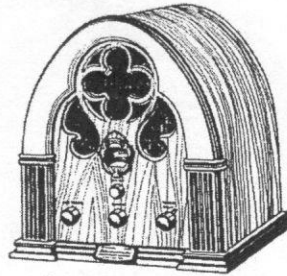


The ILLUSTRATED



PRESS

Number 423

October 2014

CAPTURED U. S. ARMY DOCTOR OUTWITS
 GESTAPO . . . IN DESPERATE FLIGHT FROM
 NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMP . . . WHILE HIS
 YOUNG WIFE, BELIEVING HIM DEAD,
 STRUGGLES TO REBUILD HER LIFE . . . HEAR
 THIS THRILLING STORY!

“YOUNG DR. MALONE”
10:45 A.M. KDKA
MON. THRU FRI.
 (Same program broadcast at
 2 p. m. WJAS)

Brought to you by Post's 40% Bran
 Flakes. There's one in every family
 who needs their three extra benefits.

The Illustrated Press

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Club Membership: \$20.00 per year from January 1st to December 31st. Members receive a media library listing and a monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$20.00; 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 Club is affiliated with the Old Time Radio Network.

CLUB MAILING ADDRESS

Old Time Radio Club
56 Christen Court
Lancaster, NY 14086



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
skylark68_1999@yahoo.com

Assistant to the Editor:
Richard Leroux (716) 693-0573
P.O. Box 54
North Tonawanda, NY 14120
rfl.1644@yahoo.com

REMINDER

All renewal and new member checks should be made out to D. P. PARISI, not the Old Time Radio Club.

CLUB OFFICERS

President:

Jerry Collins (716) 683-6199
56 Christen Court
Lancaster, NY 14086
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

Membership Inquires and OTR Network Related Items:

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

Technical Manager/CD and MP3 Librarian:

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

Reference Librarian:

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

Cassette Librarian:

Dan Marafino (716) 684-0733
19 Church Street
Lancaster, NY 14086
digbee45@aol.com

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

Club Web Page: Now you can view and download our various catalogs and club information at ---
www.buffalo-otr-club.org

Editor's Two Cents

New things are happening in our club. Peter Bellanca's message below will inform all of us.

We have been getting requests from members for a digital edition (DE) of the *Illustrated Press*. Everything seems to be on track for a January, 2015 launch. The DE will closely mirror the printed edition with a few minor changes. It will have the same cover, in color, with added and/or enhanced color graphics plus an article from the IP vaults. (Disclosure}, these vault articles, some over 35 years old, may contain information that at the time of original printing was correct, but newer research has expanded factual information rendering parts of the articles incorrect.

If you are interested in receiving a digital edition of the *Illustrated Press* send your e-mail address and full name to pmb1620@gmail.com. When responding please use IP DIGITAL COPY as a subject heading.

Bit's 'n Bytes- "Computer Bob"

Well the summer is over and the fall is upon us. A lot has happened during

the past year. The new web site is up and running. Anyone visiting the site can now download our catalogs so there are no surprises as to what we have. Mind you, our library is increasing all the time. We have a CD of all issues of the newsletter going back to the beginning of the club (1975). For a nominal charge (\$20.00 including postage) it could be yours. There has been talk of e-mailing the newsletters to our members. With the cost of postage rising so fast, we thought e-mailing would be a better way to go. Those wishing to go that route would see a reduction in dues. The powers to be hope to get this started by January 2015. You can find more info in Pete's message.

We have an OTR internet radio show on www.yesterdayusa.com. The show changes every two weeks. I will soon be posting a sample show on the catalog page of our website. Also on the same page will be a sample newsletter. Last but not least I wish to thank Mahlon Wagner for his recent MP-3 donation. Check out the website and let me know what you like there. I'll be watching for responses. Until then, as Dick would say, Happy Listening.

Part Two of Even His Initials Were B.S

Jack French

Stern ended his story by explaining the athlete who had inspired Gershwin's composition had died, but somewhere up there, he was listening when the piece debuted. "And that man was Hall of Fame pitcher, Christy Mathewson!"

Other than the fact that Gershwin did write *Rhapsody in Blue*, every other detail in the story was a lie. The piece was inspired, and commissioned by band leader Paul Whiteman. Gershwin never even met Mathewson. In the early 1920s Mathewson, who had been gassed overseas in World War 1 was slowly dying of tuberculosis in Saranac Lake, NY. But he was still alive in February 1924 when *Rhapsody in Blue* was first publicly performed since his death occurred on October 7, 1925.

The practice of taking one tiny fact and festooning it with a multitude of falsehoods



was routine for Stern, despite his denials to his critics. He once proclaimed the Colgate Program "wasn't a sports show; it's entertainment. If there's a story that I know is not factual, I'll say so—but that's seldom the case." However many of his radio concoctions must have had his audience slack-jawed with incredulity. One such story was that of a Wisconsin boy whom Stern called "Al Wenger." Supposedly in 1939 this lad tried to walk home in knee-high snow drifts during a below zero night. He got lost, collapsed in the snow, and was found the next day, virtually frozen solid. "But he lived" Stern assured attentive listeners, "and one year later, in 1940, he won a swimming championship, although both his arms and legs had been amputated!" In the mid Forties most of his programs ended with his male quartet singing: "Bill Stern the Colgate Shave Cream Man Is on his way. "Bill Stern the Colgate Shave Cream Man Had lots to say. He told you tales of sports heroes. The inside dope he really knows.

But instead of the inside dope, his listeners got a steady dose of stories well outside the boundaries of truth and reason. While Stern usually focused on tales of deceased stars and personalities, he'd occasionally feature a celebrity of that era who would then challenge his perversion of the truth. One evening Stern told a tale in which Grantland Rice was hanging around a boxing gym, watching a skinny kid sparring in the ring. Later Rice heard that same thin boxer singing in the shower. When the kid came back out, Rice took him aside and predicted that his real future would be in music, not pugilistics. And that young fellow was Frank Sinatra, Stern concluded. There wasn't a scintilla of fact to the story and Grantland Rice, normally a cool customer, was furious at this network radio deception.

Another person who became very upset over a Bill Stern broadcast was a little lady in Milwaukee whose son was a Hollywood star. She was listening the night Stern blithely related the story of two prizefighters, Harry Greb and Mickey Walker, who battled in the Polo Grounds in 1925. After the event, they had dinner and drinks at a nearby restaurant, but after tossing down a few, they decided to resume the fisticuffs in back of the restaurant. Their alley brawl was interrupted by a young uniformed officer who was about to take them both to the precinct holding cell. Greb successfully begged for leniency, and when granted, gratefully staked the policeman to \$200 so he could find the dream in Hollywood. That forgiving police officer was Pat O'Brien. This was startling news to Pat's

mother since he had never been a police officer, not in New York City, nor anywhere else. Radio critic John Crosby in his November 24, 1949 column explained that terming Stern's stories "hearsay" or "legends" was quite misleading since his lurid legends originated with his writers and only began their legend status when Stern put them on the air. Some of Stern's former scripters confessed that they would concoct a fanciful tale of some incredible hero whose name was left blank until the end. That last part would be filled out later--- usually by Stern, with the name of a famous personality.

This happened during the creation of a tale the writers worked on about Frankie Frisch of the New York Giants. In their version of his career, he was signed right out of Fordham in 1919 but spent the entire first year sitting on the Giants' bench. Discouraged and feeling unappreciated, the ball player returned to Fordham where a university priest counseled him. The cleric cautioned Frisch to be patient, encouraged him to return to the Giants and respect the decisions of his manager John J. McGraw. Frisch did as the priest suggested and went on to become a great star for the Giants and later for the St. Louis Cardinals.

Now it was time for Stern and the writers to fill in the name of the priest. "How about Pope Pius XI?" offered Stern, naming the reigning pontiff. Fortunately cooler heads prevailed. One of the writers, a Catholic, explained that Pius XI had never been near Fordham and most American Catholics

would not appreciate their spiritual leader being factitiously dragged into a baseball story. In the end, an obscure song writer was identified as the Fordham Priest.

Not every story Stern related on his program was false. On rare occasions, he would tell a factual story, devoid of his customary prevarication. During one of these he gave listeners a true summary of Stalin's rise to power, disguising the tyrant at first as "Joe from Georgia." Not until the climax did he identify this revolutionary as Jozef from Georgia, Russia. In a May 1944 show Stern's guest was J. Edgar Hoover and perhaps the presence of one of America's top law enforcement officials encouraged Stern to come up with a factual narrative. So on this program, Stern provided listeners with a true story of Bobby Feller's mother being injured in the stands while watching her son pitch. On Mother's Day 1939, the Cleveland Indians were playing the White Sox in Chicago with Feller's mother in attendance. The Sox third baseman, Marv Owen, ripped a Feller fast ball into the stands, striking the mother in the face and injuring her.

The Colgate Sports Newsreel lasted until 1951 on NBC; it was renamed Bill Stern Sports when he lost his sponsor. But he continued at the microphone, moved to ABC, and finally ended this long run in 1956. His physical condition was probably most responsible for the show's eventual cancellation. Stern's health had been deteriorating due to his dependence on pain-killers, dating back to 1935 when his

leg was amputated following a serious car accident in Texas. In his 1959 autobiography *The Taste of Ashes*, (co-written by Oscar Fraley) he discussed his drug addiction.

This colorful radio personality died of a heart attack in his home in Rye, NY on November 19, 1971 where he had lived for 15 years, doing occasional radio work. His obituary in the *New York Times* related both his successes and his frauds. The piece lauded him for his popularity and longevity but acknowledged that "some radio and television critics contended that Mr. Stern's stories were sometimes taller than the highest infield fly. After his death, significant honors began to accumulate. He was elected to the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Hall of Fame in 1974, the American Sportswriters Hall of Fame in 1984, The Radio Hall of Fame in 1988, and the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in 2001. In his lifetime, Stern broadcasts live on radio and television hundreds of sporting events, including the Olympics. He appeared in six major motion pictures; the last being *Pride of the Yankees* in which he played himself. He narrated countless of newsreels which were screened in movie houses. But most of his fame and lasting popularity today rests in the surviving audio copies of the Colgate Sports Newsreel. There we can still hear Stern, in his most loquacious and flamboyant vocal style, relay to us again his strange and incredible tales, unencumbered by any parameters of truth.

Editor's note. I think Jack French did a fabulous job on this article depicting Stern.

The Unforgettable

Nat King Cole:

By Tom Cherre

A wise man, not me, once said, "The greatest thing that could happen to a song, is for Nat King Cole to sing it". Truer words have never been spoken. I put Nat into the same category as my favorite singers of all time, including Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Perry Como, and Dean Martin. Nat King Cole had that rich baritone voice that had a velvet touch to it. Cole who smoked 4 packs of Kool cigarettes a day attributed his mellowness to smoking. I don't know about that. He was only a month shy of his 46th birthday when he died of lung cancer. I remember his last movie *Cat Ballou* was released in 1966, a year after he had passed away. If you recall that one, he sided up with Stubby Kaye and sang throughout the whole movie. He looked and sounded great, unknown to most people he was fighting for his life against lung cancer. He was the first African American to host a variety show on TV. He had a ton of hit songs in his short but illustrious career. Mel Torme's Christmas Song sung by Cole is a perennial classic. As far as signature songs, he had many, including *Mona Lisa*, *Unforgettable*, *Nature Boy*, *That Some Day That Summer*, *Lazy Hazy*, *Crazy Days of Summer*, and *Smile*.



He was born Nathaniel Adams Cole in Montgomery Alabama on March 17th 1919. Known for his smooth and well-articulated vocal style, Nat King Cole actually started out as a piano man (shades of Billy Joel). He first learned how to play around the age of 4 with help from his mother, Perlina Cole: a church choir director. His first performance at that young age was "Yes! We Have No Bananas". The son of a Baptist pastor, Cole started out playing religious music. In his early teens, Cole had formal classical piano training, but later shifted gears to his passion for jazz music. Cole attributed Earl Hines, a leader of modern jazz, as his inspiration. At age 15 Cole dropped out of school and began playing professionally. Working with his brother Eddie, he recorded his first song in 1936. The following year he put together a group called the *King Cole Trio*, the name being a play on the children's nursery rhyme. The trio had their first two hits in 1943 and 1944 with "That Ain't Right" and "Straighten Up And Fly Right" respectively. "Straighten Up" was based on a black folk tale that his father had used as a theme for a sermon. Johnny Mercer liked the song and invited him to record it on his fledgling Capital Records label. It sold over 500,000 copies. The trio insured themselves with more success by singing Mel Torme's immortal Christmas classic, "The Christmas Song".

Cole's first radio appearance was with NBC's Blue Network in 1938. They followed up with spots on NBC's *Swing Soiree*. They later appeared on the *Old Gold*, *Chesterfield Supper Club*, and *Kraft Music Hall* radio shows. Legend was that Cole's singing career did not

start until a drunken barroom patron demanded that he sing "Sweet Loraine". Cole, in fact has gone on record saying that the fabricated story "sounded good, so I just let it ride". Yet the story goes one step further. There was a customer who requested a certain song one night, but it was a song Cole did not know, so instead he sang "Sweet Loraine". The trio was tipped 15 cents for the performance, a nickel apiece. (Nat King Cole: An Intimate Biography, Maria Cole with Louie Robinson, 1971).



"King Cole Trio Time" on NBC in 1947 with Cole, Oscar Moore and Johnny Miller

On November 5, 1956 *The Nat King Cole Show* debuted on NBC. The variety show was the first of its kind hosted by an African-American, which created controversy at the time. Despite the efforts of NBC and many of his colleagues, including Ella Fitzgerald, Harry Bellafonte, Frankie Laine, Mel Torme, Peggy Lee, Eartha Kitt, and others, the show was cancelled for lack of a national sponsor. Rheingold Beer was a regional sponsor, but a national sponsor never appeared. The show lasted a year. Cole quipped after the cancellation "Madison Avenue is afraid of the dark." Nat King Cole was the first

African-American to be welcomed into the living rooms of white Americana. Nat King Cole continued his run of chart hits that started in the 1950's and continued into the middle 60's. Cole passed away in 1966 just one month shy of his 46th birthday. Cole could have gone another 20 years or so performing, if he had lived into the 70's and 80's. I remember seeing 'Old blue eyes' at the old Aud in 1977. He remarked that the reason there are no great songs anymore, was because there are no more great songwriters. The days of Cole Porter, Gershwin, Johnny Mercer, Sammy Cahn, Hoky Carmichael, and even Lennon & McCartney have long left us. The music they play today is not my style, and it will never be. The only time I hear a Nat King Cole song is when I'm listening to an easy listening station or I pop one of his CD's in my car. In his short life Cole left us a legacy of great songs for us to enjoy. His voice was mellow and clear. You understood all the words, and he seem to put his heart and soul into the rhythm of every song without much effort. Listening to any song he sung is always a pleasure. He just had a great natural voice that I'm sure you will agree that it was truly unforgettable.



Rudy Vallee
The First Crooner
By Tom Cherre

Rudy Vallée



While Al Jolson and Enrico Caruso came before Rudy, Neither one of these singers could be portrayed as a crooner. Jolson had a deep resounding voice, but did not possess the soft melodic quality that singers like Crosby and Sinatra had. Rudy Vallee, while not having a great voice charmed all the flappers whenever he appeared. He could be credited with perhaps being the first heart-throb idol of the music world.

Rudy Vallee was born July 28, 1901 in Island Pond Vermont. His father's family were French Canadians from Quebec. His mother's side came from Ireland. In 1917 Rudy Vallee signed up for World War 1. He lied about his and after 41 days of service he was discharged. As a teenager he played the clarinet and saxophone in various bands around New England. In his early twenties he played with the Savoy Havana Band at the Savoy Hotel in

London. After being discouraged to be a vocalist by other band members, he returned to the states and attended Yale University. At Yale he played in the Yale college band, The Yale Collegians. After graduating he formed his own band called "Rudy Vallee and the Connecticut Yankees", which consisted of two violins, two saxes, a piano, a banjo, and drums. He began to do vocals (supposedly reluctant at first). He had a thin frail, wavering tenor voice, but was comfortable singing sweet ballads, more so than jazz numbers. He had a suave manner with boyish good looks and attracted great attention from the young girls. His popularity gained him a recording contract and in 1928 he started performing on radio.

Bertha Brainard, who was the NBC executive for programming in 1928 began pushing for singer bandleader Rudy Vallee to host a new type of variety show on the radio. She explained that only a woman could understand the mass appeal of Vallee's voice. So on October 24th 1929, *The Fleischmann's Yeast Hour* began on NBC, and would run from 1929 to 1936, when it would then become *The Royal Geletin Hour* lasting until 1939. The show quickly became top rated, and was second only to *The Amos N' Andy Show*. On this program, America heard many future stars for the first time, as it introduced such talents as Milton Berle, Burn & Allen, Alice Faye, The Mills Brothers, and Kate Smith. Other guests included Ray Bolger, Fannie Brice, Ilka Chase, Helen Hayes, Bert Lahr, and a ventriloquist named Edgar Bergen. His first appearance on national radio December 15th 1936 led to his own program, *The Chase and Sanborn Hour* in May of 1937.



Vallée (center) with Olsen and Johnson, 1932.

When Vallee took his contractual vacations from his national show in 1937, he insisted his sponsor hire Lois Armstong as his substitute. This was the first instance of an African-American fronting a national radio show. Vallee incidentally wrote the introduction for Armstrong's 1936 book *Swing That Music*.

In 1929, Vallee made his first feature film, *The Vagabond Lover* for RKO Radio. His initial movies were to cash in more for his music talent. Later into the 30's and early 40's Vallee became more of an accomplished actor and had some memorable films, such as, *The Palm Beach Story*, *I Remember Mama*, *The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer*, and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. His last prominent role on screen was in a TV role as a vindictive surgeon in the *Night Gallery* program. He also appeared on Broadway in the musical *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*.

Rudy Vallee was married four times, first to Leonie Cauhois, which was

annulled. Fay Webb, which ended in divorce, to Jane Greer, shortly that also ended in divorce in 1944. In 1946 Vallee married Eleanor Norris and would remain with her till the end of his life in 1986. His last hit song was "As Time Goes By" from the classic movie *Casablanca* in 1943. During World War 2, he enlisted in the Coast Guard and led the 40 piece band to great success.



While not having the voice of a Crosby, or the charisma of Sinatra, Vallee did very well for himself, and would later inspire later crooners like Crosby, Sinatra, Como, and Dean Martin. He was as I said before the first personification of the 20th century mass media pops star. I often remember him in the old black and white cartoons where he was always singing with a megaphone. Rudy Vallee died of cancer at his home on July 3rd 1986. For a guy with an average voice and a little acting talent he is still an icon for all ages.



Rudy Vallée megaphone crafted in between shows at the New York Palace in May 1929

Stomach Remedy Perfect Sponsor
For ABC Drama



Radio programs with sponsors had a tendency of staying on the air longer than sustaining programs (radio programs without a sponsor). The ABC drama *The Fat Man* began its run as a sustaining program. After its initial season, the program was looking for a sponsor. Not only did the program find a sponsor, it was a product that was tailor made for the program's main character. On Friday February 14, 1947, *The Fat Man* aired its first broadcast for PEPTO BISMOL

The program's main character was Brad Runyon (played by J.Scott Smart). Although he was a tough hard-nosed private detective, Runyon was best known for being overweight (237 lbs. to be exact). Since Runyon had a large stomach, it was appropriate the program's new sponsor, Pepto-Bismol was a remedy for upset stomach. When it was time for the commercial, announcer Charles Irving narrated a dramatization when someone had an upset stomach. The regulation upset stomach has been around as long as humans set foot on this planet. In simple

terms, it's a penalty from the result of overeating. Being the good egg that it was (and is), the upset stomach didn't discriminate on who could suffer from it. It didn't care if the human was a man, woman, or child---when humans overate, the stomach became a little testy. To supposedly counteract this problem, some misguided people took antacids. Unfortunately, antacids were made for relieving stomach acid-not cure its upset. In fact when antacids were taken for this purpose, it was inclined to upset the stomach even more than before---that meant get ready to lose your lunch in a very unpleasant manner! That's where Pepto-Bismol comes in. Once it was taken, Pepto-Bismol's protective coating calmed down the stomach and intestinal walls, which were the main cause of upset stomach. Since Pepto-Bismol was known for soothing, the conclusion of its radio commercials had a soothing affect. When Irving was about to read the closing, he was accompanied with the soothing music from a harp. In the process Irving used a soothing tone in his speaking voice. When the commercial concluded, Irving opened up where the story left off by saying a rather unflattering line, "Now, let's catch up with the Fat Man." Peptol-Bismol was catching up with THE FAT MAN for over 3 and a half years. After the sponsor moved on, other sponsors (Camel Cigarettes and American chicle) sponsored the program. These sponsors kept the show on the air, but they didn't fit as perfectly with the program as Pepto-Bismol did.

ROCHESTER BUFFALO NY 142

25 OCT 2014

The Old Time Radio Club

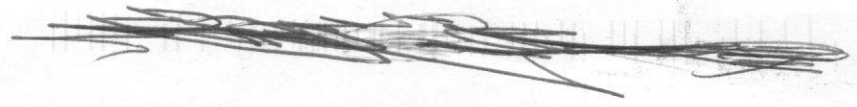
THOMAS R. CHERRE
144 FONTAINE DRIVE
BUFFALO NY 14215-2038



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Jim Beshires
163 Davidson 123 Davidson
Savannah, GA 31419

UTF



WJW
Mon. - Fri.

Listen! Exciting!

Tennessee Jed

TIP-TOP'S
New
Radio Program

Enriched **TIP-TOP** is Better Bread