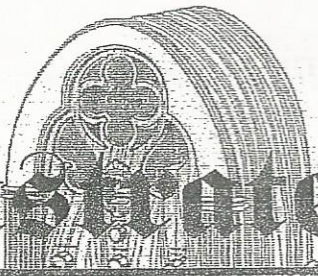


The Old Time Radio Club

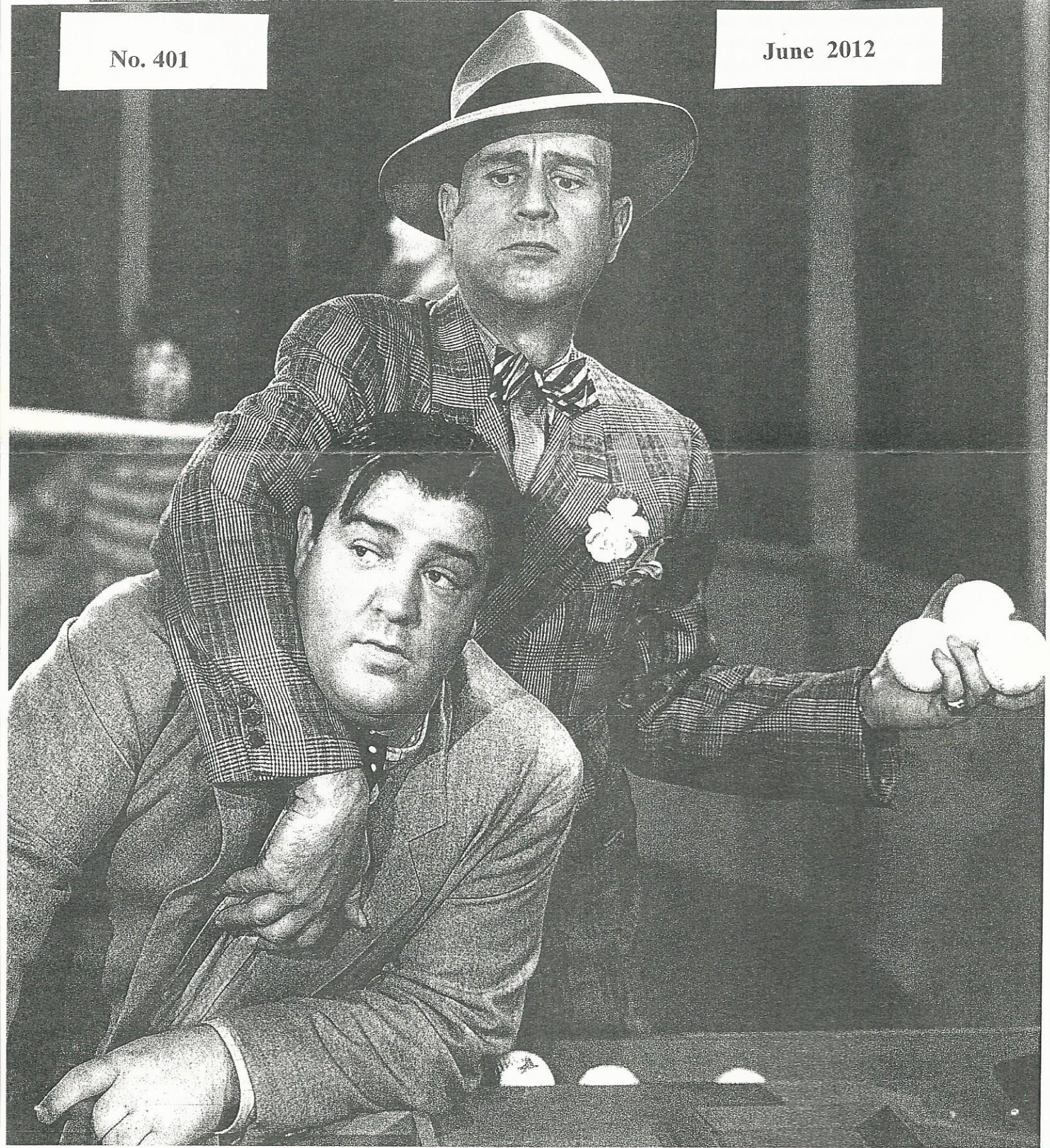
Established 1975

The Illustrated Press



No. 401

June 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.

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All Submissions are subject to approval prior to actual publication.

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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.



Editor's Two Cents:

Hello to everyone out there in radio land. It's hard to believe another season is ended, at least in regards to the newsletter. This wraps up my third year, and I'm still fairly sane. My thanks to those who contributed to the newsletter, with regards to articles and reviews. Our picnic is approaching, and because I expect to be a grandfather around August 8th, Bill and Mary Barren have graciously accepted to do the summer picnic. I will help do the cooking if I am there, and I probably will be, but then again, you never know. Bill suggested that some of us bring card tables. It makes it a lot easier than logging those 300 pound bingo tables. You should also bring a folding chair to sit on. Members should bring a dish to pass. Hot dogs and drinks will be provided. We will again ask that those who attend contribute \$3.00 to help defray expenses. The picnic will be held on the first Monday in August. There will be no meeting in July, and no more newsletters until September. Picnic starts at 6:30pm rain or shine. All are invited-guests included. I will not complain about not winning any prizes at our monthly meetings. I was fortunate to win the Tom Mix serial by Mascot. It's really good. Tom Mix was a good ole boy and he will be featured in an upcoming IP. As far as the

newsletter goes, I will be entering my 4th year. After four years is over if anyone would like to have the honor I would gladly hand it over. I do have a favor to ask. If someone would like to handle the mailing part I would be eternally grateful. All you have to do is staple them, attach addresses and stamps and mail. It would make the job a little easier, so if someone would like to do it see me at the next meeting. Working 7 days a week it gets to be a chore. Having someone do the mailing would be one less thing I'd have to worry about. I'm plan on taking a little time off and go fishing up in Northern Canada. I will be back in late May. While I'm out in the boat I will be listening to old time radio and try and think up some new material for future newsletters. I do hope to catch a few fish also. We'll also have a few beers and play a little poker every night. This is my type of vacation. And before I forget I would like to wish all dads out there,



"Happy Father's Day"

Have a safe and happy summer. See you in September.

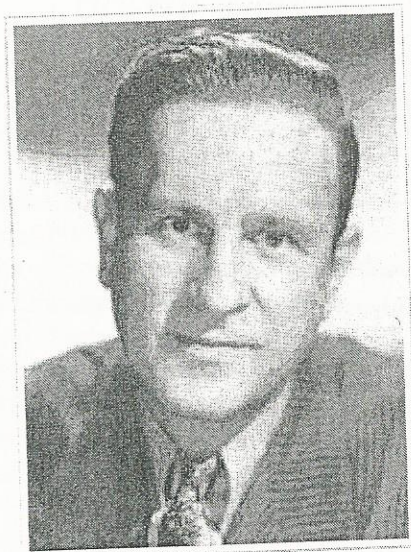
Abbott and Costello By Tom Cherre



Throughout the years there have been some great comedy teams. In the early days we had Laurel and Hardy. They were the first slapstick comedy team. Shortly after The Marx Brothers approached the scene. They dealt with a little more satire, and were more wise-cracking than any other team. The Three Stooges, with Gurley or Shemp were always funny. They were grossly underpaid, and are still popular today. The last great comedy team was that of Martin and Lewis. This duo had a clown and a good looking straight man who could also sing. Then we have Abbott and Costello, the funniest, most popular, and highest paid comedy team in the 1940s. As a young kid in the early 1950s I looked forward to their movies. Their career may have been winding down a bit, but I still enjoyed them. While Costello seemed to appear as an easy going type of guy, it was not the case in real life. We'll start at the beginning. Lou was born as Louis Cristillo in 1906 in Patterson, New Jersey. He was a gifted athlete in basketball, and once held the state record for free throw shooting. He also a run as a pro boxer. He went to Hollywood in 1927 to try and become an actor. After having little

success with only extra jobs he left and found work in burlesque shows. He changed his name to Costello and teamed up with straight man Bud Abbott and found some considerable acclaim doing vaudeville and burlesque shows throughout the country. One of my late friends, a Tony Bafo, who owned a nightclub near the old Palace Burlesque remembers Abbott and Costello appearing there in their early days. They became a popular twosome and got an opportunity to do a guest spot on *The Kate Smith Hour*, a very popular radio show at the time, and were an instant hit. This led to Universal Studios signing them to a supporting role in 1940's *A Night in the Tropics*. They stole the show with several classic routines, including "Who's On First." That same year they were a summer replacement for Fred Allen. Universal then signed them to a long term contract, and their second film, "*Buck Privates*" and they then became box-office stars. The themes were generally the same with the two repeating many of the same gags they did in vaudeville. The public loved them, and they were the hottest act during the 1940s. many of their films featured The Andrew Sisters, big bands, Ella Fitzgerald, and other big musical stars. In 1942 four films earned them ten million dollars. This was back in 1942.





With the success in the movies going to radio was a walk in the park. They launched their weekly show sponsored by Camel cigarettes October 8th 1942. *The Abbott and Costello Show* mixed comedy with music including such vocalists as Connie Haines, Ashley Eustis, and the Delta Rhythm Boys. Some semi-regulars included Artie Auerbach (Mr. Kitzel) Mel Blanc, Sid Fields, and Frank Nelson. Tragedy hit Lou on November 4th 1943. Upon arriving at the NBC studio, Lou received word that his infant son had drowned in the family swimming pool. Lou had previously told his wife to keep Butch up that night so he could hear his father on the radio for the first time. Rather than cancel the broadcast, Lou said "Wherever he is tonight, I want him to hear me," and went on with the show. No one knew of the death until after the show and Abbott revealed the news to the audience. Later Lou had a special bracelet made with his son's name on it. He had it welded so it could never be removed. If you look closely you could see it in the later movies. They continued to make a total of 36 films together.

Groucho Marx once said "A good straight man is hard to find." He also noted that Bud Abbott was the best in the business. Bud Abbott was also born in New Jersey in Asbury Park. His parents were circus people. Later his father worked for the Columbia Burlesque Wheel. His father got him a job working in the box office of the Casino Theater in Brooklyn at the age of 16. He began working vaudeville with his wife, who was also a burlesque star, as a straight man. When he met Lou, as they say, the rest is history. Costello played the baby-faced innocent chump. When they started, the set-up for salary was 60% to Abbott and 40% to Costello. Later on it was even. After they started raking it in Costello wanted 60% to Abbott's 40%. Lou also wanted the duo to be called Costello and Abbott. He was at odds with the directors and producers many times. For a few years Lou and Abbott didn't speak to each other. You can see it clearly in the movie "The



Time of Their Lives” where a little friction exists. They made three movies while feuding with each other. It seems that Universal and a lot of money made them patch up their differences and they mended their ways. In 1951 they were one of the rotating hosts of *The Colgate Comedy Hour*. The following year they inaugurated their own sit-com with Costello owning the show and Abbott working for a weekly salary. The team split up in 1957 and Lou made one solo film *The 30 Foot Bride of Candy Rock*. Abbott and Costello worked all the gags from vaudeville into their films and TV shows. The “Who’s on First” routine is probably the most famous one. If you ever visit The Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown you “ll see it on video along with a big poster of the boys in front. Another favorite was the Niagara Falls gag. As soon as someone said Niagara Falls some person would go into a somewhat trance saying step by step, inch by inch, and then began choking poor Lou. Another funny one was when they were in a diner and had no money and Lou keeps ordering something. I guess you have to see it to appreciate the full effect. Anyway, times changed and after using the same material it started to wear thin, Martin and Lewis became the next big team. As far as enjoying a long retirement that was not to be. Costello died of a heart attack on March 3, 1959, just three days short of his 53rd birthday. That same year Lou’s wife died on December 5th. She was only 47. Bud Abbott passed away in April of 1974. He was virtually penniless at the age of 78. I know slapstick is not the in thing now, but in their prime they were “the cat’s meow” Ask Jerry Seinfeld – he thought they were the greatest. And you know something? Me Too!

Three Stooges Movie Review:

Frank and I ventured out to the Regal show to see the new Three Stooges movie. Neither one of us was disappointed. I must say, I haven’t laughed so hard and so much at a movie in years. While this movie probably won’t win any academy awards, I gave it 4 stars for sheer laughter. Being an astute fan of the original stooges, I must say these guys were like authentic clones of Moe, Curley, and Larry. They not only looked like them, but their voices were exactly the same. Their mannerisms were so good it was like watching the original Three Stooges at work. It was so entertaining, I plan to see it again. The movie had the traditional music, the great sound effects, the sledge hammers hitting you in the head and a chain saw having its blade ruined when going over Curley’s head. There were so many of the good old routines that were used 60 and 70 years ago. So I will say again, if you are a fan of the Stooges, you can’t help getting plenty of laughs. Not much of a plot, but it was funny from beginning to end. I think Frank will agree with me on this one. I enjoyed it, I think you will too

The Three Stooges



LONG RUNNING COMIC STRIPS (NOT SO) SHORT RUNNING RADIO PROGRAMS

Peter Bellanca

Last December I recorded the holiday classic movie, *A Christmas Story* and finally got around to viewing it. I had seen it many years ago and thought it would be nice to see it again. The story revolves around the author's childhood memories as a boy trying to get a "Red Ryder carbine-action two-hundred-shot range model air rifle BB gun" for Christmas. While watching it I began to think about my Red Ryder air rifle BB gun. When I was about ten years old my father bought one for me and I was warned about shooting at people and that I could be blinded if not careful. Not much different than the warning in the movie, "you'll shoot your eye out."

That got me thinking about Red Ryder, who I always considered a second banana to a "real" cowboy like the Lone Ranger. Basically the only things I knew about Red Ryder were the ads on the back covers of my favorite comic books. So I decided to find out if he should be elevated to the level of the Lone Ranger.

Red Ryder was the creation of two people, Fred Harman and Stephen Slesinger, although in the eyes of the public Harman is the person most associated with Red Ryder. Harman was born on February 9, 1902 and grew up around the ranches in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, where his father had established a homestead in the 1890's. He dropped out of school at an early age, held a variety of odd jobs and eventually was hired by the *Kansas City Star* newspaper in 1921 as a pressman's helper and a part-timer in the art department. As his drawing skills increased he decided to find a job that was totally art related. He left the *Star* to take a position at the *Kansas City Film Ad Company* as a paper cutout animator and became friends with another animator named Walt Disney. Disney had become interested in cel animation and recruited Harman to help start an animation company called Laugh-O-Gram. The company had limited

success and went bankrupt within a year. Disney moved to California and Harman to St. Joseph, Missouri where he married Lola Andrews in 1927.

While in St. Joseph he worked as a catalog and book illustrator with emphasis on the Pony Express. From St. Joseph he moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, then to Iowa, back to Pagosa Springs and then to Los Angeles. In Los Angeles he published, illustrated and edited a western magazine that lasted for three issues.



In 1934 he began drawing a comic strip called *Bronc Peeler*. He tried to self-syndicate the strip with little success and in 1938 moved to New York City. There he was introduced to Stephen Slesinger. Slesinger was a merchandising entrepreneur and liked the concept of *Bronc Peeler* but not the name. He changed *Bronc's* name to *Red Ryder* and retained *Bronc's* red hair and his young Indian sidekick. The concept for the script was sold to the Newspaper Enterprise Association for syndication with the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain signing on for a ten-year commitment. On Sunday, November 6, 1938 *Red Ryder* began as "America's famous fighting cowboy." It was so successful that a daily strip was begun in March of 1939.

The opening strip introduced Ryder as a tough cowpoke who lived on his Painted Valley Ranch in the Blanco Basin of the San Juan Mountain Range with his aunt, the Duchess and his horse Thunder. When Chief Beaver of the Navajo Indian tribe dies, Ryder adopts his son Little Beaver and his horse, Papoose. Although Little Beaver appeared with *Bronc Peeler*, Harman gave him a new beginning in *Red Ryder*. Little Beaver's speech would not be acceptable in our politically correct world. Much of his exchanges with Ryd-

er consisted of "you betchum," "heap good," and "me like'm." Other characters included ranch hand Buckskin Blodgett, Ryder's girl friend Beth Wilder, and bad guy Ace Hanlon and the ranch's stereotyped Chinese cook, Ching How. Like the Lone Ranger, Ryder did not kill the outlaws he faced, but with his accurate aim would shoot the gun out of the bad guy's hand.

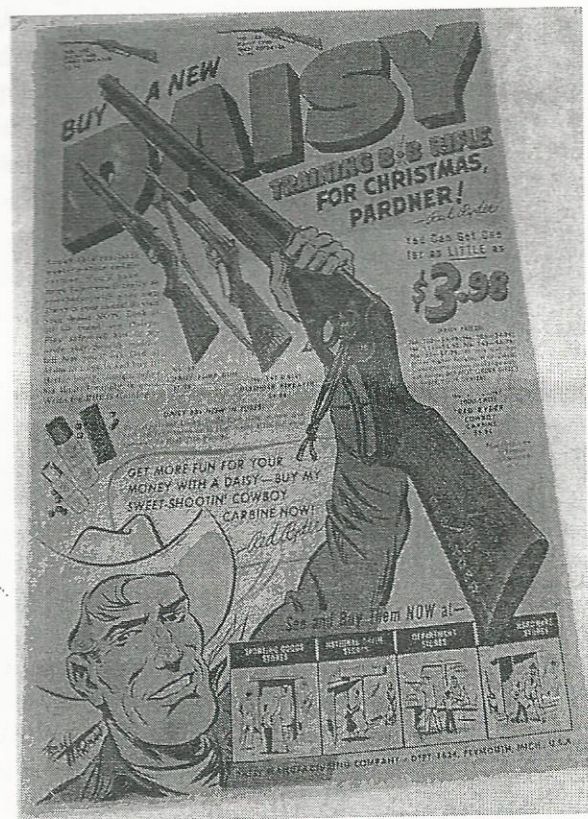
Slesinger began to merchandise Red Ryder in a variety of media, including toys, gifts, novels, comic books, Big Little Books, films, sporting goods, clothing and on the radio. Red Ryder became a worldwide enterprise with exports around the globe. The J. C. Penney Company had "Red Ryder Corrals" in their stores to sell Red Ryder and Little Beaver brand clothing and school supplies. Contests were held and Red Ryder would make a personal appearance during special event sales. Slesinger's greatest promotional coup was with the Daisy Outdoor Products Company. In 1938 Daisy began to produce the Red Ryder BB air rifle. The rifle was an instant hit with young boys and their fathers. It was modeled after the Winchester rifle that was featured in many western "B" movies and had Red Ryder's signature branded into its stock.

Many different models of the Ryder rifle were produced and it is still currently in production. The standard rifle was a lever action, spring piston air rifle with a leather thong attached to a saddle ring and a wooden stock. Advertising for this rifle was in countless comic books and hundreds of newspapers. It should be noted that the Daisy Company never produced a Red Ryder air rifle BB gun or prototype as described in the movie, *A Christmas Story*. The rifle and all advertising for the rifle shown in the movie were specially made to match the story. The company did produce a Buck Jones air rifle that more closely resembled the one in the story.

The *Red Ryder* comic strip at its peak was carried in over 750 newspapers and he was the most successful cowboy to come out of the comics. His comic book was in continuous publication for 19 years and he starred in ten Big Little Books. From 1940 to 1947 he also appeared in twenty-four motion pictures for Republic Pictures and four for Eagle-Lion Films in 1949-1950. Wild Bill Elliott

and Allan "Rocky" Lane portrayed Ryder in most of these films while Tommy Cook and Robert (Bobby) Blake played Little Beaver. Don "Red" Berry appeared as Ryder in the twelve chapter, *Adventures of Red Ryder* serial for Republic Pictures in 1940 and claimed his nickname "Red" was due to his playing Ryder in this serial.

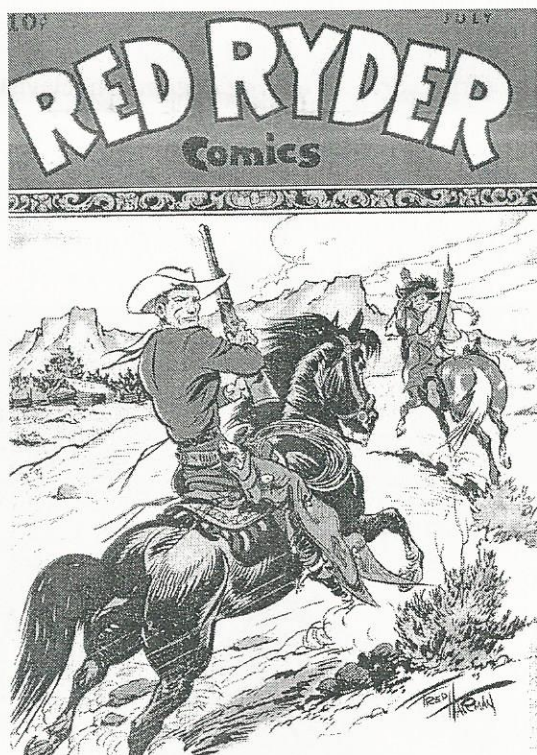
In the 1987 movie *Full Metal Jacket*, Crazy Earl carries a Daisy air rifle in addition to his M16 rifle and in our video game era it is featured in the *Fallout* game series and is an "Easter Egg" in the *Borderlands* game.



During the Korean War Harman went on a six-weeks USO tour entertaining servicemen with stories and sketches of Red Ryder and the "Old West." He was named Colorado's Outstanding Citizen in 1958 and is one of the few non-Indians to be adopted into the Navajo Indian Nation. He is one of the original members of the *Cowboy Artists of America*, and his paintings were included in their exhibition on September 9, 1966, at the *National Cowboy Hall of Fame*, in Oklahoma City. There is an annual Red Ryder Round-Up in his honor on the July 4th weekend in Pago-

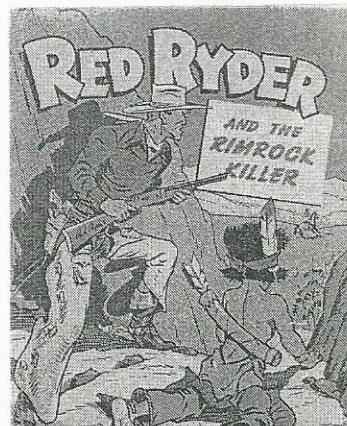
sa Springs. He retired from the strip in 1963 and spent most of his time in his studio in Albuquerque, New Mexico free lancing and working with oils of western scenes. The strip was continued by his assistant, Bob MacLeod, along with Jim Gary, John Wade Hampton and Edmond Good for another year and then cancelled. Fred Harman died at the age of 79 on January 2, 1982.

Stephen Slesinger was born on December 25, 1901 in New York City and attended *The Ethical Culture Fieldston School*, an Ivy League Preparatory School from 1914 to 1919. If you attended that school today the tuition and fees would total \$37,825 per year. After graduation from Fieldston he attended Columbia University where he decided that merchandising was what he wanted to do. By the late 1920's he was a literary agent representing Zane Grey, Will James and Andy Rooney while acquiring the licensing rights to many illustrators, authors and cartoon characters. In the 1930's he signed a contract to promote



Winnie-the-Pooh books. He published the original black and white stories in color and gave Winnie his red shirt. The rest as they say is history. He held exclusive commercialization rights to *Winnie-the-Pooh* for over thirty years. Along with Pooh he controlled or owned some of the

most popular character rights of the 1930s and 1940s, including, *Tarzan*, *Buck Rogers*, *Ozark Ike*, *King of the Royal Mounted*, *Alley Oop*, *Ella Cinders*, *Tail Spin Tommy*, *Captain Easy*, *Polly the Powers Model* and *Charlie Chan*, as well as all Newspaper Enterprise Association comic strips.



There isn't enough space in this article to cite Stephen Slesinger's accomplishments in the character-merchandising field, in children's television or his humanitarian work with young people. He was a true genius in his chosen profession. He died on December 17, 1953. His estate still holds the licensing rights to the *Red Ryder Daisy Carbine Air Rifle*, which is the longest continuing license in the history of the licensing industry.

The Radio Program

The *Red Ryder* radio series began February 3, 1942 on NBC's Blue Network, three times a week at 7:30pm and ran for nine years. The program opened with "The Dying Cowboy" (*Bury Me Not On The Lone Prairie*) as its theme song and incorporated the same cast of characters from the comic strip. Ryder was played by Reed Hadley from 1942 to 1944, followed by Carlton Kaddell in 1945 and Brooke Temple from 1946 through 1951. Numerous actors played Little Beaver including Tommy Cook, Frank Bresee and Horace Murphy who was also Buckskin Blodgett. Martha Wentworth was the Duchess and for a short period Arthur Q. Bryan was Rawhide Rollinson. The two main announcers were Ben Alexander and Art Gilmore. Monty Fraser and Bob Turnbull were the sound effects men. The program, similar to the *Lone Ranger* offered premiums to its young listeners. One of the more popular giveaways was the Red Ryder arrowhead. A plastic arrowhead identical to the one pictured on the next page sold this year (February 11th) on eBay for \$170.03.



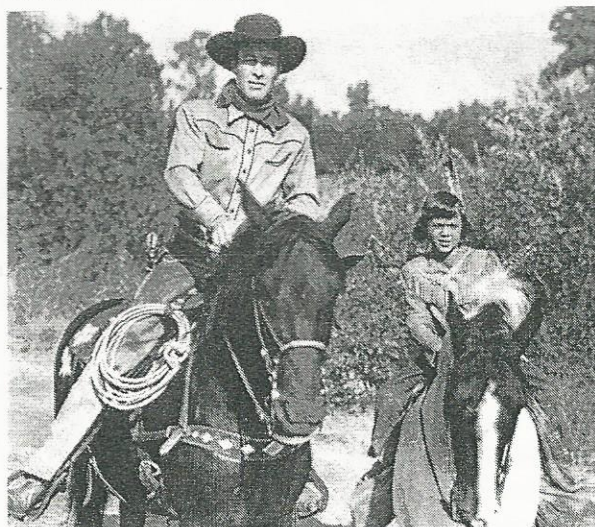
When the Blue Network outbid the Mutual Broadcasting System for the broadcast rights to the *Lone Ranger* in 1942, it sold *Red Ryder's* East Coast rights to Mutual with an option to purchase the West Coast rights. This set up a very unusual situation. Two competing networks were broadcasting the same radio program with the same cast on different coasts. The Blue network was running *Red Ryder* on the West Coast while Mutual was running *Red Ryder* on the East Coast. The East Coast *Ryder* was in the same time slot that Blue was airing *The Lone Ranger* and *Ryder* was beating the *Ranger* in the Hooper rating. This double broadcasting continued from May 20, 1942 to September 9, 1942 when Mutual found a western regional sponsor, Langendorf Bread, executed their West Coast option and took over the broadcasts from Blue. They then discontinued the East Coast *Ryder* program and *Ryder* was heard exclusively on Mutual's West Coast affiliate, the Don Lee Network on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 7:30 pm. It's curious that Mutual cancelled the East Coast *Ryder* program when its rating were higher than the *Ranger's*.

It seems as if both Mutual and NBC Blue were not acting in their own best interests during this period. We may never know, but we do know that the FCC had been investigating NBC and its owner RCA for anti-trust violations for a number of years, and in 1941 won a final court decision upholding their position. On January 8, 1942 NBC announced it would divest itself from the Blue Network and placed an eight million dollar price tag on the network. Two days later Mutual filed a ten million dollar lawsuit against NBC, "alleging a conspiracy to hinder Mutual to fairly compete in the transmission of interstate commerce in nation-wide network programming." In 1943 Rexall Drugstores and Edward Noble, owner of the Life Savers Candy Company, purchased the Blue Network, Mutual dropped its suit against NBC and the Blue Network became part of the

new American Broadcasting Company. Makes you wonder if *Red Ryder* and *The Lone Ranger* were part of all the wheeling and dealing that was going on.

Some Highlights of the Radio Actors:

Reed Hadley: There is a Western New York connection to the *Red Ryder* radio program. Reed Hadley was raised in Buffalo and graduated from Bennett High School and began acting in the local Studio Arena Theater. His radio roles were limited to *Red Ryder* and *Tales of the Texas Rangers* even though he had what was considered a "radio voice." During World War II he narrated Department of the Defense films including Operation Ivy, about the first hydrogen bomb test. Many of these films were intended for internal military use only, but a few have been cleared for civilian viewing. While narrating these films he held a top-secret security clearance. He could also be heard doing the narration in the films *Call Northside 777* and *Boomerang*. He was in numerous film roles and played Zorro in the 1939 serial *Zorro's Fighting Legion*. On television he is best known as Captain Braddock in *Racket Squad* and Bart Matthews in *The Public Defender*. His television work earned him a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.



Wild Bill Elliott and Robert (Bobby) Blake

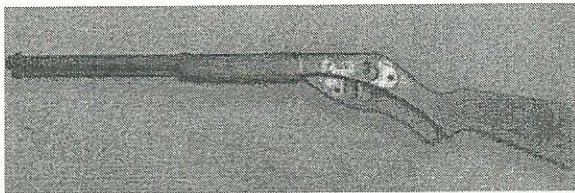
Carlton Kadel: In addition to playing *Ryder* he also announced the program in 1945. He was best known as a radio announcer for the *Amos 'n' Andy*, *Chase and Sanborn Hour*, *Jack Carson Show*, *Big Town* plus many more. Many times he would

announce the program and be part of the cast. Some of his radio roles were on soap operas such as *Backstage Wife*, *Right to Happiness*, and the *Romance of Helen Trent*.

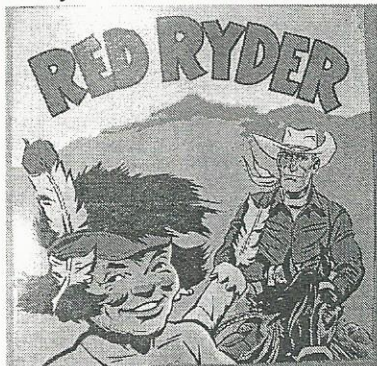
Brooke Temple: Ryder appears to be the only radio part that he played. There is little information on what he did after Red Ryder. He was born in Niagara Falls, New York.

Martha Wentworth: She played the Duchess and appeared in some of the Red Ryder films. After Ryder she did voiceovers for Disney studios including *One Hundred Dalmatians* and *The Sword in the Stone*.

Although Red Ryder was a popular cowboy in many mediums, in my mind he never reached the stature of the Lone Ranger. If it wasn't for the Daisy Red Ryder air rifle I doubt that he would have been as popular as he was or as well known as he is today. When you listen to the *Red Ryder* radio program you become aware that his horse Thunder was no match for Silver and his "roll-l-l-l on-n-n-n Thunder" could not compare to "Hi yo, Silver, away." Even *Ryder's* announcers could not compete with Fred Foy's enthusiastic, "A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust and a hearty hi yo, Silver." The music of the *Dying Cowboy*, although played somewhat upbeat, was sad in comparison to the *Ranger's* stirring *William Tell Overture*.



Pictured above is my Red Ryder Daisy air rifle that is still in good working order. Numerous metal soldiers were dented, and a few windows broken by this rifle in its early days.



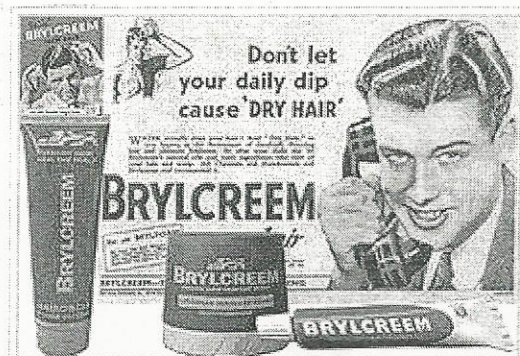
Whatever Happened to Brylcreem?



Brylcreem "A little dab'll do ya" was the common phrase for this popular hair tonic in the 1950s. I used plenty of it before going to school everyday. At least it smelled good. The first Brylcreem came out in 1928 made by County Chemicals at the Chemico Works in Bradford Street in Birmingham England. Watching Marlon Brando in "*The Wild One*" or Watching Kookie from "*77 Sunset Strip*" you got to see two gents that got into greasy tonics. I'm sure everyone remembers the popular musical jingle. It went like this:

**Bryl-creem, a little dab'll do ya,
Use more, only if you dare,
But watch out,
The gals will all pursue ya,--
They'll love to put their fingers
through your hair.**

**Bryl-creem, a little dab'll do ya,
Bryl-creem, you'll look so debonair
Bryl-creem, the gals will pusue ya,
They'll love to run their fingers
through your hair.**

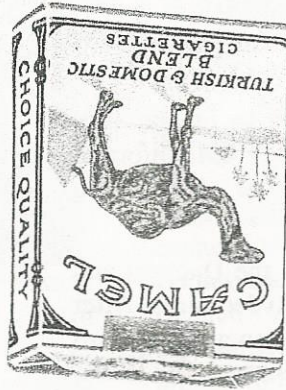
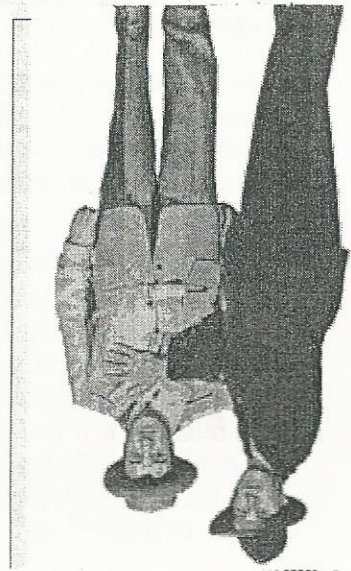


Needless to say when the dry look became popular Brylcreem disappeared.

Camel — The cigarette of Costlier Tobaccos

5 EXTRA SMOKES PER PACK!

By burning 25% slower than the average of the 4 other largest-selling brands tested—slower than any of them—Camels also give you a smoking plus equal, on the average, to



LIGHT UP A CAMEL and see what it's like to smoke the slower-burning cigarette—the cigarette that gives you less nicotine in the smoke, the cigarette that gives you real mildness. Yes, according to independent scientific tests, the smoke of slower-burning Camels contains 28% less nicotine! (See statement above.) Whether you smoke quite often, or just occasionally, it's nice to know that with Camel cigarettes—so grand-tasting and full of flavor—you get less nicotine per puff. Extra mildness from the first puff through the last! Extra flavor, too! Buy Camels by the carton—the thrifty way!

than the average of the four other largest-selling cigarettes tested—less than any of them—according to independent scientific tests of the smoke itself

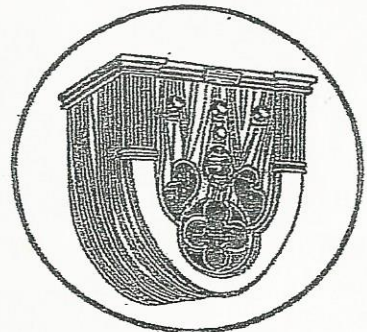
28% Less Nicotine

The Smoke of Slower-Burning Camels gives you EXTRA MILDNESS, EXTRA COOLNESS, EXTRA FLAVOR and



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