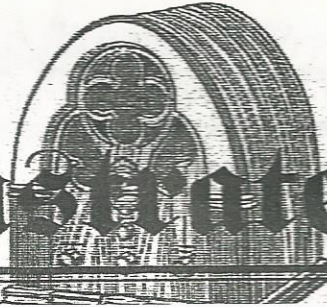


The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

The Illustrated Press



No 400

May 2012



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.

Club Mailing Address

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

E-Mail Address
otrclub@localnet.com



All Submissions are subject to approval prior to actual publication.

Deadline for The Illustrated Press is the 1st of each month prior to publication.

The Illustrated Press is the newsletter of the **Old Time Radio Club**, headquartered in Western New York State, It is published monthly except for the months of July and August. Contents except where noted are copyright © 2009 by the OTRC.

Send all articles, letters, exchange newsletters, etc. to: **The Illustrated Press**

c/o Tom Cherre, Editor (716) 833-9713
144 Fontaine Drive
Cheektowaga, NY 14215

E-Mail address: skylark68_1999@yahoo.com

Web Page Address:
members.localnet.com/~robmcd

Club Officers

President

Jerry Collins (716) 683-6199
56 Christen Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086
collinsjf@yahoo.com

Vice President & Canadian Branch

Richard Simpson (905) 892-4688
960 16 Road R.R. 3
Fenwick, Ontario
Canada, L0S 1C0

Treasurer

Dominic Parisi (716) 884-2004
38 Ardmore Pl.
Buffalo, NY 14213

Membership Renewals, Change of Address

Peter Bellanca (716) 773-2485
1620 Ferry Road
Grand Island, NY 14072
pmb1620@gmail.com

Membership Inquires and OTR Network Related Items

Richard Olday (716) 684-1604
171 Parwood Trail
Depew, NY 14043-1071
raolday@yahoo.com

Technical Manager / CD and MP3 Librarian

Bob McDivitt (716) 681-8073
109 Poinciana Pkwy.
Cheektowaga, NY 14225
robmcd@verizon.net

Cassette and Reference Librarian

Frank Bork (716) 601-7234
10 Dover Ct.
Lancaster, NY 14086
frankbork209@yahoo.com

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.



Editor's Two Cents:

Happy Mother's Day to all of those that it applies. Since this is the month of May it is only fitting we feature a lady who is deserving of the mother status. Gertrude Berg, who played Molly Goldberg of "The Goldbergs" is a natural. Although a little meddlesome, she deserves the honor. Our only Canadian member, Rich Simpson informed me I may be politically incorrect by for using the Editor's two cents term since Canada will be fazing out the penny very shortly. Until we faze it out over here in the US I'll still keep on using it. Rich Olday seemed to be fit as a fiddle after his surgery. Looks like he'll be ready for doughnut duty by September. Jerry Collins took home the bacon at the last meeting winning both the split club and serial disc prize. Rich Olday took time to mention the Mid-Atlantic Nostalgia Convention taking place in Whiteford, Maryland from August 9, 10, & 11, 2012. For anyone a fan of 50s television, it's a must. Some featured guests that are appearing are James Darren, Jay North, Sherry Jackson, Shirley Jones, and Van Williams. Movies, Drive-In and plenty more. Flyers and info enclosed in newsletter. It's hard to believe there's only one more newsletter before our summer break, and our picnic is still scheduled for August. So long till June.

Since we've written about the big bands and many of the male vocalists. I think it's only fitting to feature some of the ladies that bended an ear or two during that same swing era. In an upcoming IP I will feature the lovely Helen O'Connell. Right now I'll mention a few others. Many of these singers you've heard up but may not realize who they sang with in their early careers. Edie Adams wife of Ernie Kovacs was the female vocalist for the greatest music, this side of heaven, Guy Lombardo. Polly Bergen sang wit Bob Crosby. Theresa Brewer was with Ted Lewis. Helen Forrest who made it big with "Deep Purple" was with Artie Shaw. The great Helen O'Connell sang "Tangerine" with the Jimmy Dorsey band. Actress Doris Day had many top ten hits, hit it big with Les Brown and "Sentimental Journey." Rosie Clooney sang with Tony Pastor. Lena Horne was with Charlie Barnet. Ella Fitzgerald, "The divine one" had the pleasure of singing with Duke Ellington. Even Dale Evans, "Queen of the Cowgirls" started singing with the big bands. Legendary Billie Holiday performed with Artie Shaw. Peggy Lee, Kay Star Jo Stafford and even Harriet Hillyard Nelson got their starts doing big band gigs. Of course you had singers like Dick Haynes, Bob and Ray Eberle, and a fella called Frank Sinatra who did a little singing too. There were many, many others too numerous to mention, as I said I will highlight Helen O'Connell very soon. As Dominic says the Big Band was truly a great time to live this great music. Enjoy!!!

*Happy Mother's
Day*

Russ Columbo



Russ Columbo The Forgotten Singer

By Tom Cherre

After reading Dominic's column mentioning Russ Columbo, I got into his life a little more. For the short career he had it was a very fascinating one indeed. In the late 1920s music was getting more popular with the home radio becoming a staple with American families. Singers like Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Enrico Caruso, and John McCormack were established stars. Singer Billy Murray was the first singer to sell one million records. There was a new group of singers replacing the old ones. Rudy Vallee, Bing Crosby and Russ Columbo were all bonafide young superstars. Many of you readers might be saying, who is this Columbo fellow. Those of you with a gifted knowledge of old time music know who Ruggerio di Rudolpho Columbo was. Considered a rival to Bing Crosby, some critics would venture to say he was even more popular than "Der Bingle". Columbo was born in Camden, New Jersey in 1908. He was the twelfth child born of immigrant parents, Nicola and Julia Columbo. He started playing the violin very young, and debuted professionally at the age of 13. He left high school at 17 to travel with various bands across the country.

He began both singing and playing the violin in nightclubs. He was strikingly handsome and in 1928 at the age of 20 began appearing in the movies, including a *Vitaphone* short playing a member of the Gus Arnheim Orchestra. He eventually joined the Arnheim orchestra and performed seven vocals with Arnheim as a member of the string section. He did six recordings for *Okeh Records* and one for *Victor*. His very first recording was "I Can't Do Without You". His 1931 recording of "Sweet and Lovely" would be his biggest recording of all time. On June 18, 1930 a few months before Bing Crosby joined the band, along with Al Rinker and Harry Barris, as "The Rhythmn Boys" Columbo did "A Peach Of Pair". While officially signed as a violinist, Arnheim considered Columbo a stand by vocalist because his featured singer, Bing Crosby had some drinking problems at the time causing him to miss a show or two. When the manager of the Coconut Grove attempted to levy a fine on Crosby for being AWOL Crosby quit. Columbo then became the lead singer for Gus Arnheim. After touring the East Coast with the Arnheim band Columbo attempted to strike out on his own. He formed his own band and opened a





nightclub with his two brothers for awhile, but was persuaded to give it up when his manager said he was wasting his time and could do much better as a singer. Con Conrad best known as composer of "Ma He's Making Eyes At Me", had Columbo sing in a style like Crosby, gave him a top hat and a white suit, and had him photographed to best advantage. He then traveled to New York City with Conrad, he secured a late night radio show on NBC airing at 11:30pm five days a week. This catapulted him to numerous engagements at major nightclubs, a recording contract with RCA, and a tremendous popularity with legions of mostly female fans. When Bing Crosby was signed to do a similar radio show on CBS in the same time slot, network executives saw the potential for a publicity bonanza. Some more fuel for the fire was Crosby leaving RCA over to Brunswick records. The networks called it the "Battle of the Baritones" and some of the coverage strained the boundaries of poor taste. The rivalry became more convincing when the two singers both did renditions of the same popular songs, including "Stardust," "Goodnight Sweetheart," "Sweet and Lovely," "Street of Dreams," and "Paradise." Russ Columbo actually recorded Bing's future theme song "Where the Blue of the Night" five days before Crosby did. Both singers had music engagements at

near by clubs both at the same time. Just like Jack Benny and Fred Allen, they were both good friends. Both singers had only praise for each other. Both singers were classified as crooners, although Columbo hated that term. Despite certain style similarities, Columbo possessed a somewhat soft and creamy voice, which tended to border on blandness. Crosby on the other hand had a rougher and stronger voice, which was more closer to jazz. Columbo's voice was more serious, sometimes pretentious to a point, when he sang those romantic ballads. Crosby had a degree of self-irony, and occasional light-hearted kidding. With Columbo's dark hair, olive complexion, NBC billed him as "The Romeo of the Airwaves." The many loves of his life included singers, Dorothy Dell, actress Sally Blaine (Loretta Young's sister), and Hannah Williams. The last and most serious romance would be with actress Carole Lombard. Columbo also wrote many popular songs including "Prisoner of Love," and "You Call it Madness(But I Call It Love)," and "My Love." By 1933 there was a lull in his music career





and Columbo became more active in the movie industry including "Broadway Thru a Keyhole," "That Goes Double," and "Moulin Rouge." In 1934 Columbo was signed up by NBC for a prime-time radio series. The program aired every Sunday night introduced as "the Romeo of songs, hear with songs to delight your ears and heart." At the same time Columbo signed a record deal with Brunswick label for a reported \$500,000 a year, a huge, huge sum for the year 1934. It was about this time he was involved with Carole Lombard, who had recently divorced William Powell. On September 2nd just hours before his radio show Columbo went to visit his life-long friend Lansing Brown, who lived with his parents in Beverly Hills. He was going to have some publicity shots taken of him by Brown, who was a widely respected photographer. After the photos Brown showed him an antique pair of dueling pistols which dated from the Civil War. He placed the head of a match under the rusty hammer of one of the pistols, then pulled the trigger to ignite the match to light a cigarette. The gun was loaded and with the click of the trigger the charge exploded and the corroded bullet ricocheted off a table top and stuck Columbo in the eye entering his brain. He was rushed to Good Samaritan Hospital. A brain surgeon was summoned but could do nothing. He

lingered in agony for six hours before he died. His friend Lansing Brown collapsed following police interrogation. There was suspicions that a statement from Brown's servant said he thought there was violent arguing before the shooting took place. After a court trial Brown was found innocent and the killing was ruled an accident. Lansing Brown would grieve the rest of his life for his carelessness. A crowd of 3000 people attended the funeral at the Sunset Boulevard Catholic Church in Hollywood. One of the pallbearers was Bing Crosby. Columbo's mother who had suffered a heart attack before the incident was never told of his passing. She was told her son went to Europe for entertaining. The charade was kept up until she passed away ten years later in 1944. He passed away at the tender age of 26. No one what the future held for this great singer. So when you think of all the great Italian-American crooners like Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, Dean Martin, Jerry Vale and Tony Bennett, give a little mention to the first one, Ruggiero Eugenio di Rudolpho Columbo. "*Salute.*"

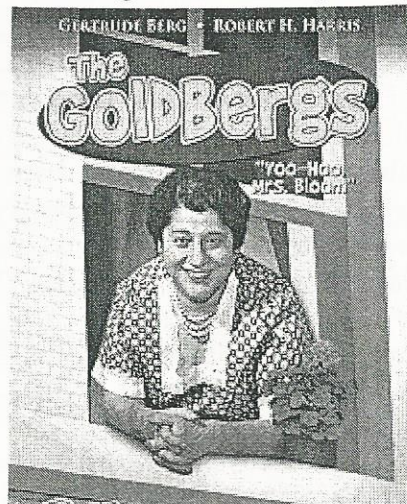


Molly Goldberg
By Tom Cherre



Before Oprah, Barbara Streisand, or Barbara Walters, there was one woman who dominated the media of radio like no one else before her. She was born Tillie Edelstein. She married Lewis Berg in 1918 and then became Mrs. Berg. She would forever be immortalized with the character she wrote and played for over twenty-five years, Molly Goldberg. Her father Jake Edelstein went through various careers. One of his more lucrative endeavors was that of running a resort in the Catskill Mountains where Tillie worked. It was here she learned to create and perform funny skits to amuse the guests children. It was here also that she met her future husband. He wooed her and at the age of 18 she married

Lewis Berg. They moved to New Orleans where Lewis was an engineer at a sugar plantation. When a large fire destroyed the plantation they moved back to New York City. It was here she pursued her writing skills and changed her name to Gertrude Berg. Her first script dealt with two sales girls in New York. She got no offers. Next she started to write about a fictional family calling it "The Goldbergs" a combination of her mother's maiden name and her husband's last name. It was a semi autobiographical Jewish family living in the New York City tenements. Berg wrote all the scripts by hand, even though the family owned a typewriter. When she went to the NBC radio studio to pitch her scripts, the executive could not make out her handwriting (She must write like me). Anyway, Berg then read aloud the pages she had written. Her stunning reading of the script not only sold the idea for a radio show, but she also got the lead actor role too. In addition, she became the major writer for the remainder of the show's entire run. On November 20, 1929 a 15 minute episode of "*The Rise of the Goldbergs*" began its very first broadcast. Her starting salary for acting and writing was \$75 per week. In less than two years in the heart of the "Great Depression" she asked for a sleight raise. The sponsor



proposed a salary and was then told "Mrs. Berg, we can't give you a penny more than \$2000 a week." She was speechless. Berg's husband, who later became successful in his own right refused to be photographed with her for publicity citing this would be an infringement on her success.



Audiences loved listening to the stories and struggles of the Goldberg family and their neighbors, and instantly took to the warmth and guidance of the lovable accented Molly Goldberg. "The Goldbergs" was the second longest running show. Only "Amos N' Andy" had the honor of being on longer. When Gertrude fell ill and was unable to do the show, the network was flooded with thousands of get-well cards. Berg wrote early in the day and then went to the studio to produce and star in the show. At the show's peak life magazine said, "For millions of Americans, listeners to the Goldbergs, a warm-hearted radio serial about a Jewish family, has been a happy ritual akin to slipping on a pair of comfortable old shoes that never seem to wear out." The series was so resistant to change that when the actor who played Molly's husband for 15 years passed away in 1945 he wasn't replaced for another two years. Molly just spoke

about him or spoke to him without his ever answering her. When Berg retired from radio and TV she was reputed to be the highest paid guest star on TV at the time, appearing on the Steve Allen, Milton Berle, and Perry Como shows. In 1959 Berg won the Tony Award for best actress in a performance of "A Majority of One." Berg also published a best-selling memoir, "Molly and Me" in 1961. She was the mystery guest on the old "What's My Line" with John Charles Daley three times. Berg even wrote songs. Her composition, "That Wonderful World" found its way into the repertoire of country great Patsy Cline, appearing on her debut album in 1957. She died in 1966 from what her family said was "over work." She was currently in production for another Broadway show. She was buried in the Catskills where all her writing skills and "The Goldbergs" all began.



**THE GOLDBERGS
ARE BACK!**

The most lovable family in radio history—Sammy, Rosie, Jake and Molly Goldberg. Written by and starring Mrs. GERTRUDE BERG

TODAY

WBBM, 4:45-5:00 P.M.

and every day except Sat. and Sun.

THE ORIGINAL GOLDBERGS!
Millions cheer their return! You'll thrill to their joys and sorrows, you'll laugh with them, cry with



**Remember that we have a new web-site!
Same address, new site!
Lots of fascinating articles!**

www.MidAtlanticNostalgiaConvention.com

We've moved the event to August now! (not September)
If you live outside Maryland, consider coming in a day or two early or staying a couple days later to check out the sights and sounds Maryland has to offer!

Remember if you pre-pay your admission, you get free goodies in your goody bags such as DVDs, comics and books! And the admission price is discounted when you pay in advance!

You can pay admission at the door, but take advantage of the discount price!

You can pay by Paypal or credit card on the web-site, or call us at 443-286-6821. Or make check or money order payable to:

**MANC Convention
Po Box 52
Whiteford, MD 21160**

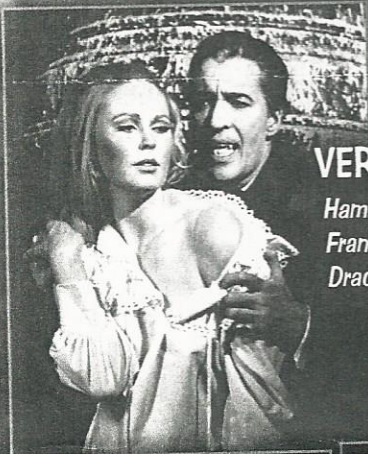
Help spread the word on Facebook, message boards, web-sites and other internet venues. If you need color flyers, call or e-mail and tell us how many you need and we'll rush them out to you! The more people that attend, the bigger names we can get for celebrity guests!

MID-ATLANTIC Nostalgia CONVENTION

our **7th**
year

AUGUST
9, 10 & 11
2012

HUNT VALLEY
MARRIOTT
MARYLAND

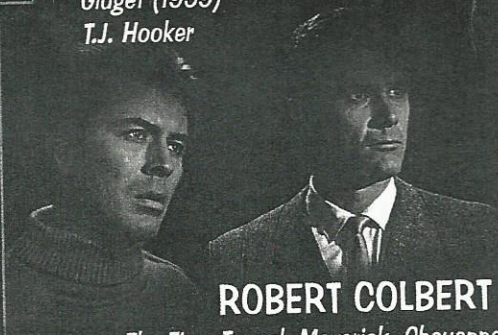


VERONICA CARLSON
Hammer Horror Actress!
Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed (1968)
Dracula Has Risen from the Grave (1968)

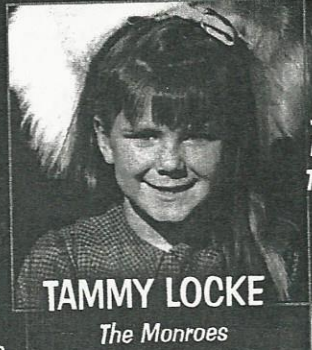
JAMES DARREN
The Time Tunnel
Gidget (1959)
T.J. Hooker



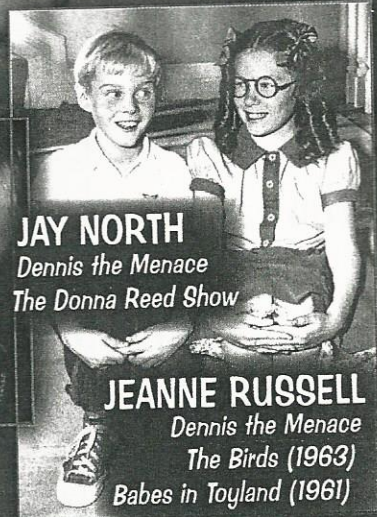
SHIRLEY JONES
Oklahoma! (1955), Carousel (1956)
Elmer Gantry (1960), The Music Man (1962)
The Partridge Family (TV series)



ROBERT COLBERT
The Time Tunnel, Maverick, Cheyenne



TAMMY LOCKE
The Monroes
Meet Me in St. Louis
Hang 'em High (1965)



JAY NORTH
Dennis the Menace
The Donna Reed Show

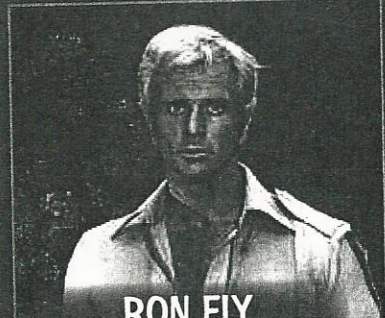
JEANNE RUSSELL
Dennis the Menace
The Birds (1963)
Babes in Toyland (1961)



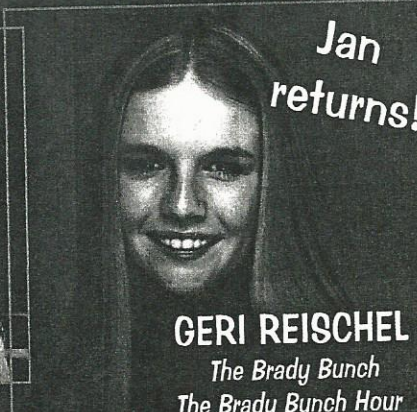
VAN WILLIAMS
Surfside Six, The Green Hornet



SHERRY JACKSON
Make Room for Daddy,
Twilight Zone, Star Trek



RON ELY
Doc Savage (1975)
Tarzan (1966-68 TV series)



GERI REISCHEL
The Brady Bunch
The Brady Bunch Hour

www.midatlanticnostalgiaconvention.com

MID-ATLANTIC Nostalgia CONVENTION

Panels & Presentations

- The Life of Gypsy Rose Lee
- Gloria Grahame and film noir
- A Celebration of Harry Langdon
- A History of *The Time Tunnel*
- Restoring Motion Pictures from Archival Prints!
- Boris Karloff: From Broadway to Television
and much more! See schedule on the web-site!

Movie Room Runs 24 Hours a Day!

- *Kraft Television Theatre* (1953) with James Dean
- *Headin' East* (1937) with Buck Jones
- *Telephone Time* (1956) with Claudette Colbert
- *Box 13* (television pilot with Alan Ladd)
- *You Bet Your Life* blooper reels w/Groucho Marx
and much more! See schedule on the web-site!

DRIVING DIRECTIONS

Take I-83 to exit 20A (Shawan Road). Hotel is on the right.
For GPS: 245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, MD 21031
Hotel phone: 410-785-7000 www.MarriottHuntValley.com

Nearest airport is BWI (Baltimore-Washington International).
There is an MTA light rail that will go direct from the airport
and reach a dead end stop at Hunt Valley, across the street
from the hotel. Call to inquire for details or see the web-site
for more info.

ADMISSION

Every person to pay for admission receives a superb 48-page program guide filled with informative articles, schedule of events, biographies on each of our celebrated guests, and more. Every person to pre-register gets a goody bag filled with DVDs, comics, books and more (usually retailing more than the price of admission) so consider paying admission in advance instead of at the door! Why pay \$25 per day like many conventions charge? Admission cost is \$15 per person, per day. Three day weekend is \$45. (Discount price only available until August 1.) You can pay admission on-line! You can pay at the door but save \$5 a day and pay in advance!

E-Mail or call to be added to the mailing list! We only send out an e-mail 6 times a year and you don't want to miss the latest news! The newsletter is FREE!

Visit the web-site for informative articles! We're adding new pages every week!
Plenty of fascinating, in-depth articles about Howdy Doody, Veronica Lake and more!

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: All presentations, events and stars subject to change.

Drive-In MOVIE THEATER



Friday night outside
in the hotel parking lot!
Starts at sunset!

PHANTOM OF THE RUE MORGUE (1954)

Warner's follow-up to *House of Wax*,
with knives thrown at the screen
and other clever tricks!
Shown in 3-D

with complimentary glasses being provided!

THE BLACK BEAUTY

On display all weekend, one of the two
original *Black Beauty* cars from the original
Green Hornet television series!
(VIN numbers match, it's not a replica!)

CHARITY AUCTION TO BENEFIT
THE ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL



HOURS

Vendor Room and Celebrity Autographs:
10 am to 7 pm all three days
All of the celebrities will be there
all three days! New extended hours!
Make sure you bring plenty
of cash for the largest selection
of nostalgic merchandise!

CONVENTION CONTACT

Phone: 443-286-6821
MANC, Po Box 52
Whiteford, MD 21160
E-mail: mmargrajr@hotmail.com



Find us on
Facebook

Look for Mid-Atlantic Nostalgia Convention!

www.midatlanticnostalgiaconvention.com

Baby Ruth, rich in Dextrose—as well as other nutritious ingredients—helps overcome between-meal hunger and fatigue.

... An American Favorite

William Roy Dages, M.D.

"Baby Ruth, being rich in Dextrose, vital food-energy sugar, and other palatable ingredients, makes a pleasant, wholesome candy for children."



Naturally, Baby Ruth was selected as the first candy for the carefully nurtured Dionne Quintuplets! For Baby Ruth is pure, wholesome candy made of fine, natural foods. You'll love its smooth opera cream center; its thick layer of tender, chewy caramel; its abundance of plump, fresh-toasted peanuts; its luscious, mellow coating. There's deep, delicious candy satisfaction in every bite of Baby Ruth. It's rich in flavor, freshness and good food-value. Join the "Quints"—enjoy a big bar of Baby Ruth today.

CURTISS CANDY COMPANY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

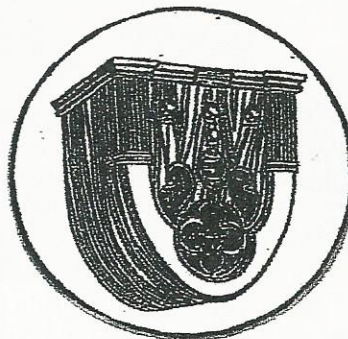


"QUINTS" GET FIRST CANDY



31419301323

JIM BESHIRE (C)
123 DAVIDSON
SAVANNAH, GA 31419



FIRST CLASS MAIL

THOMAS R CHERRE
144 FONTAINE DR
BUFFALO NY 14215-2038

The Old Time Radio Club



USA FIRST-CLASS PERMIT NO. 1000 BUFFALO NY