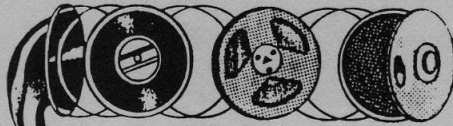
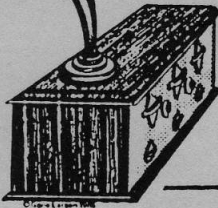


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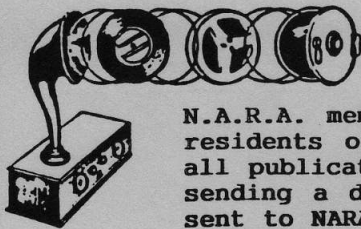
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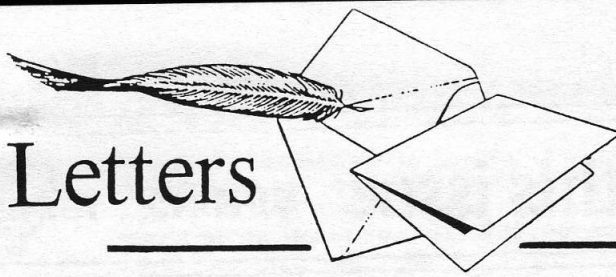
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Letters



from our readers

***EDITOR'S NOTE:** Normally we don't print two letters from the same person in the same issue, but because of that fall printing delay the winter issue was already at the printers before many of you received that fall one. So, because of that we are including two letters from Jack Palmer, this time. The first is in response to the fall issue and the second is about the winter one.*

Just a few lines to let you know I enjoyed the fall issue very much. It seems that you have a wide coverage and discuss a lot of material that is not covered in any other OTR publication. I can truthfully say that I await each issue with pleasure and read every word.

Which brings up an important point. The delay in the distribution of that issue brought home to me how much the magazine is a part of our organization. I have belonged to NARA for many years, and have pushed it to new OTR fans, because I believe it is the only OTR club that has made a great effort to become a national organization. All the other OTR organizations I belong to are local in nature, even though they accept members from the entire country.

However, the only real connector to this nationwide membership is the NARA NEWS. If it disappears, there will be nothing left to hold the group together, except the tape library. Since many members seldom, or never, use the tape library, the lack of the NARA NEWS would eventually create a loss of membership. It is unlikely that the NARA NEWS would ever disappear, but there was a time when it appeared on an infrequent basis. I sincerely hope that will never happen again.

Again, congratulations on another great issue. And it was worth the wait! I just hope the wait isn't necessary again.

Jack Palmer
Battle Creek, Michigan

Just finished reading your winter issue of NARA NEWS and want to compliment Chuck Seeley on his great article. The article hit very close to home as I have gone through almost every step he mentioned in his story, including carrying heavy boxes of records and books down two flights of stairs to the basement. (I'm not sure if you Arizonians and Californians would even know what a basement is!) Unfortunately, it is a continuing task and you keep going through the same process every few years.

I also found the article "My Son John" very interesting. It seems there is still some hope for radio, if we could just get the message out to enough people. John Pellatt is always interesting, since I'm close enough to Canada where I can pick up CBC broadcasts. I was also interested in his comments on the OTR Digest on the Internet. I hope to get involved in that soon.

Which brings up another point. Do we have enough members who are accessible to the Internet that we could print an Internet address file of members? It would be a quick, inexpensive way for many members to contact one another. Just a thought.

All in all another good issue. I just hope you can sustain this level for the magazine while you are off gallivanting all over the world!

Jack Palmer
Battle Creek, Michigan

I just received a copy of the NARA OTR SOURCE LIST and I thought I would comment on same. The information contained within, in my opinion, would be most helpful to anybody who has an interest in old time radio. I know it will be to me.

I must also tell you how much I thoroughly enjoyed the series "Fighting Words: Name-Calling on Radio in WWII" by Ken Weigel. This was indeed a fine interesting series on a subject seldom touched upon in old time radio publications.

Gene Dench
Hyde Park, Massachusetts

EDITOR'S NOTE: The OTR SOURCE LIST that Gene refers to is the one offered by Jack French on the classified ads page in this issue.

I'm enjoying the benefits of NARA membership and found your discussion of the SPERDVAC and Friends of Old Time Radio conventions in NARA NEWS especially helpful. I've yet to attend my first convention but might "go West" on the basis of your critiques and combine the annual SPERDVAC meeting with a visit to my sister-in-law (thus giving my wife an added incentive).

The NARA cassette library, though somewhat uneven in sound quality, is also a great asset which I tap on a regular basis.

Tom van der Voort
Alexandria, Virginia

EDITOR'S NOTE: The various conventions around the country can add a great deal to your enjoyment of the hobby. As we say at the top of the convention page in each issue, we encourage all of you to take advantage of them.

NOTE: The following letter was sent to John Pellatt.

I am writing in response to your article in the winter 1996 issue of NARA NEWS. You have struck an empathetic chord with your statement regarding the RCI closing down this March 1996. Your statement "...One less source for radio drama and comedy and OTR, one less window into a world of ever increasing banality and sameness on the airwaves," is so very, very accurate in today's programming, whether it be radio or television. In the Los Angeles area where I reside there was talk-show type radio shows where some intelligence was in evidence during the give-and-take between caller and the show host. Now all you have is either music or news (the sameness in news or the sameness in music).

You also mentioned a DIRK MAGGS of the BBC RADIO having some measure of success in his RADIO ONE and RADIO FIVE shows getting his youthful audience into listening to the radio. He says, "...if you approach it with an open mind..." I say "more power" to Mr. Maggs if that is do-able in his market survey. But here in the Los Angeles area I would say that all you hear when you drive around is the incessant and repetitious "boom-ba-boom-ba-boom-ba..." ad nauseum emanating from the cars of many youthful drivers which are equipped with the deep bass speakers and the volume turned on high so you cannot help but hear that mindless trash. I dare say that these youths are not the type that Mr. Maggs would refer to as having "...an open mind..."

Anthony Chan
Monterey Park, California

JOHN PELLATT'S REPLY: Thank you Anthony very much for your thoughtful observations. Radio today for the most part is a creatively anemic medium. But radio drama and comedy will never completely die as an art form as long as listeners like you and I continue to encourage producers like Dirk Maggs to excel in their craft.

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 the most popular shows on the air for more than ten years was Fibber McGee & Molly starring Jim Jordan and his wife Marian. Jim once told me that he and Marian broke into radio in 1926 or 1926 (he didn't actually remember which year). They were visiting Jim's brother in Chicago and on a dare, went down to the local radio station and auditioned.

He went on to say, "In those days radio stations had people on the street dragging anyone into the studio to be on the air. When we won the audition, we just did our singing act on radio. We never talked on the stage, just sang. I guess we never knew we could be funny until we got on the air. Marian and I didn't make much money at first, only \$10 a show. We had to continue doing our Vaudeville shows in order to make ends meet."

In 1927 the Jordan's radio career began to look up and by 1931 they met and teamed up with Don Quinn, the wonderful writer who stayed with them for the rest of their radio career.

Their first important program was a series entitled "Smackout" and it was heard five days a week on the NBC Network. Jim played the part of Luke Grey, owner of a neighborhood store that was always just "smackout of everything." The Johnson Wax Company bought "Smackout" and sponsored it for a time.

Later the Johnson people were looking for a night-time show and decided to give the Jordans a try. Jim said, "We had done some special night-time shows and were certain we could do a half hour weekly program. At first we were going to call it 'Marian and Jim Jordan,' but Jack Lewis, the manager of the agency that handled Johnson's Wax said he thought it would be nice if the main character could be kind of a Luke Grey type, but have a name that sounded like a liar. The next day when we had our meeting, Don Quinn brought in a small strip of paper, and on it he had written the two words, 'Fibber McGee.'"

That was the beginning of the "Fibber McGee & Molly Show." When it first went on the air, Jim insisted that they have a 26 week contract instead of the usual 13 weeks. He felt that it would take about six months to develop the characters and gather a loyal radio following.

During that first year the Fibber McGee & Molly Show was on NBC on Monday nights opposite the popular CBS Lux Radio Theatre. Sometimes it worked out very well. If the radio audience didn't like the Lux

drama, they would tune into the McGee's. And when they tuned in they liked what they heard. In 1939 the program moved into it's Tuesday night spot where it remained for fourteen years. It was broadcast "live" from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m., Pacific Time, from the NBC studios at Sunset and Vine in Hollywood.

In November 1979 Jim presented Fibber on a Golden Days of Radio special in Sacramento, and just a few weeks later was a guest on my AFRTS program. Here is a portion of the script from the last show:



Frank Bresee interviews Jim Jordan on PBS' "Good Old Days of Radio" program in 1975.

FIBBER: Let's talk about the time I was in the seesaw business, back in Sioux City, for the---

FRANK: You? In the seesaw business?

FIBBER: You mean I never toldja about when I sold seesaws for the Seesaw Company, that old man Seymour had in Sioux City.

FRANK: You never did!

FIBBER: Well, Frank I will. You see, I was a senior seesaw salesman for the Seymour Seesaw Company and I sold saws on the side. And when I'd start out with a sample seesaw and a sack full of saws, I'd sell the other saw salesmen silly...because I was as saucy a seesaw salesman as the other saw salesmen ever saw. I could sell you a two-buck bucksaw that would out-saw any bucksaw you ever saw a young buck saw with, and for six bucks I'd sell you a sawbuck to saw with the bucksaw on. I sold so many saw and seesaws that I got sawsick from saw-sellin' and seasick for see-saw sellin' and between the saw-sellin and the seesaws and the seasick seesaw sales and the saw-sick saw salesman and the bucksaws and the sawbucks and---

DOOR CHIME!



THE CALIFORNIA REPORT

By
Don Aston



NARA is receiving many requests for lists of material in the SCANFAX collection. We are trying to answer the requests as fast as we can. Some requests are for a listing of all the material in the collection. As of this NARA News issue, we have only made a slight dent in the 80,000 plus reels that we have. Each reel usually contains one half-hour show. That is approximately 80,000 shows. There are duplicates. Transferring the SCANFAX tape to cassette has to be done in real time. If NARA could transfer each show to cassette and do it in real time taking about 45 minutes to set up and transfer, it would take approximately 60,000 hours to transfer the whole collection to cassette. 60,000 hours is 2500 days and that almost 7 years. These figures reflect working 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Right now we are working on NIGHTBEAT, RICHARD DIAMOND, MR. MOTO, and BIG TOWN. We know what is supposed to be in the collection, but we have to really search for some of the shows. They were not shipped in the same archival boxes and many times, one or two shows turn up in boxes containing something very different. Incidentally, each archival box contains about 40 individually boxed 7 inch reels. Surprises, both good and disappointing, occur regularly. One of the big searches right now is for the March, 1949 BIG TOWN shows. They are in the collection, but we just don't know where. They were not with the rest of the BIG TOWN reels.

We are presently able to allow members to borrow the following series that have been transferred to cassette. NARA doesn't necessarily have all the shows in any listed series. The NARA lists usually contain only shows in the SCANFAX collection. If a show is added to the collection from another source to help fill in a series, it is noted on each list.

THE MAGNIFICENT MONTAGUE w/Monte Wooley -----	44 shows
THE HALLS OF IVY w/Ronald Colman -----	28 shows
THE PRIVATE FILES OF REX SAUNDERS w/Rex Harrison -	14 shows
WHITEHALL ONE TWO ONE TWO -----	21 shows
THE MARRIAGE w/Jessica Tandy, Hume Cronin -----	24 shows
TALES OF THE VALIANT -----	10 shows
CHRISTOPHER LONDON -----	2 shows
THE FORTY MILLION -----	4 shows
THE 6 SHOOTER w/James Stewart -----	38 shows
DIMENSION X -----	47 shows
X MINUS ONE -----	122 shows
IT'S HIGGINS SIR -----	13 shows
RADIO CITY PLAYHOUSE -----	60 shows
DARK FANTASY -----	29 shows
THE FORD THEATER -----	24 shows
NEWS from 1937-41, a sampling -----	28 shows

1 list is \$1.00. Each additional list is \$.25. Make all checks payable to NARA. Do not make them out to me. Anytime you order material from any NARA Library, all payments must be made to payable to NARA.

By this time next year, we will hopefully have a lot more of the material available to borrow. Series that will be started soon are HIGH ADVENTURE, DRAGNET, RUDY VALLEE, THE FALCON, HENRY ALDRICH, and SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE.

A project that takes a lot of organizing is NEWS. We have Pre-World War II news and World War II both Pacific and European Theaters. We have post war news. There is lots of Space Program coverage. We do have the Apollo 13 material, at least some of it. There is no organization and we want to put it in some kind of chronological order. Be patient with NARA, We want to do it right the first time and We know that may be an impossible task.

We do need help, but we must be careful how the material is handled. If you would like to volunteer your time, phone or write. Accepting help depends on where and what is to be done as well as what help is offered. Donations of money for cassettes, cassette cases and equipment maintenance is most appreciated.



FROM THE EDITOR



I've abbreviated this column this time to make more room for the "good stuff," but there are a couple of things I would like to mention.

We're delighted to have five writers appearing in the NARA NEWS for the first time, with this issue. We hope that we will be hearing from each of them again in the future. One thing that continues to concern me is the lack of women writers. This is my seventh issue as your editor, and we have yet to receive anything from one of the many women who are members. This wasn't intended to be a "stag" magazine so I hope that some of you will remedy this state of affairs.

Some of you have indicated that you would like to respond directly to some of the writers in the NARA NEWS. Please feel free to send your responses to me and I will be happy to forward them for you.

Coming up in our summer issue is an article by a fantastic sound effects artist, Bob Mott. We know you will enjoy his article.

Please note the changed deadlines for the next three issues of the NARA NEWS as listed inside the back cover.

Finally, I will be attending the Lum and Abner Convention in Arkansas in June and I hope to see some of you there also.

Jim Snyder



AROUND OUR RADIO WORLD



JACK FRENCH

Research into the BOBBY BENSON radio series received a significant boost recently with the discovery of the personal scrapbook of the very first Cowboy Kid, Richard Wanamaker. The on-going project is a cooperative effort of both the Metro Washington OTR Club and the OTR Club of Western New York. In addition to the scrapbook, several historical items concerning the show and its creator, Herbert Rice, have been located by Jerry Collins, the president of the Buffalo Club, by examining the microfilm copies of their local newspaper. Results of Jerry's archival successes will be published later.

The scrapbook discovery came about in the following manner. At my request, Dom Parisi of the Buffalo Club, sent me a list of every family in his area with the surname of Wanamaker. I then wrote each one a form letter (about twelve families in all) and told them I was trying to locate Richard Wanamaker, the child actor who first played BOBBY BENSON in 1932. I also enclosed a copy of my article from "The Illustrated Press" entitled "Bobby Benson: Born in Buffalo" and asked Wanamaker or any of his relatives to telephone me collect.

About four weeks later, I was contacted by Richard Guarnio, who runs a travel agency in Clarence, NY. He told me that his uncle, Richard Wanamaker, was dead but that his widow had given his boyhood scrapbook to Guarnio for safekeeping. This nephew quickly agreed to xerox all the pertinent articles and photographs from the album and send them to me.

I'm still reviewing the package he sent but have already learned that radio's first Cowboy Kid got the role in the fall of 1932 by besting 40 other juvenile auditionees in Buffalo. Wanamaker had the job for 78 episodes broadcast over the 1932-33 season. But in the summer of 1933, CBS moved the production to Manhattan and Billy Hallop took over the role. Wanamaker, who was born January 4, 1921 in Buffalo, was the second of six children. Although he lost his network job in 1933, he quickly picked up another leading role in radio, playing "Jimmy Fenton" in the juvenile mystery, GHOST TRAIN. This series was also written and directed by Herb Rice; it was only a local broadcast and not picked up by any network.



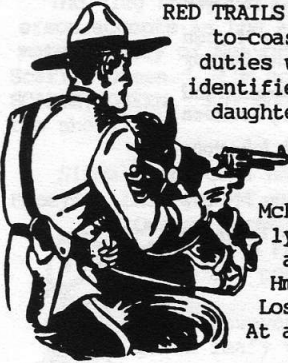
Incidentally, the FOTR Convention in Newark in 1996 will feature a BOBBY BENSON recreation. The last two actors to play the Cowboy Kid (Ivan Cury and Clive Rice) will both be there and we're hoping that Don Knotts will reprise his role as "Windy Wales." Other radio actors, who were not in regular cast but frequently appeared in the show, i.e. Bill Zuckert and Earl George, will also be invited. The writer of the show, who also did some scripts for SUPERMAN and HOUSE OF MYSTERY, Jim Shean, is alive and well in the Los Angeles area and an invitation is going out to him.

Last week I was listening to a bunch of new cassettes I'd bought at the Newark Convention and I came across a series I'd not heard of before: IT'S MURDER, a 1944 summer show on the Blue Network which was sponsored by the National Safety Council. In this mystery series, Rex A. Scott, a retired actor and criminologist, solves homicide cases with the assistance

of his niece, Joan Adams. The episode was nicely done, with crisp writing and fine acting, especially by the woman playing the niece. She turns out to be Joan Alexander and she was also in about 20 soap operas, including ROSE MARY, THIS IS NORA DRAKE, AGAINST THE STORM and YOUNG DOCTOR MALONE.

Miss Alexander had several other prominent (but usually un-credited) roles in popular network shows: "Lois Lane" on SUPERMAN, "Della Street" on PERRY MASON and Major North's assistant on THE MAN FROM G-2. Her other programs included DIMENSION X, THE FALCON, and CORWIN PRESENTS. The quiz show QUICK AS A FLASH had a stock company to perform the weekly dramatic mystery sketch and she was a regular in this group. Quite an impressive career for this versatile radio actress!

One of my continuing research projects is a compilation of all radio series that had a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the lead. I've written a lengthy article on that genre which has been published in "The Illustrated Press" and "Radio Recall." At the Newark Convention, Barbara Watkins of SPERDVAC greeted me and then gave me two reprints of articles from 1935 issues of the magazine "Stand By." Both pieces concerned a series which gets scant mention in all of our standard OTR encyclopedias; it's called RED TRAILS. The May 4th article relates that this series, broadcast coast-to-coast from WLS, was written by Stewart Sterling and the show's musical duties were handled by a band conducted by Graham Harris. The cast was identified as Warren Colston as Sgt. Tim Clone, Arline Blackburn as his daughter, and Alfred Corn as a fellow Mountie.



The second clipping, dated June 15th, has some details that tend to muddy the historical waters. This one announces that Victor McLaglen now heads the cast of RED TRAILS which is broadcast from Hollywood. The article claims that this is the first radio drama enacted by a cast composed entirely of motion picture celebrities. HMMMMMMMM...does this mean NBC not only moved the show from Chicago to Los Angeles but also re-cast the program in the process? Could be.... At any rate, the series only last until mid-July of that year.

I've also uncovered another RCMP show that is even less well documented because it was not a series itself, but one of the dramatic sketches in JOHNNY PRESENTS, a variety show sponsored by Philip Morris. I stumbled on this one while reviewing a program log I had obtained from Jay Hickerson. The format of JOHNNY PRESENTS changed over the years but usually consisted of a one-hour show that was mostly music but containing one dramatic sketch of about 15 minutes. This segment changed regularly, from CITY DESK to PSYCHIC DETECTIVE to THE PERFECT CRIME to NANCY BACON REPORTING. Jay's log entry for the period October to December 1938 has the following entry:

"CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE STORIES by Jack Johnstone.
Constable Don Fast and Mountie Historian T. M.
Longstreth provided information concerning RCMP
cases. Constable Fast appeared on the show."

Constable Don Fast?? That's a phoney name if I ever heard one, right? So I wrote my friend Glenn Wright, the RCMP Staff Historian in Ottawa, and requested any information in their archives on this segment in the JOHNNY PRESENTS series. Wright responded that his Force had not assisted in any way with CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE STORIES however Don Fast was a real Mountie, had retired in 1958, and was still alive at age 84. Wright put me in contact with this retired Mountie who now lives in British Columbia.

My correspondence with this delightful gentleman was very productive. He first joined the RCMP in 1929, but resigned in the Depression of 1935 and went to California where he became a bodyguard for traveling Hollywood starlets. He also did some writing of adventure story magazines and met Floyd Gibbons in Chicago who advised him to try his luck in

New York City. While he was in Manhattan, he was contacted by a scout for the JOHNNY PRESENTS program, was later approved by Jack Johnstone, and signed to a contract as narrator/guest on the show. Fast was paid \$ 100 a week and each program was done live twice, at 7 pm for the East Coast and at 10 pm for the West Coast. Phillip Morris had souvenir programs for each show that they passed out to the studio audience; Fast saved one from each show and had retained them over the years. He gave me the one for September 17th and a portion of it is reproduced below:

Johnny Presents **THE PHILIP MORRIS PROGRAM**
Under the Musical Direction of Russ Morgan

September 17, 1938

1. No Wonder.....Russ Morgan
2. Alabamy Road.....The Swing Fourteen
3. So Help Me.....Russ Morgan
and Beverly
4. My Own.....Floyd Sherman and
The Swing Fourteen
5. THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE.....Jack Johnstone
(Ex-Constable Don Fast—Guest)
6. Lambeth Walk.....Russ Morgan
7. When Day is Done.....The Ensemble

Musical Director.....Russ Morgan
Dramatic Director.....Jack Johnstone
Vocal Director.....Ray Block
Production Director.....Jean Hight
Program Announced by.....Charles O'Connor

Fast's program souvenirs establish that his segment on JOHNNY PRESENTS was on the air from August 23, 1938 to December 3, 1938 so that means Jay's Log is only off by six weeks. Fast later re-joined the RCMP, in 1940, went on to serve an additional 18 years, and he retired from the Force in 1958.

Those of you who are engaged in finding scripts for re-creations know that this is no easy task. That's even more true if you're looking for a script with an equal balance between male and female roles. I recently had to come up with one such script for a teen-age group at a local library. Fortunately I found one; it's called "The Devil's Flower" and it concerns a murder mystery on a small college campus in Virginia. The author, Frank Cunningham, wrote this as a non-royalty play and it includes the proviso that any amateur group may produce this play, including on the air, without permission or royalty payment. He further gives permission to such groups to make any copies needed for their own production.

Counting the announcer, there are ten members in the cast. If you cast a female in the announcer role, which I did, that will make your cast five males and five females. If you wish to involve more people, you can utilize another half-dozen in producing the sound effects. I saved a number of copies of this 9-page script and if you'd like to obtain a copy, send me a buck for postage and I'll mail it to you via first-class. [The Devil's Flower is actually a poisonous insect that resembles a flower.]

If you're among those who like adventure on the high seas, you'll probably agree with me the THE VOYAGE OF THE SCARLET QUEEN is one of the best series that Mutual ever produced. (I know that our editor of this publication doesn't think so.) Many OTR fans appreciate its imaginative plots, great sound effects, exotic settings, and superb acting (including the minor roles played by William Conrad and John Deyner.) People who collect this series know that all 34 episodes, including the 2-2-47 audition with Howard Duff, are in circulation. Mutual aired this series from 7-3-47 until last of February 1948.

There is also one episode of a show called THE LOG OF THE BLACK PARROT which is an identical twin to THE VOYAGE OF THE SCARLET QUEEN. Similarities include the same locale of the stories, a skipper played by Elliot Lewis, a first mate, Red Gallagher, played by Ed Max, and a script by Gil Doud. The minor differences: 1) the Black Parrot is a schooner, the Scarlet Queen was a ketch, 2) the Parrot's skipper is Matthew Kincaid, the Queen's is Philip Carney, 3) theme music is scored by two different composers, and 4) instead of Mutual, it's CBS.

The "log entry" for the one episode of BLACK PARROT is May 6, 1950, which Jay Hickerson accepts as the actual date of this show, which he terms an audition in his Ultimate History of Network Programming. Jay also says this show "led to the Voyage of the Scarlet Queen." I'm not sure that's possible, if BLACK PARROT comes two years after SCARLET QUEEN. Any one of our readers know the true relationship and sequence of these two shows?

Since we're on a nautical theme, let's segue into an ancient mariner, our beloved Popeye. Last year I was surprised to see this strong-armed sailor on the back of a Quaker Oatmeal box, proclaiming, "I eats me Oatmeal and I'm stronger than steel. I'm Popeye, the Quaker Man." This is almost blasphemy to all of us who are positive that spinach is the sole source of Popeye's power.

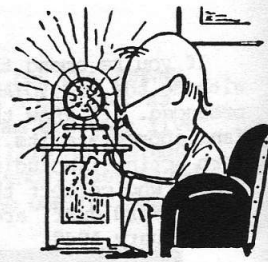


However it appears that the King Features sea-hero is faithful to that green leafy vegetable only in the comic books and feature cartoons. Just listen to any one of the eight episodes of POPEYE THE SAILOR, which was on network radio for about 3½ years starting in 1935. Wheatena cereal was the sponsor and they not only forced Popeye to plug the breakfast food at the beginning and end of every show, they also, with unabashed hucksterism, wrote the product into the storyline. In an episode about "Jack and the Beanstalk", L'il Sweetpea feeds his Wheatena to his geranium plant and it grows to the sky. Later in the same show, Popeye has to down two bowls of Wheatena to build up his "muskels" to fight the Giant.

Despite the heavy-handedness of its sponsor, the POPEYE show had some very talented cast people as regulars. Bernard Gorcey, the father of "Dead End Kids" Leo and David Gorcey, was in some of the earliest shows. Olive Oyl was played by, among others, Mae Questel. Two of Popeye's arch-enemies, Bluto and Sinbad, were both the voice of Jackson Beck, that great announcer on SUPERMAN and MARK TRAIL.

John Dunning is sending out final drafts to various researchers around the country of sections of his new edition of "Tune In Yesterday." John sent me his segments on the shows I'm most familiar with, including BOBBY BENSON AND THE B-BAR-B RIDERS, all the FBI shows, the female crime fighters (CANDY MATSON, et al) and INFORMATION PLEASE. John still has no accurate timetable that would pinpoint a publication date for this eagerly-awaited book. Our editor, Jim Snyder, spoke to Frank Buxton at the SPERDVAC convention and got the same answer regarding the next edition of "The Big Broadcast." All either one of them can say now is a "gestimate" of sometime in 1996 or 1997. Most OTR fans hope it's sooner, not later. Perhaps by the time this column sees print in NARA NEWS, we'll have some more specific publication dates for both books and their distribution of both volumes to the OTR buyers will be on track.

REFLECTIONS



by Charles Sexton

WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER VACATION

Actually it wasn't summer at all, but more like April or May 1946. I was in the second grade. My brother had just gotten out of the Army and offered to take my mother, my grandmother and me on a motor-trip to New York City, Philadelphia and Washington D.C., all in the space of six days! Being from a small town in Indiana, such news in the 1940s was like being told we were about to go to the moon. One of the reasons the trip stands out so vividly, even some 50 years later, and the reason for this article, is because that's when I saw my one and only live radio broadcast.

We drove all night, but I was asleep most of the time and was told by my mother that I missed seeing the mountain tunnels through which the Pennsylvania Turnpike meandered. We arrived first in New York and took in many of the tourist sites during the two days we were there, including the Statue of Liberty and the Empire State Building. But the highlight, for me, was a trip to Radio City Music Hall where we saw a presentation of the radio program, "Cavalcade of America." I don't really know how that got on our itinerary, but I suspect it was because it was free! Remember I said we drove all night to get there - there was a reason, and it wasn't to see the tunnels lit up at night!

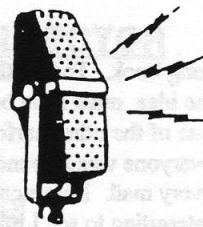
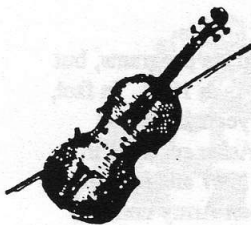
This particular "Cavalcade" show starred Geraldine Fitzgerald, a motion picture actress of the era. I don't know if I remember her name because it was rather unusual or because I saw a picture she starred in with Alan Ladd shortly after we arrived back home and the association just clicked. In any event I recall clearly she was the featured performer. (The picture, by the way, was O.S.S., a WW II spy thriller.)

I don't recall the title of the show broadcast that night, but it was a drama. My most vivid memories of the show are the "applause" signs, used to signal the audience when to respond during the course of the show, and the sound effects. I know I was amazed to witness the tricks of the trade the sound effects men and the actors used to guide the radio listener through his or her imagination. Two things in particular stand out for me: one, a scene during a rainstorm with the rain consisting of a shower being operated on the stage and thunder claps supplied by flexible sheets of tin, and the other a baby crying with the cries coming from an adult woman. I'm still fascinated today by the sound effects portion of recreations of old shows put on at such gatherings as the Cincinnati Old Time Radio and Nostalgia Convention.

In those days we heard "Cavalcade of America" at 7:00 p.m., Mondays, over WMAQ, Chicago, and even though most of the shows were over my eight-year old head at the time, "Cavalcade" became a regular listening habit with me for several years.

Although I have many examples of this program in my collection and am aware of many more available, I've yet to run across the one I saw presented live so many years ago. But it will eventually show up, I'm convinced of that.

One final note. My wife and I recently took in a show presented by the University of Dayton called "1940's Radio", a vehicle which, I understand, has been around for awhile. For those who may not be familiar with the show, it's the recreation of an hour-long variety show, similar to those actually broadcast during the era, with additional dialogue among the actors taking place before and after the "broadcast" portion of the show. It's a fun experience and probably as close as we'll ever get to recapturing the feel and sounds of a true radio experience.



FROM
JACK PALMER

EARLY COUNTRY MUSIC SHOW TRANSCRIPTIONS

At one time or another almost every early country musician performed on the radio. It was one of the few ways to become known beyond their own back yard. Even though a local radio station's broadcast may not cover a large area, it still put their name before the public and increased their chances to draw a bigger crowd when they appeared in person. Many artists spent their entire career on local stations and making personal appearances within the area covered by their local broadcast. Since they were paid a small, or no, stipend by the station unless they could dig up a sponsor to pay them, most made their living from the personal appearances. Usually they had an early morning, or noon time show (Often both) on the local station and then made a personal appearance at night, using the day time show to plug their personal appearances. It was not an easy way to make a living, and as the local appearances dropped off due to familiarity with the artist, the artist would move on to a new station, and go through the process all over again. It often looked like a game of musical chairs! Many of the biggest stars of country music went through this routine for years, as any glance through a country music history book will indicate. The surprising thing is that many of the big northeastern stations were included in this game of musical chairs. WBZ, Boston and WHAM, Rochester, New York are just two examples.

Another way for an artist to increase his income was to make phonograph recordings. However, in the early 1930's the record companies had been hit by the double whammy of the ever widening depression, and the free entertainment offered by the increasingly popular radio. So recording deals were hard to come by. But about 1932, one country music performer came up with a new idea. Asher Sizemore had been playing and singing country music on radio for several years and had started including his young son in his programs. By this time his son, Jimmie, was approaching 5 years of age, and was already a seasoned performer. His father often commented during their shows that Jimmie already knew the words to over 500 songs! As ASHER AND LITTLE JIMMIE the act was doing well for a country act since they were performing on both the Grand Old Opry on WSM, and on WHAS in Louisville, Kentucky. However, popularity did not necessarily mean a lot of money.

So, like many other country artists, Asher had prepared a song book featuring Old Fashioned Hymns And Mountain Ballads As Sung By Asher Sizemore And Little Jimmie and pushed it on his shows. Apparently the book sold well enough to encourage Asher to find a wider market for its sale. In late 1932, or early 1933, he began to prepare a 15 minute recording of his program for distribution to all the radio stations who might be interested. He offered the program free to the stations, with places to insert their own announcements. And in the body of the show, along with the 3 or 4 songs, he plugged his

song book. Today, there is no way of knowing how many stations used his programs, but the idea must have been successful, as he was still selling the song books in 1947. In fact, one of the other performers on the Grand Old Opry made a statement years later, that everyone was astounded at the number of orders (And quarters!) that Asher received in every mail. I have copies of the song books dated from 1933 through 1947 and it is quite interesting to see Little Jimmie change from a 5 year old to an adult in an Army uniform through the years.

Obviously, the idea occurred to others about the same time, as there were several other non country transcribed shows on the air in the early 1930s. However the ASHER AND LITTLE JIMMIE SHOW appears to be the first country music show to ever try this method. After him came the deluge. Nearly every country artist of any stature was performing on syndicated shows by the time of World War II. Some, like Asher, without a sponsor except themselves, but others sponsored by products ranging from soft drinks to chicken feed. Just to name them all would take more space than I have available. But the list included the biggest stars in country music such as Hank Williams for Hadacol and Eddy Arnold for Purina Feeds.

Two other early transcribed shows should be briefly mentioned. One was the CRAZY WATER CRYSTAL SHOW. Crazy Water Crystals sponsored a number of country music shows during the 1930s, both on regional networks and on transcriptions. The shows used quite a few different country music acts over the years, but all seemed to manage to get Crazy into their name somehow, such as Mainer's Crazy Mountainers and Col. Jack and Shorty's Crazy Hillbillies. Perhaps I should devote an entire article to the Crazy Water Crystals programs in the future. Their broadcasts really helped to spread country music through out the country.

And of course, there was Border Radio! A large number of country artists broadcast over border radio stations in the late 30s and early 40s, and all the broadcasts were from transcriptions. Some of the artists were just across the border in Texas, but they never seemed to have gone across the border to broadcast live. And, of course, some artists never even appeared near Texas. We will delve more into border radio and its affinity for country music in a future article.

Until next time when we discuss some regional country music broadcasts.

PLEASE NOTE: As most of you know, I am still attempting to find more information on an early country singer, Vernon Dalhart, and his connections with early radio. I have enough data to show that he was on a network show as early as 1930, and perhaps before. So he must be included with the list of country music radio pioneers. Since I do have a personal interest in this particular artist, and he was definitely on early network radio, I plan to write a definitive article about his radio career in one of my future columns. If anyone has any information about any of his radio broadcasts, or anything else about his career, please let me know so it can be included in the article.

THE END



THOUGHTS OF A COLLECTOR

by

Henry R. Hinkel

While talking to Jim Snyder at the 1995 FOTR Convention, Jim said to me, "Why don't you send me an article for the NARA NEWS?" "I can't write," I said. "That's what everyone tells me," Jim replied, "send me something." Yeah...I thought... that's easier said than done. What could I write about? I'm certainly not an expert on any shows or personalities. I'm not good on remembering names, sometimes I'm caught off guard and can't remember my own kids names. How can I write about different programs when I can't remember names of people in the shows. "Don't you have an opinion on anything concerning the hobby?" Snyder asked. Yeah...we all have opinions and thoughts concerning the hobby, but maybe no one else would care about mine.

This past year was my 20th year collecting OTR. It seems like many of the collectors started at about the same time. I remember the first "dealer" that I bought from...probably most collectors starting out bought from him too because no one knew where else to go and find the radio shows that we all loved and remembered. TWELVE DOLLARS AN HOUR....WOW....! Now Jim, do you want an opinion on that? Needless to say, no one could afford to do this too often. It's a terrible feeling to be looking through a catalog and seeing all the different shows that you would love to hear again and knowing that it is impossible to be able to get them simply because you just can't afford it. It's like an apple on a tree branch just out of reach, you can see it, but you know you can't have it. But I guess with time and patience, all of us new collectors eventually found other sources. It took time, but we slowly built our collections.

I was not one to collect everything and anything. I learned from the very beginning that with limited funds, you have to be very selective on what you collect.

In starting a collection you had to concentrate first on the programs you loved from way back....Jack Benny, Phil Harris, Fibber and Molly, Mysterious Traveler, Escape, Gunsmoke. Slowly, as the collection starts to build, you are able to expand to other great shows....Suspense, Great Gildersleave, X Minus One, Dimension X, Jimmy Durante, Eddie Cantor, Burns and Allen. Who would have thought years ago when you heard these shows every week, that one day you would be able to pick any of these programs, at any time and listen and enjoy them all over again.

Besides being into OTR, I have been a collector of Big Band Music and Singers. I guess like most people, I got interested in the music while in high school and have been collecting the bands and singers ever since. As a little kid, music was nice but who really cared about Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, or Frank Sinatra. I remember hearing them on the radio but really never paid attention. There was always some band on... playing music at seven or seven thirty at night, sometimes in between the "regular" programs, and if you happened to be up late at night there was some band playing from some hotel or dance hall in New York or Chicago. Again, as a kid, who really cared who was playing. Now 30 years later I like music and I am buying LP's of my favorite bands.

I am now also starting to collect OTR and guess what....I discovered that besides all the comedy shows, and besides all the mystery shows, and besides all the detective shows, there are music programs and a thing called remotes from hotels and dance halls in New York and Chicago. I can now hear "live" Glenn Miller from the Glen Island Casino, Les Brown from the Cafe Rouge, Guy Lombardo from the Waldorf Astoria, Tommy Dorsey from the Meadowbrook, Cab Calloway from the Zanzibar, Frankie Carl from the Mark Hopkins, Freddy Martin from the Coconut Grove, Chuck Foster from the Blackhawk and the names and places go on....

Suddenly I didn't have to listen to a LP with songs that some record company decided I should hear. The music was played live, good or bad, corney or great, just as the band leaders decided to play it with bad notes and all. The big name singers are here too....Helen O'Connell, Bob Eberly, brother Ray Eberle (they spelled their last names differently), Doris Day, Joya Sherrill, June Christy, Ginny Simms, Harry Babbitt, Marjorie Hughes, just to name a few. If you did not care for the bands, then there was also country western and classical programs. Anyone who likes the remotes of the bands may be interested in a book that came out in 1991 covering the first 1000 shows of the AFRS One Night Stand Series by Harry MacKenzie. It is an excellent reference book for those broadcasts.

In the music and variety programs, AFRS had great shows in Command Performance, Mail Call, GI Journal, and Jubilee. I heard that there also is a book out on the Jubilee Series, but I have not been able to find out the name of the author or the correct title.

The music was great, the comedy was great, and the mysteries were great. How can anyone compare today's TV against Old Time Radio? They can't....we know that....that's why we are OTR collectors. Anytime we choose, we can laugh, we can cry, we can be thrilled or chilled, or just hear some old melody being played. All we have to do is put on a tape. It's a fun hobby. Now....as I look out my window here in upstate New York, and watch the snow pile up in my driveway....I think I will go and listen to Harry James as he plays at the Palladium out there in sunny California.

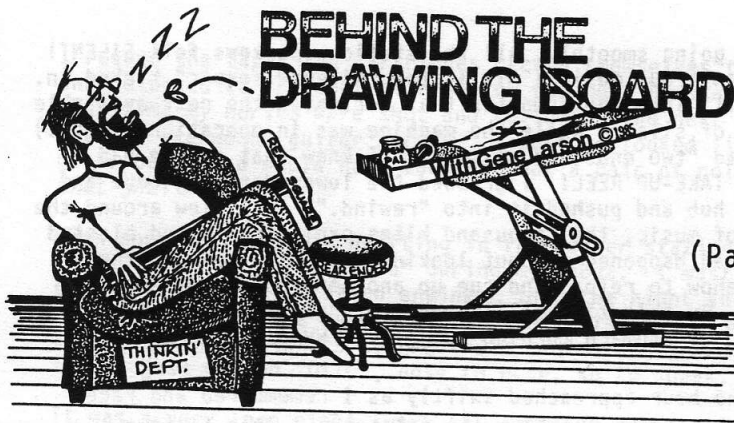
Just some thoughts of a collector.

PHILIP RAPP

NARA member Paul Rapp, who is a Hollywood motion picture producer, has sent us word of the death of his father, Philip Rapp, on January 23, 1996 at the age of 88. Phil Rapp was born in England and was brought to the United States as a teen ager by his parents. He was a noted Hollywood writer, director, and producer who created two of radio's most beloved series, the "Bickersons" and "Baby Snooks." He started his writing career by selling jokes to vaudeville comedians during the 1920's. He went to Hollywood in the 1930's to write the Eddie Cantor radio program. He created the character of Baby Snooks for the Ziegfeld star Fanny Brice and continued to write the scripts when she took the role to radio. Another classic radio creation of his

was the battling Bickersons portrayed by Don Ameche and Frances Langford. According to family members, after occasional real life family squabbles, Rapp would hurry off to his typewriter while they were still fresh in his memory so that he could get the incident into a Bickerson script. In radio, he also wrote, directed, and produced "Maxwell House Coffee Time," and he wrote material for George Burns.

Besides his work in radio, he wrote six movies for Danny Kaye including "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" and "The Inspector General." He also wrote, directed, and produced the television series "Topper" starring Leo G. Carroll.



AUTO-MATED

(Part Two-The Conclusion)

In the 'NEWS' Fall 1995 Issue I ended the first installment of this recollection (my first adventures in radio broadcasting by myself) in a very dubious situation. With the same "I gotta shut those drapes...." thought reeling repeatedly in my mind I exited the bathroom, fully clothed, and quickly proceeded to closing the drapes. Had the lights been turned off there would've been a bright red glow emanating from within the station....my red face.

I began collecting my thoughts once more. I proceeded to the control room where I checked and recorded the transmitter readings and cleared the old newscast papers from the control board. And sat down to relax my nerves from the first hour's confrontation with "OTTO." I began to feel in command of my duties just as another shot of reality hit....I had changed the OPENING/CLOSING cartridge (lame!) for the next hour....but FORGOT TO CHANGE THE BIG REELS OF MUSIC TAPES for this alternate program!

Putting yet another notch on the door jamb, this crazed human skidded headlong into the highly-polished hallway, overshooting the lobby door, and landing face-first on the sales room carpet. (But the DRAPES were closed!) Picking myself up and pointing my weakened body in the right direction, I fell into a near trance as I somehow waited for the currently-playing tape to switch off. After hitting the "rewind" button on that tape I grabbed the appropriate reel for replacement. Suddenly, I heard what sounded like an explosion of a thousand paper kites. Chancing a brave look in that direction, I was horrified to see all of the tape in the rewinding reel DUMPING DOWN INSIDE THE REEL! Frozen in place, I was jarred back to life as the end of that tape snapped out of the take-up reel. Snatching the metal encased warped mass of plastic tape off the spindle, my high speed replacement to the correct music reel almost scared me as I "cued" it for airplay. I'd just let go of the reel when "OTTO" snapped it into play. This was Reel #1.

I knew that I wouldn't have enough time to change Reel #2 before the first one played through its musical selection so I punched Reel #3 into rewind and waited for all hell to break loose. However, that reel spun off without incident, giving me my first break of that initial evening. It seemed like forever but I finally had Hour Two up and running at last.

The ever-clacking teletype machine spewed out plenty more copy to clean up but less than the First Hour. At last I had a little time to actually sit down and do a little thinking on how I might gain more control of things. Fortunately there was only one more complete tape change-over to the final program of the evening.

Just as I thought things were going smoothly, all the station speakers fell SILENT! By the time I skidded into the monstrous musical misfit the "silence sensor" kicked in. (This was one of the circuits built into the computer that activated the next available source following a preset period of silence while the machine was in operational mode.) When I saw a reel of tape that had "two ends and no middle" I knew that a tape had broken. NO TIME TO FIND ANOTHER TAKE-UP REEL! I grabbed the lower dangling tape and wrapped it around the upper tape hub and pushed it into "rewind." As I flew around the corner to retrieve another reel of music, the "thousand kites exploding" sound blasted through the air and I knew what had happened without looking. Tossing down another bulging tape reel, I managed somehow to reload and cue up another music reel just as ole "OTTO" clicked it into play. By this time all thoughts of "gaining control" of the operation completely disappeared, my stomach turning to jelly. WHAT NEXT?

Time for news at the top of the hour approached swiftly as I remembered and raced into the newsroom and edited the next newscast from the teletype. Just as news time neared, a program announcement came on the air ending the second music set for the evening...except THERE WAS STILL ONE HOUR LEFT TO GO! With feet-afire I made all corners with a bit more precision and hit ye ole "PANIC" button and killed what little was remaining of the closing announcement. And everything else. Then I advanced the "steppers" to a music tape and let it play while I cycled through the opening and on to the closing of the announcement tape once again. (The "steppers" were a row of numbered switches used to program the unit's computer, directing it to play the tapes in a certain sequence.) Another small detail I had forgotten when I set up the system for the second set. With a spark of common sense remaining, I set the switches to bring up the station identification tape following the current musical selection. Then high-tailed it back to the control room up at the other end of the station.

The second newscast was little better than the first and was about five minutes late to boot. With all of the physical exercise that occurred between the first and second newscasts, not only did I yodel the news but reported with a voice about three octaves HIGHER. Things did not seem to be improving.

The final hour of that second set of music played through without incident, giving me actual time to plot my next moves against that bug-infested automation system. My mind slowly began functioning once again and allowed me to believe that, indeed, things WERE beginning to improve. (HA!) The next set of big reels were stacked for the coming change-over in less than an hour. Checked that the extro tape for the current program and the intro tape next program were in their proper settings. Then took the usual transmitter readings. Went back into the lobby and studied all of the switches, dials, relays, and tape units to make sure I made the right moves as the night drug on. Finally the time came to change into the last set of music tapes for the night and I properly loaded the unit for the transition.

As another newscast approached EVERYTHING went crazy! There wasn't ONE source on-line that didn't snap into airplay! It seemed that all the relays opened at once and let all sources through. The three large reels of music, a program closing, another program opening, and a public service announcement and station identification were all on the air at the same time. More notches on the door jambs, a couple more bruises, a right-cross to the "PANIC" button, and complete silence in the air once again. That electromechanical monstrosity found yet ANOTHER way to run ME! Mystified at what made this happen, I gave up trying to figure what went wrong and completely rid my mind of the hundreds of possible combinations of problems that thing could bestow upon me.

I recued the tapes and cartridges recued themselves then I put music back on the air and returned to the control room for the next newscast and program change-over. By this time my nerves were shot and following the next newscast I was strung tighter than an overwound guitar string. I must've looked like a mouse running around in a glass box. Who would have thought that a pair of roller skates could be an asset to that job?

Then phone calls began drifting in from other station personnel with their comments on my "sterling performance" during my debut. I must have made numerous calls to poor ole Jack, the station engineer, into the night and he could only offer his condolences. I believe everyone kept their distance from the station that night and I surmise the listeners turned their radios off in respect of my ongoing dilemmas. It was just me and "OTTO", nose to nose, so to speak.

It was a very long night, with all sorts of combinations of stressful happenings. One of the Carousel units (those rotating round units that held twenty-four tape cartridges and usually stopped in position of the tape to be played) began its rotation non-stop and wouldn't respond to my efforts of returning it to "standby". So I had to shut it off and transfer the tapes to another unit. And so it went throughout the shift. My shift began at 6:00pm and ended at 2:00am when I shut down the transmitter. (The seven newscasts that first night....and several weeks beyond....were hideous!)

At the end of each shift my job would be to clear all the tapes from the automation unit and put them away. That initial night kept me at the station much longer because I retrieved the "dumped" tapes out of the sides of their reels and rewound them properly before boxing them up to be shipped back to the supplier. When I wobbled out of the station around 4:30am I had just enough composure to drive the thirteen miles back home. Enroute, I vaguely remember thinking about what option would be best for me: a) Shoot myself, b) Quit the broadcasting business altogether, or c) Remain the martyr and continue on. Obviously my decision remained the latter. I bravely showed up at the radio station the following night and six years beyond that time.

The following nights were not much better as "OTTO" plagued me with multitudes of new problems. In fact, that whole first summer became a living nightmare because it took that long for us to work out most of the problems, to "debug" that ornery automation system. The "exploding tapes" were eventually replaced by thicker, more durable tapes. It took considerably longer to figure out why everything would randomly play simultaneously....as mentioned earlier, the studios were located in a shopping mall. A movie theater and several large stores were clustered around the station. It was found that when one or more of the stores' air conditioners cycled on or off, a voltage drop or surge would take place at the automation unit and activate all of the relays simultaneously and fire up all the tapes on the air at the same time. A voltage regulator took care of that particular problem. But only after "OTTO" ran me ragged for most of the summer.

Eventually most of the problems were solved on that system. It was later moved closer to the control room and added onto as a unit that worked both day and night. But I was the one who broke in the monstrosity (or did it break ME in???), suffering the consequences. I later went on day shift and to more enjoyable duties such as Production Manager (my favorite aspect of broadcasting.) We who have been in any facet of broadcasting have our own stories to tell and they are many and diverse. But getting started in the business wasn't always easy.

BOOK by Hal Stephenson SHELF

***Great Radio Personalities* by Anthony Slide.**
The Vestal Press, Vestal, NY. Paperback, 1982.

There are 234 numbered black and white pictures of radio stars and a short biography of each in this book. It covers a wide range of actors giving each about equal space. The nice result is that supporting actors whose voices and names are familiar do get well-deserved attention rather than being crowded out by leading actors.

Three persons were picked because these satisfied a curiosity that had been piqued by *listening* to them. I wanted to see them and know who they were. For example, I can hear in my memory the over-the-telephone-voice of Harriet Nelson's mother as well as (Red Skelton's) Mean Widdle Kid's mother--and both were played by Lurene Tuttle.



Lurene Tuttle

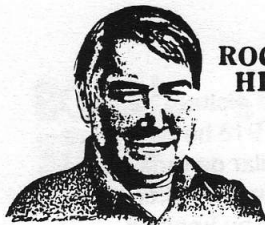
(1906-1986)

She was one of broadcasting's busiest actresses. She could be heard in the Forties on *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* as Harriet's mother, *The Great Gildersleeve*, *The Red Skelton Show*, *The Adventures of Sam Spade* as Effie, *A Date with Judy* as Gloria, *Stars over Hollywood*, *The Unexpected*, *The Lux Radio Theatre*, *Box 13* and *Maisie*. In the Fifties, she was heard on *The CBS Radio Workshop* and *Nightbeat*, and seen on television for six years with Red Skelton.

Whispering Jack Smith (1898-1950). The Whispering Baritone (left picture), began his professional career singing with a vaudeville quartet in 1915. In 1918 he joined the Irving Berlin Music Company as a song plugger. Smith became popular on radio in the late Twenties and at the same time became a Victor recording star. In the Thirties, Smith was to be heard on a 15-minute program on WABC, sponsored by Ironized Yeast. *Variety* (August 4, 1931) commented, "He has ether personality and a masculine virility decidedly different from that of the average pop singer." After a hiatus in the late Thirties, he was back on radio in 1941 with an early morning show, three times a week, on WEA-F-New York.



Baby Rose Marie (1923-). Rose Marie Curley (right picture) won a beauty contest at the age of three, the prize for which was a trip to Atlantic City, where she appeared on station WPG. Rose Marie's first major radio appearance was on WJZ-New York in July, 1931 and *Variety* (July 28, 1931) said "No doubt about the child having talent and an exceptional voice and delivery." It was that adult voice which gained Rose Marie her own 15-minute show on the NBC-Blue Network the following year, on which she promoted Julius Grossman Shoes. At the age of 12, Rose Marie retired. However, she returned to show business in 1947. She was seen on television on *The Dick Van Dyke Show* (1961-1966) and *The Hollywood Squares* starting in 1968.



ROGER
HILL

THE OLD CURMUDGEON

Writing a column is a funny thing. Sometimes an idea just hits the writer "bang!" right between the eyes and the column begins to write itself. That happened to me recently.

I was listening to a Whistler radio show called "The Huntress" and suddenly it occurred to me that the actor playing the part of the father of Mark Bradford (i.e., 'Father Bradford') was J. Anthony Smythe! Sonufagun! (a woman named Ann attempts to kill 'Father Bradford' if you must know something about the plot). Anyway, I have never heard J. Anthony Smythe in any role other than that of 'Father Barbour' of ONE MAN'S FAMILY. In fact, I thought Mr. Smythe was prohibited from performing in any role other than 'Father Barbour' during that time. Of course, this particular Whistler program was AFRS and I don't know if this had a bearing on his appearing in it or not. But what a delight to recognize a voice like that and to sit up and take notice at the sounds so out-of-place, as it were.

This made me consider how sad for the younger generation who don't know the simple joy and fun of recognition that we have when we listen to our vintage radio shows. I'm sure you've perked up your ears more than once when a familiar voice is there on some program you're enjoying. And with a big grin, you turn to your spouse or a family member and declare, "Why that's Alyouissious Hornswoggle from Henry's Backstage Niece!". (Or somesuch statement). And

isn't it a whole lot of fun to hear the recognizable voice and make the connection to some other program or even some other medium? What does that fun cost? Not a farthing! Not a sou! Not a pfenning! Isn't it sad that we can have so much enjoyment from our hobby of vintage radio and so many younger folks neither know nor care about how to really have a good time!

It isn't just connected from radio program to radio program either. Recently we took one of our rental movies home to watch and see what it was we were offering. "Boy's Night Out" doesn't sound that exciting just from the title. But in the cast is Tony Randall, Howard Morris, James Garner, Kim Novak, Patti Page, Janet Blair, Oscar Homolka, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Fred Clark (old baldy!), William Bendix, Jim Backus, and..... Howard Duff! Mr. Sam Spade himself! What a voice that guy had. Anyway, this 1962 movie is a wonderful view of some favorite stars and a chance to just have fun watching and longing for more of their talents.

For those who wonder about the story, it concerns these three guys who decided to rent a little place in town where they can stay over occasionally and enjoy some 'fun' with a live-in female companion. James Garner is assigned to set things up for Howard Duff, Tony Randall, and Howard Morris. Kim Novak appears as the female 'tenant'. On the first night each fellow appears for his turn, he tries to make a pass at Kim Novak but she rebuffs him and gets them to focus

on what they really miss in their marriages. One misses being Mr. Fixit because his wife is so handy fixing things around the house, so Kim arranges for lots of things in the apartment to need fixing each time that fellow's turn comes to spend the night. A second would-be lothario misses good home cooking because his wife is always dieting and including him in her diet planned meals. So Kim fixes banquet meals and her casanova is pleased as can be with that arrangement. The third guy doesn't have a wife who listens to him at home so when he's with Kim, he talks and talks and talks. She makes sure to keep him talking as she's really a graduate student in psychology and doing research on male fantasies. In the meantime, James Garner Oh no! I can't give away all of the plot. Just rent this one if you can and enjoy a good evening's entertainment watching and listening to Mr. Sam Spade, Mr. Magoo, the man behind Chester A. Riley, and so much else there to bring you pleasure. My wife and I heartily recommend "Boys Night Out" as a movie and "The Huntress" in THE WHISTLER radio series.

Until next time, have a good time listening and feeling sympathy for those youthful ones who have no concept of how much entertainment there is in these things we know so much about. By the

way, if you like seeing your favorite radio character on the screen, we do have the 3 Fibber and Molly movies, Great Gildersleeve movies, Lum & Abner's films, The Whistler, Inner Sanctum, I Love a Mystery, and even Henry Morgan's "So This is New York".

In addition, we have many tv versions of radio shows which tried making it on television. "Vic & Sade"; "Henry Aldrich"; "Lum & Abner" to name but a few. Just drop us a line at Nothing's New; #23 Bayhill Shopping Center; San Bruno, CA 94066 or call (415) 871-6063. We'll help you acquire your own copy if you like. So long until the next time!

NOTE: Roger Hill conducted a "Radio Day" at his store on February 10 featuring Steve Kelez of Radio Showcase and Dr. George Steiner from San Francisco State University and a former cast member of the Lone Ranger, Green Hornet, and Challenge of the Yukon. A videotape of Dr. Steiner's presentation is available for \$9.95. An audio cassette of Lone Ranger's 15th and 20th anniversary presentations is \$6.95, and the Lone Ranger pictorial scrapbook is \$15.95. They can each be ordered from the address above.

While theoretically and technically television may be feasible, commercially and financially I consider it an impossibility, a development of which we need waste little time dreaming.

—Lee De Forest, U.S. inventor,
"Father of the Radio," 1926

[Television] won't be able to hold onto any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.

—Darryl F. Zanuck,
head of 20th Century-Fox, 1946

**Fibber McGee
AND Molly**

YOU CAN HEAR THEM
**EVERY
MONDAY
NIGHT**
ON THE RADIO--OVER
NBC
SPONSORED BY
THE MAKERS OF
JOHNSON'S WAX

HEAVENLY DAYS,
MCGEE, HAVEN'T
YOU GOT THAT
ALARM CLOCK
FIXED YET?



WHY I'M THE GUY WHO SPLIT THE HOUR
HAND ON THE CLOCK IN OMSK, RUSSIA,
SO THEY COULD HAVE A 26 HOUR DAY....



IN PRAGUE I TAUGHT THEM HOW TO
OIL THE TOWN HALL CLOCK FROM A
REFUELING PLANE.

OF COURSE, THAT WAS
WHEN I WAS YOUNG...
WITH **SPRING**
IN MY HEART...

OUCH!

WELL, TAKE THAT
SPRING OUT OF
YOUR EYE AND GO
DOWN AND BUY
US ANOTHER
ALARM CLOCK.



DON'T WORRY, I'LL GET IT DONE IN NO TIME.

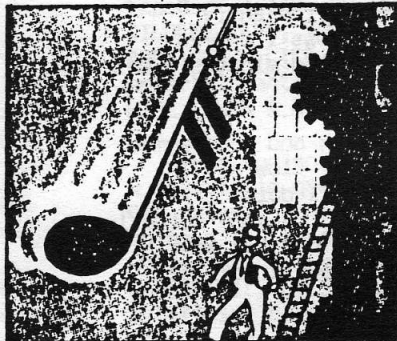


YOU MEAN WE'LL HAVE NO TIME IF YOU *DON'T* GET IT DONE.

AW... I'VE FIXED THOUSANDS O' CLOCKS WHEN I WAS YOUNG.



CLOCK-COAXER MCGEE I WAS KNOWN AS IN THEM DAYS.. CLOCK-COAXER MCGEE... THE CLEVER CONTRIVER OF COLOSSAL CHRONOMETERS, AND CLEAN-CUT CORRECTOR OF COMMUNITY CLOCKS FROM CALCUTTA TO COPENHAGEN.



I DESIGNED THE TED WEEMS MUSICAL PENDULUM THAT WOULD REALLY *SWING*



IN BELGIUM, I WAS THE FIRST ONE TO USE LEAPIN' BELGIAN RABBITS FOR MOTIVE POWER IN A COMMUNITY CLOCK... A NEW KIND OF HARE-SPRING, YOU MIGHT SAY.....

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HELLO FOLKS:

SPRING OR FALL - WAX YOUR FLOORS -
 WAX YOUR FURNITURE - WAX YOUR WOODWORK
 WITH GENUINE JOHNSON'S WAX - THE WAX
 THAT GIVES THE MOST BEAUTIFUL,
 LONG-LASTING POLISH! SEALS OUT DIRT!
 PROTECTS FROM WEAR! CUTS
 CLEANING TIME IN HALF!

 TUNE IN FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY
 EVERY MONDAY NIGHT **N.B.C.**



JOHNSON'S WAX
 PASTE OR LIQUID

AD FROM THE SUNDAY PAPERS

SEPTEMBER 26, 1937

Diversions of An Insomniac

By Ken Weigel

The broadcasting nightmares Gene Larson described in colorful detail in NARA NEWS not long ago brought to mind some strange dreams I had when I first began collecting old radio shows. That was many years ago, and it coincided with a phase of insomnia I passed through, when even a troubled sleep would have been welcome. Since Mr. Larson invited readers to share their unusual "sleeping experiences," I submit the following--and throw in a little mischief to lighten the dull spots.

None of the usual snooze-inducers, by the way, had any effect on me. I cut out coffee and took sleeping pills, but decaffeinated I turned cranky, and medication turned me into a mummy, bandages and all. Exercising was useless, and banging my head against the wall was less apt to bring on sleep than threats from angry neighbors. One night it occurred to me to play some of the OTR shows I'd been collecting. I put a tape in a bedside tapedeck--and in less than ten minutes I was snoozing in the tuneful key of C major.

Nightly after that I fed two 60-minute tapes into the tapedeck and programmed them for continuous play. This bought me an uninterrupted two-hour flow of OTR. I found that the more enjoyable the entertainment was, the quicker I dozed off. And heard through headsets, the listening became far more intimate. A good detective show, for instance, with a tight plot and one tenable red herring, had the same effect on me as a haymaker. THE LONE RANGER, with its customary taut storyline, likewise packed me off at a gallop.

Apparently the brain rebels at being given the task of concentrating at so late an hour, and just naturally shuts down. At least that's how it worked with me. Curling up with a dull book had little effect on me. On long, hyperacid nights I read everything from celebrity bios to small press poetry and first-person accounts of UFO abductions, and still I lay there wide-eyed. Dreary college tracts on everything from Missouri Abandonment Laws to Log Pile Maintenance and What Makes Pait Stick? couldn't put me away. Mostly what I've gotten out of such dull reading were thumping headaches and a cynical view of my bedroom ceiling. It wasn't until I stumbled onto the anesthetic properties of OTR--of GANGBUSTERS, HENRY ALDRICH, CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT, OZZIE & HARRIET, KRAFT MUSIC HALL, RED SKELTON, SUSPENSE, FIBBER MCGEE & MOLLY, I LOVE A MYSTERY--that I found any relief.

In those first months any old kind of radio show anesthetized me. Drama, sci-fi, western, soap, quiz--they all caressed me through the headsets as a sweet, soft lullaby caresses a baby. Mysteries worked like Melatonin on me. Wondering how a man can be in two places at once, a predicament a character in an INNER SANCTUM mystery found himself in, reduced me to gaudy snores. Even comedy sketches put me dead to the world. There was the funny remark Fred Allen made, about a certain self-admiring Hollywood radio comedian, who spent his weekends up on Lover's Lane holding hands with himself. This not only lowered me into the nighttime gauze, it also conjured up a dream wherein the comedian sprains his neck giving himself a hickey. My dreams, in fact, were as much a fringe benefit of my antidote for insomnia as was the sheer entertainment of the radio shows themselves.

It was more than just the mental exertion of following plotline and sketch that brought on fatigue and ultimately sleep. Pondering quirks of character also relaxed me and sired dreamy interludes as well. An episode of RICHARD DIAMOND, PRIVATE DETECTIVE, for example, sent me into a giddy zone, where I wrestled with the probability that detective "Otis" might be the obtuse male equivalent of MY FRIEND IRMA. This led to further reflections on the comparative brainware of other radio dullards--"Finnegan," for instance, Archie's spittoon philosopher on DUFFY'S TAVERN, and "Lightning," the mezzobrow on AMOS & ANDY. Preoccupied with whose bulb was dimmest, an odd lineup of OTR characters tramped through my subconscious as they had through living rooms half a century ago. I had the field narrowed to two--Mortimer Snerd and Gracie Allen--when the alarm went off and I awoke. I had passed an entire night in tantalizing contemplation of things metaphysical, and was none the worse for it. On the contrary, after an OTR dream I invariably awoke refreshed. Other programs on other nights brought similar gossamer pleasures.

As my collection of radio shows grew my tastes became more diversified, and my tapedeck became my laboratory. In with traditional favorites like THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE, YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR, LUM & ABNER, MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER, JACK ARMSTRONG, LIFE OF RILEY, and MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY went a more impulsive choice of entertainment: IT PAYS TO BE IGNORANT, DOUBLE OR NOTHING, TOM MIX, PAT NOVAK FOR HIRE, WHEN A GIRL MARRIES, TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT, X MINUS ONE, THE GREEN HORNET.

Not content with just sleep now, and being a gourmand by nature, I embarked on a scientific quest to find the perfect tapedeck combination to see what manner of OTR dream I could brew. As I think back on those early experiments, the ear seemed to be a far more capable organ than the eye to influence the region of the brain where associative dreams are forged. Radio drama, done well, is heightened beyond probability by its accelerated format, so it serves up events cloaked in an artificial "logic." These arrive in the subconscious already primed for misinterpretation. The subconscious eagerly soaks up the distortions of logic and begins fabricating superlogic tales of its own.

Or so my private theory goes. All I know for sure is that what goes on up there takes place in a lumpy soup about two inches below the haircut. Before my OTR sleep investigations, I thought dreams were simply the mind ridding itself of the transcendental bilge it accumulated during waking hours--a "psyche dump," if you'll excuse the vernacular. It may be that ordinary dreams are just that and nothing more. But dreams begat by OTR are of another class entirely.

The truth of this came to me the night I hit the feathers listening to the MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER tell a story about "The Man the Insects Hated"--and awoke 20 minutes later swatting the air. A million angry insects buzzed in my ears, and my bed was crawling with worms. It was all imaginary, of course. Fueled by OTR, my subconscious had simply hauled me up by the ears and set me down in the middle of a terrifying lab experiment. After a cold shower I was back in bed with BLONDIE (the radio show!), and in ten minutes my snores were rattling the windows. By the end of the week my stuttering was completely gone.

I had mooney dreams by the dozen. An ingenuous pairing of AMOS & ANDY and THE SHADOW generated pointless reverie about a "wealthy, young, undisresponsible man about town who had the power to cloud men's minds," and who conveniently disappeared whenever the subject of finding work came up. Another combination--

THE WHISTLER and THE WHISPERER--called up an equally pointless dream whereby the narrator became THE LISPERER. Yet another artless coupling of THE FLEISCHMAN HOUR and I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE FBI invoked a suspenseful cold war dream--I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR FLEISCHMANN'S YEAST--which made absolutely no sense at all, although when I awoke my mattress had risen eight inches.

Eventually my OTR dreams gave way to unadulterated buffoonery. As on the night I fell asleep listening to consecutive episodes of SAM SPADE and VIC & SADE, two of my personal favorites. Spade was a smooth private eye operating out of San Francisco who dictated his weekly capers to Effie, his simple, starry-eyed secretary. As he dictated, the drama unrolled in flashback. VIC & SADE--the Gooks--was a cartoony household of wonderful nonsense where incongruity wore the pants and the chatter leaned to the inane. The progeny of this pairing of shows resulted in a fascinating dream about a San Francisco private eye, located in "a small agency halfway up in the next block." Spade's pigin articulation--well, see for yourself. Here's the part I remember:

ANNOUNCER: The Adventures of Vic Spade, the greatest detective of them all!

VIC: [Off] Hey-ti-hey, ho-ti-ho.

EFFIE: That you, Sam?

VIC: [Coming on] No, it's your cousin Louise Kafoozalum from Dismal Seepage, Ohio, with an armload of bricks for the pantry. Got your notepad handy, Angel?

EFFIE: Indeedy-weedy.

VIC: All right, take a note. To: Marin County Sheriff's office. Attention: Deputy Flowersack. From: Victor Spade, license number 1-3-7-footle-2-stick-'em-up. Subject: The Oshkosh Caper. Dear Flowersack: [musical note seeps in] the fog was thick in San Fran--[beat]--what was that?

EFFIE: What, Sam?

VIC: I heard music. A low oboe note applied itself to the proceedings just as I said--

EFFIE: I didn't hear anything.

VIC: Cross my heart and hope to die--eat a banana an' holler hi.

EFFIE: Oh, Sam!

VIC: I'd be one surprised bowl of oatmeal if there wasn't a musical intrusion of questionable intent just now. Uh, where was I?

EFFIE: Dear Flowersack.

VIC: Must be a leak in the studio orchestra.

EFFIE: Oh, Sam!

VIC: [Giggles] Forgive me, Effie. I'm full of buoyancy and mirth this evening. Uh--

EFFIE: The Oshkosh Caper.

VIC: Yes, The Oshkosh Caper. Effie, did I ever tell you about the time Ernie Thurtle got his knee caught in his necktie and choked to death?

EFFIE: You're being silly!

VIC: Where was I?

EFFIE: Dear Flowersack.

VIC: Dear Flowersack. The dawn came up like hot tar fumes in Chinatown. It was a typical morning--fog mixed with four rows of freshly planted peanut seeds. You getting this, Miss Woosh?

EFFIE: Oh, Sam!

VIC: Just look at the view down there, Angel. Have you ever seen such latticework on a trellis before?

EFFIE: Oh, Sam!

VIC: Few things impress a man more than a well-built trellis. Although a puttywagon has a certain cuddly charm.... Uh, sorry, Ef. Slipped the track again, didn't I?

EFFIE: Uh huh.

VIC: Where was I?

EFFIE: You were hoeing a sandwich.

VIC: Now you're being silly. Effie darling, a feeling sweeps over me you're determined to make this episode a stirring, vital chapter in our lives, ain'tcha?

EFFIE: Oh, Sam!

VIC: And please stop calling me Willie!....

(Later, a beautiful brunette pays Spade a visit:)

VIC: Miss--?

SALLY: Sally. Tin Pan Sally. Mr. Spade, I--

VIC: Hey-ti-hey, ho-ti-ho. Tin Pan Sally, eh? Your parents in the music biz, were they? They name you after a certain musical district?

SALLY: No. I was named after a kitchen pot. My parents were drunkards.

VIC: Oh.

SALLY: A man called last night, Mr. Spade.

VIC: Please, call me Willie.

SALLY: All right, Sam.

VIC: Close enough.

SALLY: He said he was mailing me some pictures. They came this morning. These--

VIC: Umm. [Piercing wolf whistle]

SALLY: I--I'm afraid, Mr. Spade. I hardly know [sniffles]--

VIC: There there. Go ahead, have a good cry.

SALLY: [Exaggerated bawling for 2 seconds, then cut abruptly. Completely composed now:] I feel much better.

VIC: So do I--cleared my bad ear. Been closed since 1932.

SALLY: Hooray for you.

VIC: No need to shout, Miss Kitchen Pot--or whatever your name is. What'd the man on the phone tell you to do?

SALLY: I'm to meet him tonight at the bus depot.

VIC: What arrangements did you make? How will he recognize you?

SALLY: I'm to wear one roller skate.

VIC: That's all? If that don't fling diffidence to the four winds--

SALLY: And put string beans up my nose.

VIC: Uh huh. And?

SALLY: And wear a dinner plate in my lower lip.

VIC: That all?

SALLY: Yes.

VIC: That describes half the people that hang around bus depots. How's he gonna spot you?

SALLY: I'll be carrying a folded newspaper.

VIC: Clever. Miss Ten Pin--or whatever your name is--it took real courage to come to me. It's gonna take more courage to leave the house with that dinner plate in your lip. But I think I can help you. You can stop worrying now.

SALLY: Thank you, Mr. Spade.

VIC: Willie.

SALLY: Sam.

VIC: Thank you, Helen Trent.

SALLY: I've been scared stiff!

VIC: Really? I get tight myself now and then. What're you doing later on?

SALLY: Uh....

VIC: Forget it. Now go home, pull your shoes up by the roots, and wait for my call.

SALLY: Mr. Spade, how can I ever thank you?

VIC: Uh, leave the pictures, kiddo....

And so on with VIC & SPADE.

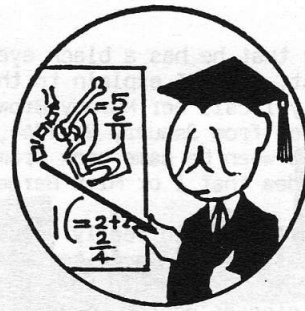
I've applied titles to some of the more outlandish dreams I had while fending off the insomnia bugaboo. Just for recreation, see if you can guess which program pairings mustered up the following ersatz OTR dreams: THE LONE PALOOKA, HOPALONG STOOPNAGLE, ONE MAN'S FAMILY SKELTON, IT PAYS TO BE UNDER ARREST, RIN TIN TONY WONS, CHANDU OF THE CABBAGE PATCH, A DATE WITH LASSIE, HERB SHRINER FOR HIRE, FRONT PAGE BEULAH, NAME THAT HAMMER GUY, WHEN A GIRL WHO SAID THAT?, TAKE IT OR EXPLORE THE UNKNOWN, OMAR THE ALL-AMERICAN BOY, YOU BET YOUR RUMPUS ROOM, MARK TRAIL MIX, THE MORMON TABERNACLE TROUBADORS, BABY SNOOKS THE MAGICIAN, FU MANCHU'S FIRESIDE CHATS.

Warning: insomniacs under age 12 are advised not to try this cure without adult supervision.

Radio and Education

by

Jarold Michael



I have been listening to and collecting old time radio shows for a long time. Most people are surprised by this hobby because few are really aware of the availability of the many old time radio shows. Through a conscious effort I have been able to get several friends interested in the hobby. Although I have been collecting for a long time it was only recently that I had the brainstorm of using old time radio in my profession.

As a social studies teacher of many years I am constantly looking for new ways to get my middle school age students interested in history. Several years ago I got the idea of using radio broadcasts to help bring home some points about World War Two that my students were having trouble grasping. How does one explain rationing to eighth grade kids who have never had to go without something for any period of time? To accomplish this I turned to none other than Fibber McGee and Molly to help me make a point. In the course of many of their WWII broadcasts Fibber and Molly are constantly mentioning that they had to do without this item or that item because of rationing. Even commercials from various shows were useful. The many Kraft commercials were constantly pointing out that their macaroni and cheese could be purchased for a certain amount of ration points. Johnson Wax commercials also pointed out the scarcity of many items and explained shortage by pointing out that all of a particular item is being sent to the troops overseas instead of being used for home consumption. Hearing others talk about this concept seemed to make it more alive and realistic. Several grandparents were surprised when one of my students asked them about rationing and other related topics.

Of course this successful use of Old Time Radio just kind of snowballed. Radio broadcasts from December 7, 1941 made the attack on Pearl Harbor much more realistic than anything I could say in class. When Jack Benny announced to his audience that this would be Phil Harris' last show until he returned from the service the kids began to understand that World War Two was something that actually happened to real people, not just something that occurred in an old dry history book.

Economics has also been taught through the use of old time radio. When I tell the students that I can remember when a hamburger and fries cost 25 cents at McDonalds they look at me as if I have lost my mind. Any discussion of how the price of goods has changed kind of went up in smoke. But when they compare the price of cigarettes in old time radio commercials to the price of cigarettes today they are completely amazed. The price of Jello in Jack Benny's time becomes a topic of conversation in class. When the kids go home and tell their parents about what we have discussed they too are amazed. Again grandpa and grandma come to the rescue by verifying what the kids have heard on the radio.

It's even fun to connect old time radio shows with events and things in the present time. The kids are completely amazed to hear Edgar Bergen explain to Charlie

McCarthy that he has a black eye because his recently born daughter hit him with her tiny fist. When I explain to them that he is talking about the birth of Candace Bergen (actually I call her Murphy Brown) everyone has a good laugh. When I play the Jack Benny show from January 2, 1944, they are amazed to find out that my father listened to that show when he came back from the hospital the day their teacher was born. (They had no idea that I or Miss Bergen, for that matter, are really that old.)

Old Time Radio really helps make social studies come alive in many different ways. When I was switched over to teaching literature to sixth graders I figured that my use of Old Time Radio would come to an end. Students who had had brothers and sisters in my history classes wanted to know when they could hear some broadcasts. After pouring over our literature book I discovered that the opportunities to use Old Time Radio were quite abundant. On our teaching team our science teacher was doing an astronomy unit. In an attempt to show the relatedness of the subject matter I found a copy of "The Invasion From Mars" a radio play, in our literature book. Bingo! Here was the chance to bring Old Time Radio into our literature class. After reading the radio play my students found it interesting but could not believe that people would really get excited about this so called invasion from Mars. Orson Welles to the rescue. I played a copy of his broadcast of "War of the Worlds" and the students really got excited. Their interest in our astronomy unit and literature increased a great deal. We even had the opportunity to view the movie version of War of the Worlds. Much to my surprise, in a comparison theme, many of my sixth graders indicated they preferred the radio broadcast to the movie version because their imaginations were stimulated more by radio than the Hollywood version. What an interesting lesson for sixth grade T.V. addicts to learn.

Our lit unit on mysteries now starts with an old Sherlock Holmes program, or perhaps a Shadow or Green Hornet mystery. Their lengths are perfect for our class and they really serve to stimulate interest in the upcoming unit. No unit on science fiction would be complete without an X-One broadcast or a broadcast of Escape or even Lights Out. Actually the educational use of Old Time Radio appears to be endless.

One teacher in our school used Lone Ranger broadcasts to examine the social relationships between Native Americans and white settlers. Perhaps an examination of Amos and Andy shows would provide a closer look at race relations. Abbott and Costello's famous "Whose on First" dialog would be a marvelous example of playing with words. Radio versions of Hollywood movies would be a great aid to any filmography classes. With a little imagination even geographical concepts could be illustrated by Old Time Radio. Sergeant Preston of the Yukon presents a fairly realistic picture of weather conditions in the Klondike. The Voyage of the Scarlet Queen always starts with a latitude and longitude entry in the log. By plotting these points on a map students can gain an awareness of how latitude and longitude are used and why they are important.

Education is a lot like Old Time Radio. The listener or the students are only limited by their own imaginations. Anything that can be used to provoke students to use their imaginations and to bring home points about real life is a very important teaching tool. Old time radio is perfect for this job.

MY EIGHT-YEAR-OLD daughter and I were listening to the radio when a commercial for a weight-loss program came on. The woman in the ad proudly announced that she had lost six inches using the program. My daughter looked at me, puzzled. "Why would anyone want to be shorter?"

—Contributed by Mary Hoogerhyde



TRANSCRIBED FROM TORONTO

by JOHN PELLATT

Good news since our last issue. RADIO CANADA INTERNATIONAL, the shortwave worldwide service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, responsible for broadcasting news, drama, comedy, current affairs and sports around the globe, has been saved from extinction. The Canadian federal government has agreed to keep RCI from closing. Those of you who enjoy DXing and SW listening will, like me, be pleased. RCI's origins in the mid 1940s began as an anti-Nazi propaganda service. Newscasts to war ravaged Europe began on a regular basis in 1945. But to those officials who felt SW radio was a leftover from WWII and the Cold War, the BBC's Graham Mytton pointed out that "It is assumed by too many people that SW is outdated, that nobody listens any more and that international radio broadcasting is a relic of the cold war. All these assumptions are completely false. The BBC's audience at the height of the cold war was 120 million.... the estimate we currently make is over 130 million and it is still growing".

At the height of its success, MA PERKINS was one of the most popular and enduring of radio's soap operas. Lasting over 27 years and 7,065 episodes, its star Virginia Payne took the role very seriously. Well, pretty seriously anyway. She spoke to Toronto broadcaster (the late) Elwood Glover in 1972. "Oh we had fun but not at the expense of the characters we portrayed. For one thing, we had only ninety minutes to rehearse and put the show on the air; you couldn't afford to clown around very much".

Her recurring nightmare? "Because of the time differences between the East and West coasts we had to do each show twice a day. Often an actor would get into his car after the first broadcast and be halfway home before he realized he still had the second show to do. My dream always involves me as the only one of the actors left... there I am trying bravely to muddle through the script without any assistance whatsoever". Regarding how the audiences of yesterday responded to the seeming realism of the soap opera, Virginia Payne commented: "At one point in the show a baby girl was left on Ma's doorstep. There was much discussion whether Ma should keep the child. We received a letter from a gentleman in San Francisco saying that if we decided to give the child up, that he and his wife would give the baby a home. He wrote that he was retired, lived in a beautiful house overlooking the bay and that he and his wife would provide the baby with a happy, loving home. And he enclosed letters from his lawyer, his clergyman and his doctor as character witnesses". As Elwood muses, one has got to wonder about that lawyer, clergyman and doctor! But that was typical of radio's power... people believed in it, literally. This interview (with Virginia Payne) and others along with Elwood's long career in Canadian radio and TV are contained in his book "Luncheon Date" published back in 1975 by Prentice-hall of Canada in Toronto. I found my copy in a used book store last month. One of THE best 50 cents I have spent in DECADES!

Of course, the all time classical case of audiences literally believing in radio drama as fact was Orson Welle's WAR OF THE WORLDS broadcast. If you were lucky enough to catch the PBS documentary on Orson and William Hearst several months back you were repaid with an insightful and fascinating television program, the type only PBS deliver so well over public airwaves. If you missed it, keep an eye out for possible repeats as part of "The American Experience". My only disappointment was the absence of a full explanation about the rift between Welles and his Mercury Theatre rightman, John Houseman, but perhaps producers felt that was outside the scope of this show (which was about the parallel careers and ultimate rivalry between Welles and Hearst).

I found a nicely packaged Radio Arts four cassette package of Bob & Ray material at my public library the other day. VINTAGE BOB & RAY VOLUME ONE, THE CBS YEARS PART ONE, put out a couple years back, is a nice tribute package to the humour of these outstanding radio talents. It features

broadcasts from their 1959 CBS Radio series. I'd prefer to hear airchecks unedited as broadcast but this edited package makes fun listening and a worthy tribute to the late Ray Goulding. I wonder if Volume Two ever came out?

A select Vancouver, British Columbia audience was delighted in February to have Garrison Keillor in town on his way to Alaska. While in Vancouver, Garrison did one of his live two hour PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION broadcasts, heard the next day on tape throughout Canada on our own CBC. In it Garrison kindly extolled the virtues of Vancouver (a beautiful city), the CBC (celebrating its 60th anniversary) and (in his unique gentle and whimsical way) the differences between Canadians and Americans. While not strictly OTR, his PHC (heard on over 350 stations throughout the USA) certainly is a legitimate descendant of OTR and one of the few "real" radio programs on the air nationally these days. His humour, pacing and sardonic observations are a real treat to hear. His book, "WLT--A Radio Romance" remains a must-read novel for fans of vintage radio everywhere.

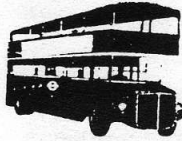
Lou Genco e mailed me to update my information on his on line radio digest service. (See last issue for my comments.) Sorry Lou if I used outdated information! That's the trouble with the information highway, you can get traffic jams and pileups if you don't stay up with the latest! His new e mail address is **lgenco@old-time.com** and if you'd like an FAQ about OTR put **Request otr.faq** in the subject line. If you want to subscribe send e mail to **otr-request@airwaves.com** and put **SUBSCRIBE** in the subject line. Hope that's got it up to date Lou!

George Coppen (147-20 Fort St., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3C 4L3) is looking for copies of the old CBC series THE HAPPY GANG. I found him the 1939 CBK Tribute show, does anyone else have a HG show in their collection?

My own internet e mail address has changed since the last issue. Please feel free to contact me with your comments, input or contributions at **bs206@torfree.net**

Until next time, good listening!

FROM ACROSS THE POND



by Ray Smith



Carry On microphone! Oh no, I can hear the groans already. He's gonna write about those juvenile English Carry On Movies with their smutty schoolboy humour, double entendre and preoccupation with knackers, knockers, knickers and snickers. But if these "rivals of Benny Hill" aren't your cuppa tea, fair dinkum. Or as one of the Carry On Gangs most frequent stars Frankie Howerd might say, "suit yerselves. I'm only doin' this load of old rubbish coz their givin' me a free plate of 'adlock and chips. Yersss. Bloomin' cheek!" A couple of military types are on the rooftop of a building searching for enemy planes during World War 2. The brigadier turns to the corporal who is scanning the night sky with a set of binoculars and says, "I say Corp, what kind of plane is that comin' in over the Thames?" "Well, sir," replies the corporal, "it's an old Fokker, sir." "I KNOW that Corp. But what KIND is it?"

Most Americans are unaware that long before the Carry On Gang vented their collective spleen on the silver screen, many of them were stars of radio's golden age. And those marvellous lines which can be taken in so many different ways, were for the most part written by the Carry On screenwriter, Talbot (Tolly) Rothwell, who was a top scriptwriter on the old BBC wireless. Second only to the still-with-us News Huddlines featuring that great cockney comic Roy Hudd, the longest running comedy show on UK radio was The Navy Lark which recounted the hopeless misadventures of Her Majesties Ship HMS Troutbridge. That series gave us Ronnie Barker, the larger of the 2 Ronnies, Jon Pertwee, the TV Dr. Who in the yellow jallopy and Leslie Phillips, a British movie veteran who played in umptheen Carry On films. Usually he portrayed a smooth, womanizing, rake, roue and cad. His famous catchphrase from The Navy Lark was "Left Hand Down a Bit," a line addressed to the battleships engine room, but one that was also open to wider interpretation. So much so, that it might have been lifted from one of the earliest Carry On movies, Carry On Admiral in which that eccentric elderly actor A.E. Matthews (Matty) was showcased.

I realize a lot of these characters had fruity voices. But Charles Hawtry went a step further. The wiry, bespectacled character usually finished up knitting a pair of bed socks for his "mumsy wumsy." And in Carry On Doctor, he was the one who went into labour instead of his wife. But Charles had been a radio performer for years appearing in classic Greek tragedies on the highbrow BBC Third Programme as well as the more down to earth environs of Toytown, famous for such characters as Larry the Lamb and Mr. Growser the Grocer. Charles also played one of the BBC's famous "brother dectectives" Norman and Henry Bones.

A Carry On Gang "institution" was Kenneth Williams, well known for numerous radio shows including The Law Game, The Secret Life of Kenneth Williams and Stop Messin' About in which his co-star Joan Sims was yet another Carry On veteran. Kenneth is best remembered as the main character player in two terrific radio comedy series, Beyond Our Ken and Round the Horne, both built around the best "straight man comic" in radio.

Kenneth Horne. A master of accents and innuendo, Kenneth Williams created characters like the saucy folksinger Ramblin' Sid Rumpole, whose reply to everything was that "the answer lies in the soil." He then got particularly "earthy" and had to be cut off by Kenneth Horne. Another of his characters, Sidney Gruntfuttock, appeared every week as lobbyist and president, of such peculiar organisations as The Royal Society of Nadgers. This opened the door on enough double entendre to make a Bishop blush. But in fact it was all perfectly harmless, meaningless and innocent fun!



KENNETH
WILLIAMS



JIMMY LOGAN

In Carry On Abroad, the story of mayhem in a seedy, unfinished, Spanish holiday resort invaded by the Carry On Gang, a major part was played by Jimmy Logan, the leading Scottish comedian and actor of his generation. Jimmy had been on radio since the late 40's first in the long running comedy It's All Yours (not to be confused with an "english" BBC show of the same title that featured a young Petula Clark) then in its sequel, Just As You Please. In both series Jimmy was partnered by his fellow Scot, Stanley Baxter. Baxter later became a great favourite south of the Scottish border as a more genteel version of Benny Hill and a brilliant female character impersonator. Jimmy Logan created some marvellous radio voices in those shows including Tony Da Chippie, a Scots-Italian philosopher who ran a "fried fish and chip shop." But his most famous radio character was the snottery-nosed wee schoolboy Sammy Dleep, still remembered for the catchphrase that has clung to Jimmy like fish and chip grease to this very day, Sausages Is The Boys. Jimmy Logan was born into a famous Scottish vaudeville family. His parents, May Dalziel and Jack Short (Ma and Pa Logan) packed Glasgow's famous Metropole vaudeville Theatre for years, with their Logan Family Shows. His Auntie, Ella Logan (who lives in NYC) needs no introduction to American radio buffs, while his sister Annie Ross (Lamberts, Hendrick and Ross) was one of Americas top jazz singers. Now in his 70's Jimmy Logan is the Godfather of Scottish comedy on stage, radio and television.



SID JAMES

Hancocks Half Hour, one of the best comedy series on the wireless, starred the much troubled "lad 'imself" Tony Hancock. He was supported by two Carry On Gang stalwarts. Sid James, of the "boxers nose" and unorthodox features, was Hancocks right hand man...con man that is! This part, he frequently duplicated on the silver screen. Although cockney comedic criminals were Sid James' specialty, he was in fact, a South African. And when it came to formidable female roles on the Carry On series, they invariably chose one of the biggest (quite literally) actresses in the UK, Hattie Jacques. She was an extremely large woman who delivered her lines in



HATTIE
JACQUES

meticulous upper class English. Usually she created the role of Hospital Matron or matronly spinster. In later years Hattie Jacques went on to television fame appearing as sister "Hat" in numerous series of a popular BBC TV comedy show starring the ex-scriptwriter turned comic, Eric Skyes. Hattie even crossed the Atlantic to tape guest appearances singing old tyme music hall songs, on the Canadian Television Network's fondly remembered "English Pub" series, The Pig and Whistle, produced in Toronto. Although he appeared in the early episodes of Hancocks Half Hour on radio, Kenneth Williams who we have already mentioned, got too many laughs and his characters were written out. Luckily, the BBC still replays some of those classic "vintage Hancock" shows in which Williams played a rather soppy-voiced simpleton who finishes up telling Hancock to "Stop Messin' About." This catchphrase was resurrected for a much later radio series of that name, in which Williams starred.

Another Carry On favourite whose roots were in radio was Kenneth Connor, a distinguished character actor who played the harrassed Brigadier in Carry On England. On the wireless, Kenneth was best known for his numerous character voices on such shows as Rays A Laugh.



**BERNIE
BRESSLAW**

Jim Dale went from UK rock n'roller on the teenage show "The Six Five Special" to London and Broadway musicals, before becoming a frequent naïve Prince Charming type in the Carry Ons. He often "got the girl" (Barbara Windsor or Liz Frazer) by a sheer flook and a series of stumblebum misunderstandings. A frequent partner in Jims carryings on, was the exceptionally tall and wonderful Shakesperean actor Bernard Bresslaw who had a comedy flair reflected in his East End of London cockney upbringing. Bernie had been on radio's Educating Archie and TV's Army Game, coining the phrase, "Well, I only arsked!" His comedy version of Magic Moments soared ahead of the Perry Como recording, in the UK top twenty.

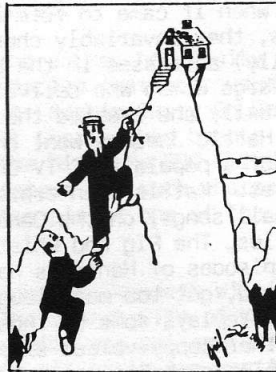
But of course no memories of the Carry On Gang would be complete without a mention of "Professor Francis Howerd Esquire." Frankie Howerd was quite simply one of the UK's all-time favourite comedians. His unique "camp" style endeared him to several generations of radio, tv and movie buffs. Variety Bandbox, The Frankie Howerd Show, That Was The Week That Was, Frankie's On and Up Pompeii were just a few of the many series which starred the sad faced comic genius. Up Pompeii, the tale of devilish debauchery in ancient Rome, triggered a couple of movies, both of which were in the Carry On tradition. Sadly, Frankie, like so many of the great performers mentioned in this article, passed away before he could fulfil his contract to star in what will likely be the last Carry On film of all, Carry On Columbus.



FRANKIE HOWERD

As far as Britons are concerned, the golden years of radio comedy and the history of the cinema screen will be forever linked, as long as people continue to replay and enjoy those outrageously camp and cheerfully wicked movies from The Carry On Gang.

Cheerio for now.



"It'd be wonderful for
radio reception."

ALERT ALL NEIGHBORS! THE RADIO MAN IS IN THE DISTRICT!

by Herb Franklin (Member of N.A.R.A.)

World War II, between 1939-45, created many feelings of insecurity in our neighborhood in Toronto but despite this undercurrent of war, fear of sickness and lack of money, the children were relatively unconcerned and carried on enjoying a carefree childhood. Usually carefree, that is, except when we were burdened with the awesome responsibility of telling a lie to the man from the Canadian Department of Communications.

Radio was becoming the newest plaything of Canadians who assembled primitive radio receivers from coils of wire wrapped around an empty cardboard 'Quaker Oats' box, a fine piece of wire called a 'whisker' that touched onto a piece of rock-crystal to receive radio station signals broadcasting from the United States and listened through earphones to far away stations which were picked out of the air by a long piece of wire stretched from the top of the house to the end of the yard.

In May, 1933, The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission came on the air and needed money to support their new broadcasting system! There was only one place to get it; people who buy radios would be forced to purchase an annual license for the privilege of snatching the signals from the air. Manufactured radios encased in attractive wooden cabinets were becoming a necessity for the ordinary working man and all who could scrape together enough money wanted this latest form of entertainment in their home. By the late 1930's most families had managed to buy a radio of some sort and they were treasured as the newest magic of entertainment.

It was difficult enough to get the money together to buy a radio of any kind, but if the government thought the public was going to pay an additional fifty cents or a dollar a year for a license, they were sadly mistaken. When the 'Radio Man' was in the district going door to door to collect his fee, the news spread like wildfire, and all children were instructed that if anyone was snooping around asking ANYTHING about radios, we must say, "We don't have a radio in our house," and hope that he didn't have the right to come in and search our house. No one seemed to know for sure if he had this power but we were willing to take that chance rather than to pay for something that is floating around in the air free for the picking. So, we learned at an early age that it is sometimes necessary to tell an outright lie and the collections for the 'Radio man' became pretty lean around Salem Avenue.

Finally, the Government got so frustated with the uncooperative citizenry and the difficulty of collecting this fee that they stopped licensing radio sets completely and got the money to support 'The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation' through income taxes which we still pay today, but the cost is now considerably more than one or two dollars per set.

Our youthful lies to the government radio license collector were not considered by the children to be morally wrong in the uneasy times of war. It was simply good practice in the event that we were to be called upon to be secret government spies to protect our country from our wartime enemies as depicted in many patriotic radio stories that we listened to with great seriousness.

Excerpt from 'Street Stories Of Toronto' c. H. Franklin 626 Fothergill Ave. Burlington, ON. Can. L7L-6E3

EDITOR'S NOTE: NARA member Herb Franklin has provided us with this excerpt from his soon to be published book entitled STREET STORIES OF TORONTO.

Customizing with Computers

by B.J. George

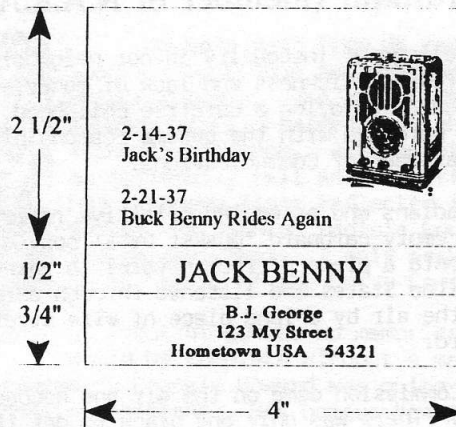


Figure 1

One of the nice features of computers is the ability to create customized items such as letterheads, envelopes, and business cards. You can take this list a step further and make your own personalized index cards (for cassette boxes) and cassette labels.

Index cards make it easy to see just what shows are on the enclosed cassette tape. Figure 1 shows a card made using WordPerfect for Windows. First I measured the index card that came in the box with my blank cassette. Then I transferred these measurements into the WordPerfect document. Using the pull down menu I selected *Graphics* and *Horizontal Line* to

draw the top line. Double clicking on the line brings up the *Edit Graphics* box. Here I set the line's length (four inches), and set its position on the page (one inch from the top and one inch from the left). I continued this process for the bottom line and both spine fold lines. Then I selected *Graphics* and *Vertical Line* to draw the left and right sides of the card. Setting the positions of the lines will keep them in the same place so they won't move whenever you add text or graphics. I set the all the margins to match the size of the index box. This makes it easier to place text and center it on the index card.

I added clip art of a radio from Softkey's Key Clip Art for Windows. You could use graphics that match the shows, such as a cowboy for western shows, etc. Finally I typed in the episode of the show and its broadcast date. In the spine I selected a larger font size and entered the name of the show. Last, but not least, I typed my name and address on the back flap.

You're not limited to using WordPerfect. Most all word processors, desktop publishers, and drawing programs allow you to draw lines and import graphics. Check with your program's instruction book on the how-to's. Remember to save your work onto a disk or the computer's hard drive. This serves as a template and saves the wear and tear of drawing lines each time you want to print up a new card. Simply change your clip art and enter new text.

Avery makes a wide selection of labels. Other companies, such as Maco and 3M, make labels as well. Most of these manufacturers list corresponding Avery stock numbers on the boxes. This makes selecting a label easier since most all computer label

makers are programmed for using Avery labels.

I made my cassette label on WordPerfect for Windows as well. There are several other inexpensive programs, such as Expert Labels or DSR's Labels Plus! You could use Avery's blank cassette labels (#5198). Or if you're like me, a Jack Benny offspring, you can make your own labels, print them onto blank 2 x 4" shipping labels (Avery #8162), and cut them to size to fit onto a cassette tape.

I created my cassette label (figure 2) using WordPerfect's Draw. This way I was able to draw just one label, then make copies of it so I wouldn't have to draw all ten labels.

First I drew the outside lines of the box. Then I drew the oval circle in the middle using a box with rounded corners. Once drawn, I simply dragged the corners to form a 5/8" diameter. WordPerfect automatically redraws the other end of the box for you.

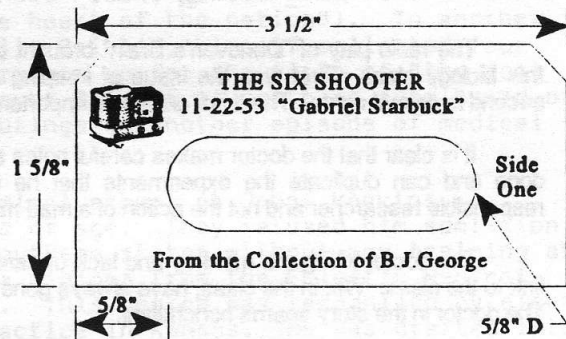


Figure 2

Placing the box and oval on the screen is easier if you have the *Grid* and *Ruler* on. I set the grid spacing for 1/8" (0.125"). Next I added my clip art of the radio (or any other clip art you desire), and the text for *Side One* and *From the Collection of...* Then I grouped all of this together so that the box, oval, text, and clip art would become one item. This makes it easier to copy. Then I simply made nine copies and placed them on the page so that when printed, they would line up in the center of each of the 2 x 4" blank shipping labels. I saved the page onto the hard drive to serve as a template for future use, like I did with the index card.

All that remained was adding the text for each program. If you're not printing an entire sheet of labels, simply delete those that are not needed. Remember not to save the changes, or you will have to recopy the labels you deleted. If you're looking for no nonsense cassette labels, you can use labels made for file folders. These are generally 2/3" x 3 7/16".

While I happen to have a fondness for WordPerfect, you can use other programs to create customized labels and index cards. I tried making both on CompuWorks' Designer, an inexpensive drawing program. While it didn't have the word processing features like WordPerfect, it worked well enough for the task at hand. So give it a try on your computer. Once you print up a few index cards or cassette labels and show them off, you'll become the envy of you fellow collectors.

DONOVAN'S BRAIN

EDITOR'S NOTE: Roger Hill gives his students an "extra credit" opportunity by letting them listen to cassettes of old radio shows and then write about them. These young people grew up in the age of television, and so it is of particular interest to those of us in the OTR hobby to see their reactions. In this review of the *SUSPENSE* show, "Donovan's Brain," Brian Householder ties the story in to his biology class.

The radio play of "Donovan's Brain" brought about a number of questions in relation to this biology class. First was the issue of keeping a journal and making observations. The second is animal rights. The third, and most important, is research ethics.

It is clear that the doctor makes careful notes so the others will see the work that he has done and can duplicate the experiments that he does. I find this to be the action of a responsible researcher and not the action of a mad man, as it later turns out.

The doctor killing the monkey and lack of care in regards to the animal is another clear link to the class. We, in the class, have always gone to the full extent to keep our subject alive. The doctor in the story seems nonchalant.

The big point of this is the ethics question of the doctor killing Donovan. The doctor's lack of regard to morality in the name of science, and the price he pays in the end, shows how small we all are in regard to the big picture.

From a personal standpoint, I loved the program. I wish that I had grown up in the days of radio plays and the great Orson Welles. It was great fun and had me on the edge of my seat. Do you have any more of these, and if so, can I have them to listen to?



University of Memphis Radio Program Archive

NARA columnist Robert Brown has notified us of a unique source for adding programs to your collection at a reasonable cost. The University of Memphis has a catalog of around 2,600 old radio shows that are available from them. You send them ten 60 minute cassettes and \$10, along with a list of which shows you want from their catalog, and they will make copies and return them to you. We haven't heard back from them yet as to the cost of that catalog, but you can request information about that by sending a stamped self addressed envelope to: Mr. Darrell Perkins, c/o Learning Media Center, The University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152. Phone: (901) 678-2181.

Wireless Wanderings



JIM SNYDER

Back in our winter 1995 issue, I wrote about Norman Baker who founded radio station KTNT which he used to advance his medical quackery. But he was not alone in this kind of scheme, as there was another well documented medical swindler on the radio.

In the late 1920's the RADIO DIGEST awarded a gold cup to John R. Brinkley for running the most popular radio station in the United States. This was KFKB ("Kansas First, Kansas Best: the sunshine station in the heart of the nation"). In another popularity poll, Brinkley himself collected four times as many votes as the nearest runner up for the title of "the most popular personality on radio." I doubt if most of you have ever heard of Brinkley, or his station, but this brings us another episode of medical fakery involving early radio.

Brinkley tried to enter the medical school at Johns Hopkins University when he was fifteen years of age. They refused him admission, so he practiced medicine in three southern states without any training at all. In 1915 he spent \$100 buying a diploma from the Eclectic Medical University of Kansas City, Missouri. This degree was recognized by eight states, so he was able to set up practice in Kansas. He was drafted into the military in 1917, and while he frequently referred to his "brilliant military career," in actuality he was discharged after only one month.

He built a hospital in Milford, Kansas, and that put him heavily in debt, so he hired advertising people to promote his new medical operation. He specialized in the treatment of diseased prostate glands. His operation was the implanting of the gonads of goats in his patients (victims). His "goat gland operation," along with other medical matters, were heavily promoted on KFKB, his station. He took in millions of dollars from his listeners who wanted to believe.

His station started up in 1923 and was powerful enough to cover much of the central portion of the country. He answered letters daily on three half hour programs, all titled the "Medical Question Box." Using this forum he organized and promoted the "National Dr. Brinkley Pharmaceutical Association," with about 1500 participating druggists. Brinkley would read a letter over the air, and then prescribe his medicines by code numbers. Patients would then purchase their remedies at their "neighborhood Brinkley pharmacy." This was done very much in the manner of the old western medicine show. A sample: "Here's one [a letter] from Tillie. She says she had an operation. Had some trouble ten years ago. I think the operation was unnecessary, and it isn't very good sense to have an ovary removed with the expectation of motherhood resulting therefrom. My advice to you is to use woman's tonic number 50, 67 and 61. This combination will do for you what you desire, if any combination will, after three months persistent use. Now here is a letter from a dear mother, a dear little mother who holds to her breast a babe of nine months. She should take number 2 and number 16, and yes, number 17 and she will be helped. Brinkley's 2, 16 and 17. If her

druggist hasn't got them, she should write and order them from the Milford Drug Company, Milford, Kansas, and they will be sent to you, Mother, collect. May the Lord guard and protect you, Mother. The postage will be prepaid."

All these "medicines" contained mostly castor oil and aspirin. Yet the "Medical Question Box" remained on the air for 13 years and brought in about three-quarters of a million dollars each year. His "goat gland operation," advertised in his medical broadcasts, brought in over 16,000 patients and over 12 million dollars. He resorted to the testimonial, such as this one broadcast in 1934: "I figured this Doctor Brinkley was talking about something that had these other doctors bothered. I figured that Dr. Brinkley was writing these letters himself that he read over the air, and so, to check up, I took down the names and addresses of some of the men whose letter he read and wrote to 'em asking what they knew about it. To my surprise, most of 'em answered me, and every mother's son that did answer was sure ace high for Dr. Brinkley and this treatment." The man went on to explain how he had the "guaranteed" goat gland operation and then continued, "Now what I can't figure out is this. With Dr. Brinkley pulling right down the main line under full head of steam and able to take care of all passengers, and right on schedule, why do so many of these regular members of the doctor's union try to run him in on a blind siding? That's what I don't understand."

Because of these practices Brinkley lost both his medical and broadcasting licenses. He then ran twice for governor of Kansas, coming in a very strong third each time. Some historians feel that he really did win the first time, as somewhere between 10,000 and 50,000 of his votes were thrown out by the election officials.

He then built a station in Villa Acuna, Mexico in 1931 and started up with his medical programming again, until the Mexican government expropriated his station in 1941. That ended the broadcast career of John R. Brinkley, the goat gland surgeon.

AUDIENCE RESPONSE

George Burns and Gracie Allen did one of their routines about saving old light bulbs:

"George, do you have any old light bulbs?"

"I thrown them away, Gracie. Why?"

"My sister could use a few."

"What for?"

"She puts them in all her lamps."

"Your sister puts old light bulbs in her lamps?"

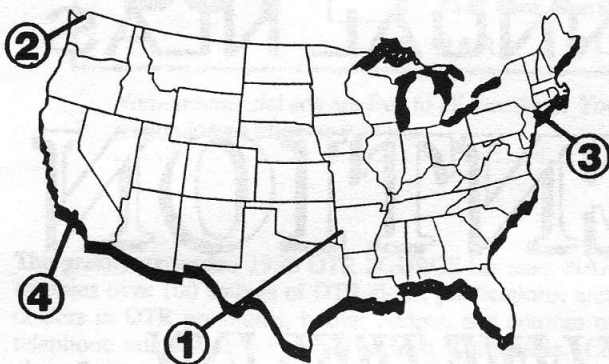
"It's a big saving."

"A big saving?"

"Of course, George. If you put in new bulbs they just burn out and you have to change them."

In the two weeks following the broadcast, the Burns' studio came to be filled with old, burned-out light bulbs of various sizes, which had been mailed to them by fans.

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 12TH ANNUAL NATIONAL LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY COVENTION will be held on June 22, 1996 in Mena, Arkansas, which is located only about twenty miles from Pine Ridge, where the action in this popular radio series took place. The Best Western Lime Tree Inn is the convention hotel. For information please contact Tim Hollis, #81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, Alabama 35062.
- ② THE REPS RADIO SHOWCASE IV is scheduled for the West Coast Bellevue Hotel in Bellevue, Washington on June 27 to 29, 1996. Information can be obtained by writing REPS Radio Showcase, 9936 NE 197th Street, Bothell, Washington 98011. Or you can call (206) 643-7641.
- ③ THE FRIENDS OF OLD TIME RADIO CONVENTION is an annual affair held 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. Future dates for this event are:
21st ANNUAL CONVENTION - October 17 - 19, 1996
22nd ANNUAL CONVENTION - October 23 - 25, 1997
- ④ THE SPERDVAC CONVENTION is held each year at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Los Angeles International Airport. For those driving it 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. Future dates;
November 8 - 10, 1996
November 7 - 9, 1997

READY OR NOT... HERE IT COMES!
**THE 12TH ANNUAL NLAS
CONVENTION**

**BEST WESTERN LIME TREE INN
MENA, ARKANSAS**



JUNE 22, 1996



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60TH
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**MENA'S
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The greatly expanded 1996 OTR SOURCE list from NARA is now available! This big, four-page compendium contains over 100 listings of OTR clubs, publications, archives, and audio dealers. Added to this new edition are dealers in OTR premiums, books, scripts, and sources of blank tape. Each entry includes full name, address, telephone number and/or e-mail address if available. Cost is only \$2 to NARA members and \$3 to everyone else. Send money in cash or stamps to Jack French, 5137 Richardson Drive, Fairfax, VA 22032. Please NO CHECKS...our profit margin on this is too small to make Jack drive to the bank and the post office. And make the stamps in a usable denomination...seven 32¢ ones would be about right. All profits go to NARA, so be generous.

Let's trade old time radio on cassette. Decent sound for decent sound. My collection contains well over 7,000 hours of material, very diverse. Much of it between 1927 and 1957. If interested, send a listing of your shows and your wants to Larry Siskind, 3725 131st Ave. N.E., Bellevue, WA 98005.

WANTED: I am desperately in need of a practical way of storing my old time radio collection. I am rapidly approaching 1,000 cassettes and have them laying all over the place. Any suggestions you can make about how to store them would be greatly appreciated. Jerry Michael, 118 Skyline Dr., Carpentersville, IL 60110.

Charles Sexton, 3245 Claydor Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45431, is looking for any information and/or copies of a children's show called "Happy Hank." This was an early morning (7:30 a.m.), 15 minute show aired during the 1940's from WLS, Chicago. It was sponsored by Cocoa Wheats.

WANTED: I'm still looking for any material on the radio career of Vernon Dalhart. I do know that he appeared as a guest artist on at least one Majestic Theater program, sponsored by Majestic radio. Also he was on the Barbasol program for a couple of years around 1929-32. Any information would be greatly appreciated. Jack Palmer, 145 North 21st St., Battle Creek, MI 49015. Phone: (616) 962-8807.

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES:

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FREE INFORMATION

On any, or all of the above. **1-800-386-0606** 24 hours a day, or write:
CARDINAL OF CALIFORNIA, Box 55, Palo Alto, CA 94302

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.

A TIP OF THE ATWATER DIAL TO....

The following individuals who have made financial donations to NARA:

John Abizaid

Sally J. Janus

Your monetary assistance is greatly appreciated.

Marilyn Hill. Husband Barry is listed as NARA's cassette librarian, and in this capacity he is doing a fine job getting new materials and organizing and working with what we have. But Marilyn is running the day-to-day operations of the library, filling your requests and seeing to it that your orders are handled promptly and efficiently. So, this is really a family and team effort. We greatly appreciate what both the Hills, Marilyn and Barry, are doing for all of us. Thanks Hills!

Ed Allcorn and Tom Monroe for donations to the cassette library. We are dependent on our members for seeing to it that our libraries continue to grow. Thanks gentlemen for helping to make this happen.

Our columnists for this issue: Don Aston, Brank Bresee, Herb Franklin, Jack French, B.J. George, Roger Hill, Henry Hinkel, Brian Householder, Gene Larson, Jarold Michael, Jack Palmer, John Pellatt, Charles Sexton, Ray Smith, Hal Stephenson, and Ken Weigel.

Paul Rapp for information on the death and life of his father, Philip Rapp (see page 16).

Robert Brown for information on the University of Memphis Archives Collection.

Those who have already sent in articles for the summer issue: Frank Bresee (six columns), Robert Mott, Ray Smith, Hal Stephenson, and Ken Weigel.

Cardinal of California for their ad in this issue (see page 48).

THANK YOU!!!

Please keep in mind that we have changed the deadlines for the following issues. New deadlines are now:

June 1 for the summer issue.

September 1 for the fall issue.

December 1 for the winter issue.