that the networks were CBS, NBC, MBS and the Blue Network? . . . Sunday was a great day for radio listening . . . although it did not include the traditional soap operas and children's adventure stories. A typical day in 1942 would start with organ recitals by E. Power Biggs, Commando Mary spoke to the home front at 9:15, while those in search of inspiration could turn to the Radio Pulpit, Church Air, Wings Over Jordan or the Salt Lake City Tabernacle. Egon Petri gave a twenty-five minute piano recital at 11:00 a.m. and then it was time for invitation to learning.

Sunday afternoon offered a wide choice of programming. For news analysis you could choose from Morgan Beatty, Quincy Howe, William L. Shirer, Edward R. Murrow, Drew Pearson, Gabriel Heatter, Eric Sevareid and Walter Winchell. If we could only get that kind of variety in news opinions today. Those who preferred cultural programs could listen to John Charles Thomas; the New York Philharmonic Orchestra; The NBC Symphony; Metropolitan Auditions, or the American Album of Familiar Music . . . starring Frank Munn: the golden voice of radio, and Vivian Della Chiesa.

Sundays had something for the youngsters too. There was Stoopnagle's Stooperoos; Aunt Jemima; the Green Hornet; The Shadow (lighting up the 5:30 spot for Blue Coal); One Man's Family; Jack Benny; Fred Allen; Charlie McCarthy and Inner Sanctum to send you off to bed with a creaking door. And that was only a smattering of radio offered in it's golden years. I glance in my closet at the Little Orphan Annie Ovaltine Shake-Up Mug, the Dick Tracy badge that I had to take Syrup of Figs to get, the Green Hornet Ring and the Tom Mix Straight Shooter Medal . . . and memories come flooding back . . . Jack Armstrong with Uncle Jim and Billy and Betty Fairfield. How many scrapes we went through with that quartet! And then that famous trio of rugged characters: Jack, Doc and Reggie, who thrilled us in "I Love A Mystery". They once proved to my complete satisfaction that they could emerge unscathed from a head-on automobile accident while the gang that was holding them hostage was wiped out. "Simple matter of knowing how to take precautionary measures," said Doc. And I believed every word of it.

While we're plucking memory strings, can you go back with me to the days when Van Heflin was that smooth sleuth Phillip Marlowe, or Richard Widmark was filling the columns as Front Page Farrell? There were so many heroes in those days: Bulldog Drummond, Ellery Queen, Martin Kane, Mr. Keene, Tracer of Lost Persons and Mr. District Attorney, "champion of truth, guardian of our fundamental right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness . . . and it shall be my duty as District Attorney, not only to prosecute to the limit of the law all persons accused of crimes perpetrated within this county but to defend with equal vigor the rights and privileges of all it's citizens."

People complain that television's golden hours of drama are over, pointing to Philco Playhouse, the Armstrong Circle Theatre and Playhouse 90 as examples. But do they remember when radio gave us the Columbia Workshop, the Mercury Theatre, Lux Radio Theatre, Screen Guild Players, Family Theatre, Grand Central Station, Helen Hayes Theatre and so many other dramas? Do you remember "Roses and Drums" or "The War of the Worlds"? Were you listening when Spencer Tracy and Pat O'Brien did "What Price Glory?" or Loretta Young and Orson Welles starred in "Jane Eyre"? That was when Lux presented Hollywood with "Ladies and gentlemen your producer, Mr. Cecil B. DeMille." Name any star of stage, screen and radio who didn't appear on the Lux program, and you have a better memory than I have.

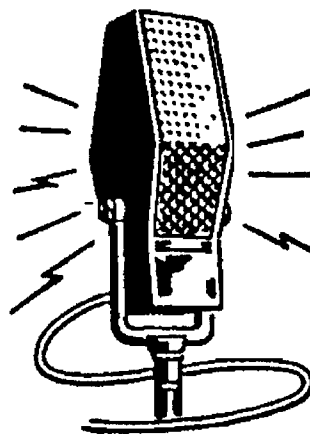
I guess Mr. First Nighter was my favorite, with Barbara Luddy and Les Tremayne, starring in the Little Theatre Off Times Square. Our seats were always third row

center, and there was always an usher to inform us "smoking in the downstairs and outer lobby only, please." Whatever the adventure or love story on the stage that evening, we built the sets in our own "minds eye" and we could see the action just the way we wanted it to take place. Was Barbara Luddy tall and blond or a short brunette? She was what you wanted her to be just by using your imagination. And that dulcet voice never let you down.

Ed Wynn, Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Bob Hope and Red Skelton. If we could only walk down Allen's Alley again and hear Senator Claghorn, Titus Moody, Mrs. Nusbaum and "mine husband Pierre," I'd gladly trade all the so-called situation comedies on TV for the privilege.

Of course, my favorites might not have been your favorites. Maybe you didn't care for Easy Aces and the malaprops of Jane Ace. (Remember when she wanted to go into acting: ("I get the smell of the old goose-grease: I want to get behind the footnotes; I want to see my name up in tights"). Or perhaps you were one of the few people in the United States who didn't stop everything to hear the Amos and Andy Show. One night Andy had bought a house and he asked Kingfish what he thought of the deal. "Andy," he said, that is a stucco house . . . and you is the stuckee.") Perhaps you preferred Morton Downey or Perry Como. Fanny Brice or the Great Gildersleeve. Whatever your favorite was, use your

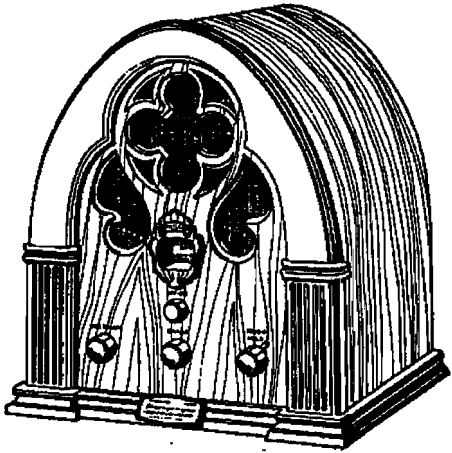
imagination. Pretend you are now seated by your old Atwater Kent, or was it an old RCA Radiola 60? You have just made up a big bowl of hot popcorn and your family is gathered around you as you turn back the years and listen . . . and listen . . . and listen.



Owens L. Pomeroy

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49 Regal Street
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The PEMCO/REPS Radio Showcase

June 30 - July 1, 2000

"OTR Treasures"



With Norman Corwin, Alan Young and 20+ other wonderful Performers

The PEMCO/REPS Radio Showcase is taking shape nicely according to Co-Chair Mike Sprague. "We have heard from all our returning OTR friends that we call 'The Company.' Almost all are coming back, and we're delighted. They create such a special, warm chemistry and each year is totally different."

RETURNING GUESTS

Douglas Young...Alan Young...Rhoda Williams...Anne Whitfield Phillips
Janet Waldo...Ginny Tyler...Gil Stratton, Jr....Norma Jean Nilsson...Tyler McVey
Jo Anna March...Merrill Mael...Art Gilmore...Ray Erlenborn...Herb Ellis
Sam Edwards...Stewart Conway...Frank Buxton...Dick Beals...Harry Bartell
Esther Geddes McVey...Randy McMillan...The 88th Street Band

Live music will be provided by returning friends

NEW GUESTS

Sprague added that three first time Showcase guests will be on hand too.
"We feel extremely fortunate to have the three new attendees who have agreed to come."
Norman Corwin...Jack Edwards...Jane Webb

THE PROGRAM

At present, PREPS believes that they will be doing
"Dr. Christian" "Vic & Sade" "My Client Curly" "Romance"
Two other re-creations are being selected with the performers in mind.
Panels tentatively include Radio's Most Memorable Commercials; Radio's Top 10
Actors; Stop The Music; Interviews with Stars and more. There will again be a
Vendor's Room with OTR and other nostalgia merchandise.

OTHER DETAILS

Where? Seattle Center...The Newest Rooms
When? Friday, June 30 3 PM - 9 PM Saturday, July 1 8:30 AM - 9:15 PM
Cost? Entire program for REPS members \$77 non-members \$89
Hotel? Comfort Suites (4/10ths of a mile away) 1-800-228-5150

For registration information, contact Mike Sprague, 9936 NE 197th St,
Bothell, WA 98011 Phone 425-488-9518 email hrrmikes@aol.com