

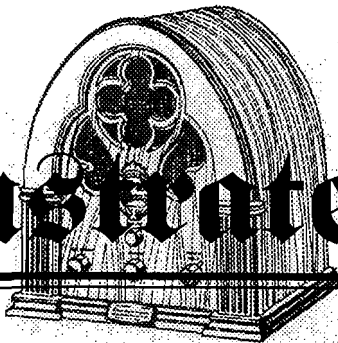
The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

# The Illustrated Press

Number 301

June 2002



**BOBBY BENSON**

# The Illustrated Press

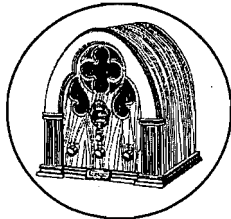
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## Membership information

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 7:39 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



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## Ed WANAT'S Clips

(This column is made up of clippings from various publications gathered over the years by Ed Wanat)

### Durante Makes Heaven Brighter

By David Ragan

For 10 years at the start of his career, Jimmy Durante never talked to his audience from the stage "because I was afraid dey would laugh at me." And he was right—they did. He kept them laughing for so many years, that millions mourned when the "Schnozzola" died at age 86.

His unconventional looks—tiny eyes and gargantuan nose—caused him a lot of pain when he was growing up on New York's Lower East Side. "Every time I went down the street I'd hear: 'Look at the big-nosed kid!' And when anybody'd stare, I'd just sneak off."

He played honky-tonk piano in New York clubs, accompanying singing waiter Eddie Cantor, and even had his own Club Durante. But it wasn't until he met young comic Eddie Jackson that Jimmy let his natural humor shine through. The team of Lou Clayton, Durante and Jackson took the country by storm in the late 1920s.

He starred on Broadway, played in 43 movies, performed on radio and TV and at the White House. His kindness was so apparent, one friend said: "You can warm your hands on this man." Comedian Joey Bishop drove 90 minutes each way every week to visit the ailing Durante. "Without Jimmy I'd have no career," hop told the *Globe*. "He encouraged me at the start, when things weren't going right. He paid the rent when I was short. He brought me meals. He helped me work out comedy routines."

George Raft, Durante's life-long pal, told *The Globe*: "He helped so many, many people over the years. He was the first to help a charity, the first to offer to perform at all the benefits."

Fans loved Durante because he made them laugh and feel better about themselves. The songs he wrote and performed like "Inka Dinka Doo" and "I Ups to Him and He Ups to Me" became national favorites.

His catchy phrases were known to all: "Everybody wants to get inta de act!," "It's da condishuns dat prevail." and "Goodnight Mrs. Calabash, wherever you are."



Jimmy and his wife Marge adopted this tiny baby girl in 1962. They named their new daughter Cece.

The last series meant a great deal to him because he was teamed once more with his buddy, Eddie Jackson. It was on this show that he worked with some of the most famous comedians and gave others their start.

Milton Berle told *The Globe*: "He was a pioneer on radio and TV . . . all of us will miss his company."

Jack Carter added "He got me on his old TV shows—and I learned so much. But I guess I'm only one of a thousand comics he's helped." Marty Allen Agreed: "Without Jimmy's help I'd probably be driving a cab."

Sammy Fain summed it up: "I'd like to write a song just for Jimmy," he told *The Globe*. "But how do you put into words all the good he has done. All the love he has inspired." Said Joey Bishop: "Though the world will be sadder for his going, heaven will be brighter."

So goodnight Jimmy Durante, wherever you are.



Daughter Cece brought him much joy during his life. Even her piano clinkers were music to his ears.



## JUST THE FACTS MA'AM

By Frank C. Boncore

### *The 2002 Cincinatti Radio Convention*

Every spring I look forward to seeing my old friends at the Cincinatti Old Time Radio Convention in Sharondale, (just north of Cincinatti) Ohio. I have a daughter in Atlanta, Georgia, a daughter, grand daughter and son-in-law in South Carolina. This also gives me a chance to visit them and get a preview of spring; since the week before, we had snow in West Seneca (just south of Buffalo).

The Cincinatti Radio Convention can be looked at as a friend away from home. And one could consider himself a guest of Bob Burchett. This year was no exception. With directions hot off the Internet, I drove straight to the hotel. It is amazing that the Internet gives you portal-to-portal instructions. The mileage and drive time. Most of the hotel speaks some kind of English. There are other hotels and several restaurants in the area.

Radio Memories, Great American Radio, Vintage Broadcasts, The Shadows Sanctum, Barry Hill and several other dealers were present. There was a great selection of radio shows on cassette, CDs for yuppies and those who think they're yuppies. DCVDs for computer heads and even some (not much) on reel-to-reel (for old farts). There was also a selection of movies and (ugh) television shows on video.

I was impressed by Ted Davenport and Tom Monroe of Radio Memories. If you were a first-time visitor to the convention, or you were under 16 years old, you were presented with an old time radio cassette of your choice. What a dvds way to pass on the hobby to the next generation. By the way, Ted donated an additional fifty cassettes to our library in addition to the 125 cassettes that were waiting for Dick Olday when he arrived home. No one has done more to increase our library than Ted Davenport. By the way, Ted is re-releasing the shows from South Africa (SF 68, The Avengers, Lux Radio Theater, Beyond Midnight, etc., etc.) You can visit Radio Memories on the Internet at [radiomemories.com](http://radiomemories.com).

It is always a pleasure to see and talk with Bob Hastings. This year we were treated to "Archie" and "Ethel and Albert". We also enjoyed listening to The Boogie Woogie Girls and Company E (Ed Klute).

Show your support for OTR. Support the Cincinatti Old Time Radio Convention. Don't be a cheat like Frank Bork, Elderly Librarian Emeritus. Hope to see you in Cincinatti next year.

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### *Cincinatti's 16th Annual Old Time Radio Nostalgia Convention - April 19-20, 2002*

by JERRY COLLINS

Although their guests are not as numerous and the crowds not as large, Bob Burchett and company were able to host another great Old Time Radio Convention. Although the dealer room opened Thursday evening, the convention was basically a Friday and Saturday event.

At 9:00 Friday morning the dealer room opened. It was good to see Martin Grams, Jr., Leo Gawroniak, Jerry Randolph, Barry Hill as well as the wonderful people from Great American Radio, Radio Memories, Satellite Productions as well as the many other vendors that have become our close friends. I think Frank Boncore and I left a little bit of our money at all their tables. I even found an autographed picture of one of my favorite baseball players, Warren Spahn.

On Friday evening we were treated to a comical episode of the *Our Miss Brooks Show*. Mr. Conklin was convinced that he could improve discipline by placing tight controls on the flow of traffic at the school.

After a few hours in the dealer room on Saturday, we were treated to another great *Ethel and Albert Show*. Rosemary Rice replaced Peg Lynch, who remained home with her husband who had recent surgery. This was followed by an episode of *A Date With Judy*. After dinner *Ethel and Albert* returned with another cute episode. The evening concluded with a hilarious episode of *Archie Andrews* featuring Rosemary Rice, Bob Hastings and Hal Stone in their original roles. Mr. Andrews thought he could save money by wallpapering a room by himself.

Throughout the weekend we were also entertained by the songs of the Boogie Woogie Girls with Ed Chute on the piano.

## Cincinatti's 16th Annual Old Time Radio & Nostalgia Convention

By Richard A. Olday

Before I begin, I want to thank the following old time radio dealers for the contributions to our club library. In alphabetical order:

- 1.) Leo Gawroniak, P.O. Box 248, Glen Gardner, NJ 08826
- 2.) Great American Radio, P.O. Box 504, Genesee, MI 48437
- 3.) Radio Memories, 4618 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 169, N. Little Rock, AR 72116-7356
- 4.) Vintage Broadcasts, 42 Bowling Green, Staten Island, NY 10314

The above dealers have extensive catalogs and sell quality shows at very reasonable prices. When ordering from them, tell them that the Old Time Radio Club sent you.

On Thursday, April 18, I drove 435 miles to Cincinatti to attend another convention. After arriving and checking in the motel (20 minutes and nobody was ahead of me) a group of fans (many good friends I only see at the conventions) and I ate dinner at a local barbecue restaurant. Bob Burchett was giving me directions so it only took twice as long to get there. After dinner we went back to the motel to rest up for the convention.

Bright (?) and early Friday morning, I went into the dealer's room to spend lots of money buying many goodies for my collection. I spent all morning visiting with the various dealers and spending money. Unfortunately the air conditioning was not working in this room and it was very hot. The temperature was 91 when I arrived on Thursday and it was still very warm on Friday. Finally, portable units were installed but they did little to cool down the room unless you stood in front of them. But a little discomfort did not stop us from gathering the various items on sale.

Friday evening's program included the Boogie Woogie Girls performing in the style of the Andrews Sisters. As usual they gave a great performance of Andrews Sisters songs. This was followed by a *Baby Snooks* skit (one of my favorite comedy programs). Concluding the night's program, an original and very funny script of *Our Miss Brooks* was recreated starring Rosemary Rice as Miss Brooks, Hal Stone as Walter Denton and Bob Hastings as Osgood Conklin. Osgood had a great(?) idea to create one way traffic in the school hallways. As usual, this created more problems than it solved and finally Miss

Brooks has to save Mr. Conklin from the wrath of Mr. Stone (head of the school board). Great performances by all greatly enhanced the funny script and all in attendance enjoyed the show.

Saturday morning was reserved for more trips to the dealer's room. At 1:30 in the afternoon we were treated to an *Ethel and Albert* skit starring Rosemary Rice and Bob Hastings. Although Peg Lynch was unable to attend, she supplied the funny scripts for *Ethel and Albert*. Rosemary stepped in for Peg and did an excellent job as did Bob. Then the Boogie Woogie Girls performed more Andrews Sisters songs. Next up was a recreation of *A Date With Judy* with Rosemary as Judy, Hal Stone as Oogie Pringle and Bob Hastings as father. Thanks to all for another recreation. Next up was a raffle of tons of donated merchandise by the various dealers conducted as usual by the very hard working Bob Newman.

I arrived early Saturday evening for cocktails and dinner. Natalie and Jerry Collins and Frank Boncore were at the same table with me. Following dinner, there was a tribute to the late Dave Warren by Gary Yoggy, request time with Ed Clute, another hilarious *Ethel and Albert* presentation with Rosemary and Bob, the Boogie Woogie Girls and the highlight of the evening an *Archie Andrews Show* starring in their original roles—Bob Hastings as Archie, Rosemary Rice as Betty and Hal Stone as Jughead. Hal was dressed in a Jughead shirt and beanie. He claimed that Bob had complained that he was never properly dressed so he pulled out a necktie from underneath his shirt to be "properly dressed". The show featured Mr. Andrews trying to save money by wallpapering the living room by himself instead of spending \$50. As you may have guessed, it winds up costing him a lot more by doing it himself. Another great evening of old time radio entertainment.

Anxious to return home, I was on the road early Sunday morning for the 6-1/2 hour drive back to Buffalo. I did not return alone, I had numerous items bought at the show and best of all great memories of the convention—the entertainment and great friends that I was able to see again. Thanks to Bob Burchett, Bob Newman and everyone else involved in running another great convention. Looking forward to next year.

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**RADIO BEAUTY CONTEST:** Miss Hilda Brooks won first prize in the first radio beauty contest in the USA. It was conducted by a Cincinatti, Ohio radio station. Thousands of fans from many states voted by telegraph for her on the strength of a description of her plus her pleasing laugh and the sound of her broadcasting voice.

Source: NY Times Midweek Pictorial, March 6, 1924.

## *The Illustrated Press*

### LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE CASSETTE LIBRARY

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| 3037 | Great Gildersleeve "Breach of Promise"<br>12/17/44  | 3053 | Let George Do It "The Ant Hill" 5/15/50<br>Let George Do It "Portuguese Cove" 5/22/50                         |
|      | Great Gildersleeve "Christmas Party"<br>12/24/44  | 3054 | Let George Do It "No Way Out" 10/1/51<br>Let George Do It "A Crime Too Simple"<br>10/22/51                    |
| 3038 | Great Gildersleeve "Leroy Makes Nitro"<br>12/27/44  | 3055 | Let George Do It "Cause for Thanksgiving"<br>11/20/50<br>Let George Do It "Nothing But the Truth"<br>11/27/50 |
|      | Great Gildersleeve "Leila Leaves for Atlanta"<br>12/20/42   | 3056 | Let George Do It "Woman In Black" 11/29/51<br>Let George Do It "Destination Danger"<br>11/19/51               |
| 3039 | Great Gildersleeve "Playing Golf" 5/9/43<br>Great Gildersleeve "Buying the Burton House"<br>5/26/43 | 3057 | Let George Do It "The Meddler" 11/26/51<br>Let George Do It "Off The Record" 12/3/51                          |
|      | Great Gildersleeve "Election Day" 11/5/44   | 3058 | Let George Do It "The Last Payoff" 12/10/51<br>Let George Do It "Off The Record" 12/3/51                      |
| 3040 | Great Gildersleeve "New Woman in Gildy's<br>Life" 11/26/44  | 3059 | Let George Do It "Stolen Goods" 12/17/51<br>Let George Do It "A Matter of Honor" 1/21/52                      |
| 3041 | Great Gildersleeve "Bullard Moves Across the<br>Street" 4/29/44                                     | 3060 | Let George Do It "Bad Little God" 1/14/52<br>Let George Do It "A Matter of Honor" 1/21/52                     |
|      | Great Gildersleeve "Marjorie Has Boyfriend<br>Problems" 5/6/45                                      | 3061 | Let George Do It "Common Denominator"<br>1/28/52<br>Let George Do It "The Darkest Shadow"<br>3/10/52          |
| 3042 | Great Gildersleeve "Gildy Learns to Samba"<br>2/1/50  | 3062 | Let George Do It "Three Times and Out"<br>3/17/52<br>Let George Do It "The Greystone Ghost"<br>3/24/52        |
|      | Great Gildersleeve "Visit with Bronco's<br>Parents" 1/25/50   | 3063 | Let George Do It "Framed for Hanging"<br>9/24/51<br>Let George Do It "The Forgotten Murder"<br>4/14/52        |
| 3043 | Great Gildersleeve "Leroy's Laundry<br>Business" 8/20/52  | 3064 | The Whistler "X Marks the Murder" 8/20/45<br>The Whistler "Phone Calls from Death" 9/10/45                    |
|      | Great Gildersleeve "Cousin Emily Pays a<br>Visit" 8/27/52   | 3065 | The Whistler "Jackson Street Affair" 3/18/51<br>The Whistler "His Own Record" 3/25/51                         |
| 3044 | Great Gildersleeve "Dr. Olson is a Rival"<br>11/18/53   | 3066 | CBS Mystery Theater "The Master Minds"<br>8/11/60   |
|      | Great Gildersleeve "Secretary to Elk's Club<br>Dance" 10/9/53                                       | 3067 | Dragnet "The Big Lift" 4/27/54<br>Dragnet "The Big Step" 5/4/54   |
| 3045 | Great Gildersleeve "Date with Two Women"<br>10/8/52   | 3068 | The Clock "Hollywood Heartbreak"<br>The Clock "A Ronald Murder"   |
|      | Adventures of Philip Marlowe "Lonesome<br>Reunion" 2/12/49  | 3069 | Space Force "Threshold of Stars"<br>Space Force "Marooned in Space"   |
| 3046 | The Whistler "Body wouldn't stay in Bay" 1/8/45   | 3070 | Lux Radio Theatre "Grisley Millions" 3/19/45  |
|      | The Whistler "Two for the Money" 1/1/45   | 3071 | Bob Hope "Lt. Com. Wayne Morris" 10/28/45<br>Bob Hope w/Mel Blanc & Francis Langford<br>10/23/45              |
| 3047 | Romance "Golden Face" 11/12/55  | 3072 | Jimmy Durante w/Van Johnson 3/10/48<br>Jimmy Durante w/Dorothy Lamour 4/7/48                                  |
|      | Romance "Winds of June" 9/24/55   | 3073 | Frank Race "The Reckless Daughter" 7/10/49<br>Frank Race "The Silent Heart" 7/17/49                           |
| 3048 | Romance "One Way Trip"  | 3074 | Romance "Winds of June" 9/4/55<br>Romance "Golden Face" 11/12/55  |
|      | Romance "Other Side of Jordan" 2/18/56  | 3075 | The Whistler "Final Pages" 8/24/52<br>The Whistler "Secrets of Chalk Point" 9/7/52                            |
| 3049 | Romance "Enchanted Voyage" 2/11/56  |      |   |
|      | Romance "San Francisco Incident" 2/4/56   |      |   |
| 3050 | Stars Over Hollywood "Truth Pays Off"<br>3/15/52  |      |   |
|      | Stars Over Hollywood "Love Tree" 3/22/52  |      |   |
| 3051 | Theatre Five "The Contract Maker" 11/14/64  |      |   |
|      | Theatre Five "A Little Piece of Candle"<br>11/18/64   |      |   |
| 3052 | Let George Do It "Every Shot Counts"<br>10/31/49  |      |   |
|      | Let George Do It "The Dark Chain" 11/17/49  |      |   |

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- 3076 Fibber McGee & Molly "Community Chest Bazaar" 10/18/40  
Fibber McGee & Molly "Making Cloth from Paper" 10/11/49
- 3077 Fibber McGee & Molly "Night School" 9/26/50  
Fibber McGee & Molly "Stomach Ache" 10/3/50
- 3078 Broadway is My Beat "Charles Crandall" 5/12/51  
Blondie "Alexander's Valentine Program"
- 3079 Lux Radio Theatre "Love Crazy" 10/5/42
- 3080 Lone Ranger "Blackie Morris and Scar Manwalo" 12/25/46  
Our Miss Brooks "Teacher's Christmas" 12/25/49
- 3081 Amos 'n' Andy "Tries to Evict Leroy" 11/11/47  
Amos 'n' Andy "Mail Order Bride" 1/13/48
- 



### A Book Review

by Thomas Hanley

#### SAY GOODNIGHT, GRACIE The Last Years of Network Radio

A new composition by Jim Cox (a former columnist for The Illustrated Press) is being released by McFarland & Company in September 2002. The author has written two previous books pertaining to selected segments of old time radio: 1) *The Great Radio Soap Operas* and 2) *The Great Audience Participation Shows: Seventeen Programs from the 1940s and 1950s*.

In his latest work he sets the stage and goes behind the scenes to explain how certain events eventually led to the demise of network radio programming. An introduction to the decade of the 1950s gives the reader a feel for what was happening at the time. The postwar period, a booming economy, the Korean War, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and most importantly from the standpoint of radio, the rise of early television.

The decade is examined in three chapters, each a range of years: *The Early Years: 1950-1953*, *The Middle Years: 1954-1956* and *The Later Years: 1957-1960*. In the Early Years chapter an explanation is given about the intense competition between the major radio networks during the late 1940s and how CBS, under the guidance

of William S. Paley, conducted a talent raid on the other networks. NBC and ABC stars were won over by CBS, the list included such major entertainers as Freeman Godson and Charles Correll (Amos 'n' Andy), Jack Benny, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Edgar Bergen, Bing Crosby, Groucho Marx and Red Skelton. In 1950 as listeners and advertisers eventually began moving to television, NBC Radio decided to regain some of its losses by doing some innovative programming. It developed a show which was aired on Sunday nights directly opposite some of the CBS programs that had talent signed away from NBC. A star-studded show hosted by Tallulah Bankhead and featuring "mega-name performers" ran for an hour and a half, appropriately titled *The Big Show*. Other new programs that made appearances during this time frame included a science fiction show called *Dimension-X* and an adult western entitled *Gunsmoke*.

The Middle Years looks at, among other topics, multiple advertisers for programs, Arthur Godfrey, the advent of rock and roll and disc jockeys, the programs originating from Detroit's station WXYZ. The scaling down of the *Fibber McGee and Molly Program* from a half-hour show on Tuesday nights to a daily quarter-hour show airing weekday mornings. During the middle fifties a weekend program created by NBC called *Monitor* began broadcasting for approximately 40 hours starting on Saturday mornings and ending Sunday nights. A look at what was happening in the soap opera world is also discussed.

The Late Years looks at TV shows which were either adapted for radio or were produced as separate radio versions. A few mentioned are *Have Gun, Will Travel*, *The Original Amateur Hour* hosted by Ted Mack, *What's My Line*, *Tom Corbett*, *Space Cadet* and *My Little Margie*. Quiz shows on both radio and television are also looked at along with the scandals that ensued when it was determined that contestants had been prompted with answers beforehand.

An interesting discussion on Charles Correll and Freeman Godsen delves into *The Amos 'n' Andy Music Hall*, a radio DJ show which interspersed music with chatter. Additional facts are presented about surviving soap operas (or "washboard weepers" as tagged by the author).

An appendix of personalities who impacted radio in the fading days, an extensive bibliography and reference notes complete the work. *Say Goodnight, Gracie* is a well-researched and superbly written book put together by an obviously dedicated OTR author. It is highly recommended reading for all OTR fans. (cont. next page)

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SAY GOODNIGHT GRACIE — The Last Years of Network Radio

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bibliography, index

Price \$35.00, Postpaid \$39.00

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# THE LONE RANGER

By TOM CHERRE

Back in the early '50s I still have fond memories of listening to *The Lone Ranger*. My mother's pleas to my father for a new television set were answered by "Wait until they're perfected." Back then the radio was still a fundamental source of entertainment. Eventually, the Wednesday and Friday Night Fights changed his mind, but until then we relied on the radio.

I didn't have the faintest idea where that "Lone Ranger" theme song came from. Rossini's Overture of William Tell you say? I never even noticed that gravel-throat voice week after week belonged to maybe the sheriff, an old rancher, or maybe some crusty old varmit. What I did know was that I rarely missed an episode, and I didn't make a move until the next Cheerios commercial came on.

The roots of the masked man stem from Buffalo's own Fran Striker who was a writer for WEBR radio. George W. Trendle commissioned Striker to write a script for a very unique type of western. Well, Striker came up with almost 3,000 of them. Fran labored 14 hours a day, six days a week for his many duties. These included 156 radio shows a year, two serials for Republic, a daily comic strip and 12 juvenile novels. He did all this for a measly \$150.00 a week. Granted this was near the end of the Depression, but that's still less than 2 bucks an hour. Anyway, Trendle said he wanted a clean fighter, a sort of growing up boy scout. He never shot to kill, except to avenge his brother and the other rangers who lost their lives at the hands of the ruthless "Cavendish Gang." He never drank or used foul language. In fact he never uttered one word of slang in even one episode. He never laughed, or even kissed anyone, except maybe the great horse Silver. He would lay down his life for the

great stallion and vice-versa. The Lone Ranger respected womanhood. In fact he was a bit like Detective Sgt. Joe Friday from *Dragnet*, in that he never mingled with the fair sex. The Lone Ranger was also a religious person asking the Lord for his help on several occasions when the chips were down. Truly, nowhere in the pages of history can one find a greater champion of justice.



Brace Beemer the voice of our hero epitomized the role like no one else could for 14 years. Fred Foy the announcer, and I believe he was one of the best, summed it up "The actor actually absorbs the role he is playing. Foy said Beemer was the Lone Ranger on and off the air. Beemer would do nothing to tarnish this image. Years later when Fred Foy retired from the Lone Ranger series he became the announcer for *The Dick Cavett Show*. Many times Cavett would ask Foy to perform the opening ode of the Lone Ranger, for which Foy was always gracious and glad to comply.

It was the dialog, the great classical music, and the compelling narration that brought us back to those thrilling days of yesteryear. I can still hear the thundering hoofbeats and all the action through the club's many tapes available to us. And I never get tired of hearing "Hi Oh Silver, Away!"



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### ... DELMAR, that is!

Claghorn. As Fred Approached the door with his question of the week, he would make a typical observation such as . . . "The Senator must be expecting company . . . I see an alligator barbecuing in the front yard." At Fred's knock the door would be flung open . . . "Somebody, ah say, somebody's knockin' on mah door! Claghorn's the name; Senator Claghorn, that is! Ah represent the south! Oh, its YOU son."

Sailing into the teeth of this Confederate gale, Fred would courageously pose his question. Usually his end of the conversation became limited to: "Look Senator, I . . . Well, I . . . Yes, I know, but . . ." As Fred bucked the South wind, the Senator would exhort: "What's on your mind, son? Speak up! This is America, son! You got free speech. Go ahead and talk son . . . talk, that is!"

The Dixie dogmatist would respond to Fred's question in his geographic manner. When Claghorn's provincial point was made, he would end the interview with "So long son . . . so long that is! As Fred left, he might wryly comment . . . "The Senator seems out of sorts. His cotton gin must have jammed up on him."

Kenneth Frederick Fay Howard was born in Boston. His early years were spent touring the country with his mother and aunt . . . a vaudeville team called The Delmar Sisters. As a "child prodigy" he did blackface, comedy, and straight drama. During the Depression he worked in his stepfather's olive importing business, which he soon left to open a ballet school. The ballet venture did not work out, and he subsequently became a radio actor. His career flourished.

In 1945, when he was about 35 years old, Kenny Delmar was the announcer on the *Fred Allen Show*. Kenny was an accomplished dialectician. He remembered the voice and mannerisms of a Texas rancher who had given him a ride in a Model T Ford during the early years of the Depression. The rancher had a deep Southern drawl. His speech was loud and repetitious; and his attempts at humor often ended with the final punctuation . . . "That's a joke son!"

Minerva Pious (Mrs. Nussbaum) brought Kenny's rendition of the Texas rancher to Fred Allen's attention. Fred liked the character with the enthusiastic, hard-driving Southern drawl. It provided a perfect outlet for Fred's keen sense for political satire. On October 7, 1945, Fred Allen and his radio audience strolled down Allen's Alley and paid their first visit to Senator Beauregard Claghorn.

The Senator was an instant success. He was mimicked by children at school, business men at lunch, and drunks at bars. He was a national sensation. There were Claghorn shirts, Claghorn compasses (the needle always pointed South), and two Claghorn phonograph records . . . "I Love You, That Is" and "That's a Joke, Son!" In *Treadmill To Oblivion* Fred Allen wrote, "The South didn't resent Claghorn; the Senator was invited to speak at many functions down South, and a number of streets in abandoned sections were named after him." Kenny Delmar did,

in fact travel to Texas and Georgia for special "Claghorn Days". He attended conventions, not as Delmar, but as Senator Claghorn.

More seriously, Fred further noted that Kenny Delmar was a fine dramatic actor who appeared frequently in Theatre Guild Radio shows and in many serious plays. Senator Claghorn was only one of the vocal cartoons culled from his gallery of comedy creations." Delmar played Commissioner Weston on *The Shadow*, and he was a member of the cast on *The March of Time*. He made the "Secretary of the Interior" speech on Orson Welles' famous production of *The War of the Worlds*, and played many other roles on *The Mercury Theatre of the Air*. Kenny was the announcer on *Your Hit Parade* in 1946. He co-starred with Henry Morgan and Arnold Stang on *The Henry Morgan Show* in 1949, and had a five minute Claghorn show on ABC in 1963. He played the Claghorn role in radio and TV commercials.

Delmar made a movie, *That's A Joke, Son* and starred for two years on Broadway in *Texas, Li'l Darlin'*. Kenny was active on television during the 1950s and 60s. He appeared on *The U.S. Steel Hour*, *The Elgin Hour*, *The Goodyear Playhouse*, *Studio One*, *The Armstrong Circle Theatre*, *The Kraft Theatre*, *Playhouse 90* and on an episode of *Car 54 Where Are You?* (11/25/62).

I enjoy the Senator very much. Fred Allen wrote some fine material for Claghorn. I guess he overpowers me just as he did Allen. When Fred reaches the Confederate flag-draped door and raps smartly with the knocker (made from the handle of an old cotton gin); I, like Fred, always brace myself to weather the fillibustering gusts. —Otto Stach



### Editor's Clips

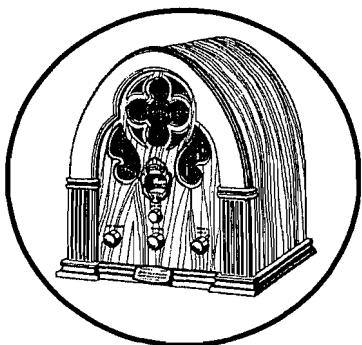
The *Illustrated Press* will not be published during the months of July and August, but will return in September. Your Editor is looking forward to a great summer and hopes the same for you. I hope you like the subtle changes that have been made to the layout of the newsletter. If any of our readers would like to submit articles for publication, feel free to send them in, we're always looking for items of interest.

So far this year with the generosity of members and dealers we've been able to upgrade our cassette library considerably. Steps are underway to catalog our library and you'll hear more on this later.

We are also working on a CD Library of radio shows and have quite a number of excellent sounding shows which will be made available to members. Also more on this later.

## The Old Time Radio Club

49 Regal Street  
Depew, NY 14043



## FIRST CLASS MAIL

# REPS RADIO SHOWCASE X

RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUJENT SOUND-SEATTLE, WA - JUNE 28-30, 2002

### THEME

Each year PREPS selects a theme around which to build the program. This year "Radio Reunions" will provide this glue in a variety of ways.

### PROGRAM

- Re-creations, panels and other features will be woven together to make a very fast paced weekend. Reasonably definite at this point are program pieces featuring the following always subject to change.
- \* The Lone Ranger Featuring Fred Foy in his classic narrator role + LR regular Dick Beals
  - \* One Man's Family Reunion With nine former cast members starring and sharing.
  - \* Imagination Theater Jim French is writing a new radio script, just for our Golden Age actor friends. It will air later on.
  - \* The Halls of Ivy 4 former cast members will lead the way, with a solid Ronald Coleman sound alike.
  - \* Cavalcade of America At least 4 of the gang worked on this show regularly
  - \* Much more in early stages of development. INCLUDING A NEW SUNDAY MORNING SEGMENT LIMITED TO 50.

### SPECIAL GUESTS

Regular attendees know that REPS has been blessed with and by a group of folks we have come to call "The Company." These devoted and talented friends come each year and take on many different roles in many different shows. Always, some of them have connections to the shows that are re-created. It is our hope and expectation that they will be back for yet another wonderful time together. And REPS is also excited about those listed below who are coming for the first or second time.

**CONTINUED THANKS TO PEMCO FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR THEIR GRACIOUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE SHOWCASE.**

For developing information, please check our website at [repsonline.org](http://repsonline.org)  
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