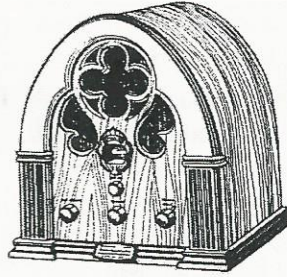


The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975


# The **ILLUSTRATED**

Number 416



# **PRESS**

January 2014



*YOU'RE GONNA GO FOR THOSE SLAP-HAPPY SWEETHEARTS*

Adventures of the  
**THIN MAN**  
A wow in the movies  
... now on the air

The complete 1/2 hour  
Comedy Thriller

**TONITE AT 6, WTMJ**


*Not Tonight!*

The  
of the **Adventures**



has moved to  
a *new time*  
**6:00 P.M. WISN**  
*Sundays!*

*YOU'RE GONNA DIE LAUGHING AT THE ADVENTURES OF*



The **THIN MAN**

A Complete  
Comedy  
Mystery Thriller

**TONITE at 6, WTMJ**  
A WOW IN THE MOVIES ... NOW ON THE AIR

# The Illustrated Press

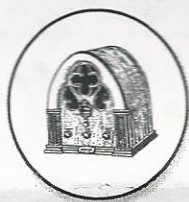
## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Club Membership: \$18.00 per year from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. Members receive a media library listing and a monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$18.00; April-June, \$14.00; July-September, \$10.00; October-December, \$7.00. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues of the newsletter. 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 p.m. 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 a Club picnic in August.

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

### CLUB MAILING ADDRESS

Old Time Radio Club  
56 Christen Court  
Lancaster, NY 14086



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Send all articles, letters, exchange newsletters, etc. to: *The Illustrated Press*  
c/o Tom Cherre, Editor  
144 Fontaine Drive  
Cheektowaga, NY 14215  
email address: [skylark68\\_1999@yahoo.com](mailto:skylark68_1999@yahoo.com)  
phone: (716) 833-9713

### **Assistant to the Editor:**

Richard Leroux  
P.O. Box 54  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120

## CLUB OFFICERS

### **President:**

Jerry Collins (716) 683-6199  
56 Christen Court  
Lancaster, NY 14086  
[collins@yahoo.com](mailto:collins@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 Place  
Buffalo, NY 14213

### **Membership Renewals, Change of Address:**

Peter Bellanca (716) 773-2485  
1620 Ferry Road  
Grand Island, NY 14072-3035  
[pmb1620@gmail.com](mailto:pmb1620@gmail.com)

### **Membership Inquires and OTR Network Related Items:**

Richard Olday (716) 684-1604  
171 Parwood Trail  
Depew, NY 14043-1071  
[raolday41@yahoo.com](mailto:raolday41@yahoo.com)

### **Technical Manager/CD and MP3 Librarian:**

Bob McDivitt (716) 681-8073  
100 Poinciana Parkway  
Cheektowaga, NY 14225  
[robmcd@verizon.net](mailto:robmcd@verizon.net)

### **Reference Librarian:**

Don Friedrich (716) 626-9164  
21 Southcrest  
Cheektowaga, NY 14225  
[don201353@gmail.com](mailto:don201353@gmail.com)

### **Cassette Librarian:**

Dan Marafino  
19 Church Street  
Lancaster, NY 14086  
[digbee45@aol.com](mailto:digbee45@aol.com)

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## Editor's Two Cents !

I trust everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I went to visit Jerry Collins ten days before Christmas. He's in good spirits and the doctors were pleased with the results of his surgery. We're hoping to see his smiling face sometime in spring. We all wish Jerry a better new year and a full recovery. Well our Christmas party was a desert lover's delight. I believe there were about 5 pies, and 2 jello treats, along with some cookies. We did manage to have three other dishes that helped to balance out the buffet. Next year I'll do chili. We did receive a new publication by Jack French entitled "Radio Rides the Range". I managed to browse through the book briefly and if you're a lover of old time westerns, then this book is for you. It covers all the shows, from Annie Oakley to Zorro. I'm sure one of our members will write a review on the book. I will give our members another reminder that dues should be paid by the end of the month. The new fee is \$20.00. Please send your checks to Peter or bring it to the meeting. There are no reminder notices. **This is your reminder. Dues are due \$20.00. Thank You.** Also a reminder to members that articles are always welcome. It makes it a lot easier on me. Send in your articles, or give them to me at meetings. The Dragnet trivia contest went well last month. I

thought most of the members knew that Jack Webb picked badge number 714 for Babe Ruth's at the time record setting life time home run record. Anyway we'll try you out on The Great Gildersleeve:

1. Gildersleeve moved from what town on Fibber McGee to what town on his own show?
2. What was the last name of niece and nephew Marjorie and Leroy?
3. What two actors played Throckmorton P. ?
4. What was the show's long time sponsor?
5. What was Gildy's nickname for Judge Hooker?
6. Marjorie married Walter Bronco Thompson. Who was he?
7. What was the name of the fraternal organization that Gildersleeve belonged to ?
8. Gildy's barber Floyd played what classical cartoon character?
9. In the beginning of his show Gildersleeve owned what type of manufacturing company ?
10. Who played the first Marjorie ?
11. What was maid Bertie's full name?
12. What was Leroy's usual catchphrase when uncle Mort would reprimand him ?
13. Girlfriend Leila hailed from what Southern town?
14. What Kraft product was mentioned almost every week and is still made today.
15. How many episodes were made in the 14 year run ?

Next brush up your talents for Gunsmoke trivia. Happy New Year!!!!

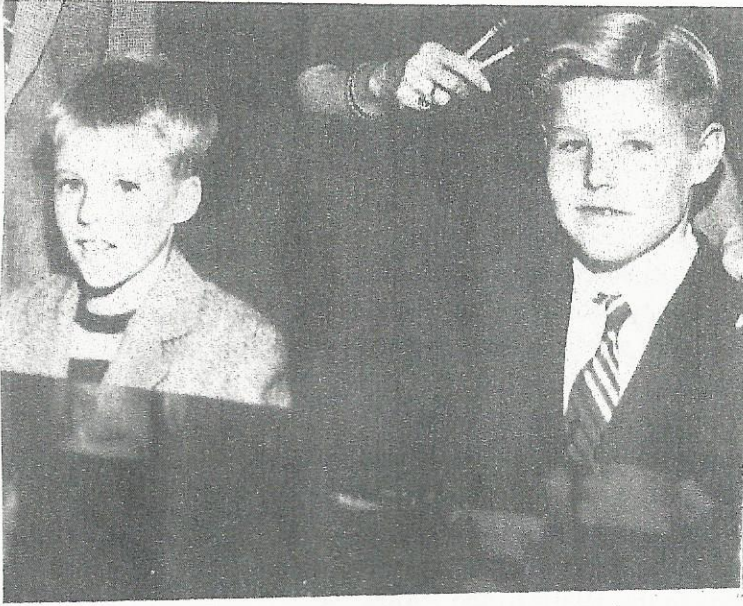
**Ozzie and Harriet  
Nostalgia Digest &  
Tom Cherre**



I more or less grew up watching Ozzie and Harriet on TV as a little kid. I still remember when little Ricky was just a wise-cracking little squirt. As Ricky got older, he had all the girl friends, cars, clothes, good looks, and parents that never got mad at him. In deed he had it made. He was probably the envy of every teenage boy in the country. Of course the show was a fantasy, but it was one show I had to watch every week. Going way back before that show even began Ozzie Nelson and Harriet Hilliard had an illustrious career. We begin with Harriet Hilliard. She was born Peggy Louise Snyder in Des Moines, Iowa in 1909. In 1932 she was performing in vaudeville. Harriet said, she did it all, meaning, she sang, danced, and did comedy skits. When the family began performing in New York, she became the Mistress of Ceremony at the Hollywood Restaurant in New York City. It was here she met bandleader Ozzie Nelson, who also chose her to be

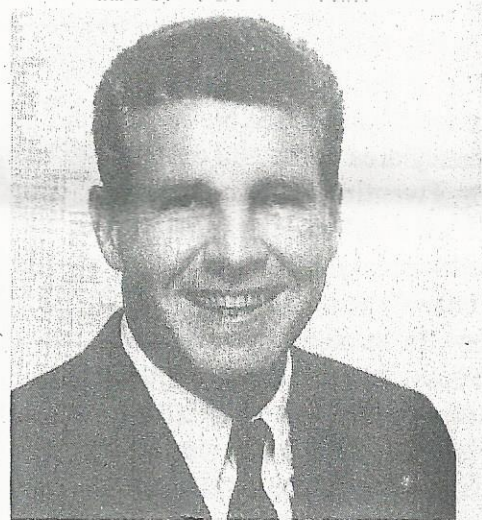
his female vocalist. This was also a first for a band to have a girl singer. Up to this time there were only male singers. Harriet Hilliard also starred as an actress and singer for RKO for a number of years, being immensely popular during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Ozzie was smitten over Harriet, and within two years they were married. After she quit RKO she became part of the Red Skelton Show, along with Ozzie being the music conductor. Harriet played the Mean Little Kid's mother. She also played Daisy Jane, Deadeye, and Calamity Jane. When Red Skelton got called into the service Ozzie thought they would get another comedian and continue in the same venue. As luck would have it, Don Quinn, writer for *The Fibber McGee and Molly Show* by chance met Ozzie and Harriet at The Brown Derby restaurant and he said, "Oz, why don't you write your own show?" It never occurred to him before, but he wrote a show, got a studio at CBS and did an audience show. John Guedel took the audition platters and sent them to New York. Within a week they were signed up by International Sterling Silver and began a regular 30 minute weekly show. Originally the Nelsons had actors portraying their two boys. One





night Bing Crosby was going to do a guest spot on the show. David and Ricky used to play with Bing's son Lindsey. The boys said, "Why can't we do the show if Bing's sons could do his own show?" Ozzie told them they could do a preview show and see how that turns out. At the preview show, the boys were a hit and drew plenty of laughs. David was 11 and Ricky was 8 when they started acting. Ricky was so small at the time that they had to place a chair on a table so he could reach the microphone. Ricky seemed to get all the laughs, and David griped about it. Harriet would tell him "Listen, everybody needs a straight man. A comic can't get a laugh without one. You're a straight man, and I'm a straight woman. Both of 'em need us to get along." That satisfied David. Their first announcer was Verne Smith. The second announcer was Jack Bailey, famed for his *Queen for a Day* on radio and later TV. In the early radio shows Ozzie was portrayed as a bandleader, much like Ricky Ricardo in *I Love Lucy* in the later TV show. Later on Ozzie was more or less a man of leisure spending a lot of time doing nothing especially with

his next door neighbor and friend Thorny or the kids. He never had any visible means of support. Harriet always enjoyed working on radio. She felt she had a life of her own doing radio. You did it live. Then you had the thrill of working in front of a live audience and having one crack at it. You didn't dare make a mistake, so you were absolutely on your very best. It was only once a week, so you could live almost a normal life the rest of the week. Later on in television it was 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There was little personal time with TV unlike radio shows, which she listened to and also enjoyed later on in her life.



Ozzie Nelson was born in Jersey City New Jersey in 1906. He was an Eagle scout played high school football and played football at Rutgers University. He played saxophone and started a band just to make some pocket money. He was studying law, but as his band got bigger and better he pursued music as his ultimate career. His big break came when his band started performing locally on radio for a furniture company. He was popular with the young people, both

for his athletic ability and music ability. He was a pretty busy guy with probably



HARRIET NELSON

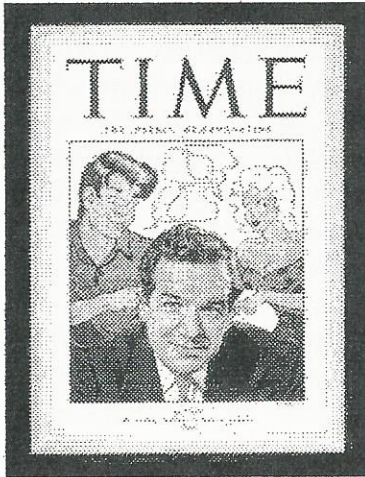
the youngest band in the New York and New Jersey area at the end of the Roaring Twenties. After he became established and Harriet joined up with him he started a new innovation that had never been done in the "Big Band" industry. In those days Rudy Vallee was popular and the girls would stop dancing and look at Rudy when he began singing. Ozzie used the same format with Harriet singing and all the guys would stop and watch her sing. For a guy who created a band to do some gigs to make a little extra money, he turned out pretty well. He was more or less the mastermind of the radio show. He wrote the show. He also produced and directed it too. If he could have, he would have handled the airing of the show also. The story lines of the show were quite simple. Ozzie's biggest problems were making sure he had the right refreshments for an upcoming party, or helping one of the boys with a minor problem. Like the TV version Ozzie became a flamboyant casual husband

who never went to work every morning like most other fathers. On TV he would hang around in a cardigan sweater spending most of his time at the malt shop. The guy never raised his voice, never had a serious argument with his wife or kids. He never seemed to have any money problems, and was about as milk toast a fellow that you could ever care to meet. Nevertheless the radio and TV shows became huge hits. The TV show went off the air in 1967 after over 400 episodes. Ozzie was probably responsible for making his son Ricky, one of the biggest pop stars along side Elvis in the 1950s to the 1960s. Now that I watch the old shows I realize how trite and unimaginative they were however, I made darn sure I would never miss an episode when it came on each week. And I concur; they were truly America's Favorite Family!



LIL ABNER - PART 4

During and after World War II Capp visited hospitals to cheer amputees, joke about his prosthetic leg and explain that they could still lead a productive life. He worked with the Red Cross to produce a comic book to be given to amputee veterans and toured Vietnam with the USO. As honorary chairman of the Sister Kenny Foundation to fight polio he visited children's hospitals, and donated free artwork to various charitable organizations. In 1950 he had Abner join the Navy to help with their recruitment drive.



During and after World War II Capp visited hospitals to cheer amputees, joke about his prosthetic leg and explain that they could still lead a productive life. He worked with the Red Cross to produce a comic book to be given to amputee veterans and toured Vietnam with the USO. As honorary chairman of the Sister Kenny Foundation to fight polio he visited children's hospitals, and donated free artwork to various charitable organizations. In 1950 he had Abner join the Navy to help with their recruitment drive.

As his political beliefs moved further to the right he became more visible to the public. His frequent appearances as a guest on various television programs, plus having his own radio program, writing a syndicated newspaper column and being a lecturer on college campuses made his political philosophy known nationwide. He was one of the highest paid speakers on the campus lecture circuit. The problem was that campuses were moving to the political left and he was going in the other direction, not practical conservatism, but dogmatic. His appearances turned into shouting matches

Added to these problems were his relationships with women. In 1971, syndicated columnist Jack Anderson wrote that three years earlier Capp attempted to rape a coed at the University of Alabama. The Anderson article led to Capp being charged with indecent exposure, sodomy

and attempted adultery. He was found guilty of only attempted adultery. Other accounts of his indiscretions came to light and these accusations plus the changing attitudes of the country marked the beginning of the end for Capp and *Lil Abner*. Newspapers began dropping the strip and on November 13, 1977 the last *Lil Abner* strip was published. Articles were written on the demise of *Lil Abner* and radio and TV commentators discussed the passing of an era. Even the cartoon free *NY Times* devoted nearly a full page to Capp and *Lil Abner*. One of the greatest comic strips of all times was gone.

At its height *Lil Abner* had sixty million readers in over nine hundred American newspapers plus one hundred foreign papers. The U.S.P.S. included it in its Comic Strip Classics Commemorative Stamps Series. Capp is honored in the National Cartoon Museum, is one of only thirty-one artists in their Hall of Fame and was posthumously awarded an Eisner Award for creative achievement in American Comics. The Eisner Award is the comic industry's equivalent to the movie's Oscar. In 1968 the strip's characters inspired a theme park called Dogpatch U.S.A. in Marble Falls, Arkansas. The park was in operation for twenty-five years.



In September, 1977 his daughter Catherine died unexpectedly and in November of the same year his granddaughter was killed in an auto accident. His poor health, indiscretions and family concerns were becoming overwhelming. On November 5, 1979 he died at his home in South Hampton, New Hampshire of emphysema, a result of a life long chain-smoking habit and

was buried in Mount Prospect Cemetery in Amesbury, Massachusetts.

### The Radio Show

The *Lil Abner* radio program made its debut on NBC's Red Network on November 20, 1939 at 6:45 p.m. John Hodiak starred as Abner with Hazel Dopheide as Mammy, Clarence Hartzell as Pappy and Laurette Fillbrandt as Daisy Mae. Wynn Wright was the producer and Durwood Kirby did the announcing. Charles Gussman with Capp acting as a consultant wrote the program. Even though the program featured many of the same story lines as the strip it unfortunately could not emulate orally the intelligence or humor to which the public was visually accustomed to and was cancelled on December 6, 1940.

John Hodiak was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on April 16, 1914. His parents had emigrated to the U.S. from the Ukraine in the early 1900's and moved to Detroit, Michigan. In high school he took part in school and church plays and shortly after graduation was hired by Station WXYZ in Detroit as an announcer. From there he went to Chicago and had parts in *Ma Perkins* and *Wings of Destiny* before landing the *Lil Abner* lead. When the program folded, Marvin Schenck, a MGM talent agent signed him for a screen test. MGM liked the test and offered him a contract. Hodiak was unable to serve in the military due to high blood pressure and MGM was looking for leading men to replace their actors that were in the service. After a few bit parts he was loaned to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox and starred in Alfred Hitchcock's *Lifeboat* with Tallulah Bankhead. From then on he emerged as a major star and was featured with among others, Lana Turner, Judy Garland, Gene



Tierney, Ava Gardner and Anne Baxter, whom he married on July 6, 1946. They divorced in 1953 and he went to Broadway and had a successful two-year run in the *Caine Mutiny*

*Court Martial*. Returning to Hollywood, he did guest work on TV and appeared in MGM's *Trial*. On the morning of October 19, 1955, while shaving he died of a coronary thrombosis. He was 41 years old at the time of his death and was scheduled to complete final work that day on 20th Century-Fox's *On the Threshold of Space*. The film was released in 1956 with his part intact. He left behind a four-year-old daughter Katrina, and was interred in the main mausoleum at the Calvary Cemetery in Los Angeles. For his work in radio he was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Laurette Fillbrandt, a true radio actress, was



born in Zanesville, Ohio on October 15, 1915. After high school she won roles in local plays and began touring with road shows. In the mid 1930's she became a staff actress for NBC's Blue network in

Chicago. This led to roles in numerous soap operas including *Girl Alone*, *Bachelor's Children*, *Guiding Light*, *Affairs of Anthony* and *Midstream*. She played both Fay and Evey Perkins on *Ma Perkins* and for several seasons was featured in the full hour omnibus, *The Chicago Theater of the Air*. Moving to Hollywood in the early 1940's she continued with her radio career and played Claudia Barbour in *One Man's Family*. She remained active in radio drama until its demise in the 1960's and then retired from show business. She passed away on September 27, 2000.



Finis



## Tokyo Rose Continued: By Frank Bork

### After The War

In September 1945 after the press had reported that Aquino was "Tokyo Rose", US Army authorities arrested her. The FBI and the Army's Counterintelligence Corps conducted an extensive investigation to determine whether Aquino had committed crimes against the U.S. By the following October, authorities decided that the evidence then known did not merit prosecution, and she was released.

### Prison For Iva Aquino

Before the year was out, Iva again requested a US passport to return home to America. The Gold Star Mother's groups contacted the noted broadcaster Walter Winchell who jumped on the band wagon against Iva. Now Winchell was not a man to stick 100% with the facts or the truth for that matter, but he would put a little frosting on the cake to make his story more convincing. The Gold Star Mothers and Winchell became enraged, that this woman, Tokyo Rose, that they considered a traitor, should be allowed to return to this country. Even though Iva's arrest for treason had been publicly announced, Iva was never informed why she was being held. After a month in jail, she was transferred to Sugamo Prison, where she was placed in a cell on Blue Block, where diplomats and women accused of war crimes were held. Here she spent the next eleven and a half months, locked in a 6 by 9 cell. Her husband was allowed one 20 minute visit a month. There she was allowed to have a bath once every 3 or 4 days. It was at this time period she learned of her mother's death while en route to the Gila River Internment Camp in Arizona. Her

family had moved to Chicago. While this was going on, Major Cousens was tried for treason and was acquitted by the Australian Army for his work with the Japanese Radio Service, whereupon he returned to work at Radio Sydney. Similarly, not only was Captain Ince of the American Army cleared of all charges while working as a broadcaster for the Japanese, but upon his return back home he was promoted to Major with all his pay, while he was prisoner of the Japanese. Iva, meanwhile was interrogated by the FBI and the Army CIA. There was overwhelming evidence that "Tokyo Rose" was a composite figure and that Iva had not committed treason. Despite this the interrogators refused to believe in anything she told them, even ignored copies of her scripts which were presented to them. Finally, on October 25 1946, having spent a year, a week and a day in Military custody without ever being charged, Iva was released without condition". She left the prison flanked by an honor guard and carrying a bouquet of flowers presented by the Sugamo Prison commandant, Colonel Hardy. Once again she tried to apply for a passport to return home, but the same lack of documentation (no proof of American citizenship) that had left her stranded there, before the World War 2 in 1941 continued to frustrate her efforts once again. At the same time she suffered the loss of her first child, shortly after he was born in January 1948. This was quite possibly because of her long confinement that contributed to her baby's death.

### The Treason Trial

In the US pressure was mounting to either have Tokyo Rose brought back to stand trial, or be-or to prevent her from

ever returning as a citizen. Brundridge, who had joined the "Nashville Tennessean", together with former FBI Special Agent John B. Hogan, now an attorney with the immigration Service, persuaded the US Department of Justice to support their efforts to have Iva sign Clark Lee's notes. Brundridge returned to Japan and confronted Iva, who was still recovering from the loss of her son. Mentally and physically exhausted, and wanting only to return home, she signed the document. Two months later, a word of her "confession" spread when Brundridge published a ten part series that opened with "The Arrest of Tokyo Rose". Brundridge's series was a sell out. Three months later, June 1948, Attorney General Tom Clark formally announced that Iva Toguri Aquino would be tried for treason in the 12<sup>th</sup> District Court in San Francisco. Iva was arrested at her Ikejiri apartment and was presented with a warrant charging her with treasonable conduct against the US Government during World War 2. She was shipped off to San Francisco, leaving behind her husband, never to see him again. The ship docked at San Francisco harbor on September 25 1948. Iva had lost 30 pounds during the sea voyage and was suffering from chronic dysentery. Despite this, she was taken to the county jail and held for 9 months without bail. Iva was charged with 8 counts of treason and giving aid and comfort to the Empire of Japan during World War 2.

Continued Next Month.

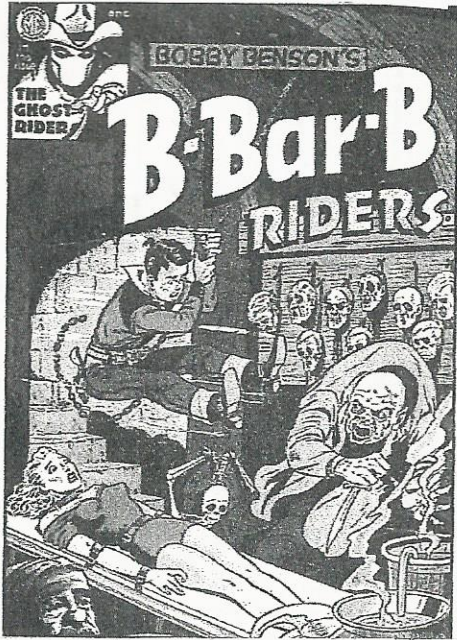
*Iva's husband died nearly 50 years after the trial in 1996, never having to see each other since the trial. In 2009 PBS broadcasted a segment of "History Detectives" with evidence that key prosecution witnesses were bribed. This was discovered in 2006.*

### Longest Running Old Time Radio Shows Part Two

By Tom Cherre

The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet had a long running show starting in 1944 and running to 1954. The show continued on TV till 1966. The Nelsons portrayed themselves with Ozzie writing most of the shows. Inner Sanctum a great thriller show went from 1941 to 1952. Many great guests stars and special effects helped make this a long time favorite. Mr. District Attorney with its great intro ran 13 years. Creator Ed Byron based the show on former NY Governor Thomas E. Dewey, who had built himself a reputation of a no-nonsense hard-nosed prosecutor. I also liked this show very much. Rudy Vallee, one show I've never listened to, was on the air for 16 years. It had many rising stars and many of the old vaudeville acts. Maybe I might just try the show out myself. Charlie McCarthy with Edgar Bergman pulling the strings stayed on the air for 18 successful years. It was the number one radio show in its first three seasons. It didn't show decline until TV came along. The show ended in 1956. The Cavalcade of America, a show I was completely unfamiliar with, had a healthy 18 year run. Cavalcade told true stories of persons and events that helped reshape American History. Dr. Christian went on for 16 years. Burns & Allen, Great Gildersleeve, and First Nighter all had great runs of 18 years each. Fred Allen and company had a 16 year run. The truly great shows that lasted 20 years or more dealt with comedy, music, theater, mystery, and suspense. Tune in next month and see what the top ten radio shows were of all time. You might be surprised to see what they are. Pt three conclusion in Feb.

Bobby Benson's  
B-Bar-B Rider Part One



After browsing through Jack French's new publication entitled *Radio Rides the Range* I ran across an interesting Buffalo connection of one of the more popular kids' shows. *B-Bar-Riders* with Bobby Benson actually had two runs over the airwaves. It first ran from 1932-1936, and then had a run stretching from 1949 till 1955. The show was created by Englishman Herbert C. Rice who emigrated to the U.S. and settled in Buffalo. He found a great deal of success in acting and writing. In 1932 Buffalo based H-O Cereal Company approached Rice with the idea of creating a children's radio show to promote its cereal products. Rice came up with a story about an orphan lad named Bobby Benson who inherits a ranch in Texas called the H-Bar-O Ranch whose foreman is Buck Mason. The show debuted in 1932 and the response was sensational. H-O had to hire a dozen more girls just to answer the fan mail. Premiums, a big deal then, were given

out with listeners sending in their change and box tops. The hot premiums then were Bobby Benson code books, cereal bowls, drinking glasses, and card games. Richard Wanamaker, an 11 year old son of a Buffalo attorney played the role of Bobby Benson. Rice did a great deal of promoting the show, with Wanamaker appearing in Western duds on top of a pony named *Silver Spot*. After a smashing season of 78 episodes the series moved to New York City. A new star by the name of Billy Halop replaced Wanamaker. Halop, 12 years old at the time would later gain great fame when he became a part of the 'dead end kids' on Broadway years later. His sister Florence Halop would costar on the show. Florence would also make it big on TV later on as a great character actress. Halop's sister played Polly Armstead. Buck Mason was changed to Tex Mason, and the character of Sunny Jim was phased out. Diogenes Dowaddle, Windy Wales, and Harka the Indian were added to the show. Jock, a Scottish boy was played by Walter Tetley. Billy Halop was given more star appeal than Wanamaker. Pictures of Halop were distributed nationally on premiums. He also toured circus rodeos



Part 2 next month

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**Jose Iturbi**

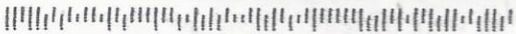
**Ed Archie Gardner**

**Cass Daley**




**"OPENS TONIGHT, FOLKS"**

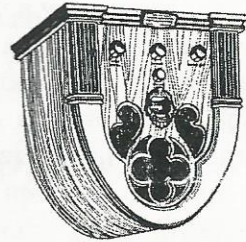
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**Jim Beshires ©**  
 123 Davidson  
 Savannah, GA 31419

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**



**THOMAS R. CHEREE**  
 144 FONTAINE DRIVE  
 BUFFALO NY 14215-2038

*The Old Time Radio Club*



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