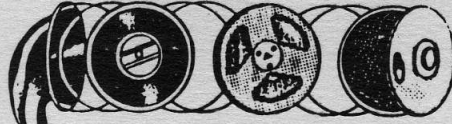
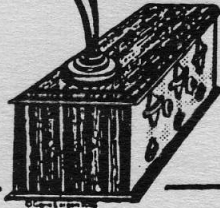


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A JOURNAL OF VINTAGE RADIO

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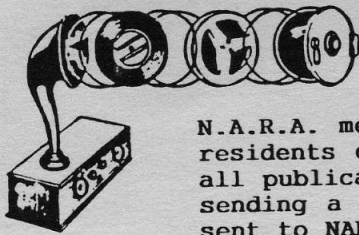
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Letters



from our readers

I would like to comment on a couple of contributions in the Spring NEWS. The first has to do with the Country Music articles by Jack Palmer. When I was a kid one of my earliest recollections of this type of program was the *National Barn Dance* out of Chicago, on Saturday evening as I recall. One of my favorite "characters" was Uncle Ezra from the "Little 5 watter down in Roseville." If there is any more writing on early country, I would like to hear about Uncle Ezra, if possible.

My second comment has to do with Ken Weigel's *Diversions of An Insomniac*. If anyone is not familiar with *Vic & Sade* this article might appear stupid and inane. But for those of us who listened to and loved *Vic & Sade* like I did (and still do), this was one of the cleverest, wittiest and most enjoyable satires I have read in a long, long time. In fact while I was reading this material, my wife came in from another room and wanted to know what I was laughing so hard about.

Jim Davis
Sunnyvale, California

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jack Palmer says that he will "look into" Uncle Ezra, perhaps sometime next year.

I want to compliment you on the great issues of NARA NEWS, in particular the Summer 1996 issue. There were several great articles in this issue, notably "Fort Laramie: One of the Last and One of the Best," by Jack French. Jack paints a thorough picture of this show which, unfortunately, lasted too short a time. The details about the program and its cast of characters—Raymond Burr, Vic Perrin, Jack Moyles, et al.—leave no doubts in the reader's mind as to the value of this series, and I agree with Jack that it is one of the finest westerns on the air, ranking very close to "Gunsmoke," which is certainly another classic show and better than the TV version. Who said radio was dead in the fifties?

After reading Jack's excellent article, I checked my own collection and found a few "Fort Laramie" shows, which I plan to listen to with renewed enthusiasm. And with the details spelled out by Jack in his article, I will be not only entertained but educated as well. Kudos and a twist of the dial to Jack for his fine effort! It is this type of article that makes your newsletter one of the finest in the entire OTR newsletter lineup!

Another excellent piece, among others, was "Unclouding Clouded Minds: Getting the Hang of OTR History," by Ken Weigel. Without going into great detail, this article should be must reading by every OTR collector or buff. It is thoroughly researched. Keep up the great work, Jim! My only regret is that NARA NEWS is a quarterly and not a weekly!! Can't wait for the next issue! And I hope that Jack and Ken and the others continue to write similar articles!

Chuck Huck
Warrenville, Illinois

EDITOR'S RESPONSE: Thank you for your kind words. As you have pointed out, we are very fortunate to have a large number of very talented writers submitting material for the NARA NEWS. It simply wouldn't be worth very much without them. The NEWS, being a quarterly publication, allows us to have a greater number of pages in each issue than other OTR publications that come out more frequently. This permits some leeway to do some things that the others simply don't have room for. Because of that, I think we have a unique publication that is filling a somewhat different niche than the others.

Dan Haefle of SPERDVAC recently mentioned the many errors in old time radio writings due to assumptions by the authors. This has annoyed me for some time so here goes.

Most recently was that Baby Rose Marie retired in 1935. Not so! When I joined the engineering staff at WHN, New York, in October, 1936, she was teamed with a "has been" singer, Al Shayne, on the daily 6 pm show for Sally's Furs originating from Studio A on the 22nd floor of Loew's State Theatre Building at 1540 Broadway on Times Square. Don Albert conducted the WHN staff orchestra, Otto Korntheur was the engineer. Possibly Ray Saunders was the announcer. Her parents were not permitted in the studios so waited for her in the ground floor lobby. Someone came down and escorted her to the studio and then returned her to the ground floor after the show. In later years she was a regular cast member on the old Dick VanDyke TV show.

Another article was regarding Arthur Godfrey's early morning local programs. An author stated that the program was only broadcast over WTOP in Washington as the New York "brass" was not interested in Arthur. Wrong! The station was WJSV which was licensed in Virginia and had studios in the Earl Theatre building on 14th Street in Washington. There were two consecutive shows, one broadcast over WJSV where he did his famous furrier commercial, and the other over WABC (later changed to WCBS), New York. Both programs would originate from whichever location Arthur would show up. My old friend, Joe Travis, was with WABC (Atlantic Broadcasting Company) when William Paley bought it, and was the New York engineer standing by in Studio 7 on the 4th floor of 485 Madison with a stack of 78's. Possibly a chap by the name of Klink was the WJSV engineer. They would be on the telephone at air time to coordinate where the origination would be. When I joined the CBS engineering staff in December 1944, I sat in with Joe as part of my indoctrination. During the 1970's Arthur was asked to substitute for Jack Carney (not the Talent Scouts producer) for two weeks on the KMOX, St. Louis morning show, originating from a Columbia Records studio on East 30th Street in New York. I was assigned as the engineer. We had a wonderful time! Many old friends dropped by. The only problem was that Arthur had a rough time dealing with the pace of the times. He started "piggy-backing" the commercials and then piggy-backed the "piggy-backs." A lot of laughs, particularly when he had a furrier spot and I asked if the name was "Shlotnick" (not sure of the spelling).

Another author recently credited another old friend, Milton Charles, as the orchestra leader on a show. Milt was an organist and presided over the console of the big pipe organ in studio 4 at CBS-Hollywood's Columbia Square studios and as such was musical director of many big shows from Hollywood.

A dear friend of mine (I have already straightened her out) credited Bill Spier as being the producer of "Sam Spade." He was the director. I was the engineer in the music studio, CBS-H Studio 1 along with conductor Lud Gluskin, and the staff orchestra. Bill's wife, June Havoc, joined him in my control room, bringing his supper in a picnic basket. He dined while listening to the music cues, while June's little dog sat on the production desk hoping for a handout.

Bill Murtough
Palm City, Florida

The Lend-A-Hand Society, Inc. in New York is broadcasting a 13-episode series of Ring Lardner's plays. Some of the 26 actors involved worked in radio in the 40s. The Lend-A-Hand Society has three stations in New York who are willing to play part or the entire series this fall. A commercial station (WEVD) will play the first episode in early September, and the entire series will be carried on other stations. Lend-A-Hand Society would like to find other stations in the country who would consider broadcasting the series. If the Society could find some public interest in the country, National Public Radio would be willing to put the series on satellite so that different stations could carry the series.

The Society would be happy to send anyone a demo copy of one of the shows, and it is their hope that the public will contact their local stations to carry the entire series. Please contact Gary Gabriel for a demo copy of a show or for further information about the series. You can reach him at (212) 579-9422 or write to 60 Riverside Drive, Apartment 2C, New York, NY 10024.

Walden Hughes
Costa Mesa, California

THE FOLLOWING LETTER WAS SENT TO JANIS DEMOSS:

Enclosed is my renewal for the year. It is always a pleasure to renew my membership to such a wonderful club that provides so much for old time radio fans. The effort put out by volunteers such as yourself is appreciated by those of us who belong to the club. Without the dedication of people who want to preserve old time radio, so much entertainment history would be sadly forgotten and buried in the old basements of buildings. NARA is certainly a club that has done more than its fair share in keeping old radio alive. If it was possible I would thank everyone on the committee for a job well done! Look forward to having another year of membership privileges and may the future of old time radio continue to thrive.

Steven Kucsma
Hamilton, Ontario

The packages have arrived containing the tapes of the radio series "Fort Laramie," and we have been reviewing them to find episodes that we might be able to reproduce for sale in the Fort Laramie Historical Association Bookstore. Fort Laramie Historical Association is a non-profit Cooperating Association operating under National Park Service guidelines. Monies generated from their sales are used to fund the interpretation programs at Fort Laramie National Historic Site.

We sent a letter of inquiry to CBS Radio seeking information regarding copyrights and our possible use of four or six of the episodes as a fund raiser. As of this date, we have not received a reply, however we are hopeful that all details can be worked out to the satisfaction of everyone concerned.

We are appreciative of the offer by NARA to help in our current project, and we will certainly be calling on your organization once we hear something from CBS.

Linda Gilson
Fort Laramie National Historic Site
Fort Laramie, Wyoming

EDITOR'S NOTE: NARA has provided tapes of the Fort Laramie radio series (courtesy of Jack French and your editor) as mentioned in the letter, and will continue to work with the National Park Service on this project. The "Homesteaders' Museum" in Torrington, Wyoming is also going to use these tapes as background for some of the graphics displayed.

While I enjoyed portions of the article, "Fort Laramie," in your summer issue, written by Mr. Jack French, it is readily apparent that neither he, nor his editor, is fully cognizant of the impact of that series. It is a serious omission to discuss that series in terms of its historical significance without a full discussion of the most important episode. I refer to, of course, episode #34, "The Payroll."

The program, which was broadcast on September 16, 1956, was not only one of the best shows in the entire run, but it also contained the only specific tribute to the original Fort Laramie. This particular show ends with an announcement of the 67th anniversary of the official closing of that military post in 1889. A brief history of the fort was then furnished to the radio listeners. All in all, certainly an episode that should have been included in any worthy treatment of the series.

While it seems unnecessary to quibble over smaller points, one would have hoped that Mr. French, in discussing the historical realities being incorporated into the "Fort Laramie" scripts, would certainly have commented on the fact that Spotted Tail, a chief of the Brule Sioux, is the central character in two of the radio episodes, including the 7-22-56 program, "The Return of Spotted Tail."

Clarence Rundeen
Takoma Park, Maryland

The "old nitpicker" is at it again. The article in the Summer 1996 NEWS, "Unclouding Clouded Minds: Getting the Hang of OTR History," by Ken Weigel really hit the nail on the head when it comes to remembering many of our favorite old time radio programs. For instance, I am very familiar with the accuracy and research of Jack French (one of my favorite contributors by the way) but in his article on Fort Laramie he mentioned tha Jack Moyles had a major role on the program "Night Editor." To the best of my recollection, one of the charms of "Night Editor," a program out of San Francisco sponsored by Cardinet Candy, was that Hal Burdick played ALL of the characters. I used to talk to Hal, a very nice person, not at all high falutin', occasionally in the late 40's when he was living in Palo Alto, California, and doing some writing for the San Quentin prison newspaper, and I don't recall him mentioning any other players on the 15 minute program which aired weekly on Sunday evening, if memory serves me correctly.

If I am in error, please let me know, but as I continually tell my grandchildren, I may have my faults, but being wrong is not one of them. Again thanks for another outstanding edition of the NARA NEWS.

Hal's son, by the way, followed in his father's footsteps, being very active in plays, etc. at Palo Alto High School, where he was a classmate of my future wife.

Jim Davis
Sunnyvale, California



THE INN AT MAPLEWOOD FARM, a bed and breakfast inn located in Hillsborough, New Hampshire has something new for old time radio fans. They have their own 100 milliwatt transmitter from which they broadcast old time radio programs to the antique radio receivers located in each room. This programming is offered each evening until 11:00 p.m. and all day on Saturdays. They have monthly themes for their broadcasts and also play special requests if they have the show in their collection. Further information

on this lodging may be obtained by calling (603) 464-4242 or writing to them at The Inn at Maplewood Farm, P.O. Box 1478, Hillsborough, NH 03244.

FROM THE EDITOR -- Jim Snyder

We're delighted to have three "celebrity" writers appearing in this issue. Long time NARA member Frank Bresee shares another of his interviews with the stars of old time radio. Ray Erlenborn, who many of you have met when he has handled the sound effects at the Newark and SPERDVAC conventions, appears here for the first time. Long time friend Bill Murtough returns to these pages for the second time with both an article and a letter. Thank you gentlemen!

As you can see, from these four pages, we have a large number of letters this time. I'm happy to see so many of you sharing your views with the rest of us. I receive many letters, but most are not for publication.

MY ADVENTURES IN EARLY RADIO

by
Ray Erlenborn



EDITOR'S NOTE: Ray Erlenborn was the sound effects man for many radio and television programs, such as the Red Skelton Show, Big Town, and the Bickersons. Nowadays you can find him demonstrating his craft at the Newark and SPERDVAC conventions each year.

It struck me that a story of my adventures in EARLY RADIO in the Los Angeles and Hollywood area might be of interest. My mother, Lulu Maud Erlenborn began transporting me around to the Southern California radio stations in 1925, when I was ten years old. I had already been coached in ELOCUTION at Egan's Little theater at Ninth and Figueroa Streets in L.A. and had joined "Hugo Hamlin's Proteges" learning the waltz clog and soft shoe dancing for purposes of appearing with the group in area Vaudeville Theaters.

I didn't realize that the dance lessons mom exposed me to would come in handy years later, when as a staff sound effects technician at KNX CBS Radio I would don my tap shoes and insert the sounds of tapping feet into radio shows.

My first performance in front of a CARBON MICROPHONE (suspended from rubber bands, in a steel ring about five inches in diameter) was an appearance on "Uncle John and Queen Titania's" children's show. It originated from the Los Angeles Times (newspaper building) with what I believe had the first KHJ call letters. I had memorized a reading titled, "The Bald Headed Man." It concerned a small boy who was riding beside his mother on the train and was enchanted with the vision of two flies which continued to cavort busily upon the oblivious man's head. (I began losing hair at a tender age and later was hired to play numerous "bald spots" in motion pictures and television.)

In a short time, because we had moved to Gordon Street in Hollywood, I learned to play the Ukelele with the encouragement of neighborhood kids who

lived on the same block with me and my family. So...because I had a passable singing voice I began my SINGING CAREER in radio, joining several of the juvenile radio shows which cropped up due to the popularity of kids like Jackie Coogan, Baby Peggy, and those popular Our Gang (Little Rascals). There was "Helen McCune's "Just Kids" at the original KMPC station, (MacMillan Petroleum Corporation) with studios located behind one of their gas stations on Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills. I received quite a lot of fan mail with requests to sing the popular songs of the day; such as "Love Letters in the Sand," "I Want to be Happy" (a song introduced by Al Jolson), "Me and My Shadow" (a Ted Lewis WINNER) and of course my imitation of Al Jolson singing "Mammy." Every boy in Hollywood was doing Jolson imitations.

For some time I was BILLED on radio as one of the "World Famous Meglin Kiddies," and I went from one KIDDIE GROUP to another "Daddy Mack's Kiddies," "Bud Murray's Hollywood Starlets," "The Hollywood Buds," "The Peppy Trio," etc. etc.

With my ukelele I worked at KGFJ, "The 24 Hour Station" where I had my own show singing between commercials read by Jonathan White. White had purchased three hours of time each Saturday and hired me for the munificent sum of five dollars per Saturday to sight read lead sheets I picked up from the music publishers offices in downtown L.A. theater buildings. KGFJ was on the top floor of the J.V. Baldwin Chevrolet building on Figueroa near Pico Boulevard. Twin radio towers were atop the building. These towers were a familiar sight atop the Bekins Van and

Storage Building on Highland near Santa Monica Boulevard, the Don Lee Cadillac Building at Sixth and Bixel Street and the Earl C. Anthony Packard Motor Car Building Building at Tenth and Hope Street.

I was just getting off the motor car sized elevator, carrying my ukelele when I got my first opportunity to do sound effects at KECA (Earl C. Anthony's) radio station. A kindly gentleman named Charlie Forsyth took me by the shoulder and ushered me to studio one (the big studio, complete with pipe organ). He explained that he needed my "sound effects" help for the Pennzoil News Review Program which was about to go on the air.

"Right after the opening of the show I'll throw you a cue to lay your arm on the pipe organ keyboard. We need the sound of a squadron of planes passing over!" Charlie instructed. Forsythe was later hired to do all of the sound effects for Lux Radio Theater.

After I did the "pipe organ" sound effect for Charlie, he waved bye bye and I left the studio to get ready for the ukelele and song bit I was scheduled to do in another studio.

In a short time I was doing sound effects at several studios. I did "Witches Tales," starring the wonderful Martha Wentworth, at KMPC, at that time located at Sunsent Boulevard and Gordon Street. At that station I also did the sounds of the bat, mitt and crowd reactions for the baseball recreations of Bill Kelly. Later KNX radio moved into the building and I did sound effects for "The Newlyweds" and "Calling All Cars" shows.

Later on, I landed a comedian job as "The (hard of hearing) Sheriff" on Franco Bread and Rolls "Junior Hi Jinx" (a spinoff of the long running, regular "Hi Jinx" variety show). The junior edition ran for more than a year on KFWB, the Warner Brother's Radio Station located on the motion picture lot on Sunset Boulevard where their pair of tall radio towers are still standing. One of KFWB's most popular programs of the time was their presentation of Kay Van Rippers "English Coronets."

At the peak of my childhood career I was signed to write and act as master of ceremonies of the "Marco Juvenile Review" which ran on KNX radio for nearly five years. When it finally folded in 1937 I went on staff as a sound effects technician at KNX CBS where I was lucky to work in radio and television until I finally retired from Television City in 1977.



Ray Erlenborn at CBS in Hollywood.



"No, no, no, no"...

WORKING THE BERGEN/McCARTHY SHOW

by

William L. Murtough

Bill Murtough was the lead engineer for CBS for a number of years, handling all the "big" shows including LOWELL THOMAS, GRAND CENTRAL STATION, PHILLIP MORRIS PLAYHOUSE, and THE GARRY MOORE SHOW.

I came into the studio one day, reporting for the day's activities and the schedule manager, as I passed by, said that she had changed my days off for the coming week in order for me to go to Chicago. That was the first I had heard of it, but I didn't want to let her know that I didn't know what she was talking about. Obviously something was missing somewhere. So, I went on in to see my department head, Van, and asked him what this was all about. Did I have to go to Chicago and he said, "Oh yes, I forgot to tell you about that. The Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy show is going to originate from Chicago this coming week and your friend Pat Walsh, who usually does this show in California, isn't able to come with the show. He has another assignment."

The next question was, "Where is it?" Well, he didn't know where it was going to be and I asked if there was a set up sheet, which was what we called it. Most shows have a diagram and information pertaining to the show, the microphone placements, number of microphones, so forth. Details that another engineer would need to know if you were going to do the show. No, there was no set up sheet available.

It all boiled down that my boss didn't have any information at all. He just said, "Go to Chicago, and I want you back that night after the show." I said that I'd go out a day ahead of time, after I got through with some other assignments. He wanted me to come back the same night as the show, as soon as it was over. Well that was sort of unrealistic and he wasn't aware that you have to tear down all of the equipment and somehow take care of it, whatever the deal is.

So, the only problem was that I had to be back for my usual Longine Symphonette session the next day. I told him that I was not going to come back that night, that I would come back the next morning, in time to be in the studio by one in the afternoon for Longine.

His attitude was, "Well, just go to Chicago and you'll figure the whole thing out." All I had was an address where I was to stay. I took a cab from

the airport. Ended up in a residential hotel as it turned out on the near north side. I walked into the lobby, signed in, and took the keys. When I opened the door to what I thought would be my room, it turned out to be a very large apartment: living room, kitchen, bedroom, dining room. All that! A very beautiful place. Unfortunately I wasn't going to see very much of it. So after I got over the surprise and shock of that, I decided I'd go down and have a nightcap in the bar.

I got on the elevator. It was on an upper floor. It was a long ride down and there were two chaps on the elevator who I'd say were of questionable sexual orientation, who decided I was Ed Sullivan. That was a long ride, from whatever floor it was, clear down to the lobby. I had my nightcap.

I decided the only thing to do was to get up early in the morning, and head over to WBBM in the Wrigley Building. I got over there about seven o'clock and a chap by the name of Bill Kettlehut greeted me. He was the oldest engineer on their staff, I believe, at the time. Nice guy and he was to be the guy that was going to work with me. He took me into a room and showed me a pile of equipment. He said that we were going to do the program from the WLS 8th Street Playhouse which was the home of the National Barn Dance. Bales of hay all over the place.



He then got out a set of blueprints and said, "Here are the blueprints. We have to set up a whole studio because we're not allowed to use the WLS equipment. We're going to put a board over it and we're going to set up a whole control room, studio, audience mikes, the whole bit, right from scratch." And he said, "Here are the blueprints. I presume you're not particularly interested in them." I said, "No, I'll do it my way," and that would be it.

I went in and paid my respects to Ransom Sherman who was the brother of one of my friends, one of our department heads in New York, and we had some breakfast and Bill and I took off for the 8th Street Playhouse.

A short time later a supervisor from WBBM showed up with a young fellow, the newest guy on the staff. He announced that he would be working with me throughout the entire day, that Bill would be only with me until the afternoon. As it turned out these two fellows were not on speaking terms. For some reason or other they had no use for each other, which meant that they couldn't very well work with each other. So the agreement was that one of them would work out in the studio, and the other would work in the control room. So we managed to get the thing put together.

One thing involved was a public address system and I wanted to put the public address equipment out in the studio where this chap, the young fellow, who's name I don't even remember, would be able to hear what he was doing. In other words, he would be able to operate in such a way that he would know that he was covering the audience. Well, that didn't go over too well with the supervisor and unfortunately I let him influence me and we agreed that we would set it up in the control room alongside of me. I knew better, but for some reason or another I didn't stand my ground.

As the day went on, we managed to get the studio completely equipped and operational and the show began to get organized. As it turned out, the guest on the show was Cesar Romero. Now this was a comedy show, supposedly, and Cesar Romero would be the last person on earth that would be any help to a comedy show. He was not a funny man. So that was one of the first problems.

The second problem was that Edgar Bergen was there in Chicago to visit his university, Northwestern University, I believe it was. And his sponsor was also headquartered in Chicago, a pharmaceutical company. That night the audience

was going to be stacked with friends from the university and the sponsor's friends, which results in a very poor audience, very poor response. They feel that they are part of the act and they don't react to it as the people who are avid listeners, who come to watch a broadcast, would.

We got the thing well organized and ready to go and I believe we did the dress rehearsal first. Back stage the dummies were sitting on stools as you walked in through the stage entrance. The ventriloquist's dummies were sitting all in a row on stools like people. By this time I went out for dinner and I guess I was getting pretty weary of this whole thing. It was a tedious job. When I came back from dinner, I found myself walking past the dummies bidding all of them a good evening, and got into the control room and realized what I had done. I figured, "Boy, I've come to the end of my rope."

Then Edgar Bergen did his warmup using Effie Klinker. Effie Klinker is a dirty old lady, particularly when she's not on the radio. And he did a very dirty warm up, much to the hysteria of the audience. That went over great, but he killed the audience for the air show, because it was dull after that. She was very funny when she was dirty.

We got on the air with the show. The PA man sitting beside me, a dull audience, a dull guest, everything against it. The show didn't go over well with the audience. Now this was a live show that night, which was normally the way it went on the air. There was very little audience reaction. They didn't laugh at anything. They had already witnessed a hysterical warm up and nothing else was funny to them. So it was not a good evening. Cesar Romero was very dull on the show and the whole thing was a total loss as far as I was concerned.



After we got off the air the agency representative, who I had been together with most of the day, came to me and said, "Bill, I hate to tell you this, but the audience had difficulty hearing because the PA wasn't loud enough." I said, "Well, why didn't you come in and tell me at the beginning of the show?" He said, "Because I didn't want to disturb you." So that was the kind of circumstances I was working under. Of course the show was not very good and didn't go over very well and of course they naturally blamed the engineer.

It took us until midnight, I guess, to get out of there and get all of the stuff back to the studio. I got a quick night's sleep and got my plane in the morning to New York, getting back there by one o'clock, just in time to do my Longine job in the studio, which I'll go into another time. That was an interesting show.

The Bergen show was now scheduled to come out of New York the following week, but it would be taped. I don't know why that was, but must have been caused by a time conflict in his schedule. Anyhow, it was to come out of the Lincoln Square television studio that CBS had. It was an old movie house on Lincoln Square, where Lincoln Center is now, and it had been taken over by CBS TV as a theater studio.

The first thing that happened was that I got over there with a bit of a chip on my shoulder. I had decided that I wasn't going to get taken again. But the first problem turned out to be my own maintenance people. They were two fellows from television and they had never seen me before. They were fairly new and I had been in California for six years, just prior to this, so they were very uncooperative and were giving me a very hard time. Finally, somehow they realized that I was a New York engineer and had been for a long time, so they apologized and explained to me that the reason they were being so difficult was that they thought I had traveled from California, and was on the Hollywood staff, which I had been at one time. This rubbed me the wrong way to think they would treat a visitor like that. However, they came around OK.



This studio didn't use a separate engineer for the PA. There were selector switches on the console and the engineer selected the mikes he wanted on the PA, set the level on the console and it was what was called automatic. It was just that there was no PA man required. So I decided that they were not going to get me this time and set my PA overall volume so that I could hear it kicking back, in fact, it was on the verge of feedback, but not quite. There was no howl, but there was quite a bit of reverberation from it. I thought this would be the proof that the PA was loud enough. We did the show and, as I say, there was a lot of reverberation, like I was doing it in a big echo chamber.

When we finished the taping I called the tape room, my friend Mike Shoskes was over there. He was a pretty hep guy and a very good engineer. His comment was, "Gee Bill, I don't know what you did over there, but that's the best sounding show you ever did." So that was a total loss. I came out on top, but not for the reasons I wanted to. That was the last time I worked with Edgar Bergen, Mortimer Snerd, Charlie McCarthy, and Effie Klinker. It was a memorable couple of weeks.

The poet Edna St. Vincent Millay, a fan of Charlie McCarthy, sent the following verse to Edgar Bergen, Charlie's creator:

Last night I heard upon the air
A little man who wasn't there.
He wasn't there again today;
I hope he'll never go away.



FROM

FRANK BRESEE

Radio historian Frank Bresee is heard on his "GOLDEN DAYS OF RADIO" broadcast in the United States and Canada over the YESTERDAY USA SATELLITE NETWORK. Frank has a long and distinguished career as a radio performer and producer. He has worked with many greats of fantasy films.

One of my favorite programs was THE ALDRICH FAMILY. The show had an extremely long run, from its first radio spot on the Rudy Vallee' Hour, then as a semi-regular feature on the Kate Smith Hour, until its presentation as a regular weekly half-hour show. The Aldrich Family was on the air for a total of fourteen years, from July 2, 1939 to April 19, 1953. This was a record for a radio situation comedy. During most of the run Henry Aldrich was played by Ezra Stone, who as most know had originated the role in Clifford Goldsmith's Broadway comedy "What a Life."

When the Aldrich Family became a radio series Ezra Stone rode the air-waves and made it one of the top rated programs on the air. Of course during the war years, when Ezra Stone was in the Army, the part of Henry was played by various other performers, but with the war over, Mr. Stone returned. Ezra Stone left us early last year, but the character he created will be remembered by radio historians and collectors everywhere.

A dozen or so years ago I had the opportunity to interview Ezra Stone for my AFRTS "Golden Days of Radio" show. We talked about his long career and he surprised me with the many programs he had directed. During World War II, he served as producer and director in many of the Army's Special Service stage productions, including the Irving Berlin show "This is the Army." In the early fifties he was director of program development at CBS television. It was later that he became a TV director with the credits of shows such as "The Flying Nun," "Lassie," "The Munsters," "Lost in Space," "Love American Style," "The Debbie Reynolds Show," etc.

He was proud of his heritage and his father, Rabbi Solomon Feinstone, and fifteen years ago became the director and president of the David Library of the American Revolution which his father founded.

During our interview Ezra Stone told me that he had never forgotten his radio roots. And indeed he had not...over the years he was a big supporter of radio clubs, often appearing in person, and talking about his radio experiences.

Ezra Stone was one of a kind, and The Aldrich Family was one in a million.

Collecting with Computers

by
B.J. George

Do you remember which of your tapes contain the second audition of *Gunsmoke*? Or, on what dates did *Suspense* air *Sorry, Wrong Number*? Or, on which episodes of *Burns and Allen* did Jack Benny guest star? If you catalog your collection on a computer, the answers are just a mouse click away.

When I first started buying cassettes, my collection of radio shows were small enough to house in two plastic shoe boxes. I was able to catalog my shows in my head. Soon the shoe boxes overflowed into an old dresser and several large boxes. And I needed someplace more reliable than my memory to keep track of each tape.

Using Lotus' Approach 3.0 for Windows, a data base program that allows you to customize fields of data, I set out to catalog my collection. A field is like a file folder that stores a specific category of information. You can label each field to match the category, such as tape number, program, or episode.

Tape	Show	Date	Episode	Title	Guest Star-1
421	Abbott & Costello	12-30-43		The Talking Dog	Bert Gordon
472	Fibber McGee & Molly	4-6-43		Our of Energy	
823	Mr & Mrs Blandings	11-8-50	1	The Dream House	

Depending on which data base program you own, the number of fields you can add is almost limitless. Some programs allow you to select different types of fields. A date field only lets you enter dates. This enables you to print your catalog in chronological order. Or to find an exact date, such as any show that aired fifty years ago today, or on someone's birthday.

A number field accepts only numbers and makes it easy to arrange your catalog by tape number. A text field usually lets you enter both words and numbers. Using text fields enables you to list programs in alphabetical order.

The number of fields you wish to include is up to your needs and wants. Figure 1 shows a sample of the fields I created for my own use. Although I don't include *all* the fields when printing up my catalog, as this would use too much ink and paper.

Having a large selection of fields makes it easier to search for certain shows. When I feel like listening to Bob Hope, I have the computer perform a *Search* under *Guest Star*. In a few seconds the screen lists all of the shows that Bob Hope made a guest appearance on, including; *Suspense*, *Jack Benny*, and the *Lux Radio Theatre*. If I want to listen to the *Bob Hope Show*, I perform a *Search* under *Show* and up they come.

I store a print out of my catalog in a three-ring binder. I do a separate print out for each show. This makes it easier to update my catalog. When I add new tapes, I only have to print up those shows that I added to and not the entire collection. When printing my catalog, I am able to list them in one of several ways; chronologically by date, numerical by tape number, alphabetically by title, or whatever is needed.

Guest Star-2	Sponsor	Length	Tape Source	Notes
		30 min	Metacom	
	Johnson Wax	30 min	Radio Spirits	
		30 min	copy-NARA	This program is transcribed.

There are a wide variety of data bases available, including an inexpensive program called *My Data Base*. The features of each program is as varied as their prices. Some limit the number, size, or type of fields. Others only allow you to print out your data in the same order you entered it. Check each program for the feature you wish to have before purchasing. Now, do you know what shows aired fifty years ago today?

BOOK by Hal Stephenson SHELF

Going, Going, Gone... Vanishing Americana

by Susan Jonas and Marilyn Nissenson. 1994.

175 pages, 150 B/W photographs, ISBN 0-8118-0292-2.

Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA. Paperback, \$18.95.



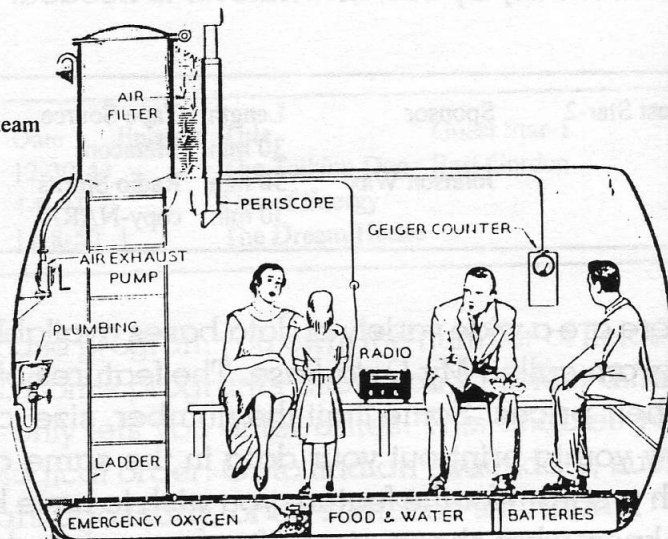
There are 71 essays on topics as shown on the list. The authors trace each topic to its origins, describe it at its apex of use by Americans in the early to mid-twentieth century, and the reasons for its obsolescence in recent decades.

Although the authors don't mention radio in many topics such as the Motion Picture Production Code, the information is relevant to radio fans. For example, "Mae West's popularity proved that lack of virtue had its own rewards." Radio buffs may recall Mae's Garden of Eden sketch that got her banned from most radio networks.

In the Smoking section, I noticed the authors interpret L.S.M.F.T. as Lucky Strikes Mean Fine Tobacco. My recollection from the Jack Benny show is of Don Wilson saying Lucky Strike Means Fine Tabacco.

In the Civil Defense section, a radio is at the center of the bomb shelter.

- American Elms
- The Automat
- Balsa-wood model airplanes
- Bank checks
- Baseball players who stay with one team
- Black-and-white movies
- Black smoke
- Blue laws
- Bridge parties
- Carbon paper
- Card catalogs
- Cavities
- Chop suey
- Civil defense
- DDT
- The dining room
- The draft
- Drive-in movies
- The enclosed telephone booth
- Family farms
- Fan mags



In the Nuclear Family section, we find:

Americans measured themselves against families like Ozzie and Harriet Nelson and their sons David and Ricky. *Ozzie's job was never mentioned.* He hung around the house a lot. In reality, though, suburban dads were frequently on the road or got home from the office too late to put the kids to bed. Ozzie's life was much more care free. He was a pal to his kids, and a slightly foolish yet endearing husband to his wife.

Young children of the 1990's who watch reruns of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, *Leave it to Beaver*, or *Father Knows Best* often find the shows as fanciful as *The Flintstones*. The families they know have working moms, single parents, and stepbrothers and stepsisters who are the children of their father's second wife by her previous husband--families united by bonds of love rather than blood.

BOMB SHELTERS

\$ **795.00** COMPLETELY INSTALLED

\$ **79.50** DOWN F.H.A. Financing

The advertisement features a large, stylized graphic of a bomb with the words "BOMB SHELTERS" written across it in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the graphic is a price tag that reads "\$ 795.00 COMPLETELY INSTALLED" and "\$ 79.50 DOWN F.H.A. Financing". The background of the advertisement shows a suburban house with a lawn and a driveway.

Fire escapes
Fur coats
Gas station attendants
Girdles
Handkerchiefs
Hitchhiking
Hotel keys
House calls
Landfills
Leisure suits
Marbles
Mending
The menopause taboo
Men's clubs
Men's garters
The milkman
The Motion Picture Production code
The navy blue suit
The nuclear family
Nuns
Organized labor
Paperboys
Paper dolls
Parietal rules
Penmanship
Polio scares
Political bosses
Psychoanalysis
The Red menace
Rotary phones
Sanitary napkin belts
Security-free airports
Shoe-fitting fluoroscopes
Slide rules
The smell of burning of leaves
Smoking
Soda fountains
Stockings
Suntans
Teenage dating
Telegrams
Tonsillectomies
TV antennas
Two-newspaper towns
Typewriters
The unanswered phone
Unfixed domestic male animals
Vinyl records
Wedding night virgins
White gloves



THOUGHTS OF A COLLECTOR

by

Henry R. Hinkel

I was talking with Phil Scott from the Metro Washington OTR club concerning video tape. I asked him, "Why do you have to rewind the tape before you return it to the store?" "Because they will charge you a dollar if they have to do it," he replied. "Yes, but what difference does it make if you rewind it before you watch it or rewind it after you watch it," I asked again. "Besides the convenience of coming home and popping it into the VCR, why does it have to be rewound?" "I don't really know, but what's your point?" Phil asked. With store video tape, nothing, but we as collectors handle a lot of tape, open reel, cassettes, and video. How many collectors rewind their tapes after partially listening to them and then set it back on the shelf to sit for a long time before it is listened to again. It's OK to rewind the tapes so that they are back to side one or program one and are ready to go the next time. But probably in most cases when the tape is rewound it is at the fast speed and not at the regular or play speed, and that is the point.

How long is the average tape good for? What is the shelf life of the open reel tape? Can a little extra effort in taking care of these tapes prolong the life of them? When we put a tape back on the shelf, do we rewind at fast speed and have a tape with uneven and ragged edges? Or do we rewind it at regular or play speed and have a nice smooth even "new look" edge on the tape? I think it will make a difference in the longevity of the tape.

We as collectors all have some Ampex government surplus tape in our collections. How old was this tape before we got it and how long ago did we get our first reels? Some of the Government tape that I had purchased was wound smooth on the reels and seemed to record OK, but most of those that were not wound smoothly, and had edges sticking out, did have some sound drops and ripples. So I believe that care is essential if you wish to keep your collection intact and not lose any part of it because the tape went bad.

Bad tape is bad tape no matter what you do. Cheap tape is cheap tape and will deteriorate no matter what you do. If you have good tape and take care of it, it can last longer than you expect. I bought my first open reel recorder in 1955. I still have those first tapes I recorded back then and they still sound the same today as they did when I first played them.

A while back Jim Snyder used to write articles and rate the different dealers that he had bought tapes from. Many times those who got less than a good review would use the excuse about being a one man operation, about being behind and having to rush orders, and several other reasons. To me this was no excuse. If you take my money, then you owe me the best you can provide. We all know that we shouldn't always expect broadcast quality sound from old recordings, but we are pleased when the sound is better than we expected. There is no excuse for dealers to mislead on sound ratings. Bad sound from bad tape is something else again.

I have received recordings from dealers on brand new tape and in some cases the first five minutes, and once the whole first side, was flux. That means that the dealer's master was bad, and not the tape they sent me. That also means that he, or the person he got his tape from, never listened to the tape. At double speed it may sound all right on the monitor, but in reality it is a bad tape. Again, no excuse. It is quite possible that when he got that tape originally it was a good tape, but if it was rewound at fast speed and sat on the shelf for a long time without being used, it could have gone bad. Heat and humidity, excessive dampness or cold, whatever the reason, unevenly wound tape can dry out in spots and develop ripples and cause flux. A little extra effort especially when the last five or ten minutes of tape may prolong the life and sound of that tape. Rewind the tape properly and secure the ends. This could produce a happier customer and a

more respected dealer. What collector is going to keep buying from a dealer who keeps sending bad tapes. Maybe that is why there seem to be fewer dealers today than there were a few years ago. Many got in and then got out in a short period of time. Here again if you don't have a good product, you won't keep or build a good flow of customers.

Too many of these "dealers" were just pushing as many programs as they could just to make sales. This is wrong. I believe every program that is offered for sale should be listened to first and sound rated before being offered for sale. Yes I know, sound ratings are a whole new argument. If you went to a video store and bought a movie, came home and played it, and as you watched, the picture jumped up and down, was "washing out," or had "flashes" or crackling and distorted sound, back it would go to the store. You wouldn't want to hear about it being the best copy available or if it's a one of a kind. If you can't enjoy watching it, then it isn't any good. I think enjoy is the key word.

If you can't enjoy an OTR program because of bad quality in sound, then it is simply a bad program that should not have been offered for sale without stating that the sound was not good. If I know beforehand that the sound may be bad and I still want the program, then that is my choice. I think today most dealers work for better sound on what they offer by either improving what they have

electronically or by coming up with new and better copies of shows. Of course, if you happen to order from a catalog that has programs that were obtained way back, chances are you may pick up some shows that are not up to par sound wise, but that is OK as long as they are labeled as such.

I still order by reel and run into this problem from time to time. Although I am sometimes disappointed by less than good sound, I am still grateful for all the programs I have picked up in the past and the ones I am able to obtain now. I believe most of today's dealers and collectors are more dedicated to the hobby than some were a few years back. After all, if it wasn't for these dedicated hobbyists, I wouldn't have any collection today or be able to enjoy any of those programs from long ago.

Today's youth go to concerts. I just play a tape from my collection and can go to a "concert" at the Cafe Rouge in New York, the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco, or the Hollywood Palladium and listen to one of the great bands from long ago. I may not be watching them in person, but I certainly can "see" them play.

Just some thoughts of a collector.



NARA NEWS COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES

ONE ISSUE:

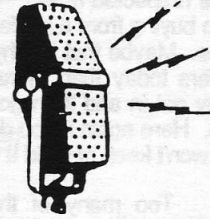
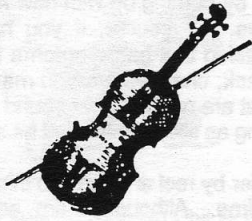
Full page - \$ 50.00

Half page - 25.00

Quarter page - 15.00

FOUR ISSUES:

25% off above rates



FROM

JACK PALMER

COUNTRY MUSIC AND BORDER RADIO

I can't discuss country music on old time radio without a discussion of the famous, or infamous, border radio stations. Although few people look upon the border stations as real old time radio, they certainly were a huge presence across most of the North American continent for more than 30 years. Although most of what they offered was not up to the standards of what we revere today as old time radio, they did offer a glimpse of the America not often heard on US stations. And they certainly provided a good source of revenue for many country acts in the 30s and 40s.

I won't go into the history of the border radio stations, which would be a long story in itself, but they were all based in Mexico just below the US border and were scattered from California to the Gulf. At various times there were anywhere from 3 to 5 stations in operation. They also changed their call letters every time there was a change in ownership, which sometimes makes it difficult to tell exactly which station broadcast which programs. I'm personally familiar with the station out of Juarez, which blanketed the entire southwest every night for years, with hour after hour of country music, either complete transcribed programs, or just the records themselves with a commercial between every record! All of which requested a postcard or letter to be sent to Clint "That's C-L-I-N-T", Texas. I listened to it almost every night in the late 40s when I was stationed at various times in El Paso, Ft. Worth, Oklahoma City and even some points farther north. In fact, late at night, it could be picked up as far north as Canada in good weather.

Although country music was a mainstay of border radio for most of its history, it was being replaced by rock and roll and "hell fire" preachers in the later days and was not as all pervading as it had been earlier. But in the 1930s, merchandisers who used border radio had discovered that country music attracted the audiences and they packed the airwaves with country artists. Most of the programs were done by transcription. Although many of the artists moved to Texas and lived just across the border, few seemed to actually broadcast live. They recorded their programs in Texas and they were broadcast in Mexico, often on several stations, or repeated on the same station.

One of the biggest names in country music to broadcast on border radio was the Carter Family. The Carter Family had been a top country act since their first recording session in Bristol, Tennessee in 1927. They were as popular as Jimmie Rogers, who had made his first recordings at the same time and place. Even though popular they were still following the gypsy existence of moving from station to station across the eastern US, including a spell with the Grand Ole Opry. In the late 30s, the group had been disrupted when A. P. and Sarah had divorced. But the offer to broadcast on border radio must have

been too good to resist, because they managed to get back together (Although A. P. and Sarah would never speak directly to each other!) and spent the next four years broadcasting on border radio. They did a few live programs at first, but quickly switched to transcriptions. Not only was it easier for them, but the advertisers liked it better also, since they could broadcast the same program several times or from several other different stations, all along the border, as mentioned above.

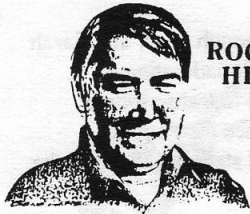
Eventually all the popular country stars appeared on border radio either by way of transcriptions, or by phonograph record on some disc jockey show. Among those who did appear on regular programs were Patsy Montana, who had spent years on the National Barn Dance; Hank Thompson and his Brazos Valley Boys; The Delmore Brothers, who actually wrote a song about their experiences with border radio; Wayne Raney, who sold harmonicas on his program and even Asher and Little Jimmie (No longer so little.) still selling their song books, but no longer for a quarter!

Several country artists never appeared anywhere except on the border stations and never made a commercial recording, yet they were very popular throughout the country. One of the best known was Cowboy Slim Rinchart. He first auditioned for XEPN and was turned down by the musical director. But the station manager overruled him, saying "He sounds more like a cowboy than anyone else singing here." Although he was merely tolerated during his first few programs, he had the last laugh, when he received more mail after his first week than all the other artists together. He eventually was broadcasting by transcription from every border station. For a time he even had a program with Patsy Montana. Unfortunately he was killed in an auto accident in 1947 while on his way east to make his first commercial records. Luckily, like other radio acts, he can still be heard on some of the transcriptions made for his border radio broadcasts.

As mentioned above, by the late 50s and early 60s, the country acts were disappearing from the border stations and being replaced by rock and roll. The same fate that was affecting US radio stations. By the 70s, even rock and roll was being replaced by the radio preachers. Soon thereafter The United States and Mexico worked out their differences over the allocation of station spots on the airwaves and the overpowering border stations disappeared from our hearing.

NOTES: Patsy Montana, one of the earliest country music stars died in May this year. She was 82, but had been performing until last year. She appeared on the National Barn Dance out of Chicago for many years in the late 30s and early 40s. A couple of years ago, I received a personal note from Patsy thanking me for an article I had written about the National Barn Dance, and we corresponded once or twice. So I feel a personal loss as well as the loss of another of our early radio stars.

I am still hoping to hear from someone regarding Vernon Dalhart's radio broadcasts in the 1930s. I was sure that someone would know of the Barbasol network shows that he did about 1930, just before Singin' Sam. Dalhart also appeared on several local radio stations in upper New York. I would certainly appreciate any information, as I need it for a biography I am hoping to write.



ROGER
HILL

THE OLD CURMUDGEON

Here we go again, into the soon-to-arrive Christmas season with rampant commercialism {and now it seems we are part of that here at the store, Nothing's New}. I wondered what to write about for this time then it occurred to me that the many customers we have who rent radio shows would be good fodder for the column.

Let me first introduce M. R. {"No names please!"} who first impressed me as a street derelict. His weather-beaten appearance left much to be desired and I thought he was an alcoholic from skid row. Boy, can appearances be deceiving! I still don't know why he looks so ravaged by nature but you'd never find a nicer, better-hearted, kind person with the highest love and regard for vintage radio. And he actually got to see some of the last of the radio broadcasts in the 1950's, including one which we have in the lending library here and he borrowed to relive the memory. In addition to borrowing from us and caring for the rented materials, he has increased our own collection by bringing in his albums bought from Wireless many years ago. *Gunsmoke, The Whistler, Suspense..* these are but a few of the items he has loaned us. And the tales he has to tell are endless. Now M.R. is a member whom we look forward to seeing and talking with and who lends a hand from time-to-time as he is able, helping with small tasks to be done here.

Another "friend of radio" stopped in to ask about doing an hour's worth of Vintage Radio on a campus station in Irvine, California. This young lady must be all of 19 years old and pretty well innocent of the addictive value in these older programs. Besides interspersing her comments with "Cool!" every ten seconds, she had very little idea of what was once on the air. We gave her a sampling of old radio by donating some of the LPs with radio shows on them {*Amos & Andy, Fred*

Allen, Phil Harris, Lux Radio Theater, and Soap Operas}. A few cassettes with news broadcasts from WW II, a *Shadow* item, and an *X Minus One* program was enough to start her on. She was sent on her way with instructions to listen to these and think about who her audience was going to be. We asked her to return in 2-3 weeks and we'd see what else she needed. Upon her return and finding that she was becoming more aware of what vintage radio really was {but still with too many "Cool!"s in her conversation}, she was introduced to the 23 years' worth of back issues of NARA NEWS which we have in our store library and loaned a couple of the quarterlys to browse through. She was also shown the extensive lending library catalogs from NARA, SPERDVAC, and RHAC which we have...as well as the commercial catalogs and flyers from such companies as Radio Vault, Radio Showcase, and Hello Again, Radio. Jay Hickerson's monthly "Hello Again" is so unique as a clearinghouse of information {and so necessary for anyone believing themselves to be a fan of old radio broadcasts} that we couldn't let her leave without a few of these to borrow. She's scheduled to return in a couple more weeks with some final programming schedule worked out and has promised to keep us informed via any flyers or mailing list materials, of just how things are going. We may share these with NARA NEWS readers if it seems worthwhile.

A third member who recently joined, one R. L., was very aggressively seeking any and all Jack Benny programs. His questioning while I was in the midst of swearing at my computer (a frequent occurrence) was most annoying. Mostly these were questions such as, "Are there more Jack Benny Shows than the ones you have?"; "Where can I get more?"; and the ever-popular..."Do you have a listing of all the guest appearances Jack Benny did and where can I find them?". Well, Mr. R.L. finally seemed to exhaust

the Benny files and then he seized onto Amos & Andy with the same series of questions directed at us. Everytime I tried to show him the library of research materials we have: NARA NEWS, Jay Hickerson's Ultimate Directory of Available Radio Shows; and other such things, he just ignored them and went back to asking these same old questions of us. Is this typical of young people today that they don't want to read and want immediate answers to everything within 5 minutes? There are some people who drive us a little batty and R.L. fits that category.

R.L. also recently asked me which are the scariest radio shows we have. Good Grief! Who can answer that!

We steered him to some that we thought worth listening to: 'Donovan's Brain'; 'The Thing On the Fourable Board'; a nice homicidal female story from The Clock series; and several of those in The Whistler, Hermit's Cave, Witch's Tale; Suspense, Light's Out, and Escape series. After all of this, he comes in and says that none of these were really scary and wants us to find him one which would make his hair stand on end! At that point I mentioned maybe he's too young, maybe he's trying to hard, or maybe he's just too jaded with having seen buckets of gore and gallons of gruesome-ness on the silver screen these days. What would you do? What would you tell him? He can be an awful pest with his ignorance of what we collectors have gone through in our learning over the past 20 plus years and his unwillingness to do some reading and research along these lines. I do try to promote the conventions such as SPERDVAC's, the East Coast one in October, and REPS's in Seattle but so many people who say they want to know more and to enjoy vintage radio don't seem to care about the gathering to share information and the joy of seeing re-creations of these old broadcasts. It's a real problem for the future of our hobby if so few today are lacking in curiosity and imagination to see value in the radio shows and the assembling of other fans

occasionally to keep this art form alive.

Along these lines, Chris Lembesis {well-known co-author of books on *Quiet Please, Suspense, and Dragonet*} called recently about their revised Suspense book and we talked at length about the lack of new supporters for vintage radio. I felt at the time he was being overly pessimistic but since then I've begun to think he may have something there. How do you feel about this? Are we losing ground in gaining new adherents to our hobby? There certainly does seem to be an appalling wealth of ignorance and ennui {look that one up in your Webster} regarding these wonderful past radio shows. Some customers who come in and see the radio section keep asking if they're like "Books-on-Tape" or if it's music....they seem lost when we try to explain about drama and sound effects, and story lines and the whole kit-and-kaboodle.

Recently, a phone call from a A.C. in Sacramento resulted in him driving all the way down (2 hour trip) to see our place and then leaving 6 hours later. While here he talked about his love for some early television and the many different vintage movies and how he has so much stuff. But when I tried interesting him in old radio programs, he stated that he had absolutely no interest at all in such stuff. I pointed out how there were such good cross-ties to movies and television with these radio shows and performers. Seeing J. Carrol Naish, for instance, in his many screen roles and then hearing him as Luigi on radio and seeing him as Charlie Chan on television...what a delight and what an experience! No dice! A.C. just would not budge at all. Well, we could go on and on about some of the strange customers we encounter here. No need to dismay you further but it is something to think about.

The good news for us is that our radio section in the store is now undergoing renovation with expanded shelf space and re-doing the albums with electronic spine labeling for better identification and

easier access by customers. The inventory listing of radio programs is still a long ways off, however. The movie video directory is now available with over 4,000 vintage movies. Cost of this 42 page bound volume is \$3 to members and \$10 to non-members. Once a non-member joins, they receive a \$5 rebate on the directory price. Call us at (415) 871-6063 or write to #23 Bayhill Shopping Center; San Bruno, CA 94066. Don't bother looking for us on the net as the only net we have is for fishing and the websites are strictly in the attic corners with flies and mosquitoes scattered about.

I've asked friends such as Jim Stringham and Mike Ryan to consider writing an article or two for NARA NEWS and share their experiences and expertise on radio's past. I'm keeping my fingers crossed they will because they have a lot of interesting stories to tell. Another source of potential writers are those people who subscribe to and read Reminisce. This is a superb publication by Reiman Group and each issue includes items on movies, radio, and a variety of other topics of interest to most of us. The only advertisements are vintage ones. Another nice publication which isn't nearly as

professionally done as Reminisce but is still nice to look through is Good Old Days. This one does have lots of current ads and some just aren't appropriate for the tone and mood of vintage life and experiences. I'm not aware of other magazines along these lines other than the hobbyist publications. If you know of others, I'd like to hear from you.

One last comment. If any of you readers are involved with conventions (old radio, movies, or whatever), radio hobbyist publications, or other vintage media groups....please send me brochures and flyers you have so I can make them available to any of our members in the store. Thank you.

Jim Snyder will probably edit this down to a manageable few paragraphs but if he doesn't, I hope some of you will write and let me know your thoughts on these problems I brought up in this column. How to best approach people who have "no interest in vintage radio"; who have no knowledge of radio's past, and who don't seem interested in reading although they claim to want to know about radio shows and personalities.

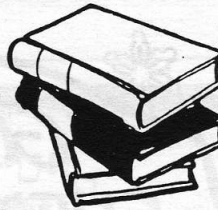
So long until next time!



One of our NARA members, Ray Barfield, has just published (publication date was July 30, 1996) a new book on "old time radio." Ray, a professor of English at Clemson University, has previously authored a number of articles on an assortment of topics, including radio. This book, LISTENING TO RADIO, 1920-1950, is quite different from most other OTR books, in that his history is in the form of reminiscences on radio as they remember it by a wide variety of people, several of whom are NARA members including NARA NEWS columnists Jack French and Ken Weigel. It's really a collection of the sort of memories that are exchanged when any two or more OTR fans sit down to talk about our hobby. The 248 page book is published by Praeger Publishers of Westport, Connecticut. Price is \$45.00 and it can be ordered with a credit card by calling (800) 225-5800.

**SCIENCE FICTION....
...ON RADIO: A REVISED
LOOK AT 1950-1975**

by James F. Widner and Meade
Frierson III (1996)



**BOOK REVIEW
BY
JACK FRENCH**

While there are many fine books on the hobby of Old Time Radio and hundreds more on the subject of Science Fiction, this is the only book that combines these two topics with a thoroughness that will impress every reader.

The two authors of this welcome publication are well known to the OTR community. Meade Frierson of Birmingham, AL and Jim Widner of Dayton, OH have been collecting and researching radio programs of science fiction for years. Both of them have been in contact with OTR collectors around the country and this book's foreword is a "who's who" listing of most of the significant audio dealers in the land.

Basically, this 194 page book is a complete anthology of science fiction as portrayed on network and syndicated radio, both here and overseas. The extensive research and careful compilation of the co-authors ensure that no important detail is left out.



Starting with the very first sci-fi programs on network radio ("Frankenstein" on CBS and "Buck Rogers in the 25th Century", both debuting in 1932), the authors then trace the complete history of this genre to the last known series aired, "SF 68", a South African program in 1968. Over that nearly forty year span, the reader is offered an accurate and detailed description of virtually every sci-fi show, regardless of what series it appeared in.

The book deals with not only the standard science-fiction series ("Dimension X", "2000 Plus", "X Minus One" etc.) but also the other shows that had but an occasional sci-fi episode ("Family Theatre", "Lux Radio

Theater", "NBC Short Story" etc.) As a brief trivia nugget, the authors reveal that the very earliest sci-fi program that one can currently acquire is May 1934 "Witch's Tale" story entitled "The Entomologist."



On the popular series, for example, "Dimension X", a complete log is set forth, including the title of the show, date of airing, author, adaptor, cast, and synopsis of plot. If the episode was based on a published story, the authors also cite the magazine and/or book in which it appeared. The lesser known series, including some of those on the BBC, are treated with less detail.

It is difficult to imagine how much more detail on this genre the authors could cram into a publication of less than 200 pages. They even cover programs that never aired. For example, "Beyond Tomorrow" was a series that CBS touted as the 1950 summer replacement for "The FBI In Peace and War", but later the network went with "The Lineup" in that slot. However, we still have three audition copies of "Beyond Tomorrow" in circulation.

To this wealth of material, add a logical format, a comprehensive index, and a sturdy spiral binding that allows it to lie flat, and you have a book that every sci-fi/OTR fan should have on the shelf. The book is available from the publisher, A.F.A.B. at P.O. Box 130969, Birmingham, AL 35213-0969 for only \$ 15 and that covers shipping. Once you dive into its contents, your only regret will be in wishing that this wonderful and authoratative book had come out years ago.

UP! UP!
AND AWAY....
DOWN SOUTH!

GOSH, SANDY...
EVEN A HARD WINTER
HAS A GOOD SIDE!

ON, KING!
ON, YOU HUSKIES!



**KEEP YOUR FEET DRY AND
HAVE A NICE WINTER**

© Gene Larson 1996

ORPHAN ANNIE & SANDY ARE HAROLD GRAY CREATIONS

'OL' MAN WINTER,
THE T O L' MAN WINTER...

**Happy
Holidays
To You from
WARA.**

ARF!

**WARM YOUR HEART WARM...
WINTER!**

**Sung to the tune of "OL' MAN RIVER"*

AUDIO-BOOK REVIEW

by
Chuck Seeley

Superman Lives!
Time Warner AudioBooks, 1993
\$17.00, 2hrs, 35 min.

Y'now, I liked this. Stuart Milligan, the actor who portrays Superman/Clark Kent, has that old Bud Collyer voice shift down cold. Clark isn't in this very much, but never mind.

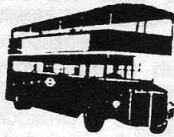
The note on the box says that this was originally presented as "The Adventures of Superman--Doomsday and Beyond" by the BBC, and it's presented here on two cassettes. The only actor's name I recognized was Burt Kwouk from the Pink Panther movies. That doesn't matter, though. All these folks sound American, except the ones that aren't supposed to be American.

However, I have a feeling that the many characters might bewilder the average audience. This Superman is not the Superman you grew up with, and most of the supporting cast of characters will be strangers to you unless you're familiar with Superman comics since, say, 1990. For example, Supergirl isn't really Supergirl. She, uh, it is an alien shape-changer of indeterminate sex. And Lois knows the whole Clark Kent/Superman secret identity deal; they were engaged at the time of this story. The Justice League of America makes a brief appearance here, and you will know none of them. And so on.

The death & resurrection of Superman was the culmination of about 2 years worth of weekly comic continuity. The BBC did a pretty good job of wrapping the whole thing up in two and a half hours.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since Chuck Seeley has brought up the subject of AudioBooks that have some application to our hobby, let me mention a couple of others that I have in my collection these about Superman's friend Batman. The first is titled "Batman: The Complete Knightfall Saga." This is also from Time Warner AudioBooks. It runs 180 minutes. It was put out in 1994 and lists for \$17.00, although I only paid \$2.50 in a local discount book store. The other one is titled "Roddy McDowall Reads Batman." This is a 1989 Dove Book on Tape and runs 90 minutes. I don't know the list price, but again I paid \$2.50 for it at that same store.

FROM ACROSS THE POND



by Ray Smith



"Calling All Workers . . . Calling All Workers!" If that revolutionary phrase from the golden days of UK radio doesn't get your attention, I don't know what will. You are probably reading this column as those ever-so-romantic autumn leaves start to fall, hopefully to the lush accompaniment of Mantovani and his Orchestra. But it's being written on one of those hot and humid dog days of summer, when inspiration means reaching into the fridge for a long cool glass of Gator-Aid. You don't believe me? Ah well. Let's get back to that fractured phrase we used for openers. It actually had nothing to do with the communist manifesto, but it leads nicely into our theme for today's column, signature tunes which bring back memories of our favorite radio programs.

"Calling All Workers" composed by Eric Coates, was endorsed by the wartime government of Sir Winston Churchill when it was chosen as the regular music for a twice daily program of non-stop light music entitled Music While You Work. The British war workers least productive hours must have been from 10.30 until 11 am and 3.30 until 4 in the pm, which was when over 9,000 British war factories beamed the BBC's Music While You Work over their pa systems. The program was unimaginative, going from one medley of light classical, pop or dance music to another, with no

announcements in between. The tempo was upbeat, designed to spur productivity on the factory floor.

The bands hired were as colorful as Music While You Work was predictable. Frederick Cooper and his Tipica Orchestra, Cecil Norman and the Rhythm Players, Jimmy Leache's Organolian Quintet, Troise and his Banjoliers, Stanelli and his Music, Primo Scala and his Accordion Band, Chico Arnez and his Combo etc. etc. Chico doubled as a theatrical agent in London. Despite his romantic Latin name, Chico whom I knew, spoke more like "Arry 'Oskins from "Uddersfield than an emigrant from the Costa Del Sol!

LOU PREAGER'S
AMBASSADORS BAND
 Specially Chosen Combinations
 One-Night Stands Anywhere
 LOU PREAGER'S Presentations
 69, GLENWOOD Gdns., ILFORD
 Valentine 4043

Popular on
 "Music While You Work"

And the program featured the big British swing and dance bands of the times, including those of Joe Loss, Geraldo, Lew Stone, Lou Preager, Oscar Rabin and Phil Tate. When its long run terminated in 1967, the BBC hired one of the original radio bands from the 40's, Jimmy Leach and his Organolians, to wrap things up.

And when it was brought back in the 90's for a limited series another of the original groups, Phil Tate and his Orchestra, played the tunes.

So frequently was his music used to introduce popular radio programs that composer Eric Coates could be called 'the radio producers friend'. Another Coates original was Sleepy Lagoon, (enhanced by the sound of seagulls) the signature tune for Desert Island Discs presented on the BBC from 1942 until his death in 1985 by Roy Plomley. Each



John Thaw on
 Desert Island Discs

week, a well known celebrity was cast away on a desert island and asked to pick 8 gramophone records to sustain his or her isolation. Plomley was the "gentleman's gentleman" of interviewers. Politicians, movie stars and Royalty clamored to appear on the "by invitation only" program. Over the years the 'castaways' who now number over 3,000 (the program has continued to this day on the BBC with Sue Lawley doing the interviews, but is now a pale imitation of the radio classic made famous by dear Roy Plomley) ranged from Sir Anthony

Hopkins the actor, to Stirling Moss the racing driver and Maggie Thatcher the former Prime Minister. The first celebrity featured in 1942 was radio's Hi Gang comic, Vic Oliver. Hollywood stars like Errol Flynn, Deborah Kerr and director Otto Preminger were 'shipwrecked.' And on program 2,000 actor John Thaw alias Chief Inspector Morse of the PBS TV series Mystery, was featured. The interview techniques of Roy Plomley were a lot gentler than those used by Inspector Morse, Sergeant Lewis and the Oxford murder squad, when tracking down a serial killer.

Another Eric Coates composition, The Knightsbridge March this time enhanced by traffic noises, was used as the signature tune for the long-running interview program In Town Tonight hosted by John Ellison. As the Knightsbridge March reached its crescendo, and anonymous voice hollered STOP!!! Then Ellison took over, "Once again, we stop the mighty roar of London's traffic, to introduce some well-known people who are . . . In Town Tonight."

But perhaps Eric Coates most famous tune internationally was The Dam Busters March, the stirring theme music from the 1950's RAF war movie, The Dam Busters, which starred Richard Todd as Wing Commander Guy Gibson. When The Dam Busters March was issued as a single record by Billy Cotton and his Band, it was an overnight best-seller.

One of the most popular detective imports on US public radio was the Paul Temple murder serials skillfully put together by writer Francis Dubridge and producer Martyn C. Webster. But for me, Mr. Temple's famous signature

tune The Coronation Scot composed by Vivian Ellis, evokes memories of short-trousered arguments with my parents about whether Paul Temple was "suitable for children" (meaning ME). Thankfully I won those arguments and enjoyed the exciting but harmless adventures of the upper class English crime novelist and his lovely wife "Steve" played, from 1938-1968 by veteran BBC actress Marjorie Westbury. Although the Paul Temple known to most Americans will be actor Peter Coke (pronounced Cook) he only had the role from 1954 until 1968. Earlier Paul Temples (the show actually began with Send For Paul Temple in 1938) included well-known actor Howard Marion-Crawford and Barry Morse, who became popular in America as the police detective assigned to track down television's David Jansen, better known as The Fugitive.

And another radio crime series which was known as much for its theme music as for its blood and thunder content, was Dick Barton, Special Agent, canceled by the BBC in 1951. But not before it had ensured the longevity and popularity of its 'nail-biting' signature tune the thrilling Devils Galop composed by Charles Williams. But as mentioned in the Summer '96 edition of NARA NEWS, the show which replaced Dick Barton, was the antithesis of crime serials.

The Archers, which has become the longest running daily radio soap in the world, (1951 and STILL going strong) recounts the layed back 'adventures' of Dan and Doris Archer and their family who farm at Ambridge in the English Midlands. The thousands of British troops who participated in Operation Desert Storm, put up

with the hardships of desert warfare. But they were NOT prepared to miss The Archers which they could not receive in Saudi Arabia. The BBC were deluged with protests from the 'tommies' and consequently, the British Forces Broadcasting Service carried the everyday story of country folk for the duration of hostilities. It seems incongruous that the most popular UK radio program of that horrific battlefield, was introduced by the Arthur Wood composition Barwick Green. This jolly, meandering tune is reminiscent of spring lambs gambolling across a Shropshire meadow, chased by a ruddy-cheeked 'typically English' country bumpkin, wearing an old-fashioned cotton smock and grinning like Benny Hill at his most lecherous.

Not only were record 'request' shows cheap and easy to make, but they were very popular. Everyone likes to hear their name mentioned on the wireless. At the top of the 'heap' was Housewives Choice heard daily for over 20 years between 9 and 10 am on the BBC Light Programme. The program host was rotated weekly. Freelance disc jockeys like David Jacobs, Pete Murray and Dave Gell (who now broadcasts in Calgary), were firm favourites along with popular entertainers, sports stars, journalists and politicians. But the favorite Housewives Choice host was a genial-voiced Scot from the cold Northern city of Aberdeen. George Elrick has been a drummer, band-leader and vocalist before becoming business manager and impresario behind the world famous orchestra-leader, Mantovani. George also became a regular on Housewives Choice, signing off each day as, "Mrs Elricks Wee Son George."

And the signature tune which signified a broadcast by "Mrs Elricks Wee Son George" and the other Housewives Choice presenters, was Jack Strachey's In Party Mood.



George Elrick in 1996.
"Housewives Choice"

On weekends, Housewives made way for children when the long-running Childrens Favorites was introduced by the familiar music of Puffing Billy. The regular host was Derek McCulloch who was much loved as Uncle Mac on the nightly BBC Childrens Hour. As a youngster I loved getting up early on Saturday morning for Childrens Favorites. Henry Hall and his Band did the Teddybears Picnic,



Derek McCulloch
"Childrens Favourites"

Max Bygraves sang the UK version of Gilly Gilly Ossenfaffer, Burl Ives made my tummy rumble for "the big rock candy mountain" and Charles Parker brought tears of joy singing about The Laughing Policeman. And how that man could laugh!

It's been fun reminiscing about some favorite BBC radio shows from the perspective of the music associated with them. We'll have to do a similar column in the future. Next time you find yourself whistling a familiar melody that you can't QUITE place, maybe it's one of those "famous but anonymous" pieces of music which was used as a 'signature tune' back in the golden days of radio.

Cheerio for now.

DON'T GET A DIVORCE

Few women want to go out because they hate their homes. It is because they need a change. Those wives who are in the home all day find the walls boring at night and they crave a glimpse of the outside world — but on the other hand, husbands after a hard day at the office are tired and wish to stay at home.



COMPROMISE
Come to the nearest R. S. Williams store, select a Rogers or Majestic radio and have it sent home tomorrow, and from then on bring the outside world into your home and enjoy the comforts of your easy chair too.

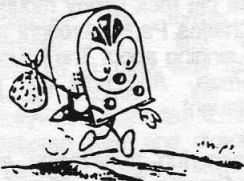
Get a
Rogers-Majestic
Radio

R. S. Williams Co.
F. A. TRESTRAIL
145 Yonge St.

Established
Since 1869

This ad from the
"early days," gave
a new reason to
buy a radio!

Wireless Wanderings

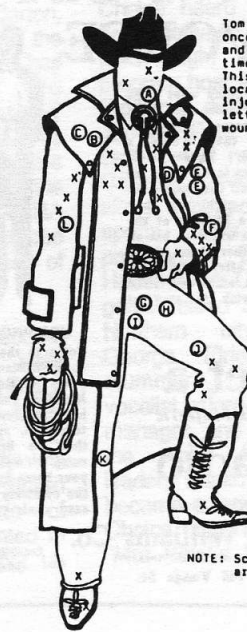


JIM SNYDER

A few weeks ago, I drove a few miles southeast of my home and again visited the Tom Mix Monument. This is located on Arizona highway 79 between Florence and Tucson and is at the site where he was killed in a traffic accident on October 12, 1940. Back then, a highway crew had just put up a detour barrier near the spot now named Tom Mix Wash, but Mix didn't have a chance to stop. Witnesses said he was driving at least 80 miles an hour when he ran into the barrier and overturned his car. A suitcase in the back seat lurched forward, breaking his neck. Mix, who was 60 years old, was killed instantly.

This visit caused me to go back to reading about this figure that was fictionalized in the kiddie radio serial. The "real" Tom Mix was greatly glamorized in accounts in the press and in his own mind. For example, the drawing at the bottom of this page has appeared in several OTR publications, including this one, and purports to show the injuries he experienced during his lifetime. Most of this is pure bunk, although there are a few that are correct, such as item "J." Probably all of this came from an interview that Tom gave in 1930 in which he said, "I was shot three times in the left arm, once in the right shoulder, once in the right elbow, once through the ribs just below my heart, and once through the jaw, three times through the abdomen and pelvis, and once in the left and once in the right leg. The first time I got shot, I was only fourteen years old. I went into town with my family at Pony Track, Texas [there was/is no such place]. I got in the way of a wild bullet from a politician's gun and stopped it with the fleshy part of my leg. It was in Oklahoma that I got shot up the worst. During the years I was marshall in that state, I was plugged seven times. Since 1913 I have been in the hospital forty-seven times with fractures and severe sprains. I wasn't counting the breaking of my nose in China. Sniper's bullet hit me in the mouth, taking out my front teeth and part of my jaw. I counted up once and found I had been knifed twenty-two times. I've told you about all the shooting except the time bank robbers got me in Tennessee, and the shot I stopped from a Hollywood bandit." Well, that statement should give a pretty good clue that there was an active imagination at work.

Regarding item number "A" in this drawing which says that Tom was shot through the jaw by a sniper in the Spanish American War; well, Tom claimed to have ridden beside Teddy Roosevelt in the famous charge up San Juan Hill, but he was apparently unaware of the fact that the charge was on foot, not on horseback. He probably came up with this story from Tom Isbell, who he knew in the Buffalo Bill Circus, and who had been wounded in the neck in Cuba. It made a good story, as much of the misinformation about this actor did.



TOM MIX INJURIES

Tom Mix has been blown up once, shot twelve times, and injured forty-seven times in movie stunting. This chart shows the location of some of Tom's injuries. (X marks fractures; letters indicate bullet wounds, as listed below.)

- A-Shot through jaw by sniper in Spanish-American War.
- B-Shot by bandit in Mix home.
- C-Shoulder fractured when horse was shot from under him by bandits in U.S. Marshall days.
- D-Shot by cattle rustlers in Texas.
- E-Shot twice in left arm by Oklahoma outlaws.
- F-Shot below elbow by outlaw.
- G-Shot through abdomen by killer he arrested.
- H-Wounded in gun fight by rustlers.
- I-Shot by badmen while Oklahoma sheriff.
- J-Shot in leg when 14 years old.
- K-Shot through leg by bank robbers.
- L-Shot through elbow in real stagecoach hold-up in 1902.

NOTE: Scars from 22 knife wounds are not indicated.

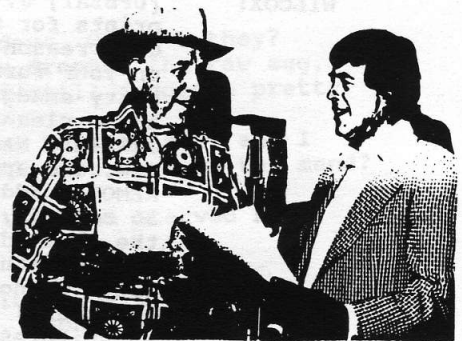


The Tom Mix Memorial alongside the Pinal-Pioneer Parkway in Arizona, remembers the actor who was killed nearby.

When the real Tom Mix lost control of his car and was killed on that Arizona highway in 1940, there was consternation as to whether the show could, or should continue. But since Mix himself had never appeared on the show there was no question of needing to replace an actor, so the show did go on. Ralston sponsored it over its entire run and always had big responses to their premium offers, at least 300,000 requests for each one. Many are worth large sums on money in today's collector's market.

There was an attempt to have the show move to TV. But while Ralston owned the rights for radio, they did not have the rights for television and the Mix estate would not give them permission.

So, the Tom Mix radio show was a fictional account of the largely fictional adventures told by this movie character. The radio characterization was selected based on a poll of youngsters between the ages of 7 and 12 that was conducted in the early 1930's. The overwhelming majority named Tom Mix as their hero. Tom agreed to lend his name to the show and to endorse Ralston products, which had agreed to sponsor the show. The show started in 1933 featuring Artellis Dickson in the title role, and appeared in three fifteen minute episodes each week over the Red Network. Dickson was followed by Russell Thorson and Jack Holden before the actor that most of us remember, Joe "Curley" Bradley took on the part from 1940 to the end of the series in 1950. Other "name" radio actors who appeared as regulars on the show were George Gobel, Hal Peary, Willard Waterman, and the announcer, Don Gordon. The show was always well up in the ratings for children's shows, and sometimes held the number one position in that regard.



Curley Bradley (left) is interviewed by NARA member Frank Bresee on the GOLDEN DAYS OF RADIO SHOW in 1975.

ADVERTISING?

During a program sponsored by a tobacco company, announcer Westbrook Van Voorhees had a coughing attack. He recovered sufficiently to explain, "Guess I've been smoking too much!"

In the middle of a World Series broadcast in the fifties, sponsored by Gillette, the announcer asked Billy Southworth, who was then with the St. Louis Cardinals, if he had used a Gillette razor that morning. Southworth responded, "You know bloody well I did!"

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ken Weigel has provided our readers with a wide variety of different materials in the last several issues. Here he has come up with what he calls a "spoof" of the Fibber McGee and Molly program. Actually, the script is pretty much "on track" with what we heard on this popular series. The "spoof" comes in his commercials. Once again, thanks for your contribution, Ken.

THE JENSEN'S WAX PROGRAM

FIBBER MCGEE & MOLLY

"Salad Days"© By Ken Weigel

MUSIC: THEME: 7 SECONDS, THEN SUBDUE]
WILCOX: The JENSEN'S WAX PROGRAM, with Fibber McGee & Molly!

MUSIC: THEME UP BRIEFLY, THEN BRING DOWN BEHIND WILCOX
WILCOX: The makers of JENSEN'S WAX for home and industry present FIBBER MCGEE & MOLLY! Written by Ken Weigel, with music by the King's Men and Billy Mills' Orchestra.

MUSIC: SONG #1--BILLY MILLS' "HAIR OF GOLD." 30 SECONDS.
THEN BRING UNDER WILCOX AND SUPPRESS
WILCOX: [UPBEAT] J. Edgar Hoover's G-Men collect finger prints for a good purpose. But ladies, there's no good reason why you should collect finger prints on your furniture. No sir. And if you do find nasty smudges on your table or counter tops on house cleaning day, remove them easily with JENSEN'S NASTY SMUDGE REMOVER. It's so easy to use. One application of JENSEN'S NASTY SMUDGE REMOVER adds a bright, sparkling finish in just 30 seconds. My wife uses it every week. Why, just the other day I said, "Honey Bunch, how do you get the furniture looking so beautiful?"--and she broke my nose. Around my house it doesn't pay to get smart! So ladies, don't use cheap oily substitutes. Use cheap non-oily substitutes. Keep a 12-ounce bottle of JENSEN'S NASTY SMUDGE REMOVER handy. Better yet, keep a 2200-gallon drum in the basement. You never know when J. Edgar Hoover may come calling at your house!

MUSIC: BRING UP "HAIR OF GOLD" AND FINISH IN :15
WILCOX: Tonight, through the magic of radio, we're going backwards in time to a familiar household at 79 Wistful Vista. It's evening now, and we find our homespun friends just as vibrant, and in one case vinegary, as we remember them. And as we look on, what do we find them doing? Why, they're reminiscing too, harking back to an earlier day, looking through old, yellowed scrapbooks and photo albums, trying to recapture their past. So folks, if no one objects to a little backward harking, let's meet radio's ageless, boneless hams--Fibber McGee & Molly!

FIBBER: These old pictures sure bring back memories, don't they, Molly?

MOLLY: Heavenly days, were we ever that young? We sang and danced from Portland to Piedmont. I never realized how far-flung we were.

FIBBER: We toe-tapped through four different time zones, Snookie. We did the pigeon wing in Muncie--

MOLLY: The hoochy-cooch in Boise, and the tarantella.... And we never ducked a date either, did we, dreamboat?

FIBBER: Nope. Ducked a few vegetables, though. Remember the time--

MOLLY: Oh, look. Here's you in your baggy trousers and red nose, juggling some vegetables.

FIBBER: [LAUGHS] I've got a tomato, a head of lettuce, and a raw egg in the air there. And you right beside me in your pretty little tights, holding the salad bowl.

MOLLY: Yes, and what you dropped I caught.

FIBBER: Between what I dropped and you caught and we kept and you cooked, we ate pretty good, didn't we, Molly?

MOLLY: [LAUGHS] For vaudevillians, yes. Not to mention what the audience threw at us.

FIBBER: That's what chased Jack Benny out of vaudeville, you know. The vegetables.

MOLLY: Vegetables?

FIBBER: Yeah, when they started putting them in cans.

MOLLY: [LAUGHS] I see you've been listening to Fred Allen again.

FIBBER: Ah, those were the salad days, weren't they?

MOLLY: Caesar salad days when you dropped the raw egg, dearie. I'll bet you could still juggle a pretty good supper, couldn't we?

FIBBER: Remember the time your feet hurt so bad, and I hooked up with Nittany while you were on the mend?

MOLLY: Sure.

FIBBER: You remember Nittany, Molly? From Starved Rock, Indiana?

MOLLY: Illinois.

FIBBER: Oh, he'll annoy you all right, till you get to know him. McGee & Nittany, "Songs & Witty Sayings."

MOLLY: Oh, dear.

FIBBER: Yessir, we carried our own cyclorama and a magenta spot. We opened in Far Rockaway. Hey, did I ever tell you about Far Rockaway?

MOLLY: [ENDURING] Once or twice.

FIBBER: Well, sir, I and Nittany, we were doing three-a-day in Bismarck, South Dakota, in the dead of summer. And--

MOLLY: North Dakota, dearie. Bismarck's in North Dakota.

FIBBER: North-South--what's the difference?

MOLLY: About 90 miles.

FIBBER: Anyway, we was in Dakota territory, and I sez to Nittany, "It was so hot today, chickens hereabouts were laying soft-boiled eggs." And Nittany, he sez--

MOLLY: Hardboiled eggs.

FIBBER: Hardboiled-softboiled--what's the difference?
MOLLY: About three minutes.
FIBBER: Anyway, Nittany sez to me, "I wanna thank you and the missus for having me over last weekend. Molly must've thought I was starved the way I dove into that barbecued chicken." "Naw," sez I in reply. "Molly was raised on a farm. She's used to those kinda noises." [LAUGHS] Get it, Molly? I sez, "She was raised on a farm--"
MOLLY: Tain't funny, McGee.
FIBBER: Aw, pshaw.
MOLLY: It didn't take much to make people laugh in those days, did it?
FIBBER: Uh huh.
MOLLY: What about Far Rockaway?
FIBBER: Far Rockaway? Shucks, Molly, just talkin' about it makes me antsy. Are we going to have to stay cooped up indoors all night?
MOLLY: I'm starting to squirm too.
FIBBER: I'm itching to take in some vaudeville.
MOLLY: Sweetie, there isn't a vaudeville house within the sound of my voice if I was John Charles Thomas. How about we take in the carnival? The paper says it's playing here in the neighborhood.
FIBBER: The carnival? Gimme the paper. [RUSTLE OF PAPER] Here....Hey, it's playing over at 14th & Oak. It's not vaudeville, but what the hey.
MOLLY: Talked me into it. I'll go slip on a jacket while you slip into your billfold. [OFF] I'll be down in half a jiffy.
FIBBER: Okay. [TO HIMSELF] Ah, there goes a good kid. And talented? She can dance, cook--and sing? Like a kilarney canary. Yessir....Lessee, where's that billfold?
SOUND: DOORBELL
FIBBER: Huh? I'll get it. [BEAT] What do I mean I'll get it? I'm the only one here. Come in!
SOUND: DOOR OPENS
TEENY: [SHE'S 5 OR 6] Hiya, Mister. [GIGGLES]
FIBBER: Oh hi, little girl. Haven't got time to stand around and fan the breeze with you tonight. Mrs. McGee and I are stepping out.
TEENY: Are you looking at pitchers, Mister, Hm? Can I see?
FIBBER: No time, Sis. Anyway, they're just vaudeville circuit stuff.
TEENY: Were you in the circus too, Mister?
FIBBER: Circuit, Sis. Who do you know is in the circus?
TEENY: [GIGGLES] I got a grampa in the circus, I betcha.
FIBBER: You do, eh?
TEENY: Sure. He calls himself Gulpo. He's a Human Garbage Disposable. [GIGGLES]
FIBBER: Oh. Specialty act.
TEENY: Sure. He eats nails and razor blades.
FIBBER: Holy cow. He must have a cast iron stomach.
TEENY: [GIGGLES] That's funny.
FIBBER: What's funny?
TEENY: A cast iron stomach. You're being silly.

FIBBER: Two can play this game, kiddo.
 TEENY: Um hm. One time he swallowed a whole baseball.
 FIBBER: Are you sure it wasn't a basketball?
 TEENY: [GIGGLES] No, it was a baseball. He was in the park working on a new trick, an' some kids were playin' baseball.
 FIBBER: What new trick, he said putting his foot in it.
 TEENY: He was eating string cheese and belching half-hitches.
 FIBBER: Oh, sure.
 TEENY: An' one of the kids hit a baseball over the fence, an' grampa chased and caught it with his teeth and swallowed it.
 FIBBER: Hey, nice catch, Gulpo.
 TEENY: Then he runned home.
 FIBBER: Why'd he run home?
 TEENY: It was a home run.
 FIBBER: Oh.
 TEENY: But then he got a tummy ache.
 FIBBER: He did, eh?
 TEENY: Um hm. They had to--hm?
 FIBBER: I said, He did, eh?
 TEENY: Did what?
 FIBBER: Had a tummy ache.
 TEENY: Who?
 FIBBER: [IMPATIENTLY] Your grampa Gulpo!
 TEENY: I know it.
 FIBBER: [GROANS] So how sick was he?
 TEENY: Pretty sick. They had to bunt him to the hospital....He was in the hospital for ten weeks, I betcha.
 FIBBER: Just to have a baseball taken out?
 TEENY: Jeepers, no. He got over that right away. While he was there he worked on a new act. And he wouldn't leave until he could swallow it. Y'see, grampa was the Human Garbage--
 FIBBER: Chow Chucker, I know. What was so hard to swallow that it took him ten weeks to do it?
 TEENY: The hospital food! [GIGGLES] 'Bye, Mister!
 SOUND: DOOR CLOSSES
 MUSIC: SONG #2--BILLY MILLS ORCHESTRA: "BESAME MUCHO" (1:57)
 MOLLY: [COMING ON] Who was that, dear?
 FIBBER: Teeny, with more old Eddie Cantor jokes. I must've tapped my watch 50 times before--
 MOLLY: Are you about ready?
 FIBBER: Just about. Soon as I find my billfold.
 MOLLY: S'pose we oughta make reservations, just in case?
 FIBBER: Good idea. Gimme the telephone. [PICKS UP RECEIVER] Hello, operator? Gimme the carnival at 14th & O--ooohh, that you Myrt? [CHUCKLE] How's every little thing, Myrt?...What say, Myrt?...The Armory? Oh, my gosh!
 MOLLY: Oh, dear.
 FIBBER: Bombed, eh?
 MOLLY: Heavenly days! Who bombed the Armory?
 FIBBER: Myrt's sister. She joined the Wistful Vista Toastmaster's Club, and the initiation speech she gave at the Armory bombed....Ok, Myrt. [CRADLES RECEIVER] Line's busy. Been busy all day.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS
WILCOX: Hiya, Pal. Hello Molly.
SOUND: DOOR CLOSES
MOLLY: Why, hello, Mr. Wilcox. [HEARTFELT] Nice to see you. Come in.
WILCOX: I was just in the neighborhood. I thought I'd stop by and pass the time of day.
FIBBER: Not now, Junior. Haven't got time to beat the gums. We were just walkin' out the door. So, whatever you're sellin' tonight, (as if I didn't know), we haven't--
WILCOX: What a swell idea, Fibber--selling! I'd love to be out in a little sellboat right about now, selling the ocean blue.
MOLLY: Oh, brother!
WILCOX: Where I'd really like to be is stranded on a south sea island with a dozen Vaughn Monroe records, a phonograph, and no batteries.
FIBBER: No batteries?
WILCOX: No. I can't stand Vaughn Monroe.
MOLLY: Oh, I love Vaughn Monroe! Have you got something against him, or is it that you just don't care for male singers?
WILCOX: I've nothing at all against male singers, Molly. And speaking of mail--say, you'd be surprised at how many letters we get from housewives just like you [FIBBER GROANS] with clever ideas for new and unusual uses for JENSEN'S WAX.
FIBBER: [ASIDE] Subtle, ain't he?
MOLLY: Someone's got to pay the bills, dearie.
WILCOX: That's right, Molly. And we get letters at JENSEN'S WAX headquarters from satisfied housewives every day. A lady in Omaha applies JENSEN'S WAX to her electric light switch plates. "One application of wax and they're so much brighter," she says. A woman in Chicago writes, "I wax the brickwork around my living room fireplace. Now it looks so bright." A young Fresno bride writes, "I waxed my radio with JENSEN'S WAX during the Duffy's Tavern program. Now it's so much brighter. In fact, Finnegan's IQ jumped 12 points. Now he's just a dimwit. Tell that to your listeners." I will indeed. And I know that if you're bothered by lackluster bricks or dull radio comedians, you'll welcome these bright, new suggestions. So use genuine JENSEN'S WAX, and brighten your home and radio listening. So long, folks!
SOUND: DOOR CLOSES
MOLLY: Why don't you try calling again, McGee?
FIBBER: Okay. The line oughta be--
SOUND: DOORBELL
MOLLY: Come in!
SOUND: DOOR OPENS
MOLLY: Why it's Mayor LaTrivia. Good evening, Mayor.
LaTRIVIA: Hello, Mrs. McGee, McGee.
FIBBER: Hiya, politico.
LaTRIVIA: How are you folks this fine evening?
MOLLY: We're both fit as fiddles, your honor. Anyway, who ever heard of a fiddle with the pulmonary sniffles?

LaTRIVIA: [BEAT] Professor LeBlanc. [LET IT SINK IN]
MOLLY: [LAUGHS] Yes, and one fret shorter than the others too, I'll bet. How's your health, Mayor?
LaTRIVIA: I've just had my annual checkup, Molly. Doc Gamble says I need to lose a few pounds. Outside of that, I've been given a clean bill of health.
MOLLY: That's wonderful, Mayor.
LaTRIVIA: Truth to tell [EXPELS HEALTHY LUNGFUL OF AIR], I feel like a wild, young--
FIBBER: Bull.
MOLLY: McGee.
FIBBER: How does he do it, LaTriv?
LaTRIVIA: How does who do what?
FIBBER: How does Doc Gamble clean your bill of health? Does he use soap and warm water? Does he run it through a Maytag?
LaTRIVIA: McGee, you misunderstand me. I was just using a figure of speech. A clean bill--
FIBBER: Is better than a dirty bill any old day.
MOLLY: Yes, with a clean bill, you don't have to worry about germs.
FIBBER: How about it, LaTriv, did he use bleach to de-germ your bill?
LaTRIVIA: [GROWING IRRITATED] Bleach? What in the name of--?
FIBBER: Did he starch it while he was at it?
LaTRIVIA: No, he doesn't use starch or bleach. [RAISING VOICE] He doesn't even own a Maytag!
MOLLY: Now, Mayor, don't get your dander up.
LaTRIVIA: For your information, I feel just dander--I mean dandy. My hedical melth is superb, and I've never felt [BEAT]--medical health....better in my life.
MOLLY: Maybe you oughta get a second opinion, Mayor.
LaTRIVIA: I have all the confidence in the world in Doctor Maytag. After all, he's been my doctor for.... [VOICE RISES AS HE BEGINS TO LOSE CONTROL]--His name is not Doctor Maytag! His doctor's name is--
MOLLY: Calm down, Mayor. You're turning pink.
FIBBER: He's red as a lobster, Molly.
LaTRIVIA: [COMPLETELY UNHINGED & TONGUE-TIED; SHOUTING] I've never felt pink in my life! Cleaner! I never starch my lobster! You were the one who bleached my germs--....You said--....You're always trying to-- [HIS BABBLING DISSOLVES INTO GRUNTS BEFORE HE FINALLY REGAINS CONTROL. HE SPEAKS ONLY AFTER THE LAST TITTER IN THE AUDIENCE DIES. THEN, CALMLY:] McGee?
FIBBER: Yes?
LaTRIVIA: I believe I've stumbled on a way to lose those few pounds in a hurry, and possibly a great deal more.
FIBBER: How, old hat?
LaTRIVIA: I'll forego my evening meal altogether. Instead, I'll just drop over here and sit with you for a short spell. Because five minutes with you [NOT LOUD BUT WITH FERVOR] is a belly full! Good night!
SOUND: DOOR SLAM
FIBBER: [HE RUNS THESE TWO SENTENCES TOGETHER:] Kiddo, I'll be one surprised idio-centric if that carnival's still in town by the time--I wish people'd stop bothering us....Dadtrat the dadtratted.

MOLLY: Now what, McGee?
 FIBBER: I had my billfold a minute ago.
 MOLLY: We better find it quick if we want some entertainment tonight.
 SOUND: DOORBELL
 FIBBER: Now who? I'm gonna take out that doorbell.
 MOLLY: Come in!
 SOUND: DOOR OPENS
 MOLLY: It's Mr. Old Timer! Hi, Old Timer. Please come in.
 OLD TIMER: [JOLLY] Front and center, kids. You folks gettin' ready to go out?
 MOLLY: Yes, Old Timer. We're going to the carnival.
 FIBBER: That's right, Old Timer. So unless you're delivering a telegram, kindly step to one side while we toot by.
 MOLLY: Himself and I made the mistake of looking through some old scrap books tonight. Next thing we knew we were buggy for something to do, practically.
 OLD TIMER: Well then, what's holdin' ya up?
 FIBBER: Can't find my billfold. That and we've had more callers tonight than a kid with a new box of crayons.
 OLD TIMER: [LAUGHS] That's pretty good, Johnny. But that ain't the way I heerd it. One fella says t'other fella, Saaayy, he sez, knew a brewer once who drowned in a vat of beer. Too bad, sez t'other fella. His wife must've taken it pretty hard. She did, sez the first fella--'til she found out he'd climbed out four different times to use the restroom. [LAUGHS] Well, gotta run, kids.
 MOLLY: Why the rush, Old Timer?
 OLD TIMER: [DOWNCAST] Lost my place. So long!
 SOUND: DOOR CLOSES
 FIBBER: I oughta padlock that door, someone oughta. If that don't work--
 MOLLY: I know someone who hasn't been over tonight.
 FIBBER: Hah! Who?
 MOLLY: Wallace Wimple and Mrs. Uppington.
 FIBBER: That's some-two, Molly, not some-one. Watch your grammar....You heard about Wimple, didn't you?
 MOLLY: No. What about him?
 FIBBER: He's down in Bolivia at the International Bird-Watcher's Convention.
 MOLLY: Good old Mr. Wimple and his birds--and his bird book. Did he take Mrs. Wimple along?
 FIBBER: No. She wanted to go, but Wimp said they had 32 species of condor down there, and one more buzzard would upset the balance of nature. [MOLLY LAUGHS] If he'd have said it to her face she'd have lowered his [FRANTIC]....Hey! O'migosh, Molly! Lookit the time!
 MOLLY: Oh, goodness!
 FIBBER: Let's get goin'! Where's my billfold? Where's my blue cardigan? Where's my--?
 MOLLY: Think, dearie. Where'd you last put them?
 FIBBER: Where's my soft-soled shoes? Oh, I know where I put 'em. [OFF] They're right here in the hall closet. I'll just open the door--
 MOLLY: McGee! Don't open that door now!

SOUND: A CASCADE OF STUFF & JUNK, ENDING WITH A COWBELL.
MOLLY REACTS]

FIBBER: Gotta clean out that closet one of these days. I'll do it when we get back.

MOLLY: You really should remember to clean out that closet.

FIBBER: Are you kidding? Why, that's our gold mine, baby. It's got more character than Mortimer Snerd and Mrs. Nussbaum combined. Might as well ask Jack Benny to give up his Maxwell.

MOLLY: He tried that once--offered it to the scrap drive during the war. Uncle Sam refused it on the grounds it'd be helping the enemy. [FIBBER LAUGHS]

MUSIC: SONG #3--THE KING'S MEN: "BLUE SHADOWS ON THE TRAIL" (2:25)

MOLLY: Try calling Myrt one last time, McGee.

FIBBER: Okay, hand me the phone.

BOOMER: [NO DOOR OPENING OR CLOSING HERE: BOOMER JUST APPEARS. HE TALKS OUT OF THE SIDE OF HIS MOUTH, AND USES EXAGGERATED POLITENESS, ALA W.C. FIELDS. HE BARELY TOLERATES FIBBER. COMING ON:] Ah, good day, McGees.

MOLLY: Goodness, Mr. Boomer! Where'd you come from? I didn't hear you come in.

BOOMER: Saw the lights were dim and thought you might be away, er--yaaas, fancy meetin' you two here....I just blew into town. Swept in on a gentle breeze. A sudden gust, actually.

MOLLY: You sure do move quietly, Mr. Boomer. And you can stop wiping your feet on that imaginary doormat. You're already in.

BOOMER: Yaas, in my business you gotta keep moving. I float on the current, m'dear, and leave on the Zephyr. Tonight, at 10:15 sharp.

FIBBER: Just wafting through, Boomer?

BOOMER: That's right, Gormless. Ah, on the subject of drafts, Molly, you wouldn't happen to have a beverage for a thirsty skedaddler, would you?

MOLLY: I'm afraid we're fresh out, Mr. Boomer. Would you settle for a glass of lemonade instead?

BOOMER: I certainly would not, but your hospitality touches me [ASIDE]--right here....

FIBBER: What's this about you catching the Zephyr tonight, Boomer? You taking a late jumper somewhere?

BOOMER: Y'might say that, Satchel-Face. Been called away on urgent business. I'm closing the deal tomorrow, lock, stock and barrel--Bottom....Carolina beckons.

FIBBER: Which one, North or South?

BOOMER: North-South--what's the difference?

FIBBER: Oh, about 90 miles! [LAUGHS] Get it, Molly? He sez Carolina, I sez which one, North or South? He sez, What's the dif, and I sez--

BOOMER: Tain't funny, Fiddle-Face.

FIBBER: Aw, pshaw.

BOOMER: Confidentially, Wetwash, it's neither north nor south. It's Carolina Snavelly, mi amoré.

MOLLY: Ah, romance.

BOOMER: She's wearing a veil and a white dress with a long train.

MOLLY: Oh, what a lovely picture comes to mind. You wouldn't happen to have a picture of her, would you?

BOOMER: Let me see, I was looking at her photo just the other day. Where is that pho-to? Should be here someplace. Pho-to....pho-to....A cat's-eye marble, memento of my childhood. Won't need that anymore. [AS HE GOES THROUGH HIS POCKETS HE THROWS EACH ITEM OVER HIS SHOULDER]

~~SOUND:~~ SLIDE WHISTLE DOWN, MARBLE DROPS

BOOMER: I was the only kid on the block with a loaded marble. [THE MCGEES LAUGH] Don't laugh--it put me through grades one through four....What's this? A puppet. Won this in a crooked card game--no strings attached.

~~SOUND:~~ SLIDE WHISTLE, PUPPET DROPS

BOOMER: Long stick of licorice. In case some hungry little shaver asks for a handout.

~~SOUND:~~ SLIDE WHISTLE, LICORICE DROPS

MOLLY: Why, that's kind of you, Mr. Boomer, to keep licorice handy for a downtrodden child.

BOOMER: Your sentiment touches me, m'dear, but kindness has nothing to do with it. If a downtrodden child ever puts the bite on me, I'll whip the little deadbeat....Where's that pho-to? Ah, fingernail file--for filing nails. Also iron bars and municipal bracelets.

~~SOUND:~~ SLIDE WHISTLE, NAIL FILE DROPS

BOOMER: Whoops! Might need that again some day.

~~SOUND:~~ SLIDE WHISTLE UP

BOOMER: Thank you. And a check for a short beer. Well, well, no pho-to. Imagine that!

MOLLY: So when are you and Carolina eloping, Mr. Boomer?

BOOMER: Who said anything about eloping?

MOLLY: Didn't you say Carolina's waiting for you?

BOOMER: That she is. She's waitin' in Florida. I'm highballin' it for Oregon.

MOLLY: But if she's waiting for you in Florida, why are you going to Oregon?

BOOMER: Because she's waitin' for me in Florida! Are you deaf, woman? She'll never get that horse collar on me! No sir....Well, can't keep the train waiting! I must be off! [GOING AWAY] Good day, children! [NO DOOR CLOSE]

MOLLY: He must be off if he thinks Carolina won't chase him down and unbreach that promise he made.

FIBBER: She can't be much of a "catch" herself, chasing after a grifter with a fourth grade education. On second thought, Molly, with Boomer in the neighborhood, maybe I better not de-bell the doorbell.

MOLLY: [LAUGHS] Settle down, McGee. Everyone's been over who's coming over, with the exception of--

~~SOUND:~~ DOORBELL

FIBBER: Visitors, visitors!

MOLLY: And unless I'm mistaken, that's him now. Come in!

~~SOUND:~~ DOOR OPENS

MOLLY: Why, it's Doctor Gamble! Hello, Doctor. Do come in.

GAMBLE: Hello, Molly. What a sight you are for sore eyes.
And McGee. What a sight you are.

FIBBER: Greetings, Iron Hat.

GAMBLE: Haven't seen you in several bleak nights, McGee.

FIBBER: It's been a blissful ten thousand weeks for us
too, Baggy.

MOLLY: McGee, don't talk that way to the Doctor.

GAMBLE: That's all right, Molly. I enjoy watching Dribble
Puss drool. Sarcasm is a healthy sign. It proves
he's still as witty as when those shoes and shirt
he's wearing were in style.

FIBBER: Ain't got time to trade insults with you, Adipose.
I and Molly are goin' to the carnival tonight.

MOLLY: Yes, and if we don't clear out pretty soon we're
liable to miss it. Want to come along, Doctor?

GAMBLE: Thanks, Molly, but I've got an emergency call to
make.

MOLLY: Good heavens! Anyone we know?

GAMBLE: Just across the street, in fact. But first I'm on
my way over to Mort Toops, to borrow some tools.
This is a special case.

MOLLY: Who is it?

GAMBLE: The old fossil, the veteran side show attraction.
In the circus, I believe they're called specialty
acts.

FIBBER: In sawdust parlance, Custard Muscle, they're
called "junk solos."

GAMBLE: Junk isn't the word for it. This guy eats
anything--razor blades, glass, hospital food--
stuff no human would dare consume. Last year I
removed a light bulb and some nails from his
stomach. He swallowed an 8-penny nail his 6-penny
stomach couldn't digest.

MOLLY: Goodness! That must have been an expensive
operation.

GAMBLE: Not at all. It cost him just sixteen cents.

MOLLY: Sixteen cents? For major surgery?

GAMBLE: That's all. While I was in there I removed three
indian-head nickels and a 1909-S VDB penny that'd
been down there since 1910. That was my fee. It
more than covered expenses.

FIBBER: [LAUGHS] You're talking about Gulpo, the Human
Garbage Disposal.

GAMBLE: That's the guy. He's got a cast iron stomach.

FIBBER: Well for Pete's sake, Doc, tell us about the light
bulb he swallowed.

GAMBLE: Not much to tell. His old circus routine was
simple: for a buck he ate a 100-watt bulb. For
two bucks he ate a 200-watt bulb. And for
three bucks he bolted the three-course meal.

MOLLY: What's the three-course meal, I'm afraid.

GAMBLE: That's the three-way bulb.

FIBBER; At least he didn't have to worry about gaining
weight on that light diet. [LAUGHS] Get it? I said
Gulp will never get corpulent wolfing incandescent
calories because--

GAMBLE: Tain't funny, Smallbore.

FIBBER: Aw pshaw.

GAMBLE: Each year with Gulpo it's some new gastric disorder. I've never had a patient that bellyached as much as him.

FIBBER: And when it comes to bellies, Lobster Pot, you oughta know. You're hiding four or five under that shiny bib you call a vest, ain'tcha?

GAMBLE: [ANGERED] If I wasn't in such a rush tonight, Bucket Ears, I'd--

FIBBER: You'd what, Pillbox?

MOLLY: Boys, boys! Don't get carried away.

FIBBER: Aw, he makes me tired.

GAMBLE: As I was saying, I'm operating on Gulpo again tonight. Mort Toops offered to loan me his hacksaw.

FIBBER: Hacksaw?

GAMBLE: [GOING AWAY] Yes, hacksaw. Gotta run. Be seein' you.

FIBBER: Hey, waitaminnit. Doc, come back!

MOLLY: Good heavens, Doctor, what're you gonna do with a hacksaw?

GAMBLE: [OFF] I thought I told you.

FIBBER: Told us what?

GAMBLE: About Gulpo--he's got a cast iron stomach!

MOLLY: My word!

FIBBER: My gosh!

GAMBLE: My exit! So Long!

SOUND: DOOR SLAM

WILCOX: [HE'S FAR GONE IN LIQUOR] The McGees will be back in a moment. Ninety percent of the women in America wax their floors [HIC] because it makes their homes more beautiful. And more of those women use JENSEN'S SELF-POLISHING GLO-GHOUL...GLOP than all other brands of floor wax combined. Why? Because there's no other GLOP quite like JENSEN'S. And Jensen oughta know--he's been pickled on this stuff since Coolidge. So ladies [LOUD BELCH], if you've got dull floors, or if you jus' wanna get dizzy as a coot like ol' Jensen, knock back a coupla quarts o' GLOP. Coupla raw eggs with that make yer gizzard sit up and bark! Yer floors will have a rich, mellow glow, too. They really won't, but in your condition, who cares? Don't forget now [HIC]--ask for JENSEN'S SHELF-GALLOPING WHUZZIT. While yer at it, pick up a six-pack of their SLUDGE REMOVER. We're talking kosher mash here! No rubbing, no barfing. So, bottom's up! And if I don't see you next week [BELCH], what dif'rence does it make?

SOUND: EXAGGERATED CHUG-A-LUGGING, MAN'S GROAN, BODY HITS FLOOR

MUSIC: BRING UP THEME

MOLLY: [A CALM ATMOSPHERE] You never did tell me about you and Nittany in Far Rockaway, McGee.

FIBBER: Shucks, Molly, that was half an hour ago. Who can remember that far back?

MOLLY: And we never did get to see the carnival tonight, either.

FIBBER: Naw. Place was closed tighter than a drum by the time we got there. Anyway, we had more clown acts and shills right here in our living room than I bet they had.

MOLLY: [LAUGHS] With neighbors like ours, who needs carnivals. Or even vaudeville?

FIBBER: [LAUGHS] Yep. For that matter, who needs neighbors?

MOLLY & FIBBER: [BEAT. IN UNISON:] We do.

FIBBER: Good night.

MOLLY: Good night, all.

MUSIC: ORCHESTRA. BRING DOWN BEHIND:

WILCOX: [PUTTING THE BEST FACE ON HIS INEBRIATION] Thish is Harley Walcott speaking for the makers of JENSEN'S WAX and JENSEN'S POLISH SHOE GLUE, reminding you all to be with ush nex' time.... Thish izza Irrational Network.

SOUND: WACKY COWBELL-SLIDE WHISTLE RENDITION OF NETWORK CHIMES

NARA'S LIBRARY CATALOGS

To obtain catalogs of what is available to members from the various club libraries, please write to the librarians listed below and enclose the price of the catalog.

CASSETTE CATALOG

The listing of the 20,000 shows in the cassette library is \$13.00 (checks payable to NARA). For a copy please contact Barry Hill, Route 1, Box 197, Belpre, OH 45714.

REEL-TO-REEL CATALOG

The catalog of the 15,000 shows available in our reel-to-reel library costs \$18.00 (make checks out NARA). They can be obtained from Scott Jones, 4741 East Grant Ave. Fresno, CA 93702.

SCANFAX CATALOG

A list of the various program series that are available in our new SCANFAX cassette library is available for \$1.00 and a self addressed stamped envelope. You can then request program titles for those series that are of interest to you. Send your requests to Don Aston, P.O. Box 1392, Lake Elsinore, CA 92532.

PRINTED MATERIALS CATALOG

The printed materials library currently has three catalogs ready, the book catalog (407 books), the script catalog (228 scripts), and the catalog of logs (29 logs). To receive all of these, please send ten 32 cent stamps to Bob Sabon, 308 West Oraibi Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85027.

An interviewer once asked Marilyn Monroe if she had indeed posed for photographs with nothing on. "Oh, goodness no," the sex goddess replied wide-eyed. "I had the radio on."



THE NATIONAL
LUM & ABNER[®]
SOCIETY

CONVENTION REPORT

by
Jim Snyder

For this, my first visit to a Lum and Abner convention, I spent three days driving to Mena, Arkansas from Phoenix. Mena is located in an area of heavy forests and very high hills. Pretty countryside. On the way I visited an archaeological site, about 50 miles from Mena, where they have uncovered evidence of the Vikings exploring the area more than 700 years before Columbus. I got checked into the convention motel in the middle of Friday afternoon and then since I didn't see any other convention people I decided to drive out to the "Jot 'em Down Store" in Pine Ridge, about 20 miles away. This is where the action of the popular radio series took place. About twenty convention goers were already there. I stayed on for a while after everyone else left and had a very informative conversation with one of the present owners of the Jot 'em Down Store, Kathryn Stucker. The Stuckers have turned the place into an excellent museum about the Lum and Abner show. The convention wasn't to start until Saturday, but the couple dozen people that were here a day early went up in the mountains to a state park lodge for dinner.

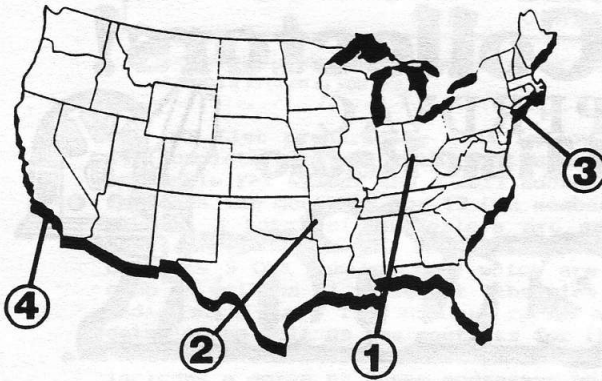
Saturday morning there was a 2½ hour session. The movie "Partners in Time" was shown and there were presentations by several speakers who talked about the Lum and Abner Show and its stars. It was a standing room only crowd. There was no program in the afternoon and people were encouraged to go out and visit Pine Ridge. Since I had been there the day before I stayed behind and visited at great length with NARA members Tom McConnell and Ted Davenport along with dealer Ron Bowser, all friends from many years of assorted conventions.

Saturday evening there was a two hour program. First was a tribute to Lou Crosby, the Lum and Abner announcer. This involved his two daughters, Cathy Lee Crosby (best known from the "That's Incredible" TV show) and Linda Lou Crosby who is with PBS. Also on the program was Forrest Owen, formerly of WXYZ in Detroit and the man in charge of the Alka Seltzer sponsorship of Lum and Abner. The evening concluded with an original Lum and Abner play featuring these three guests.

This convention is the only one that I know of that has a free admission. No charge at all! Great credit goes to the organizations secretary Tim Hollis for putting the whole thing together. Many thanks to him and the other "zekatif" officers.

The Lum and Abner convention is an annual affair held in Mena on the fourth Saturday of June each year. For further information on this event please see the "convention" page in each issue of the NARA NEWS.

CONVENTIONS:



MARK YOUR _____ CALENDAR _____

The various conventions around the country are outstanding places to enjoy old time radio. All provide re-creations of old radio shows and workshops with some of the stars of old time radio. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to add a new dimension to your hobby.

We list dates here as soon as we receive them so that you can plan ahead.

- ① **THE 11TH ANNUAL OLD TIME RADIO AND NOSTALGIA CONVENTION** is scheduled for April 18 and 19, 1997 at the Marriott Inn on the north side of Cincinnati, Ohio, just off I-75. The person to contact for information is Bob Burchette, 10280 Gunpowder Road, Florence, Kentucky 41042. Phone: (606) 282-0333.
- ② **THE 13TH ANNUAL NATIONAL LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY CONVENTION** will be held on June 28, 1997 in Mena, Arkansas, which is located about twenty miles from Pine Ridge, where the action in the popular radio series took place. The Best Western Lime Tree Inn is the convention hotel. This event is held on the 4th Saturday in June each year. For information please contact Tim Hollis, #81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, Alabama 35062.
- ③ **THE 22ND ANNUAL FRIENDS OF OLD TIME RADIO CONVENTION** will be October 23 thru 25, 1997 at the Holiday Inn North at the Newark, New Jersey airport. The hotel is located just off the interstate highway, and for those flying into Newark, the hotel provides free shuttle service back and forth to the airport. Contact person is Jay Hickerson, Box 4321, Hamden, Connecticut 06514. Jay can be reached by phone at (203) 248-2887.
- ④ **THE SPERDVAC CONVENTION** is held each year at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Los Angeles International Airport. The next convention dates are November 7 thru 9, 1997. For those driving the hotel is located on the airport entrance road off I-405. The hotel provides a free shuttle service for those flying. Contact person is Larry Gassman, Box 1163, Whittier, California 90603. He can be reached by phone at (310) 947-9800.

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Fans & Collectors!**
1996 **SPERDVAC**
Old Time Radio



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ALAN YOUNG SHOW
RECREATION

Command Performance
RECREATION

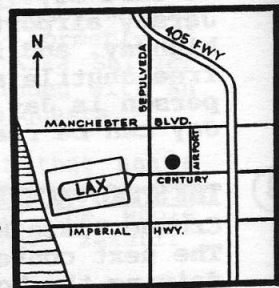
One Man's Family
Tribute

Cavalcade of America
RECREATION

**"ETHEL
and
ALBERT"**
RECREATION

30 Minutes to Curtain
"Aldrich Family"
RECREATION

Crowne Plaza Hotel



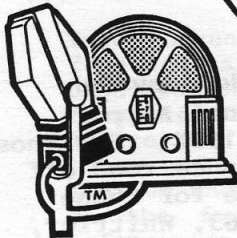
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FOR CONVENTION INFO & REGISTRATION FORM:

SPERDVAC

SOCIETY TO PRESERVE AND ENCOURAGE RADIO DRAMA VARIETY AND COMEDY
P.O. BOX 7177 VAN NUYS, CA 91409
(310) 947-9800

5985 W. Century Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA



PLEASE...NO UNAUTHORIZED OLD RADIO SHOW SALES ALLOWED.

BUY SELL TRADE

NARA CLASSIFIEDS

Non-commercial ads are free to all members. Your ad will be placed in one issue, but you can resubmit it as often as you like.

The OTR List prepared by NARA is now a full 6 pages and contains 140 complete entries, with name, address, telephone numbers, and if available FAX number and e-mail address. This most recent revision includes the contacts for 19 OTR membership clubs and another 9 fan clubs. A total of 44 dealers are set forth including those who sell audio recordings, books, scripts, blank tape, etc. The list contains 9 OTR publications which are not affiliated with any OTR club as well as 27 different libraries, museums, state, and college audio archives. Ten antique radio and historical societies are detailed as well as the contacts for the six annual OTR conventions in the U.S. The OTR Web Site section has been expanded and now includes a dozen of these addresses on the Internet. It costs NARA approximately 70 cents to print and mail each copy and since we only charge \$2 to members, this is not a high-profit item. Nevertheless, as of the 1st of June 1996, we had made \$96 for the prior six months through the sale of these comprehensive lists. To order yours, send \$2.00 in cash or stamps (no checks, please....this item cannot justify a trip to the bank and the post office) to JACK FRENCH, 5137 Richardson Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032-2810. All requests filled same day by return first-class mail. Help us keep this list current by sending your additions and corrections to JACK FRENCH at the above address.

WANTED: Amos and Andy Log. Has anyone created a log for this show and how can I get it? I have many half-hour shows for which I have no date. This hinders my attempts to collect everything available in a systematic fashion. Various dates from catalogs are contradictory and often obviously wrong. Can anyone help? Contact: Richard Rieve, 10029 Mosby Woods Dr., Fairfax, Virginia 22030.

LOOKING FOR OLDER BROADCAST AND RECORDING MICROPHONES. Also, any reel-to-reel tapes with Gene Krupa and/or Buddy Rich, plus any information on Australian-born jazz singer Merle Harris. Jason Matusiak, 55 Downpatrick Cres., Etobicoke, Ont., Canada, M9R 2R8 or call collect (416) 244-2888!

WANTED: Tape copies of any of these programs: SKY BLAZERS w/Capt. Roscoe Turner (1940); ADVENTURES OF CHARLIE LUNG (2/28/48); GUS GRAY: SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT (1930's); O'HARA (w/Jack Moyles); and/or TIMBER TOWN. William Kiddle, 315 Cherrywood Rd., Buffalo Grove, IL 60089.

HELP NEEDED WITH THE FOLLOWING: ☉ Griff Barnett, believed by me to be the "Rexall Family Druggist" on the Phil Harris/Alice Faye show. What other credits did he have? What was his relationship with Rexall? Particularly interested in hearing from any relatives. ☉ Has the contribution of Fibber McGee and Molly and Johnson's Wax to the WWII effort been written up, even years ago? I believe it is without precedent or success and I want to work on it but not reinvent some wheel. Mickey Smith, School of Pharmacy, University, MS 38677.

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WHAT RADIO WOULD HAVE SOUNDED LIKE BACK THEN IF THEY ONLY HAD THE EQUIPMENT WE HAVE TODAY! A FULL CAST AUDIO PRODUCTION OF:

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by

David Bischoff and John DeChance

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- Make...Save...Invest your money
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UNCONDITIONAL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

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- Get out of debt forever
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- Protect your home
- Lose weight
- Buy more for less money
- Lots, LOTS more

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UNCONDITIONAL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

A TIP OF THE ATWATER DIAL TO....

Dean Case, of Fon du Lac, Wisconsin, for contributions to the cassette library.

Jim Watson who has had to give up serving as librarian for half of our reel-to-reel library. He has held this position for two years, and we appreciate his efforts.

Scott Jones who will continue to serve as librarian for the entire reel-to-reel library. Prior to his taking on this responsibility, a couple of years ago, Scott served as our printed materials librarian. Thank you for your years of work on behalf of NARA, Scott. While we're at it, we should also express our thanks to our other librarians; Barry and Marilyn Hill for the cassette library, and Bob Sabon for the printed materials library. All are doing an outstanding job.

Our paid advertisers in this issue: Cardinal of California and Ziplow Productions. You'll find each of their ads on page 49. They have also purchased ads for our winter issue.

Gene Larson for our centerfold on pages 25 and 26.

Our columnists this time: Frank Bresee, Ray Erlenborn, Jack French, B.J. George, Roger Hill, Henry Hinkel, Bill Murtough, Jack Palmer, Chuck Seeley, Ray Smith, Hal Stephenson, and Ken Weigel. It is these people who make each copy of the NARA NEWS worth while.

Those who have already sent in articles for our winter issue: Frank Bresee (4 articles), B.J. George, Hal Stephenson (5 articles), and Ken Weigel. We appreciate your letting us have these so early.

THANKS TO YOU ALL !!!

DEADLINES:

December 1 for the winter issue.
March 15 for the spring issue.