

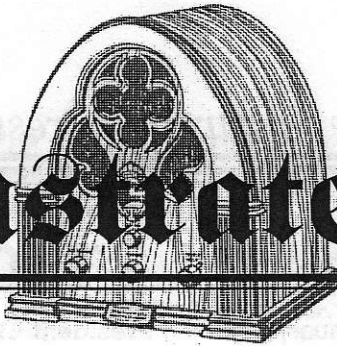
The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

The Illustrated Press

Number 359

April 2008



LAND of THE LOST

Undersea Fairy-Tale Fantasy Triumphs over the Airwaves

The Illustrated Press

Membership Information

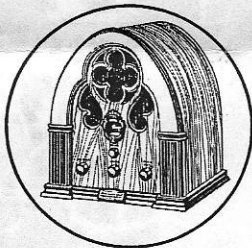
Club Membership: \$18.00 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and the monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$18.00; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing newsletter issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The **Old Time Radio Club** meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 PM during the months of September through June at St. Aloysius School Hall, Cleveland Drive and Century Road, Cheektowaga, NY. There is **no** meeting during the month of July, and an informal meeting is held in the month of August.

Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome. The **Old Time Radio Club** is affiliated with the Old Time Radio Network.

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All Submissions are subject to approval
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**Send all articles, letters, exchange newsletters,
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Library Rates:

Audio cassettes and CDs are \$1.95 each and are recorded on a **club supplied cassette or CD** which is **retained** by the member. Rates include postage and handling and are payable in U.S. funds.

LAND of THE LOST

(Article originally published July, 1945)

In this radio world of kiddie programs devoted to rocket ships and anti-tank guns, it's refreshing to hear an air series which restores children's tales to their rightful field of faerie. Isabel Manning Hewson's *Land of The Lost* can't be located on any mundane map—but it's a worthy addition to Wonderland, Oz, Never-Never-Land and all that fabulous geography which is the literary heritage of youth.



On the air and in the book, it's Billy and Isabel who visit the *Land of The Lost*, with Red Lantern, the fish, as their guide. In real life, it's Raymond Ives and Betty Jane Tyler who play the children, with author Isabel Manning Hewson as narrator of the juvenile program.

Thanks to the magic of radio, young listeners can make weekly visits to this kingdom under the sea, where they find their lost toys miraculously "alive" and well enjoying enchanting adventures. Here, too, they can send messages by shellaphone and shellagraph, see ocean pictures produced by Samuel Goldswim, drink salted milks and eat seanut butter at a sandbar.

Such funny puns appeal to a lively spirit of fun, but the series exerts still other influences on young imaginations. In the past year alone, 5,000 *Land of The Lost* clubs have sprung up, each with its own good-citizen goal—to salvage scrap, establish community lost-and-found bureaus, repair old toys for less fortunate tots.

Much of this response is due, no doubt, to the fantasy's rare sense of real-ness. The only human characters, Isabel and Billy, are re-created from an actual childhood—that of author-narrator Hewson and her own

brother—and the land itself is something the Baltimore-born writer has dreamed about as far back as she can remember.

Now, to top off its success in radio, *Land of The Lost* has come to life between the covers of a book by the same name, illustrated in color by Olive Bailey, and toy manufacturers are bidding for rights to make dolls based on the characters. If this keeps up, blonde, ultra-feminine, real-life Isabel may soon find herself being tagged with the title "the first Disney of the airwaves"!

Mr. Keene, Tracer of Lost Persons

By TOM CHERRE

It was probably the opening theme that turned me on to Mr. Keene. Noel Coward's "Someday I'll Find You" was written for a Broadway play in 1930. Incidentally I heard the song playing as background music for an old Norma Shearer movie while watching TCM. The title was most appropriate for a show called *Mr. Keene, Tracer of Lost Persons*. When the show started way back in 1937 the kindly old tracer was mainly limited to searching for people who disappeared without a trace. Back then the show was heard three times a week in a fifteen minute slot on the Blue Network. Bennett Kilpack played the tracer throughout most of the series 18 year run along with Philip Clarke and Arthur Hughes. Mr. Keene's less than brilliant assistant Mike Clancy was played by Jim Kelly for the duration of the series. Mike was the only one to carry a gun and would usually provide the muscle power when needed.

Beginning in November of 1943 the program changed to a half hour offering on CBS. The famous investigator who sought missing people then became more involved in handling cases almost exclusively dealing with murder. Mr. Keene tended to use his vast knowledge and deductive reasoning, much like our beloved Mr. Sherlock Holmes in apprehending the villain. At the end of each case the fatherly Mr. Keene would graciously extend a heartwarming epitaph to his clients assuring them all would be well. It was a little corny at times, but I guess I like a little corn. Mike Clancy speaking with a hard Irish brogue always called Mr. Keene "boss" and had the most popular catchphrase on the show "Saints Preserve Us" which he usually said on just about every show.

The program had a great run of 18 years from 1937 to 1955. The series had quite a few sponsors including "Bisodol" and "Kolykos" toothpaste. When was the last

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time you heard one of those products mentioned. They've gone the same way as "Blue Coal" and "Sal Hepatica". Oh well, that's another story. If you felt the show had a soap opera touch to it, that's because it was inspired by Frank and Anne Hummert who were responsible for "Helen Trent" and "Ma Perkins".

Mr. Keene is perceived as the kindly old tracer. He might have been my age or as young as Frank Bork. Nevertheless, his age was never a stumbling block in his pursuit of the bad guys. In the beginning of the show announcer Jack Elliott calls Mr. Keene one of fiction's greatest characters. There was a book published by Robert Chalmers in 1906 entitled "The Tracer of Lost Persons". Apparently this is where Mr. Keene was derived from. I am sorry to say that from 18 years of programming there exists only 60 episodes of the series. It's unfortunate for old time radio fans like us. As I said before, I love the theme song and a little corn.



Librarian's Notes

By FRANK BORK

Now that the smoke has cleared and I am comparatively organized in my new home and the Cassette Library is safe on the new shelves I finally found time to build, the Club's Library is ready to serve our members.

"The Dragon Lady," AKA Linda DeCecco, has donated her entire cassette collection to the Club. "The Dragon Lady" informed me when she brought her collection to a Club meeting a few months ago, that she is switching to the CD format for her personal collection.

As I started to check over her collection I was shocked when I saw the Sherlock Holmes cassettes. Has "The Dragon Lady" given up on my hero Sherlock Holmes? Thanks ever so much Linda, when I get time I'll replace any missing cassettes in the Library with yours where ever I can.

P.S. "The Dragon Lady's" collection is well over 100 cassettes. Thanks again Linda.

Last February I received a phone call from Dick Nowack from Holly, NY. Dick had a number of long playing records he wanted to donate to the Club. A week later, I received a large package containing seventeen, 33-1/3

records. They have been added to the Club Library. A big Radio Club Thanks, Dick.

P.S. Dick is looking for a program called, "Those We Love." It aired on Sunday evenings. If anyone can help find copies of this program, please contact Dick or me by E-mail. Richard Nowack, 601 Woodmill Dr., Holly, NY 14470.

LIST OF MISSING CASSETTES

Please consider donating or loaning a copy of any of the following missing cassettes. I will copy, place in the library and return to you. Thanks in advance.

- #395 -The Six Shooter - Silver Belt Buckle
The Six Shooter - Man Chased by a Posse
The Six Shooter - Outlaw's Wife returns to Town
- #396 -The Six Shooter - More Than Kin
The Six Shooter - The Double Seven
The Six Shooter - Swedish Girl's Husband to be Hanged
- #418 -Suspense - Life and Death of Joaqui Murietta
Suspense - Tom Dooley
- #419 -Suspense - Last Letter of Dr. Bronson
Suspense - A Friend of Alexander
- #428 -Suspense - Of Maestro and Men
Suspense - The Empty Chair
- #461 -First Nighter - The One In The Middle
Honest Harold - Cousin Marvin Comes to Stay
Notorious Tariq - Detective Type
- #469 -The Lone Ranger - Origin of The Lone Ranger
- #490 -Lights Out - Murder Castle
Lights Out - Sub Basement
- #500 -Adventure - Eddie And Miss Simpson
Adventure - Ex Private Eye
- #509 -Forcast - No. 4
The Shadow - Wigmaker's of Doom Street
Suspense - The Lodger

The Year 1950 in Review

By JERRY COLLINS

Some of the more significant events of 1950 would include:

1. Two Puerto Rican nationalists attempted to assassinate President Truman on November 1st. The Truman family was living at the Blair House across from the White House, while the executive mansion was being renovated. Truman was taking a nap when Osicare Collazo and Giselio Torresola tried to bridge security at the President's temporary residence. Washington policeman Coffelt was wounded, but before he died he managed to kill Torresola. The

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- assault came to an end when Collazo was badly wounded.
2. North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25th. Thus began the Korean War. Three days later North Korean forces captured Seoul
 3. Russia announced their possession of the atomic bomb.
 4. The Korean War made a major turn when General Douglas MacArthur surprised the Communist forces with the brilliant Inchon Landing.
 5. Seven men stole \$3,000,000 from Brinks headquarters in Boston on January 17th.
 6. *Truth or Consequences* premiered on television on September 7th.
 7. Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were arrested for selling secrets of the atomic bomb to Russia. They were eventually electrocuted in 1953.
 8. The second and possibly the most damaging phase of the Red Scare began on February 9th. It began with Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin delivering a speech to the members of the Republican Women's Club at the McClure Hotel in Wheeling, West Virginia. In that speech he stated that 20 members of our State Department were also members of the Communist Party.
 9. On March 1st Chiang Kai Shek moved his Nationalist Government to Taiwan.
 10. The comic strip "Peanuts" debuted in seven newspapers.
 11. The comic strip "Beetle Bailey" first appeared on September 4th.
 12. Diner's Club issued its first credit cards.
 13. Sister Mary Teresa (Mother Teresa) began ministering the poor of Calcutta on October 26th.
 14. Gloria Swanson was one of the great stars of the "Silent Movie" era. It appeared as though her career was over in 1934, but she made her comeback in the 1950 movie, "Sunset Blvd." She was nominated for an Academy Award but lost to Judy Holliday.
 15. In California a B-29 carrying an atomic bomb crashed into a trailer camp, killing 17.
 16. The one-piece windshield was offered on the new Cadillac.
 17. The United States passed the 150 million mark in population.
 18. Jimmy Dean began his acting career in a Pepsi commercial.
 19. Florence Chadwick swam the English Channel on August 5th in the record time of 13 hours and 22 minutes.
 20. A terrible pre winter storm hit the Midwest delivering 30-50 inches of snow with temperatures dropping to zero.
 21. Sandy Sadler regained the Featherweight title with an 8th round TKO over Willie Pep. Pep suffered a separated shoulder and could no longer continue the fight. Sadler would retain the championship until 1957 when he had to relinquish his title due to eye problems. Between 1942 and 1957 only two men held the Featherweight title Willie Pep (229-11-1 W/ 65 KO's), 1942-48 and 1949-50 and Sandy Sadler (144-16-2 w/ 103 KO's), 1948-49 and 1950-57. They are two of the best in the Boxing Hall of Fame.
 22. At their annual meeting, NFL owners approved an unlimited substitution. This quickly led to the two-platoon system.
 23. On October 15th Al Lien, a pitcher for the San Francisco Seals, pitched a 1-0 17-inning victory over the Hollywood Stars.
 24. *What's My Line* premiered on television in February. The show's first mystery guest was Phil Rizzuto.
 25. The Month of June was quite a productive month for the Boston Red Sox. Four of their top games were; June 4 - Red Sox 17-White Sox 7, June 7, 1950 - Boston 20 - Browns 4, June 8 - Red Sox 29 - Browns 4, June 29 - Red Sox 22 - Athletics 14.
 26. On May 21, 1950, Tiger second baseman, Jerry Priddy, started five double plays in the first five innings of the game.
 27. In 1950 the Boston Red Sox showed a total lack of commitment to baseball integration of baseball in their dealings with Piper Davis. In 1949 Davis hit .378 for the Birmingham Black Barons. He was the leading hitter on the Scranton team in the Eastern League when he was released on May 13, 1950.
 28. Ralph Bunche won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in achieving temporary peace in the Middle East.
 29. Jerusalem became the first capital of Israel.
 30. In London atomic scientist Klaus Fuchs was jailed as a Communist spy.
 31. Television ownership increased to 8 million sets.
 32. Dr. Richard Lawler Performed the first kidney transplant operation.
 33. "Guys and Dolls" debuted on Broadway at the 46th Street Theater. The show ran for three years and 1,200 performances.
 34. President Truman ordered the development of the Hydrogen Bomb.
 35. The Sino-Soviet Treaty was signed.
 36. The Alger Hiss perjury Trials were probably the most celebrated criminal trials since the Lindbergh and Bobby Frank's cases of the 1930s and Sacco-Vanzetti and Scopes' Monkey Trial of the 1920s. Hiss was a top official in the US State Department. On August 23, 1948 Whittaker Chambers, a senior editor at *Time Magazine* and an admitted Communist, accused Hiss of being a Communist spy. Since the statute of limitations prevented a

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trial on the espionage charges, Hiss was charged with making perjured statements before the House on Un-American Activities Committee. The first trial began on May 31, 1949 and ended in a hung jury on July 7, 1949. The second trial began on November 17, 1949 and ended with a guilty verdict on January 21, 1950. Hiss served a 44-month sentence at Lewisburg Prison term from January 25, 1950 to November 27, 1954. Later it was discovered that pressure from Richard Nixon and HUAC caused FBI agents to commit perjury, withhold information, distort information (the reels of micro film in the pumpkin) and switch evidence (the infamous Woodstock typewriter).

37. The first Xerox machine was produced.
38. Otis Elevator produced the first self-service elevator for a building in Dallas, Texas.
39. Saturday morning children's broadcasting began on television.
40. Although the period 1938-50 was not a very successful period in local Baseball history, many great players performed at Offermann Stadium. We did win the International League pennant in 1949, but lost in the final round of the playoffs to Montreal. We also lost in the final round of the playoffs to Syracuse in 1947. Ollie Carnegie had two of his best seasons in 1938 (45 HR's-142 RBI's - .330) and 1939 (29 HR's-112 RBI's). Lou Boudreau was hitting .331 when he left Buffalo to begin his Hall of Fame career in Cleveland. Chet Laabs had 11 productive years in the Major Leagues, mainly with the St. Louis Browns, where he hit 117 home runs and drove in 509 runs. His best year was the Brown's World Series year in 1944. Playing for the Bisons from 1947-49 he had 73 homeruns and 232 RBI's. Coaker Triplett played six years in the Majors, mainly with the Cards and Phils, with 334 hits. He came into his own with the Bisons from 1946-51. During these six years he had 603 hits, 69 homeruns, 359 RBI's. He hit above .300 every year and retired with a Bison batting average of .325. Fred Hutchinson was the league MVP in 1941, with a 26-7 record and a .392 batting average. Other players that made their mark in Buffalo were Hal White, Mayo Smith, Clyde McCullough, Pat Mullin, Virgil Trucks, Ed Kobelsky, Vic Wertz, Andy Seminick, Art Houtteman, Ray Mack, Lou Kretlow, John McHale, Billy Pierce, Paul Richards, Saul Rogovin. Bill Serena, Johnny Groth (30 HR's and .340 in 1948), Luis Aloma, Chico Carrasquell (the pitcher) and Harry Byrd. The future of the Bisons looked good. In fact the 1951 season proved to be a great one for offensive minded fans. We probably had the greatest outfield in franchise history; Frank Carswell (.302), Wally Post (21 HR's-.306), Archie Wilson (28 HR's-112 RBI's-.316) and Coaker

Triplett (.347) coming off the bench.

The following radio shows premiered in 1950:

1. Night Beat
2. Mark Trail
3. The Tales of The Texas Rangers
4. The Lineup

The following teams and individuals won championships in 1950:

1. The Yankees easily won the American League by eight games over Detroit. Their 98-56 record was better than the Phillies pennant winning record of 91-63. The Whiz Kids edged the Dodgers by two games. In a series closer than one might think, The New York Yankees defeated the Phils in four games. The Yanks sent eight players to the mid season classic; Yogi Berra (28 HR's, 124 RBI's and .324 BA), Tommy Byrne, Jerry Coleman, Vic Raschi (21-8), Phil Rizzuto (.324), Allie Reynolds, Tommy Henrich and Joe DiMaggio (32 HR's, 124 RBI's and .322 BA). Once again the Yanks had great depth; Johnny Mize hit 25 homeruns in only 90 games, Hank Bauer hit .320 and Eddie Lopat had a record of 18-8 and Whitey Ford was 9-1. The Phils sent four players to the All-Star classic; Willie Jones, Jim Konstanty (16-7), Robin Roberts (20-11) and Dick Sisler. Their best player was Del Ennis (31 HR's, 126 Rib's and .311 BA). Other key players were Richie Ashburn, Granny Hamner, and Curt Simmons. The Yankees Defeated the Philadelphia Phillies in four games. Vic Raschi, Allie Reynolds, Eddie Lopat and Whitey Ford all pitched strong games giving up a total of only three earned runs. Robin Roberts and Jim Konstanty both pitched well in a losing effort. Gene Woodling led the Yanks with six hits, while Bobby Brown, Jerry Coleman and Joe DiMaggio had four hits. Coleman had three RBI's, while Joe DiMaggio had a homerun and two RBI's. Granny Hamner had six hits, while Eddie Waitkus and Willie Jones had four hits. The Phils failed to hit a homerun and had only seven walks compared to 13 for the Yanks. The Yankee pitchers had 24 strikeouts, while the Philly pitchers had only twelve. Game one might have been the closest in World Series history. Bobby Brown, Yankee third baseman, scored the only run on a double, a fly ball and then a sacrifice fly ball in the fourth inning.
2. The upstart Cleveland Browns relied on Lou "The Toe" Groza as he kicked a pair of field goals to defeat the New York Giants 8-3 in a special playoff game and the Los Angeles Rams 30-28 in the NFL championship game. The Giants playoff game represented a changing of style. The Giants relied on a strong defense featuring players like Emlen Tunnell, Tom Landry, Arnie Weinmeister and Al DeRogatis,

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beat the Browns twice during the regular, but they could not beat them a third time. The Cleveland - Los Angeles contest represented a change to a more wide opened game. Bob Waterfield began the game with an 82-yard touchdown pass to Glenn Davis. Dick Hoerner followed with a three-yard plunge. Otto Graham then took charge hitting Dub Jones with a 31-yard touchdown pass and then Dante Lavelli on 35-yard and 39-yard touchdown strikes. Dick Hoerner then scored on a one-yard plunge. The Rams jumped into the lead when Larry Brink recovered a fumble and ran six yards for a touchdown. Cleveland rallied in the fourth quarter on a fourteen-yard touchdown pass from Otto Graham to Rex Baumgartner and Lou Groza's sixteen-yard field goal. In future years both of these teams would play wide open football, in fact with Bob Waterfield, Norm Van Brocklin, Tom Fears, Elroy Hirsch, Dick Hoerner, Glenn Davis, Vitamin Smith, Dan Towler and Paul Tank Younger the Rams would possess one of the most potent offenses in the history of the game. In 1951 the Rams scored 456 points, while giving up 209 points.

3. CCNY pulled off one of the greatest feats in college basketball history. They defeated Bradley 69-61 before 18,000 fans at the Garden to win The NIT. Irwin Dambrot scored 23 points, while Ed Roman scored 19 points and Ed Warner 16 points. Shortly after this CCNY defeated Bradley 71-68 before 18,200 fans at the Garden to win the NCAA Tournament. Dambrot scored 15 points, while Warner added 14 points and Roman 12 points. Soon the bubble burst and it was discovered that key members of the Kentucky, CCNY, NYU, Bradley and Manhattan teams were involved in a point shaving scandal.
4. Ben Hogan won the US Open.
5. The 1949-1950 season was certainly all about the Detroit Red Wings. They dominated the regular season with a 37-19-14 record. They then defeated the New York Ranger in seven games to win the Stanley Cup. They also dominated the post-season awards. They had the three highest scorers in the league; Ted Lindsay, 23-55-78, Sid Abel, 34-35-69 and Gordie Howe, 35-33-68. The Red Wings along with the Canadians dominated the all-star selections. Bill Duman (G) and Ken Reardon from Montreal joined the following Red Wings on the first team; Sid Abel (C) and Ted Lindsay (LW). Gordie Howe (RW), Red Kelly (D) and Leo Reice (D) made the second team.
6. As boxing entered a new decade some new names were added to the list of top boxers; Ezzard Charles (HW), Jersey Joe Walcott (HW), Joey Maxim (LHW), Archie Moore (LHW), Jake LaMotta (MW), Ray Robinson (WW), Ike Williams (LW) Beau Jack

(LW), Jimmy Carter (LW), Kid Gavilan (WW), Willie Pep (FW) and Sandy Saddler (FW).

7. The last time Army, Notre Dame or a Big Ten school failed to win the National Championship was 1939. The Oklahoma Sooners coached by Bud Wilkerson ended this streak. The Sooners compiled a record of 10-1, losing only to Kentucky in the Sugar Bowl. It was a close race for the title, but they edged out Army 8-1, Tennessee (11-1), Kentucky (11-1) and Texas (9-2). The team was led by fullback Leon Heath and tackle Jim Weatherall, both All-American selections. Freshman Billy Vessels scored 15 touchdowns.
8. The Most Valuable Player Awards were given to American League - Phil Rizzuto and National League - Jim Konstanty
9. As a result of a merger between the NBL and BAA the NBA was Formed and began operation in November of 1949. The Minneapolis Lakers coached by John Kundla and led by George Mikan, Jim Pollard, Vern Mikkelson, Herm Schaefer Arnie Ferrin and Slater Martin easily won the regular season crown with a 51-17 record. In the playoffs the Lakers defeated the Chicago Stags, Fort Wayne Pistons and Anderson Packers. In the finals they defeated the Syracuse National in six games to win the first NBA playoff championship.

The best movies in 1950 were:

1. Sunset Boulevard
2. All About Eve
3. Born Yesterday
4. Cinderella
5. Father of the Bride
6. The Third Man
7. King Solomon's Mine
8. Harvey
9. The Asphalt Jungle
10. Cyrano Bergerac

The year's best music included:

1. The Cry of the Wild Goose
2. Hoop-Dee-Do
3. I Wanna Be Loved
4. Mona Lisa
5. Rag Mop
6. Sentimental Me
7. Tennessee Waltz
8. All My Love
9. Bolero
10. Music, Music, Music
11. Dear Hearts and Gentle People
12. Third Man Theme
13. It Isn't Fair
14. Chattanooga Shoe Shine Boy
15. I Can Dream, Can't I
16. The Thing

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The most popular books of 1950 were:

1. The Cardinal
2. The Wall
3. Across the River and into the Woods
4. The Way West
5. The Martian Chronicles
6. The Town

The Emmy Award Winners for 1950:

1. Best Dramatic Show - Pulitzer Prize Playhouse
2. Best Male Performer - Alan Young
3. Best Female Performer - Gertrude Berg
4. Most Outstanding Personality - Groucho Marx
5. Best Variety Show - The Alan Young Show
6. Best Game Show - Truth or Consequences
7. Best Sports Program - Los Angeles Rams Football
8. Best Children's Show - Time for Beany

Your 1950 budget would include:

1. New House - \$8,450
2. New Car - \$1,511
3. Average Rent - \$75
4. Tuition to Harvard University - \$600
5. Movie Ticket - \$.65
6. Gasoline - \$.18
7. United States Postage Stamp - \$.03
8. Eggs - \$.24/dozen
9. Fresh Ground Hamburger - \$.49/pound
10. Fresh Baked Bread - \$.14/loaf
11. Average Income - \$3,216

Any Club Members interested in obtaining either Club Sweatshirts or Jackets, please give me a call for further information. The more we order, the lower the price.

TOM CHERRE (716) 833-9713

We are sorry to announce the death of fellow member Ed Wanat, Jr. who passed away on March 10, 2008. Ed was being treated for cancer and had recently moved from Buffalo to Alvin, Texas. He was a general contractor in the construction business and served in the United States Air Force. Ed had recently made sizeable contributions of radio shows, music and other items from his late father's collection.

Let's Pretend with UNCLE RUSS

(Reprinted from the May, 2007 Illustrated Press)

Editor's note: Uncle Russ is still looking to hear from any of his fans from many years ago.

From 1948 to 1952, kids at American military bases all over the world would tune in to *Let's Pretend with Uncle Russ* on Saturday mornings. The show was presented by the Armed Forces Radio Service and was hosted by me, Russ Thompson. I was a Staff Sergeant and was stationed at AFRS Sendai, Japan, as program director in 1951 and 1952. I produced, wrote, directed and was *Uncle Russ*, a 30 minute show sent to Armed Forces Radio stations in almost every country in the world. Audiences would tune in to hear me tell stories and play music in our Saturday morning broadcast. Our prime audience was the U.S. Military service people and their dependents ("GI brats of the fifties"), but we also heard from many others who listened in as well to be entertained and to hone their English skills. *Uncle Russ* also had the "Around the World Safety Club", which sent out safety hints and suggestions and membership cards with safety slogans and a picture of *Uncle Russ* on each card. On the show I did some character voices, including Percy the Penguin and Ricky the Robot, two of my favorite characters, along with Captain Comet and Rocket Ranger Jane. Several countries had *Uncle Russ* fan clubs, and the fan mail was phenomenal. I was quite proud and very pleased to think that this program had such a profound effect on the children of the Armed Services. The Armed Forces Radio Service had a "hitch-hike" audience of give or take ninety million people!

I invite you to visit my website at:

www.letspretendwithunclelerruss.com Take some time to browse through the PHOTOS, and check the LETTERS page to see some of the fan mail I received while playing *Uncle Russ* to all those kids so many years ago. There must be thousands of people who have since grown up and returned to America and remember *Let's Pretend with Uncle Russ* from Armed Forces Radio Service. If so, I'd love to say "Hi" once again and hear from you. You can reach me via e-mail at:

russ@letspretendwithunclelerruss.com

Charles R. (Russ) Thompson

**1819 I Street
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(707) 443-8500

BEING THERE: Collecting Radio Broadcast Admission Tickets

By RICK PAYNE (All Rights Reserved 2008)

During the golden age of radio, networks and sponsors invited the general public to attend live performances of many popular programs. For the performers, the presence of the studio audience provided encouragement, laughter and appreciation. For the audience, the experience was an unforgettable opportunity to see their favorite entertainers at work. Tickets from some broadcasts survive today . . . waiting for collectors like me.

"The man who showed America how to make whoopee." That's the description of Eddie Cantor provided by publisher Simon & Shuster on the dust jacket of his 1929 book *Caught Short*. This man of boundless energy was blessed with a big heart, and audiences loved him.

This remarkable entertainer found early success in vaudeville, headlining the Ziegfeld Follies from 1917-1919 and starring in several blockbuster theatrical revues throughout the 1920s. Recordings and sheet music for songs like "If You Knew Susie", "Ma, He's Making Eyes At Me", "Waiting For the Robert E. Lee" and "Makin' Whoopie" sold in the millions. Eddie Cantor co-wrote "Merrily We Roll Along" (the theme for Looney Tunes cartoons) and popularized "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" a holiday standard. Like fellow performer Al Jolson, he found screen success in the early days of talking pictures. He worked tirelessly to sell bonds during World War II, and he dedicated himself to charitable causes throughout his life. There's even a story giving Eddie credit for encouraging and funding the founding of Nathan's Famous Hot Dogs!


And, of course, Eddie Cantor had a long and storied radio career. Unlike many megastars of radio, he starred in several different formats for many different sponsors. This month, let's take a look back at Eddie Cantor's radio career through broadcast tickets.

THE COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM		1 723
CBS 44TH ST. RADIO PLAYHOUSE		
141 WEST 44 TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY (East of Broadway)		CBS 44th St. Radio Playhouse
MARCH	NEW PEBECO TOOTH PASTE PRESENTS	
22	EDDIE CANTOR	22
SUNDAY EVE.	11 TO 11.30 P.M. • DOORS CLOSE AT 10.50 P.M.	1936

Reports indicate that Eddie appeared on the radio as early as 1922, making him one of the first major stars to go on the air. However, it took a guest appearance on the Rudy Vallee program in 1931 to convince him to take a show of his own. Later that year, his *Chase and Sanborn Hour* debuted on NBC to enormous success. His ratings surpassed even *Amos 'n' Andy*. In fact, his 1932-33 CAB Rating of 58.6 was the highest ever achieved during the golden age of radio. But he longed to make movies in Hollywood and left the show in 1934. He wasn't away from the airwaves for long.

In February 1935, he returned with a new Sunday program on CBS for Pebecco tooth paste. The 1936 ticket pictured above is for the West Coast rebroadcast of the show, originating from New York at 11 PM. The CBS 44th St. Radio Playhouse was also used in 1936 by Ford's *Fred Waring & His Pennsylvanians*, Lucky Strike's *Your Hit Parade* and Model Tobacco's *Pipe Smoking Time*. On this series, Eddie introduced young singer Bobby Breen as a regular feature and also featured Bert Gordon as the Mad Russian. Gordon would remain with Cantor in almost all his radio series.

But it was a little tougher for Eddie this time; his program aired opposite Jack Benny's *Jell-O Program* on NBC. Less than two months later, he was ready to change sponsors and locations again.

Columbia Broadcasting System		E ADMIT ONE GOOD ONLY FOR EASTERN BROADCAST
WILSHIRE EBELL THEATRE		
4400 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles		No. 1553
JAN	THE TEXAS COMPANY presents	
10	 EDDIE CANTOR IN "TEXACO TOWN"	EDDIE CANTOR SUN, JAN. 10
1937	5:30 P.M. Doors Close at 5:25 P.M.	

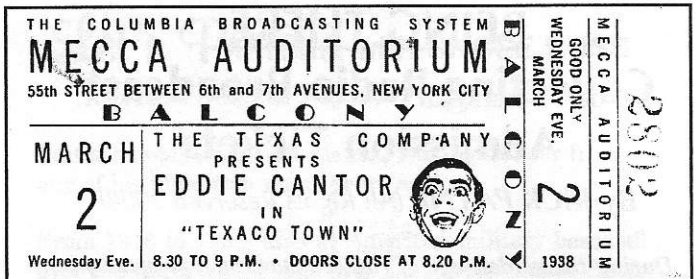
In our last article, we noted that Texaco had followed their legendary *Texaco Fire Chief Program* starring Ed Wynn in 1935 with an ill-fated program about circus life called *Jumbo*. When things didn't pan out as hoped, Texaco turned to Eddie Cantor. *Texaco Town* featured Eddie as the Mayor of a fictional town, presiding over all manner of special events and songs. The programs were entertaining and featured a variety of guests in brief appearances. It was on this series in 1936 that he introduced the talented Deanna Durbin as a regular member of his cast.

And the tickets for this series look fantastic! Texaco Town tickets feature a drawing of Eddie's well-known face, "banjo eyes" and all. The idea of images on tickets never caught on with many other shows, but one other Texaco-sponsored program did follow suit. Fred Allen's

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1941 *Texaco Star Theatre* tickets feature a caricature of him (as do the attractive folders in which they were mailed). Texaco used their company logo on tickets for other programs as well. And Bob Hawk's *Thanks To The Yanks* tickets for Camel Cigarettes feature a hawk's head logo.

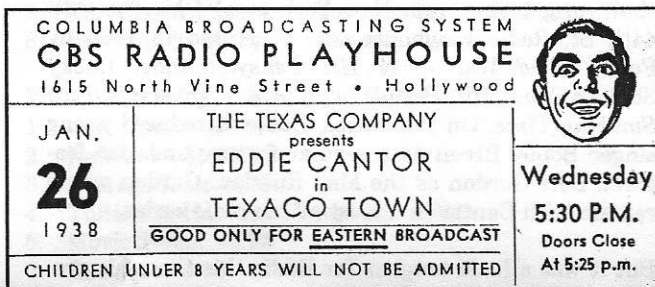
The Wilshire Ebell Theatre was also the broadcast home of *Big Town* and Chesterfield's *Alice Faye and Paul Whiteman* programs in 1937 and 1938. The 1270-seat theatre is still in use, having the distinction of hosted Judy Garland's first audition and Amelia Earhart's final public appearance. This 1937 ticket was for the early East Coast performance.



Five weeks later, a special remote broadcast of the 75th episode of *Texaco Town* originated from New York's 3700-seat Mecca Auditorium (today the site of the New York City Center for the Performing Arts). There would be only three more broadcasts after this presentation.

Bobby Breen was featured in this program, titled "A Day at Eddie's Radio School". Curiously, the image of Eddie used is slightly different from that used on the other tickets.

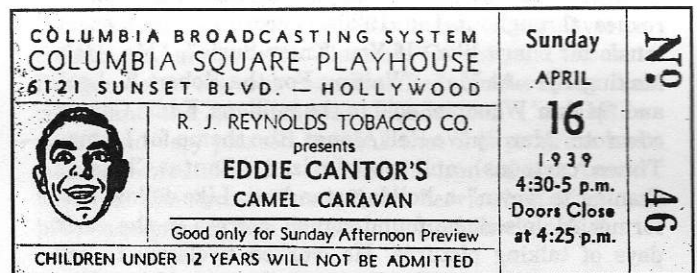
One final note on this series: Mapquest confirms there is a real hamlet near Rochester, New York on Route 20 named Texaco Town! Do any club members know if there's a connection to the radio program?



Here's another *Texaco Town* ticket for an East Coast performance, this time from early 1938. By that time, the show had moved to the popular CBS Radio Playhouse on Vine Street. The Playhouse was also home to *Al Jolson*, *Joe Penner* and Jack Haley's *Wonder Show* in 1938. This specific broadcast featured bandleader Jacques Renard in a sketch about a horse race. But this ticket has important historical significance.

President Roosevelt, stricken with polio in 1921, inspired the creation of a National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis on January 3, 1938. Eddie Cantor was asked by the President to help create an appeal for public contributions to aid research efforts. According to the official account of the NFIP, Eddie launched the effort with a special all-star radio broadcast on January 22nd. He asked every American . . . even the children . . . to show the President that they are with him in the battle against the disease. Eddie asked them to send a dime to the White House, in what he personally named a "march of dimes." Within a week, over 80,000 letters arrived. That first campaign raised \$1.8 million, and by the time a cure was found in 1954 over \$622 million had been raised through the March of Dimes.

And the *Texaco Town* ticket pictured above is for Eddie's first show after that historic broadcast, when he repeated the appeal for his audience.



Exit Texaco, enter Camel cigarettes! After about 18 months of *Texaco Town*, Eddie switched gears and joined the R.J. Reynolds portfolio of *Camel Caravan* shows. Over the years, that show title was used for different programs featuring Glen Grey and the Casa Loma Orchestra, Benny Goodman and Jack Oakie, Bob Crosby, Xavier Cugat, Jimmy Durante and Garry Moore, and Vaughn Monroe . . . at least.

This version of *Camel Caravan* featured another Cantor discovery: announcer and singer Bert Parks (yes, that Bert Parks). The program was presented in the new Columbia Square Studio complex in Hollywood. This broadcast associated with the pictured ticket featured an appearance by Hollywood producer Mervyn LeRoy, who had just completed filming of "The Wizard of Oz." As an aside, MGM bought the film rights from Samuel Goldwyn . . . who had wanted to cast Eddie Cantor as the Scarecrow.

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You'll also note that this ticket was for an audience preview performance. Eddie Cantor pioneered that practice for his 1935 Pebeco series as a way of ensuring that the on-air gags and sketches were sure to get laughs.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS SUNSET AND VINE		
Tues. Jan. 21 7:00 p.m. Studio B	PREVIEW OF IPANA and SAL HEPATICA Present EDDIE CANTOR in TIME TO SMILE	Doors Close 6:45 P.M. CHILDREN Under Six Years of Age Not Admitted

Eddie's *Camel Caravan* ended abruptly as a result of a controversial speech he made at the 1939 New York World's Fair. He was off the air for over a year, but Jack Benny successfully appealed to Bristol Myers to give Eddie another program. Their Ipana and Sal Hepatica products had lost the services of Fred Allen, who had moved his show to CBS in 1940. The result was the debut of *Time to Smile* on NBC's Red Network in October 1940 ("Ipana for the smile of beauty, Sal Hepatica for the smile of health.")

This 1941 ticket admitted the bearer to the preview for the January 22 show and centered on Eddie's return from his friend President Roosevelt's third inauguration. *Time to Smile* also featured young Dinah Shore, who credited Eddie with giving her career the boost that made her a star.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING CO., Inc. RCA BUILDING RADIO CITY STUDIOS NEW YORK ENTRANCE ON 49th OR 50th STS., BETWEEN 5th & 6th AVES.		
P WED. 24 SEP. '41 11:55 PM	IPANA & SAL HEPATICA present EDDIE CANTOR in TIME TO SMILE	P FLOOR 8
VOID IF SOLD 1941 SEE REVERSE SIDE		

The fall 1941 series of *Time to Smile* moved from Hollywood to NBC's Radio City Studios in New York. The special guest for this program was baseball legend Joe DiMaggio, whose Yankee team won their 99th game earlier that day and would shortly defeat the Dodgers in the World Series. Actress Carole Landis also appeared on the program.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS SUNSET AND VINE		
Wed.-May 22 See Reverse Side	IPANA & TRUSHAY PRESENT EDDIE CANTOR	STUDIO A Doors Close 4:40 p.m.
* CHILDREN UNDER 14 WILL NOT BE ADMITTED *		

This 1946 ticket is from the last month of Eddie's stint with Bristol Myers. The program was back in Los

Angeles; Sal Hepatica was out; Trushay hand lotion was in. Most references still refer to the series as *Time to Smile*, but obviously the ticket only reflects his name. The ticket is unfortunately trimmed.

The week's guest star was Basil Rathbone, the star of the Mutual series *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. He would stay the star of that series for precisely five more days, when he portrayed Holmes for the last time on radio. Tom Conway assumed the role when the show resumed in the fall. Rathbone wowed Eddie's audience with an over-the-top musical impersonation of Jimmy Durante.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC. HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS SUNSET AND VINE		
Mon.-May 12 See Reverse Side	PREVIEW PABST BLUE RIBBON PRESENTS The EDDIE CANTOR Show * CHILDREN UNDER 14 WILL NOT BE ADMITTED *	STUDIO A Doors Close 8:20 p.m.

The *Eddie Cantor Pabst Blue Ribbon Show* premiered in September 1946. This preview ticket is from May of 1947, when the actual broadcasts aired on Thursdays. Bert Gordon and announcer Harry Von Zell stayed with Eddie for this popular series.

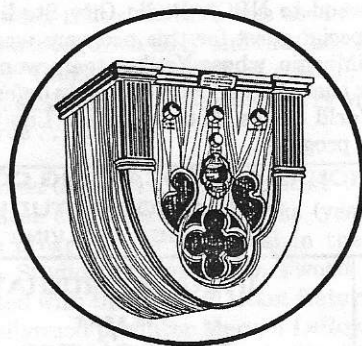
ABST BREWING COMPANY PRESENTS THE EDDIE CANTOR SHOW OVER N. B. C. COAST TO COAST GEORGE DEVINE'S BALLROOM EAGLES CLUB HOUSE - 2401 W. WISCONSIN AVE. OPEN UNDER 12 YEARS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED	FRIDAY APRIL 1 1949 8:00 P. M. Doors Close at 7:30 P. M. Good This Date Only
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And here's a ticket stub from a 1949 remote broadcast from Milwaukee, the home of Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer. Mitzi Green, best known as the star of the 1932 film "Little Orphan Annie", was the featured guest. As we've seen, most broadcast tickets weren't defaced upon entry . . . but this looks like one of those rare exceptions.

By 1949, the guy whose radio signature song was "I'd Love to Spend Each Sunday With You" had needed to substitute every day of the week except Tuesday and Saturday. But the program and Eddie's radio career were nearing the end of the line. The show wrapped for the season ten weeks later. Eddie took over host duties for NBC's game show *Take It or Leave It* in September, continuing for nearly a year before throwing in the towel.

And it's time for me to do the same for this edition of Being There. I hope you've enjoyed this tribute to Eddie Cantor, who is now largely forgotten by the general public. In our next installment, we'll look at tickets from some of the best-loved children's programs. Hope to see you in Cincinnati!

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