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A JOURNAL OF VINTAGE RADIO

Twenty-five years -- 1972/1997

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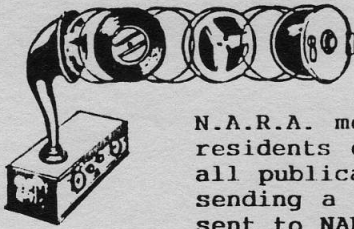
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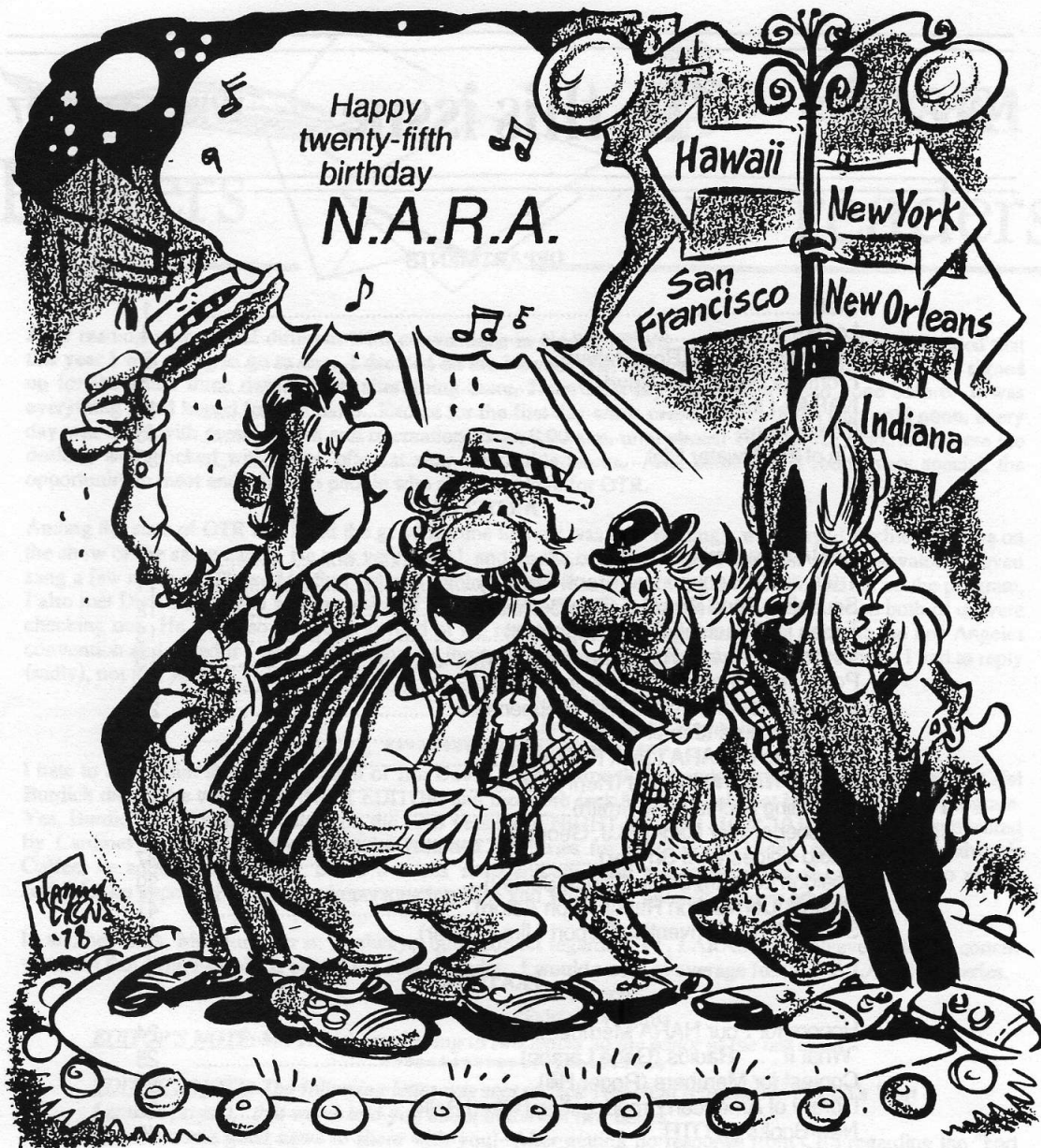
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Founded in 1972, the North American Radio Archives was the first national old time radio club. Throughout 1997 we will have special features in the NARA NEWS to help celebrate our twenty-fifth anniversary.

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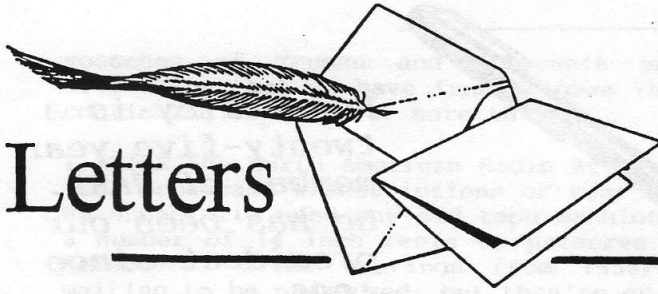
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Letters



from our readers

After reading accounts of different OTR conventions in NARA NEWS , so many times, I finally decided that this year I was going to go to one. I decided on the Newark one, because it is closest to where I live. I signed up for the entire three days. Now, after going there, I can only say that I wish I had gone before. It was everything I had hoped for and more. Except for the first day when presentations didn't start until noon, every day was filled with presentations and re-creations from 9:00 a.m. until almost 10:00 p.m. Also, there were the dealers, well stocked with tapes, often at very reasonable prices. And, something I found very special, the opportunity to meet and talk with people who share my love for OTR.

Among the stars of OTR that I had the good fortune to meet was Bob Hastings, who played Archie Andrews on the show of the same name. He was very genial, and on the occasion when I met him on the elevator, he even sang a few notes of "Please Mr. Sun" when I reminded him that he had sung it on one occasion on the program. I also met Dick Beals, who was the voice of "Speedy Alka Seltzer." I met him in the hall when both of us were checking out. He was also starred in several of the re-creations. He said that he was going to the Los Angeles convention and asked if I was. After a joyous three days that only whetted my appetite for more, I had to reply (sadly), not this year.

Ruth Boas
East Petersburg, Pennsylvania

I hate to disappoint the grandchildren of Jim Davis, but this time their grandpa is wrong. He believes that Hal Burdick did all the voices on NIGHT EDITOR, and therefore Jack Moyles could not have been on the program. Yes, Burdick did do all the voices on the CBS version of NIGHT EDITOR (1934-1938) which was sponsored by Cardinet Candy. However when he resumed the series for NBC (1945-1948), sponsored by Edwards Coffee, he added other actors. Some womens' roles and specialty voices were played by other radio actors. Jack Moyles appeared frequently, impersonating FDR and Winston Churchill, among others.

In another letter, Mr. Runden is, as always, quite correct regarding FT. LARAMIE. However I do not concur with him that "The Payroll" is one of the best episodes. I would rate it as average for the FT. LARAMIE series.

Jack French
Fairfax, Virginia

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. French is referring to two letters to the editor in the last issue.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following letter was sent to Jack French in reference to NARA's "Fort Laramie project," that we've told you about in the last two issues.

At last we have some good news to share with you! After getting no response from CBS regarding the "Fort Laramie" tapes, we had our cooperating association pay for a copyright search. [We have] received the results of that search and I am enclosing a copy of the information sent to us from the Library of Congress. It would appear we can go ahead with the project of selecting several taped programs for reproduction and sale in the cooperating association book and gift shop. Once selection has been made, we will write up an enclosure brochure. Thank you so much for your help and encouragement in getting the project this far along.

Linda Gilson
Fort Laramie National Historic Site
Fort Laramie, Wyoming

President's Page



Ronald Staley

Ron Staley is a twenty-five year member of NARA. He has been our president since 1985.

Hello! I'm here, basically, to tell you some exciting news. Number one, I'm looking with great cheer at our 25th anniversary. After all, 25 years ago a group of able young folks under the tutelage of Roger Hill, who was a student at that time at San Francisco State University, formed a group of collectors across the United States that he hoped would foster a love and a kinship with the spirit of old time radio to keep it going for generations to come. He called it the North American Radio Archives. We were students together and he came to me and said, "I'd like to do this North American Radio Archives," and he had a big twenty page form he was filling out. I kind of laughed and asked, "What's this going to do." He said, "We're going to have a good time and one of the things we want to do is put together a Carlton E. Morse tribute." Well, I kind of laughed at the idea and then I sat down and said, "What the heck, I might as well join up and become a charter member." So I signed on and sure enough, within the next year, 1972/73, he had formed a committee. In 1973 they had the first dinner to honor a noted radio person, that being Carlton E. Morse. It was held in San Francisco. I'd just gotten married at the time, was involved with going to classes and stuff, and being without much money I thought, "Now I have to go to a dinner and I don't have two cents to rub together, let alone a real suit." I got a call from Pat McCoy, one of the nicest guys you'll ever want to know. He told me that he was in San Francisco and would come to San Jose to pick me up. I told him that I just didn't have the money to go to the dinner. He responded that he would be glad to give me transportation up and back, and that I could stay in his hotel room. He made all kinds of wonderful offers to make it possible for me to go, but it was not to be, and I missed a fine dinner and program.

But now, as for the up and coming, we have established a working relationship with the University of California at Los Angeles, and their radio collection. I was originally their radio archivist from 1975/76 until 1990 when the program was discontinued. I felt that the best that I could do was try and foster a friendship with the University, and I kept the friendship going and we are now in the process of working out some pretty miraculous things. I might add that I'm interested in reporting to you, in the future, anything that we might get hold of. At present, I can allude to some things. We're going to be getting things from the 40's and a lot from the 60's. Collections I can't really tell you about right now are in the "work out" stages. We've already obtained quite a few broadcasts of various

speeches of Truman and Roosevelt and things to compliment our collection that we have from Brigham Young University. We are always continuing to look for more things.

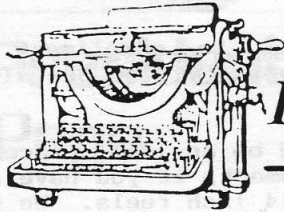
I think the North American Radio Archives would be an ideal place for your broadcast transcriptions or your old equipment, if you have any. We especially need any old tape machines with 14 inch reels. We have a number of 14 inch reels to preserve right now. A number of Estes Kefauver's crime hearings from 1950/51 are right now in storage waiting to be preserved, but they're on big 14 inch hubs. I'd like to put them on digital audio tape if I can, to make sure that we get a good clean copy, and then make them available to the NARA membership. But we can't do anything right now until we get some good preservation equipment that will take the 14 inch reels.

I know it's a task, but I can use this 25th anniversary to appeal to you on several fronts. Number one, if you know of anyone with grant writing capabilities I'd really appreciate hearing from you. If you know anyone who would possibly be interested in bequeathing their money to a good cause, the North American Radio Archives is such a good cause. We have a lot of good people out there and of course I look back at all the folks who were a part of our history. I look back with fondness to Roger Hill's day when he was president. Roger had a way of talking with people and dealing with people, and I hope I have some of the same for this 25th. We need all the help we can get with regard to updating our equipment. We're always in need of good equipment, or money to purchase digital audio tape equipment, supplies to keep it going, and to keep our storage facilities going too. It does cost to keep a climatized storage facility. We're storing a lot more than just Brigham Young University there. There's a lot of other materials, some transcriptions and a lot of tape. I appeal to all you folks out there. If you know of anybody who can give to a good tax free cause, a good non-profit cause, give to the North American Radio Archives.

I'm looking forward to another 40 or 50 years of prosperity. I think we will be the leaders in the future in terms of keeping vintage radio alive. I like to call it vintage radio because "old time" sounds very pejorative, and I hope to be a part of this process as time goes by.



We would like to start providing audio cassettes of the NARA NEWS for our blind members. This would require someone who would be willing to read each issue and put it on a cassette, and someone (it could be the same person or someone else) who could make copies of that "master" cassette and mail them out. If you would consider taking on either one, or both of these projects, please send a note to Jim Snyder (address inside the front cover of this issue) and include your phone number so that we can talk about it.



From The Editor's Desk....

So NARA has now been with us for a quarter century. That's really quite an accomplishment!!! I don't want these anniversary year issues to become maudlin, but I do think that this is a good opportunity to look back at some of our interesting past as well as forward to the future. I've asked some of our "old timers" to share their thoughts and memories with us during the year, and I hope that some of the rest of you will do the same. What you send us can be long or short, but we'd like to hear from you.

This might be a good time to share some of our editorial procedures with you. Someone spoke to me at one of the fall conventions, mentioning that Roger Hill has said a couple of times, in his column, that I was cutting material out of them. This person asked me to stop doing so. I simply didn't know what he was talking about but I came back and looked at Roger's stuff from the last couple of years and did find that in two of his columns Roger had speculated that I might have to shorten what he had written. Well, it didn't happen. In the very first issue of the NARA NEWS that I put together (fall 1994) I did indeed cut out some material from a couple of columns to make the material fit on a page. Since then I have NEVER done so. I've learned how to make things fit without cutting. I have used my judgement in changing some profanity, in direct quotes, that I really didn't think was necessary. On the other hand I haven't cut it all out as sometimes I have felt that it was necessary in the context of what was being said. I have returned three columns to writers because I didn't feel they had anything to do with OTR. Other than that, everything I receive goes in without being altered, except for the unintentional editing caused by my poor typing, which brings us to my next point.



About half the material that I receive is "camera ready." That simply means that I can use it exactly as I receive it and all I have to do is paste it together with the other things that I have. But, I must still type a great deal of the material in each issue myself. Frankly, my typing is poor, much on the order of the illustration on the left. After typing each paragraph I check it over and make corrections before going on. After the issue comes back from the printer, I re-read everything and am appalled at all the errors that I now see that I made. I can't imagine why I miss them when I do my first check, but I do. I'm sorry, but you are just going to have to bear with me on this.

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The most positive thing that the NARA NEWS has going for it is the excellent writing we see in each issue. This is from a magnificent cast of "regulars" and a wide assortment of others, both celebrities and our regular members. Several people have told me that they haven't sent anything in because it appears that I already have more material than I can use. THAT IS NOT CORRECT!!! I use everything that I get, and with at least two issues in the past year it was "nip and tuck" whether I would have enough to fill the full fifty pages.

I started writing my "Wireless Wanderings" column, in another club's publication, twenty years ago this month, in 1977. The editor of that publication had asked me to consider doing six columns a year and I wrote back saying that I sure couldn't think of anything to write about and would have to decline. But then I realized that was probably the response he would get from everyone, so before mailing that reply I sat down and thought of six subjects (a year's worth of columns) that I could write about. So I threw the original letter away and told that editor that I would try it for a year. Five years, and thirty columns later, I found that list and realized that I had only used one of those topics. Enough other ones occurred to me as I went along that I no longer needed a list. I certainly hope that some of you who have toyed with the idea of writing something will do so. If you're kind of stuck and don't know just how to get started, let me know and I'll be happy to help.

We do want to thank all those hard working staff members listed inside the front cover for the many hours that they put in for you. None are paid. In fact, I know that they all put some of their own money into their assignment for which they do not ask for reimbursement. Certainly there are going to be slip-ups as far as you, the members, are concerned. Since this happens to organizations with highly paid executives it is certainly going to happen to a volunteer outfit like NARA. If you encounter a problem with some area of NARA's operation, please DO follow up on it, but also be patient with our staff. They are all trying their very best.

I personally also want to thank all the contributors to the NARA NEWS. We wouldn't have a publication without them.

Finally, thanks to all of you, our loyal members, for your support over the last twenty-five years.



JIM SNYDER

NARA's 25th ANNIVERSARY

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

1997 is the twenty-fifth anniversary year for the North American Radio Archives, and it seems appropriate to give our members a bit of our history.

During the summer of 1972 Roger Hill, now our president emeritus, met with Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Krin (we've lost her first name) and the three of them expressed the concern, that many of us feel today, about the loss of radio programming as it appeared in the pre-television era. Since no organization existed, at that time, to preserve these broadcasts on tape and to disseminate information about them it was decided to create an organization to fill that need. Mrs. Krin, who was an attorney for AT&T, offered her services in preparing the legal documents necessary to gain recognition from the state of California. These people met and put the organization together during the last half of 1972 and in January word was received that the Secretary of State, the State Tax Board (both for the state of California), and the Internal Revenue Service had formally approved the incorporation of NARA.

Since the fledgling organization had no money to really get under way, six of the founding officers each contributed \$100 to meet the initial expenses. Of that group, only Roger Hill remains a member, and an active one at that as you can see from his regular column in the NARA NEWS.

The first major event sponsored by NARA was a tribute dinner for Carlton E. Morse and the cast members of "One Man's Family" and "I Love a Mystery." This was held in June, 1973 and nearly 100 guests were in attendance. This was, perhaps, the forerunner of the various old time radio conventions that are now held around the country.

The first issue of the NARA NEWS came out the following October. This was a 13 page mimeographed effort. This first issue also announced the opening of our tape library which had eight reels (cassettes weren't on the scene in those days) available for members to borrow. The opening of the printed materials library was also announced with eight books and seventeen printed papers available.

In February of 1974 NARA made its presence known to the general public by presenting, with the California Historical Society, a two hour program on the "Great Moments in Radio at its Heyday." Over one hundred people attended this program. This was followed by a joint venture with the Bank of America to edit this program into a three-part program which was put on to full houses during the lunch hour in San Francisco's financial district.

TIME magazine contacted NARA in April, 1974 and did an article mentioning NARA and old time radio. This brought in over 800 requests for information about the club. The third issue of the NARA NEWS came out later that year, a "bound" issue of 87 pages. NARA was definitely launched.

It is interesting to note that in the beginning NARA stated two main objectives for the organization:

A. To establish the means by which the knowledge of radio broadcasting can significantly be realized by the general public.

B. To gather and preserve materials which will serve to educate the general public about radio. Such material may be original radio broadcasts recorded on electrical transcriptions,

scripts of radio broadcasts, books, magazines and other publications pertaining to radio history between 1920-1960. Donations of such items are tax deductible. All materials will be curated and inventory catalogs made available to members and scholars. NARA will disseminate information through publication of newsletters, quarterly journal and brochures for educational purposes. the corporation will maintain a circulating library of radio broadcasts on tape for use by members and the general public. NARA will provide guidance and selected materials to those wishing to teach classes in radio history on the high school and college levels. NARA will continue to actively explore means by which material of radio's history may be used today in education. The organization is actively seeking funds to establish a museum of broadcasting which would be open to the public and contain a resource library, the archives, NARA offices, and other facilities designed to serve the educational interest of the public.

While some of these goals have changed over the years, one additional statement is as true today as it was then. That is: "THE NORTH AMERICAN RADIO ARCHIVES IS OPERATED BY MEMBERS AND FOR MEMBERS."



"Aren't We Devils"

Truth or Consequences

**How the Edwards organization
rigged the "It Could Be You"
series ...**

"Aren't we devils" was an expression that Ralph Edwards used on his vintage "Truth or Consequences" radio show which began in the fall of 1940.

Two decades later Ralph Edwards turned out to be the devil, or at least play the devil's advocate, as he defended his rigged television show "It Could Be You".

According to his 'official' biography, Ralph Edwards was born in 1915 on a farm near Merino, Colorado. When he was 12 his family moved to Oakland, California where Ralph began his theatrical career by appearing in school plays.

Then Broadway beckoned. Ralph and a friend pooled their resources, packed their worldly goods into a battered jalopy and headed for New York and fame.

New York, however, remained singularly unimpressed by Edwards' talents. His finances dwindled; he slept in local parks and when the weather was bad he slept in an all-night movie house on passes from a friend.

After three months of struggling, and when he was down to his last fifteen cents, his luck changed.

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.

He was called for an audition as staff announcer at one of the networks, stood at the mike with his hand covering a hole in the elbow of his only suit, and won the audition over 69 competitors.

Within six weeks he was one of the most popular announcers on the air, and within two years his earnings rose from his starting salary of \$45 a week to \$1,100 a week.

Then it happened. Proctor and Gamble was looking for a new half-hour radio program. He dusted off the old children's parlor game and "Truth or Consequences" was born on the air.

For a time it was one of the most popular radio shows on the air, originating for the most part, every Saturday evening from the NBC studios at Sunset and Vine in Hollywood.

During a national contest, Hot Springs, New Mexico, changed its name to "Truth or Consequences, New Mexico," and it remains to this day.

It seems this idea, however, was originally hatched by the great Lum and Abner, when Waters, Arkansas changed its "official" name to Pine Ridge, Arkansas, to pay tribute to their wonderful show.

Over the years the Edwards organization produced many shows and during the 1959 - 1960 season, in addition to T or C, presented for the TV audience "About Faces," "It Could Be You," and "This Is Your Life."

During 1960, writer Hal Blake provided "contestants" and wrote special acts for the "It Could Be You" television show. These turned out to be rigged, and an investigation was undertaken.

In the February 1961 edition of CONFIDENTIAL magazine, Hal Blake told the complete story. He said in

part "When I first started writing for Edwards, I was a little dubious about the legality of rigging shows." At one point during a later investigation, Blake was called into the office of Paul Edwards (Ralph's brother) and when confronted with rigging one show, said, "I didn't rig one, I rigged forty of them and almost everybody in the organization knew I was doing it."

The Confidential story goes on to tell the facts of how, when the chips were down, Hal Blake was fired, and wasn't even paid all the money that was due him. (Quoting from Confidential)

It certainly was a sad commentary for an organization, which at that time, twenty years ago, was the top production company in the business. Sad, too, that perhaps because of the rigging, the Edwards shows went off the network, and except for a 13-week revival of "Name That Tune" on NBC several seasons ago, I don't know of any other network show produced by the Edwards Company.

It seems a tragic end for a man who, at one time, was eagerly listened to by most everyone from coast-to-coast.

THE END OF THE SQUEALING REEL PROBLEM

a procedure that old time radio fans anywhere can use to temporarily restore full playability to squealing reel-to-reel audio tapes and/or tapes that completely freeze on the machines

By Bob Burnham

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The folks at a major reel-to-reel blank tape manufacturer have recommended the use of a special convection oven to bake varieties of certain grades of tape whose binders dry out making them impossible to play without cleaning the machine every minute or two of operation.

Some old-time radio collectors have advocated the concept of spraying plain tap water on the tape. The "other" common method used by collectors is the continuous manual (read laborious!) application of head cleaner directly to the tape with cotton swabs. This must be done as the tape moves through the machine. Typically, this means one must sit at the machine every minute the tape is playing.

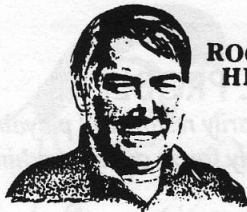
Not everyone has a convection or an industrial oven, and I don't feel the other methods that have been used by collectors (including myself) to be particularly healthy for the tape itself or the machine. Those methods are also a bit of a pain!

The "baking" of the tapes, however, also works with ANY household oven (NOT microwave) with a reasonable thermostatic control. Use an oven thermometer if you aren't certain your oven is dependable. They are available from any grocery store. Below are the steps involved that I recommend. This is not a "pure" science, so some deviation from these steps will probably also work. This is the method I have tested, however, and I can verify with reasonable certainty that if you follow these steps, it WILL work.

- 1.) If possible, first wind your reel onto a metal reel. I used an empty 10-1/2" aluminum take-up reel, but a 7" metal reel should work just as well. You may have to thread the tape directly from the supply reel to the take-up reel (by-passing the tape guides and heads) if the tape is really bad. Use a piece of masking tape to temporarily secure the tape guides to enable your machine to operate in this mode.
- 2.) Thoroughly pre-heat your oven to approximately 125 degrees. A few degrees either way should not make a difference. Then switch your oven to "bake." Imagine you're warming some left-overs or a bagel... before the days of microwave ovens.
- 3.) Place the reel on the center rack of the pre-heated oven. If you wound it onto the metal reel, it will of course, be wound tails out.
- 4.) Allow the reel to "bake" for about 30 minutes, of course, using adequate protection for your hands.
- 5.) Remove the reel from the oven. Allow it to "cool" about 15 minutes.
- 6.) Clean your tape heads and tape guides. Rewind the reel, threading in the usual manner to the start of the tape. You will find the tape passes across the tape guides just like a factory fresh tape!
- 7.) Play the tape. The tape should play perfectly all the way through.
- 8.) Make a copy of the tape onto new stock. This "baking" method is only temporary, however, it can be repeated if the squeal returns before you have time to make a copy.

I make no warranty as to the suitability of these methods for your particular situation, tape or equipment. Furthermore, if you melt your tape into a plastic blob, I will not be held responsible! If you take your time and follow these steps and the advice given, however, I have reasonable confidence that these techniques will work perfectly for you just as they did for me.

Bob Burnham / BRC Productions / Platecap@aol.com / 24 HR FAX (313) 277-3095



ROGER HILL

THE OLD CURMUDGEON

Back in the early 1970's I had the pleasure of teaching Radio History courses at several universities in the San Francisco Bay Area. At that time I had assembled a nice audio tape with many bits and pieces representing broadcasting from the 1920's to 1945. Recently, while renovating our radio section in the store, I had to re-do the listing for the contents of these cassettes as they are now on the shelf for rental (or purchase of copies) by members.

Perhaps some of you are interested in teaching a short course or a semester-long class in radio history. If so, these segments may be of use to you and feel free to contact me with any questions or if you'd like to purchase the 4 cassettes. A listing is below.

HISTORY: 1920-1926 & 1927-1934

1. Mood setting songs and music: Barney Google by Georgie Price - 1918
Carolina Moon by Troubadours; Prisoner's Song by Vernon Dalhart;
Got to Cool My Doggies Now by Cotton Pickers
2. Soft Wax Cylinders: comedy routine 2 min.
3. Two Black Crows (Moran & Mack)-1925
4. Cohen on the Telephone (Joe Hayman)-1918
5. It's Nice to Get Up in the Morning w/ Harry Lauder-1922
6. Uncle Josh (Calvin Stewart) buying automobile-early 20's
7. Enrico Caruso "O Sole Mio"-1909 {Lee DeForest broadcast
from Metropolitan Opera House Stage via radio telephone}
8. Eugene V. Debs [WEVD in NYC] socialist party leader
9. Wm. Howard Taft - 27th pres.
10. Woodrow Wilson - 28th pres.
11. Warren G. Harding - 29th pres.
12. Thomas Edison reminisces
13. King George V
14. Sarah Bernhardt
15. Babe Ruth
16. Jack Dempsey
17. Bobby Jones
18. Rudolph Valentino
19. Aimee Semple McPherson
20. George Bernard Shaw
21. Booker T. Washington
22. George M. Cohan
23. King Edward -1926
24. Billy Sunday
25. FDR -1920 vp candidate for democrats
26. H. Fonda comment on T. Roosevelt & voice of TR
27. Charles Herrold's 1912 station KQW (KCBS)
28. Cylinder song on radio; comments re: Westinghouse;
wireless; Frank Conrad's KDKA; 1st anncr Harold Arlen of
KDKA; Herbert Hoover; Will Rogers; Wm. Jennings
Bryan; WJZ; Vincent Lopez; John B. Gambling; 1924 elections
29. comments-singer Vaughn De Leith [didn't break tubes with
high notes; off air in 1921]
30. NBC began in 1926; Merlyn Aylesworth 1st pres.; recreation of
Will Rogers voice; Ben Bernie; FM & M; L & A; radio themes

HISTORY: 1927-1934 & 1935-1940

1. Sam & Henry - 1927
2. Amos & Andy - 1928 election
3. A & A song showing popularity-1929
4. Phantom Dancer - 1931
5. Crosby Cremo Cigar Show - 12/5/31
6. Pontiac Show - 1932
7. Ted Lewis Show - 1934
8. Sealed Power Show - 1933
9. Silver Masked Tenor (Jos. White) -1932
10. Jones & Hare - 1934
11. Armand Dance - 1932
12. Big Bands commentary
13. Gulf Pgm. w/Will Rogers -1933
14. Town Crier w/Alex. Woolcott -1933
15. Comments on radio in depression
16. Clara, Lu & Em - 1934
17. Detectives Black & Blue
18. Calling All Cars - 1934
19. Honor the Law - early 1930's
20. Thrills of the Highway Patrol
21. Tarzan
22. Omar, the Wizard of Persia
23. Moon Over Africa
24. Chandu, the Magician
25. Frankenstein
26. Jack Armstrong - 1934
27. Sound Effects commentary
28. Easy Aces - 1934
29. Seymour Bergson - 1935 news
30. Hindenberg Crash w/Herb Morrison -5/7/36
31. Newscaster Floyd Gibbons
32. Father Coughlin
33. FDR Fireside Chat
34. 1936 Berlin Olympics w/Jesse Owens
35. Munich Pact w/Neville Chamberlain-1937
36. Hitler's Danzig Speech-9/18/39
37. March of Time -1939
38. David Sarnoff Speech 6/37 about TV

HISTORY: 1935-1940 & 1940-1945

1. Henry Morgan's comments on soaps-Ma Perkins
2. Anne Hummert's comments
3. Myrt & Marge - 1937
4. Vic & Sade
5. Norge Musical Kitchen:Sanderson & Crumit
6. Uncle Don
7. Let's Pretend
8. Air Adventures of Jimmy Allen
9. Speed Gibson of the International Secret Police
10. Capt. Midnight & how he got his name
11. Little Orphan Annie-radio premium !
12. Major Edward Bowles Amateur Hour -gong
13. Palmolive Beauty Box Theater w/Jessica Dragonnette
14. Fanny Brice - 2nd Hand Rose
15. Fanny Brice - Baby Snooks
16. Joe Penner & Rudy Vallee
17. May West - 1937 Eve skit
18. Fred Allen with the Eagle problem (Mr. Renshaw)
19. Shadow Openings w/Welles and Morrison
20. Gangbusters
21. Big Town rehearsal w/E.G. Robinson
22. Henry Morgan comments on Witches Tale
23. Les Miserables - #7 w/Welles
24. Wm. N. Robson - 1937 Col. Workshop "Fall of the City"
25. Wilkie accepts nomination
26. OMF and Paul Barbour "We Are Proud" - 9/40
27. FM & M - 11/40 election show {old timer/alliteration}
28. FDR & 1st draft #- late 1940
29. Closing of 1940 World's Fair in NY
30. ending of Hospital on the Thames - appeal for Bundle for Britian
31. Churchill appeal for aid
32. Lord Haw Haw (Wm. Joyce)
33. Murrow from London during air raid
34. U.P. News dramatized - london air raid
35. Young America Wants to Help w/Garland, Aldrich, Helen Hayes
36. News - Walter Winchell- 5/8/41
37. comments on German American Bund
38. News - 11/41
39. Johnny Messner remote from NY - 12/7/41
40. March of Time - Pearl Harbor recreated 12/7/41
41. FM & M part - 12/9/41

HISTORY: 1940-1945:

1. FM & M part - 12/9/41
2. Anti-Axis songs
3. This is War - 1942
4. This is our Enemy - 1942
5. Life Can Be Beautiful 1942/1943
6. I Love a Mystery close & Jack comments on Nazis
7. OMF open w/com'l and rationing
8. H. Morgan comments on blackmarket gas
9. Mileage rationing pgm. w/Cantor, Benny, Burns, Allen
10. Garry Moore comments -Command Performance
11. Stage Door Canteen/commentary on fats & junk
12. Superman - Nazi's North Pole
13. Superman - Japs in S. America
14. Front Page Farrell open - war effort
15. Troman Harper, Rumor Detective: Chinese coming to America
16. Man Behind the Gun cancelled-1943 race riots
17. D-Day -6/44
18. Ed. R. Murrow-wire recording by Collingwood ; Geo. Hicks on Battleship
19. FDR Fala speech-11/44; after Yalta 2/45
20. Molotov speech from S.F. on day Germany surrendered
21. Howard K. Smith from Berlin - 5/45
22. On a Note of Triumph 5/45
23. Gabriel Heater News
24. British comments on Bergen Belsen camp
25. Pacific War Report w/Webley Edwards - Jap balloons landing on W. Coast
26. Empire State Building plane crash on 79th floor-7/28/45
27. Uncle Don - japs and spanking 8/10/45
28. premature surrender reports on Double or Nothing - 8/12/45
29. Cab Calloway interruption -surrender 8/14/45
30. Father Barbour's prayer for peace -8/19/45

ROGER HILL was one of NARA's founders, and the only one still a member. He served as our president from 1973 to 1980. Since then he has been our president emeritus. He was the editor of the NARA NEWS from 1974 to 1976 and again from 1979 to 1980. He has been a frequent contributor to this publication, and is, of course, now one of our regular columnists. We thought you might enjoy seeing his picture as it has appeared here over the years:



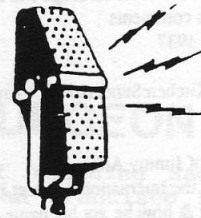
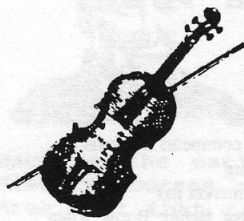
1976



1983



1995



FROM

JACK PALMER

VERNON DALHART ON THE RADIO

Regular readers of this column have heard me speak of Vernon Dalhart from time to time. He was really the first country music star, but he did it all on recordings, not radio or personal appearances. Records (and sheet music) were much more important than radio until the latter part of the 1920's. However, Dalhart did appear on several network radio shows as a guest and also had his own network program for at least 6 months in 1931. Since I did not have enough information to discuss his radio career with the other country music radio pioneers, I will try to cover it now.

Vernon Dalhart, whose real name was Marion Try Slaughter, II, was born near Jefferson, Texas in 1883. (see note) His father was killed in a bar room brawl when Dalhart was about ten years old. Shortly thereafter, he and his mother moved to Dallas, where he eventually started training for a career in classical music. By 1910 he had moved his family (wife and two children) to New York and was appearing on the stage in various operas and light operas. For several years, he sang the part of Ralph Rackstraw (the leading tenor) in Gilbert and Sullivan's H. M. S. Pinafore, both in New York and with various touring companies. Since the financial condition of any performer is always dependant on his next booking, Dalhart hoped to obtain an additional source of income by doing phonograph recordings. Around 1915, he auditioned for the Edison Record Company and was approved by Thomas Edison himself. However, his first Edison recording did not appear until 1917. In the meantime, he had recorded for at least two other companies and by 1920 was doing recordings for several companies on a fairly regular basis. With a few good sellers and a wide ranging repertoire (he sang everything from classics to comedy) he probably would have continued on that course for his entire career, and would have been only another tenor who made records. And there were many of them in the 1920's.

But in 1924 occurred an event which changed his life and career forever. He had covered a song, Wreck Of The Old 97, for Edison and when it sold reasonably well, he asked Victor to let him record it for them. They agreed if he had something for the B side. Dalhart and/or others, revised an old folk song often performed by his cousin, to use on the B side. Naturally the B side took off and became one of the biggest selling records in the world up to that time. The song, The Prisoner's Song, made Dalhart famous. It became so popular that he sang the song for every major record company, and his recordings appeared on more than 30 labels in the US, plus dozens more over seas. For the next 2 or 3 years Dalhart was the busiest recording artist in the US. He often did 3 sessions a day to get all his commitments completed. Because this record was considered country, much of Dalhart's output after this date was rural flavored. He had become the first country music star and was eventually inducted into the Country Music Hall Of Fame in 1981.

But by 1930, between the depression, competition, and other problems, Dalhart's recording career had almost died. So Dalhart, like many other artists, turned to radio. He had already appeared as a guest on several radio shows, including at least one program of the MAJESTIC THEATRE OF THE AIR on 1 September 1929. On this program Dalhart had been billed as Vernon Dalhart & Company. The company consisted of his recording partner on many of his duets, Adelyne Hood (she also played violin and piano), plus a banjoist and a guitarist (as they were listed on the program). Dalhart and his company performed 7 of the 16 numbers presented on the show. The selections varied from "Razors In The Air" to "Can't You Hear Me Calling, Caroline"

Finally in 1931, Dalhart and his partner, Adelyne Hood, were featured on their own regularly scheduled CBS show sponsored by Barbasol. The program was called BARBERSHOP CHORDS with Dalhart as Barbasol Ben and Ms. Hood as Barbara, the manicurist (note the names). They were supported by a barber shop quartet and presented old and new songs and stories. The program was on for 15 minutes twice a week and was supposedly broadcast on the nation-wide CBS chain. However, I was unable to locate any mention of the show in west coast radio program listings, so perhaps it was never actually nation-wide. It must have been fairly popular, since one month later it went from twice a week to three times a week.

There are several unanswered questions about this show. It replaced Singing Sam, whom had been broadcasting for Barbasol. It was on the air from April to October 1931, then was replaced with the Singing Sam program again. Was the Dalhart show just a summer replacement show for Singing Sam, or did it do so poorly that Barbasol went back to Singing Sam? Possibly Dalhart decided to quit it himself. To my knowledge, he never appeared again on network radio until the late 1930's, when he was a guest on WE, THE PEOPLE.

The second major question is how was it broadcast. This may seem an odd question, but it is a valid one. On 1 and 2 April, 1931, Dalhart and Hood were in a recording studio in London, England recording 8 songs for Regal Records. Yet according to at least 2 radio magazines, the show was to begin in April and be broadcast on Mondays and Thursdays. The first Monday in April was the 6th. Considering the difficulties of both travel and short wave broadcasts in those days, the only way this show could have been on the air would have been by transcription. This would have been highly unusual, but would have been possible. A recent discovery by a collector acquaintance of transcriptions used by Frank Crumit in broadcasts about this time makes me wonder. It may have been more common than one realized.

(As you can see, the information I have gathered about this 1931 show has created as many new questions as it resolved. I have been unable to check every radio magazine published in 1931, but surely there must have been mention of this show in more than one magazine. If anyone is able to furnish me any additional information about this show, or any other radio broadcast that Vernon Dalhart appeared on, I would greatly appreciate it.)

Dalhart later did some local broadcasts in upstate New York in 1938 when he was making personal appearances in that area. It was the same as I had mentioned in earlier articles. He performed for free to advertise his personal appearances. Dalhart did not think much of the system and wrote in a letter to a friend "I think I've had a belly full of that supporting radio stations with free entertainment. If I'm going to do that, I can stay home and do better." There were no more free performances. A few years later he was working for a defense plant in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He died in 1948 almost forgotten.

NOTE: The 1890 census shows Marion Try Slaughter, II as born in 1881. All other sources, including his death certificate and grave marker, indicate 1883.

Post-Panic Welles & the Campbell Playhouse

By Ken Weigel

Few programs have had a shorter life or a more protracted history than *Mercury Theater On the Air*, which threw in the sponge shortly after "War of the Worlds." Orson Welles secured a sponsor even before the print media's harangues against radio for spooking the public subsided.

The record of Welles's first contact with Campbell Soups is spotty, even today. There are at least two accounts in the OTR daybook that are at odds with the more reliable radio informants. One claims the Welles-Campbell collusion began on November 12, 1938, with the performance of Agatha Christie's "Murder of Roger Ackroyd." John Dunning, however, dates the "Ackroyd" broadcast one year later: November 12, 1939 (*Tune in Yesterday*, p.276). The inconsistency here merely puts a typesetter's error under suspicion. But Dunning is also the source for the rumor that the *Campbell Playhouse* series premiered on September 10, 1939, with the production of "Peter Ibbetson" (p.413). More likely Welles drew his first paycheck from Campbell ten months earlier, on December 9, 1938, for "Rebecca." In his telltale introduction to "Rebecca," Campbell spokesman Edwin Hill gave a red carpet welcome to Welles, outlining his triumphs with lavish allusions to the Welles prodigy and theatrical genius. Buildups of this tonnage--as, to mark another, the summer premier of Welles's *First Person Singular*--were generally spared audiences at all but inaugurations and cattle auctions. For those who care to check, the December 9 date matches the *Campbell Playhouse* premier date given in Jay Hickerson's *Ultimate History of Network Radio Programming*. Hickerson also puts the final *Mercury Theater* broadcast at December 4, the Sunday before "Rebecca" aired. It seems safe to say then that the *Mercury/Campbell* conjugation took place on December 9, 1938.

Nevertheless, some confusion over the *Campbell Playhouse* premier survived into the 1980s, when the soup folks reprised the series for radio. Campbell called in Helen Hayes to reintroduce it to a new generation of listeners anesthetized by television. In her opening remarks, Hayes immediately fogged the record by fixing the date of the *Mercury/Campbell* merger as *December 30, 1938*. With spiked information like this still in circulation, tomorrow's OTR historian may need a bulldozer to get at the facts.

What finally became of *Campbell Playhouse*? In late 1938, after vacating the *Mercury Theater's* 8 o'clock Sunday slot opposite *Chase & Sanborn* (i.e., *Bergen & McCarthy*), it moved to the friendlier confines of Fridays at 9, where its principal competition was *Waltz Time*, *Death Valley Days* (both NBC) and *March of Time* (Blue). The following season, perhaps owing to a time broker's lapse, *Campbell Playhouse* went up against *Bergen &*

McCarthy on Sundays again. Here it fared only slightly better than now defunct **Mercury Theater** had, despite the heavy layer of radio fame covering Welles. **Campbell Playhouse** then returned to Fridays, at 9:30. Now in a half-hour format, it continued adapting the classics. In its new time it faced competition from Arch Oboler's anthology, **Everyman's Theater**, and **Your Happy Birthday**, a transitory human interest quiz, but neither of them offered **Campbell** much resistance.

With the success of "Citizen Kane" in 1941, Welles's fee went up like a skyrocket, and Campbell Soups backed away. In radio showbiz, kissing the hem translates into program christening, and directly the Only Begotten One found himself with a program bearing his name, compliments Lady Esther. In September 1941 the **Orson Welles Theater**, also called **Wonder Theater**, began loading the airwaves with the standard--that is to say, above standard--Welles dramatics. Though it earned decent marks, Lady Esther proved to be only an interim sponsor, pulling out after just five months.

Welles was much in demand during the war years, having escaped the draft for reasons of health. He made countless guest appearances and was point man on at least two other shows--**Hello Americans** and **Ceiling Unlimited**--both now as obscure as **Capt. Flagg & Sergeant Quirt**, remembered only by aficionados and Jack French. By 1944 CBS was trying Welles in a mid-week comedy-variety dead-duck called the **Orson Welles Almanac**. Fortunately, only Arizona and California received its transmissions, and on April 24, 1945, two weeks before the German surrender, the last of them was safely en route to the Pleiades. From time to time Welles applied the "Mercury Theater" tag to his endeavors in hopes of buttering his Hooper, but whether it helped at all the record doesn't say. A sample:

Announcer: The Columbia Broadcasting System presents the Mercury Theater in a special series of broadcasts about the other Americas, produced by Orson Welles.

Welles: Hello Americans. [Hello Americans, 1.10.43]

Meantime, Campbell Soups survived the separation with Welles with no appreciable damage to its reputation. Among the shows it sponsored through the mid-1940s were **Amos 'n' Andy**, **The Arkansas Traveler**, **The Man I Married**, **Jack Carson**, **Radio Reader's Digest**, **Short, Short Story**, **Edward R. Murrow**, and **Robert Trout**. The variety of programs kept its variety of soups well within earshot of the consumer.

What became of the 8 o'clock slot abandoned by **Mercury/Campbell** in late 1938? Beginning Sunday, December 11, CBS positioned the tuneful **This Is New York** (sustaining) opposite Bergen. It vanished after 13 weeks. In January 1940 **Bergen & McCarthy** went to a half hour, still on Sundays at 8. Here it met its strongest challenge, the following September, in **Helen Hayes Theater**, which rang up respectable ratings. But the **Hayes** dramas were

reduced to 30-minute adaptations, so the program's deterioration was premeditated. In 1942 *Helen Hayes Theater* was replaced--by *Orson Welles Theater*. Thus after a comfortable two-year absence Welles again found himself nose-to-nose with Bergen, though with less amperage than before in this 30-minute format, and again without sponsorship. In radio adaptations, by my calculations the odds of doing right by a classic in 30 minutes, whether book, film or play, whether in English, Russian, or Celanese--whether by Welles, Helen Hayes, or *Umbriago*--are roughly 10 billion to 1. This makes *listening* to one a pleasure on the order of removing your own appendix. Consequently Welles fared no better against Bergen than anyone else had, and surrendered without fanfare.

Bergen, in fact, put all of his competitors over the jumps. For a time comedian *Jerry Lester* groped for laughs in a musical-variety setting in the 8 o'clock period vacated by Welles. But *Lester* quickly gave way to *Blondie*, who was chased by *Beulah*, who stepped aside for "The Mariners," a quartet whose musical legacy, along with the fate of Jack Benny's gas man, is sealed forever in radio arcana.

END



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 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 to 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. 1392, Lake Elsinore, CA 92531.

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 three of these, please send ten 32 cent stamps to Bob Sabon, 308 West Oraibi Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85027.

BOOK by Hal Stephenson SHELF

Dashiell Hammett--A Life by Diane Johnson.
Random House. Hardbound, 1983. 344 pages.

Radio fans would know Dashiell Hammett (1894-1961) as the originator of Sam Spade, the Fat Man, the Thin Man, the Continental Op and other characters.



This biography is the only one written with the full cooperation of his friend and executrix, Lillian Hellman, as well as his late wife Josephine and his daughters. It provides personal details of a complex person with several contrasts.

Dashiell never finished his autobiography. However, he was a prodigious writer starting in the late 1920's. The books that made him rich and famous included *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Glass Key*. **After writing *The Thin Man* in 1934, he never finished another novel.** The character Nora in *The Thin Man* is based on Lillian Hellman who he met in 1930. The Fat Man character (remember "weighing in at 239 pounds"? which happens to be your book reviewer's weight now) was based on *The Maltese Falcon*.

The detective characters are based on Dashiell's experiences as a Pinkerton detective in the western United States. He did not like to listen to radio broadcasts of his scripts because he did not want to hear the editorial changes that were made.

A great contrast begins with Dashiell being a veteran of **both** World War I, where he contracted tuberculosis, **and** World War II where he served in the Aleutian Islands off Alaska. In 1951, he was in prison for six months because he refused to answer questions in court concerning communists. When he died, he was working on his unfinished novel, *Tulip*, trying like one of his fictional heroes, to live as an honest man in a corrupt world.

Dashiell Hammett in the 1920's; one of the 32 black and white pictures in this book.





TRANSCRIBED FROM TORONTO

by JOHN PELLATT

A New Book About S-F on Radio

What a pleasure it was to receive a copy of **SCIENCE FICTION ON RADIO: A REVISED LOOK AT 1950-1975** by James Widner & Meade Frierson III. It's 194 pages, nicely printed with spiral binding for easy opening. As reviewed by Jack French in our last issue, this is certainly a "must-have" for fans of s-f on radio. It provides a well researched listing of all known US shows--we're talking "radio anthologies of science fiction stories" for adults here--including a useful and detailed checklist of MY favourite American s-f shows, **DIMENSION X** and **X MINUS ONE**. I had always thought those were the only two s-f series on US radio. This thoroughly documented and enjoyably presented treatise proved me wrong--and how! Radio is the perfect medium for s-f... the shows are as good as your own imagination. Or as Stan Freberg put it, by comparison TV only stretches your imagination twenty one inches. I also liked Jim's discussion on Adaptations (why did some stories work better than others?) and Meade's Who's Who of S-F Radio folk circa 1950-1959. There's also some material on BBC, South African and Canadian shows (with more to come in future editions I'm sure.) In passing it also answers the questions: What was the first s-f show? Who is the most broadcast author? And what colour was that Green Thing, anyway? If you collect science fiction OTR or would like to, you should have this handy reference work nearby. It's \$15 well spent from A. F. A. B. (Publishers), P. O. Box 130969, Birmingham, AL 35213-0969. Toll free number for orders: 1-888-967-3437.

CBC Radio 60th Anniversary

This past November saw the 60th anniversary of the founding of CBC Radio. It was in 1936 that the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) took over from the then CRBC (Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission) and history was made. The weekend long celebrations at CBC centres across the nation featured tours, live to air special programming in front of audiences and much needed public support for our wonderful but beleaguered public radio broadcaster. Of special interest to vintage radio fans was the live to air drama on CBC Radio, "Burlap Bags", a modern recreation of a classic radio drama of the 1940s. First broadcast 50 years ago, this Len Peterson play has been called the first "Existential play written in Canada", very much in the vein of some of Norman Corwin's finest works. It is deserving of a closer look which I hope to do in a future column. The 1996 recreation was particularly exciting because it was live to air with an invited studio audience. That extra edge of excitement communicated itself across the country. For all the wonders of prerecorded technology something of the human is lost. Live radio had that extra something that connects with its audience and this brief return to those glorious live days proved it could still be done. The magic is not yet dead!

Visitors to Toronto will want to include a stop at the headquarters of the CBC at 250 Front Street, the "Broadcast Centre". Free guided tours of state of the art radio (and TV) facilities are available (includes modern radio drama studios) and the CBC Broadcast Museum has regular and changing exhibitions. The current exhibition (Summer through Winter of 1996) is entitled "CBC War Effort" and includes excellent recreations of an old wartime radio control room, news booth (with a cutout blowup of CBC Radio's then "Voice of Doom" newscaster, Lorne Greene) and a display of battlefield conditions for recording reports "on the run". Their idea of portable equipment, of course, consisted of enormously bulky and heavy disc recording machines designed to rupture most hernias! The CBC became famous for those wartime recordings taken in London of the Blitz on this so-called mobile equipment. Even the BBC relied on CBC recordings of their own cities being bombed. (There's also a display of old radio microphones to kill for!) Tours can be prearranged by calling 416-205-8605. CBC Radio is also heard around the world on the internet. Their website is [<http://www.cbc.ca>] for more information.

From Other Publications

HELLOAGAIN. Jay Hickerson's ^{bi-}monthly updates on the hobby of collecting vintage radio always contains useful addresses, reviews, gossip and information. His OTRlogs are legendary and his frequent revisions unquestionably a vital service to all enthusiasts. \$15 per yr. P. O. Box 4321, Hamden, CT 06514.

SPERDVAC's "RADIOGRAM". Editor Dan Haeefe always serves up a monthly potpourri of photos, articles, news, club info, lists and ads, all professionally printed and pleasingly laid out. Subscriptions are \$15 per year or free with membership in SPERDVAC (\$25). P. O. Box 7177, Van Nuys, CA 91409-7177. This past summer I especially enjoyed the child actor Tommy Cook's memories of working with Arch Oboler.

Looking At The Radio?

Musician and satirist Nancy White recently devoted a whole TORONTO SUN column to "The Things We Saw On Radio" which I hope Jim will find room to include. In short, she talks about how radio was something you not only listened to but LOOKED at. Did you? When I listen to vintage radio tapes these days, I tend to close my eyes and roam the galaxy of my imagination fueled by the wonderful voices and sounds coming out of my speakers. But I know a lot of you did watch the radio as you listened to its magic. I wonder if we did an informal poll, what the results would be? Did you (or did you not) WATCH the radio as well as listen to it?

Himan Brown On The Internet

Oh Mr Brown! The things you said! Vintage radio veteran Himan Brown has found a new outlet for repeats of his CBS MYSTERY THEATER. It's via the internet. As an experiment, CBS Radio will place a different episode on the web every few weeks and listeners are encouraged to download them and respond. Of course, you need the necessary software and hardware. And a computer, of course. For more details check out the CBS website at [<http://www.cbsradio.com>]. Amidst his comments promoting the website, Mr Brown seemed to say a few less than complimentary things about vintage radio and those of us who are fans of it. I think his point was to stress that radio drama can and should still be considered a vibrant and contemporary medium. I take no offence at his remarks, after all, they are mostly targeted to Corporate America. If he can get new sponsorships there may be a lot more new radio drama via the internet and that can only be good for everybody--vintage radio fans included.

Clifford Simak on Audiotape

While not strictly vintage radio, I was delighted to come across two cassette tapes of s-f short stories written by the late Clifford D. Simak, who had a number of his stories adapted and broadcast on X MINUS ONE, etc. Simak's stories have a warm, endearing humanity about them with a touch of nostalgia for bygone days and a gentle humour. The tapes are read by Jonathan Frakes of STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION fame and I must say I was quite impressed with his readings. He is not just a "pretty face"--the man CAN act. The titles are "Neighbour" and "Over the River and Through the Woods" with other short stories. They're published by Durkin Hayes and available at most local book and audio stores. I really did enjoy these a great deal.

BBC Radio Plays--Scripts Available

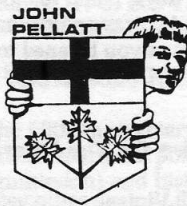
A quick trip to the UK this summer once again had me drooling (with envy! with envy!) over the diversity and quality of radio drama and comedy still available on their BBC Radio services. Despite cutbacks and massive restructuring internally, drama and comedy remain daily fixtures of BBC Radio programming. Additionally this summer the BBC made copies of their summer radio drama anthology series "Five In July" scripts available to the general public. Details from Broadcasting Support Services, P. O. BOX 7, LONDON W5 2GQ, ENGLAND.

FINALLY... I hope your holiday season was a good one. I can't believe this YEAR marks NARA's 25th anniversary. I've been with NARA since 1973... one of the few constants in an ever changing life. (Hey Roger, looks like your baby's still here!) May our 25th anniversary be a great one for NARA and the best ever for all of you.

John Pellatt has been a NARA member for 24 years. His first writings appeared in this publication in 1977, and he has been a regular ever since. He was our "Canadian Editor" from 1980 to 1983. That title was changed to "Contributing Editor" in 1984, a position which he holds to the present day. He was editor of THROUGH THE HORN from 1980 to 1992. He is a writer and broadcaster in Toronto. Here is his picture as it has appeared in these pages over the years.



1978



1980



1982



1985



1986

Honors

Each year, at the Friends of Old Time Radio convention in Newark, individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the old time radio hobby are recognized by being given the "Allen Rockford Award." Rockford, the gentleman for whom the award is named, was a radio announcer and news-caster. He also had a radio program of OTR and published a monthly magazine called NOSTALGIA RADIO NEWS, and through Double-R-Radio he sold old time radio programs. He passed away in 1979 at the early age of 35, and the convention started giving the award named for him later that same year.

At the convention this past October your editor was very proud to be able to present one of this year's "Rockies" to NARA member Don Ramlow. Earlier in the year Ramlow also received the "Stone/Waterman Award" at the Cincinnati convention. That award was named for Ezra Stone (Henry Aldrich) and Willard Waterman (the Great Gildersleeve) so this has been a year of outstanding recognitions for Don.

Don is a member of the public administration staff in the city of Portage, Michigan and is completing his graduate work at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. Each year, for a number of years, he has directed all the dramatic presentations at an annual Pulpcon convention. He has also directed all the old time radio re-creations at the Cincinnati convention and many of them at the Newark convention. He and his wife Mary have been responsible for the video taping of each of those radio conventions with the tapes made available through AVPRO. As the Midwest Acquisitions Chairman for NARA, he has been working at getting outside financial grants for our club.

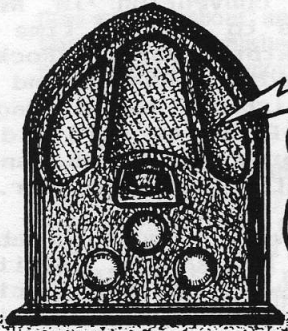
This award has been given to a really nice man and is certainly highly deserved. We congratulate Don on all his recognitions.

In addition to Don, a number of other NARA members have been given the Rockford Award in past years, namely: Don Aston, Bill Bragg, Frank Bresee, Bob Burchett, Bob Burnham, Jack French, Barry Hill, Roger Hill, Tom Monroe, Terry Salomonson, Jim Snyder, Barbara Watkins, and Gary Yoggy.

Three NARA members were honored with awards at the SPERDVAC convention last November. Plaques recognizing "Lifetime Achievement of Excellence in the Field of Sound Effects" were presented to Barney Beck, Ray Erlenborn, and Bob Mott. Barney created the sound effects for such shows as the Shadow, Bobby Benson, Superman, Mysterious Traveler, and Bob & Ray. Ray handled Al Pierce, Jack Benny, Blondi, and Red Skelton. Bob did the effects on Gangbusters, Phillip Morris Playhouse, Ed Sullivan, and Lowell Thomas. These are just a few of the many shows that these three men were responsible for. We were very pleased to see these gentlemen finally receiving well deserved recognition for all the great listening that they provided for us over the years. Congratulations to all!

WHAT IF BY GENE LARSON © 1986

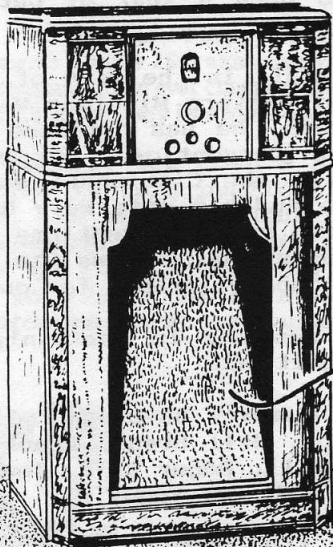
LIGHTS OUT!



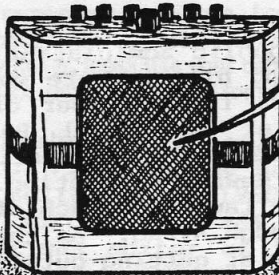
"IT'S TIME NOW FOR THE OLD FASHIONED REVIVAL HOUR!"



POOF!



“LUX RADIO THEATER”



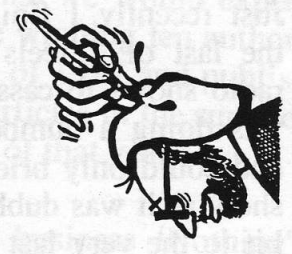
AH-AH-AH! AH! DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL, LISTEN TO...
BLAXDIE!



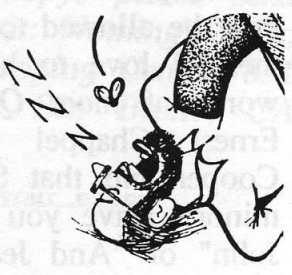
RADIOS MATCHED TO



THEIR PROGRAMS



CENTERFOLD by GENE LARSON
 Gene Larson's artwork first appeared in these pages in 1978. In 1979 he was listed as our "cartoonist," and from 1980 to the present he has held the position of "Staff Artist." The drawings, on each side of this statement, are "self-portraits that he has provided for us."



A CONTEST FOR NARA MEMBERS by Roger Hill

Just recently I finished transferring the last of 7 reels of *Quiet Please* radio shows to cassette. Although I was doing a number of other tasks and could only briefly monitor each show as it was dubbed, I did listen a bit to the very last program and felt such an over-whelming sadness at the announcement of its demise (this series is one of my favorites!), that I dreamed for a minute of which five series I would most like to hear again if, by magic, the Golden Days of Radio could return with more and different shows for a limited time -- say one year. What an exciting dream this was! What wouldn't I give for an experience to enjoy radio as it was but with programs not now in our collections and yet with the performers and the quality of those former years. Which ones would you pick?

What a hard question to pose to a dedicated listener of vintage radio. So many different series to enjoy but only be allowed to select five! For me, I'd love to hear a full year's worth of more *Quiet Please* with Ernest Chappel and by Willis Cooper and that *Symphony in D-minor*. Have you heard "My Son John" or "And Jeannie Dreams of Me," "Valentine," "The Thing On the Fourable Board," "Tap the Heat,

Bogdon"? These are fascinating, varied, adult, and just pure genius!

Yes--I know--*Fibber McGee and Molly* was a wonderful show and I'd love to hear more of that one too, but we already do have nearly 20 years to enjoy. It's the ones which didn't last so long--and should have--which I'd like more of.

Fort Laramie, *The Clock* (American version), *The Big Show*, *Vic and Sade*, *Lights Out*, *Arch Oboler Plays*, *I Love a Mystery*, *One Man's Family*. These are just some of the series I'd pick from if I could rub my magic lamp and have a year's worth of each again.

Now here's what I propose. You readers of NARA NEWS think about what 5 series you would dearly love to have again for one full year to listen to--not with programs we currently have but with the same casts, directors, and sound effects men to provide new and different shows.

After you've thought good and hard about this, then write it down and send it in to Jim Snyder, editor of this publication. Include your reasons for wanting a year's worth of each of the five series and the more

reminiscing and commentary, the better. Jim Snyder will read these over and send them on to me with his comments on which are the best to print. I will also add evaluations and send photo copies on to other interested staff members for their evaluations. After each of the submissions have had a chance for evaluation (using a point system as well as comments), we will pick the ten (10) best for publication and each of these ten people will receive as a gift from NOTHING'S NEW (and NARA), a set of radio shows on cassette as issued by Metacom in those nice gray plastic RCA BK-44 microphone holders or the brown plastic cathedral radio holders. The only requirement is that you be a current member of NARA in order to participate. So send in your choices and comments as soon as you can to: Editor, NARA NEWS; Jim Snyder (address inside the cover of this journal). Because of publication dates, we will make March 15, 1997 as the deadline for submission of your articles. With reading, evaluating, and passing them around among the interested staff taking

another 3 months, we would expect to announce the winning ten authors by June or July of 1997 and publish the best of the articles in the summer or autumn issue of that year.

Remember, our business (Nothing's New) supports any and all organizations, clubs, associations, societies, or groups with an interest in vintage radio/movies/television and those who were part of these media and brought us all so much enjoyment.

Younger generation---keep your Mosh Pits and Rap music. As for me, I'll take vanilla.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We very much appreciate Roger Hill's great generosity in providing the ten fine prizes in this contest. Roger has put together a directory of 4,000 plus movies available in his store. If you would like a copy, please send \$10.00 to him at: Nothing's New, #23 Bayhill Shopping Center, 851 Cherry Avenue, San Bruno, CA 94066.

REMEMBER: The contest deadline is March 15. Send your entry to:

Jim Snyder
2929 East Main Street #149
Mesa, AZ 85213

GOOD LUCK!!!

MEMORIES OF NARA by Jack French

In the summer of 1975 I was confined to bed with a case of mononucleosis. At that time I was assigned to the St. Louis FBI office and living across the river in Granite City, IL. My secretary, to cheer me up, presented me with a large LP containing two TOM MIX radio shows. From the first words of Curley Bradley singing the Ralston commercial, I was transformed back into an 8 year old boy listening to the radio in Wisconsin.

"What a find!" I exclaimed. I had never known that any of these old radio shows had survived and were available to the public. My secretary said that the TOM MIX record was the only one the store had.

By the time my mononucleosis had subsided, I had resolved to search for more such shows. I made my way to the Granite City Public Library and examined the Encyclopedia of Associations under hobby groups: radio. There were three listed, two groups who collected antique radios and North American Radio Archives. I copied down the address of a Roger Hill in California and sent for information.

My package from NARA came two weeks later (in those days Roger sent you two back issues of NARA News and then asked for you dues.) I joined immediately and started availing myself of the services.

There were only two libraries then; an open reel library run by Sherill and Gayle Bland in Reno, NV and a printed materials one stored by Al Inkster of Tucson, AZ. I had a tiny portable Weber reel machine and I couldn't copy any shows. I just borrowed the tapes, listened to them, and sent them back.

NARA News came out on an irregular basis then and the issues weren't all the same size or thickness. Roger was the Editor and the President and I don't know what else. The journal ranged from 20 to 80 pages and it came out whenever Roger could fill it, usually three times a year.

The open reel library was run by a married couple, the Blands,

and as one NARA officer said later. "They were anything but." Most issues of NARA News had a lengthy list of complaints from the Blands against the members who were borrowing tapes.

In the fall of 1976 Al Inkster took over the reins of the editor of NARA News and I began to slowly contribute articles for publication, including ones on copyrights and another on TOM MIX. To my delight, they were all published. (A few years later I would learn that OTR editors are so desperate for material they will print anything that comes into their hands.)

In the spring of 1977, Tom Price volunteered to be the NARA Treasurer. I continued to enjoy my NARA membership as the FBI transferred me to Headquarters so my residence changed to Fairfax, VA.

Roger Hill dropped out of NARA duties in the fall of 1978 but a year later he returned and took the editorship of NARA News. By 1980 Roger had located a volunteer to run the cassette library, R.C. Kula of North Dakota. The membership, including me, were delighted since most of us had access to only cassette recorders. However our joy was relatively short as Kula disappeared about a year later, and the library disappeared with him.

By the spring of 1980, there were actually two NARA pubs being printed. In addition to NARA News, Steve Ham and John Pellatt (a youngster from Canada) took turns publishing "Through the Horn." It was about 6 to 8 pages and came out every other month, while NARA News was usually published four times a year. The rising cost of printing and postage forced the demise of "Through The Horn" in fall of 1981, although John turned out a few issues sporadically in the next five years.

But things got worse, not better in the early 80s. In the fall of 1980 Roger Hill disappeared (literally) and Al Inkster resigned as editor of NARA News. I hoped that John Pellatt would take over, but he declined. Six months passed with no NARA News so I volunteered to

take over temporarily until a new editor could be found.

A few weeks later a big box of OTR materials arrived from Inkster: a jumble of old clippings, some unfinished articles, and some obituary paste-ups. I struggled for a month and got out my first issue in Winter of 1981.

By early 1981 NARA's fortunes had improved a bit. Steve Ham volunteered to be the President (like all NARA officers, he just volunteered; I know of no NARA officer who was ever elected.) Don Aston volunteered to be our Treasurer when Tom Price left.

In the middle of 1982 NARA felt optimistic enough to begin plans for a 10th Anniversary Convention in summer 1983. Don Aston agreed to chair the event, little suspecting that he would be the only worker in the months ahead.

The odds against a successful convention were enormous. For although we had about 350 members, they were all "by-mail". As such they were scattered thru the U.S. and Canada, as were the officer ranks. We hadn't had a local meeting since the first six months and everything was handled via the post office.

Aston struggled mightily for nearly a year, but with few hands in L.A. to help and no way to tap the resources of the membership, we finally canceled the event, six weeks before it was scheduled to open. We never tried it again.

By the end of 1983 Hal Widdison of Flagstaff, AZ was running the open reel library and a little later, Tom Monroe of Ohio jumped in and took over duties as Cassette Librarian. These two dedicated and professional librarians soon had both archives humming. Within a few years, they had built up our respective libraries to large holdings.

I continued to slog on as the NARA News Editor, my "temporary" job would stretch on to five years. Each quarter I had to get out 60 pages; a labor of love but still a difficult task. I could never develop any regular contributors, other than John Pellatt, Al Inkster and Don Aston, all of whom had other duties.

Even if all three sent in three pages a piece (which seldom happened) I still had 51 pages to go. So I wrote articles, poetry, OTR commentary, book reviews, mostly under fanciful pen-names.

Some issues, I'm ashamed to admit, I wrote everything between the covers, including the letters to the editor. But desperate times call for desperate measures, and my pleas for material went unanswered just as Aston's cries for help regarding the convention. I was almost amused by some of the responses I got to my entreaties for help. Usually it would be a letter from a member chastising the rest of the membership for not helping me and then explaining that the letter-writer was too busy himself to render any aid.

By the mid 1980s, there was less and less borrowing of the open reel library as our membership (and the general public) were switching to cassettes exclusively. The tiny library that Tom Monroe had taken over had blossomed to thousands of shows in hundreds of different genre. Our NARA artist, Gene Larson of Utah, continued to do a wonderful job in providing illustrations for NARA News, including several very impressive center-folds. Ron Staley took over the role of President when Steve retired.

After five years of getting out the NARA News four times a year, I was totally burned out and said so in an editorial in the summer of 1985. I said I would resign as soon as a replacement could be found,

and luckily for NARA, a very competent editor raised his hand and said, "yes." He was Robert Simpson of Ocala, FL who had been a regular contributor to our pages before. Bob took over the reins and went on to hold the job longer than I had.

The NARA OTR Source List, which I began in the early 80s as a one-page flier, continued to expand. Until recently, I always attributed the compilation of the list to "the NARA staff" which was sort of a private joke. Over the years, the listings have greatly increased and improved so that now there are over 125 names and addresses, including Web sites, on this six page summary.

During Simpson's editorship period, there were many other changes in our volunteer ranks. The membership directors, the printed materials librarians, and other key people on the NARA team bowed out, to be replaced by equally talented people. In fact, the only major role that didn't change was Don Aston, who has been holding down the Treasurer job for umpteen years.

Recently, Jim Snyder took over the editorship of NARA News, under pretty much the same sort of conditions in which I had to take the job. The magazine was not being printed, no one else would take the job, and so Snyder picked up the ball.

Jim and I go back a long way; Don Aston introduced him to me at the Newark FOTR Convention in the fall of 1982, I believe. In those days, NARA would rent a small table and try to solicit new

members and re-sign old ones. I was in charge of the booth and would get some back-up help from Jim (who at that time was living in Michigan) and Lora Palmer, from Connecticut.

Jim was not only helpful in signing up new members; he would always make an additional contribution above and beyond the amount of his yearly dues. Since those days, Jim and I have become close chums and we take turns impersonating Clarence Turneen (who sends each of us postal communiques from around the world.)

The big redhead has amazed me with his skill in rounding up a stable of regular contributors and columnists for NARA News, something I was never able to do in my five year tenure. I told Jim when he took the job that this would be a big problem, but it wasn't to him. Frequently, he's had to hold one of my submissions over to the next issue because he was filled up in the current one.

One of Jim's biggest assets is that he has been collecting in this hobby long before I started and he has been a dues-paying member of nearly every OTR club in the country at one time or another. So he has a reservoir of good will to be tapped as needed.

I'm very optimistic for the future of NARA. The "post box loyalty" of our scattered membership is a strength, not a weakness. I look forward to future service, camaraderie, and informative data from this organization.

Jack French is a retired FBI agent. His assignment was working with international police agencies, including INTERPOL. His writings first appeared in the NARA NEWS back in 1976. He was our editor from 1980 to 1985, and has always been an active contributor to these pages. He is currently serving as the editor of the publication of the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Old Time Radio Club. We've resurrected some of his pictures from past issues for you. It seems to us that the one from 1980 is most impressive.



1977



1980



1993



1995



THOUGHTS OF A COLLECTOR

by

Henry R. Hinkel

In a previous column, I had mentioned that where I live I do not have much contact with other OTR collectors. The main reason being this area is OTR poor. Local radio stations do not broadcast OTR, local stores do not carry OTR and if there are any who show an interest in collecting they just don't have any way to find others in this area who also have an interest in OTR. This makes it difficult to get together with others and gossip, trade, or just have a general bull session involving the hobby.

This past summer this all changed. "How?" you may ask. It's very simple -- the Internet. This past summer I went "on-line" with the Internet and discovered OTR is available if you know where to look. The Internet is a super duper warehouse of information for you, depending where your interest lie. OTR is no exception. It is there, all you have to do is find it. There are a couple dozen or more OTR related web sites which carry all sorts of information, some even have audio where you can hear actual OTR shows. The most popular of all web sites is probably Lou Genco's web page at <http://www.old-time.radio.com>. On it are several different items you can go to, from vendors listings to radio logs. The main item that everyone "tunes" in to is William Pfeiffer's OTR digest. This is where the "club" meets. Here you can ask your questions, get answers most of the time, or just pass along information of general interest concerning OTR. You can "subscribe" at no cost to you and receive the digest every day through your e-mail.

First of all, let me say that I am not a computer person. If I were choking and had to send a message in order to get help.... my insurance company would not be too happy with

me. My wife and my son and the ones who actually "run" the computer. Last year my wife "talked" me into listing my OTR shows on the computer. This I did, but only after she made me a step by step list of what to do. You know.... push this button.... next control F.... enter.... pause.... scratch head.... enter.... whoops.... scratch head again. Needless to say, it took time but I finally managed to enter most of what I had. No one in their right mind could afford to pay me by the hour to do what I did. Now that is simple computer data entry work....can you imagine me trying to "surf" the Internet...."YIKES!!!!" The easiest solution of course was for my wife or son to give me a print out of the OTR digests. That way I get to read the digest and they get to use the computer.

When I read my first few digests, I said to myself "This....is....nice". After a couple of weeks I said "This is great". The topics and subject matter cover just about everything you could imagine -- from a topic that everyone seems to jump on for over a week and nearly hammer it to death, to casual little items of information that is appreciated by everyone. You may read about a radio tower that fell down in Boston, to fake radio towers in California that were used to aggravate the competition. From an in-depth history on a certain radio show to radio logs to help keep your collection straight. From abandoned radio studios with their "on the air" signs still on the wall, to empty lots where stations and studios once stood. And of course the main topics usually touch on the programs and personalities that made OTR what it was, from the big name shows to the lesser known and forgotten ones.

After reading the digest for a couple of weeks, I found another pleasant surprise. Some

of the contributors were people I know, Bob Burnham, Jay Hickerson, Ed Carr, Dave Siegel, Max Schmid, Kathy O'Connell, and Anthony Tollin. Then every once in a while another name would pop up that I am also familiar with. This isn't to say that these people write in every day. When a topic comes up, they may jump in, put in their two-cents worth, and jump back out again. It's almost like sitting in on an OTR club meeting with questions and answers flowing in and out, topics shifting from one thing to another. I enjoy reading postings by "new" collectors. They often ask questions about things I forgot about, but an "old" collector will send in an answer and someone else may add to it, all which adds to everyone's benefit.

However, I must say the OTR digest is not for everyone. Some may find it boring with too wide a range of subject matter. I don't. I feel that any information I read that is "new" to me is to my benefit. Even the "old" that I forgot about helps to jog the old memories and stories. Of course like everyone else I may find certain topics not of any great interest to me, but generally, I enjoy everything everyone writes.

It's amazing the knowledge that's out there among collectors. Some have been very thorough in their quest for information because when you read their topics, the information is almost overwhelming in accuracy. I say to myself, "No one can remember this much detail about a show just from memory", so they must have done a lot of research to gather that much information, which is great for the rest of us readers. Then there is the collector who, like myself, just relies on their memory. As I read their article, I pick it apart with "that's not right",

that's the wrong name", "he was not on that show". I can't always remember the correct answers myself, but someone else will write in to set the record straight. That's the nice thing about the OTR digest. Ninety-nine percent of all contributions are in the proper spirit and attitude which makes for enjoyable reading. It's a very friendly and "homey" place to spend some time in. It not only helps us learn more about the hobby, but helps new collectors feel like part of a big friendly family.

Now to change the subject for a moment. One of the guests at this past Newark OTR Convention was Eddie Bracken. I had an opportunity to talk with him for a few moments and said to him, "Tell me if this story is true. During World War II you got credit for capturing a Japanese soldier and you weren't even there". He replied "I not only got credit but I also got a medal for doing it too". How did this happen you may ask. I didn't ask him for the details but as I remember hearing the story, on one of the Pacific Islands they were showing one of his movies. As the GI's were gathered around watching the movie, unknown to them, a Japanese soldier was hiding up in one of the trees. Whether he understood some English or not, as the movie progressed he got caught up in the humor of the movie and started laughing so hard, he fell out of the tree and was captured. The GI's felt they would never have discovered the soldier in the tree and that it was Eddie Bracken's humor that was responsible for the capture -- thus the credit and later the medal.

Just some thoughts of a collector

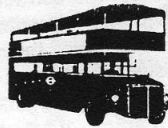


MOVING???

If you are going to be changing your address please let NARA know! Send your old address AND your new address to our membership director:

Janis DeMoss
134 Vincewood Drive
Nicholasville, KY 40356

FROM ACROSS THE POND



by Ray Smith



Peter Brough makes a fortune by educating Archie

He was amongst Britain's biggest wireless stars but didn't receive a single penny for his many top-rated broadcasts. Although he was one of the UK's favorite naughty schoolboys, unlike some of the others (Billy Bunter, Jimmy Clitheroe, Jennings & Darbyshire and 'Cardew the Cad' Robinson) he never went to school...not even for a day! And when a popular comedian described him as "dead creepy with that glassy stare following you all over the place" he didn't take offence or sue for defamation. His name was Archie Andrews. And he is remembered by millions of Britons as the star of one of the BBC Light Programme's top variety series of the 50's and 60's, *Educating Archie*. If you haven't already guessed, the reason for his uniqueness, is that Archie was the wooden-hearted component of BBC radio's most successful ventriloquist act, Peter Brough (pronounced Bruff!) and Archie Andrews.



Peter Brough & Archie Andrews in the studio.

By day, Peter Brough, who came from a family of part-time ventriloquists, ran his own textile agency and in the evening, played 3rd rate vaudeville dates. During a Scottish vacation in 1942, after being invalided out of the army, Brough perfected the voice of a 14 year old schoolboy. He had a prototype dummy built by Danvenports Magic Shop in London and took his newly-minted character to Ted Kavanagh, who wrote the BBC's wartime comedy *ITMA* (*It's That Man Again*). Could the scriptwriting icon who gave the world such characters as Colonel Chinstrap, Missus Mop and Mona Lott, think of a suitable name? Kavanagh took one look at the little chap. "That, dear Brough...is Archie Andrews!"

Peter and Archie made their BBC debut on *Musichall* and got their own regular spot (*Archie Takes the Helm*) on the wartime *Navy Mixture*, also written by Kavanagh. This led to bigger, better and more frequent, vaudeville dates. Soon Brough was lobbying for his own radio series. The BBC was reluctant. Surely a ventriloquist was totally visual? But in 1950, under the guidance of producer Roy Speer abetted by writers Eric Sykes and Syd Colin, *Educating Archie* was finally launched. It's success was immediate and phenomenal. Audiences sky-rocketed from 4 to 12 million and within a year, it was enjoyed by an average of 18 million listeners.

Peter Brough became one of the UK's highest paid entertainers. He could

name his price as top of the bill attraction on Britain's major vaudeville circuit, the Moss Empires. To this day, he remains the only ventriloquist ever to HEADLINE at the theatre in London's West End. In October 1950, a few months after its launch, Educating Archie won the prestigious Daily Mail national radio award as Best Program of the Year. But it seemed as if the Beeb would lose its biggest variety attraction. Harry Alan Towers, who produced Black Museum for Radio Luxembourg, offered Brough 1200 pounds (sterling) per week if he'd switch to the European pirate. And all they wanted was a 15 minute show. For once, the BBC counter-offered, Brough accepted and Educating Archie settled into a long run on the Light Programme. Although Educating Archie had a somewhat 'thin' story-line, its early years owed more to vaudeville than sitcom. The concept was simple. Brough was a "busy" man, who didn't have time to teach his young friend Archie Andrews the 3 r's. And so, he hired a Tutor. Over the years a number of performers who became UK stars, received early career boosts, 'tutoring' a block of wood.

They included Tony Hancock (Hancocks Half Hour), Sir Harry Secombe (Ned Seagoon of the Goons), Bruce 'I'm in charge' Forsyth (host of Sunday Night at the London Palladium) and Bernard Bresslaw of the Carry On Gang. Archie's best-loved tutor was the cockney entertainer Max Bygraves, who became one of the UR's most enduring, all-round stars. In the 50's Max was no stranger to the hit parade with numbers such as, Why Does Everybody Call Me Big 'Ead, I'm a Pink Toothbrush, When You Come to the End of a Lollipop and Tulips from Amsterdam. Through the 70's he re-emerged as "Singalong Max" producing umpteen albums of relaxing chorus songs and thumbing his nose at jokesters who suggested that Bygraves had by now recorded

"every song ever written." And in the 90's, Max the business-man bought world rights to the old Lionel Bart musical Oliver, which has been playing to sellout crowds on its comeback at the London Palladium. In contrast to tutors who came from a vaudeville tradition, James Robertson-Justice was a famous stage and film actor who kept Archie in line with almost Churchillian firmness. Audiences had a hard time accepting the bearded Robertson-Justice in vaudeville. One BBC survey interviewed an engineer who was outraged. "A common variety programme like Educating Archie is hardly the 'metier' for such a fine actor!" he exclaimed.

But Archie also benefitted from a strong supporting cast. Hattie Jacques of Hancocks Half Hour as Miss Dinglebody, Graham Stark as the foppish upper class twit, "Nigel Bowser-Smythe with a hypen" Dick Emery the complaining manservant Grimble, remembered for his exclamation, "I hate yew!", the cackling Welsh comedienne Gladys Morgan, and gentleman comic Robert Moreton, who told Archie one outrageous "howler" after another, ending on the catchphrase, "Oh, get in there Moreton!" Beryl Reid, a stand-up and sketch comedienne in vaudeville, was Archies girl-friend, the hockey-loving upper crust school-girl Monica, whose lines were of the "Tally ho, up and at 'em cheps" variety. Beryl also played a totally contrasting character who spoke in a thick Birmingham twang.



Archie 'dancing' with an unidentified starlet.

"Moi noimes Marleen and I coom from Beer-meenk-am" referring to England's 2nd city in the industrial Midlands. (Methinks it's worse than broad Scots!)

During its earlier years there was a strong musical component, vocal group, The Coronets: harmonica ace Ronald Chesney, who played solo's, 'a la Adler' and introduced the famous 'talking harmonica' which actually 'sang' songs (Twinkle Twinkle Little Star etc.): a young girl singer who made her professional debut (with her folks) earlier, at the Tivoli Theatre Aberdeen. For her parents, the Scottish musichall act, "Ted Andrews & Barbara" it was what is known in vaudeville as a "Number 3" theatre. But their daughter was destined to star in the "Number One's." She was, of course, Julie Andrews: and when Julie said farewell to namesake Archie, her replacement was Pearl Carr, of 'Pearl Carr & Teddy Johnson' fame. (see NARA NEWS, Summer '96)

From the mid 50's until it ended, Educating Archie was revamped. Musical turns were "out." The programme became a sitcom with a single (often rather slender) plot sustaining the full half-hour. The new team included producers Jacques Brown or Trafford Whitelock, replacing Roy Speer. And with Eric Sykes & Syd Colin gone, the writers were Ronald Wolfe, Ronald Chesney (the shows former mouth-organist) and the legendary Marty Feldman. The 1990's writing partnership of Messrs Wolfe & Chesney, can be sampled on the Britcom, Take a Letter Mr. Jones, currently seen on many PBS TV stations.

Nobody who lived in Britain during the 50's and 60's was unaware of Archie Andrews. He was big business and the Archie Andrews image was entirely owned by Peter Brough, who still managed the family textile firm on the side. There were Archie Andrews ties, caps, soaps, calendars, diaries, jigsaw puzzles,

boots, key rings and comic book 'annuals' to mention a few. And the Archie Andrews Ice Lollie Club (British term for frozen popsicle) had 80,000 young members, each of whom had to send in discarded wrappers from a dozen frozen lollies, to join. Some people claimed Brough was a "radio ventriloquist" because his lips moved too much for a visual medium. This was nonsense. He was extremely adept in the ventriloquial arts. But it was true that when recording his radio shows, he placed so much store in Archie's voice, that he made no attempt whatsoever, to disguise or eliminate his mouth movements. Ironically, when Educating Archie finally transferred (with much ballyhoo) to TV, it flopped. On radio, people thought of the wee chap as a real little boy. He could climb a tree, swim a brook, enter a pie-eating contest, ride a bike, in fact, tackle anything within reach of a typical 14 year old. Although they tried valiantly to solve the technical problems, the close-up cameras were cruel in the extreme, to the block of wood with the obviously 'hinged' lower jaw which went up and down mechanically, to simulate Archie Andrews' speech. Although he was a success on TV as a star 'specialty' act in vaudeville programmes, having Archie Andrews headline a TV sitcom which tried to exactly replicate radio's Educating Archie, just COULDN'T work.

Educating Archie was half an hour of good, wholesome family humour, a radio show any child could let a parent hear! I'll let you determine whether a typical Archie Andrews 'howler' from the 1950's withstands the test of time. Archie suggests that Brough is putting on weight and needs to purchase a new suit. "Nonsense, Archie m'boy" scorns Brough, 'why I haven't put on a pound in years!" "No, Brough" retorts Archie, "and you haven't spent one (pound sterling) in years either!"

Cheerio for now.

WPOW in WWII

by B.J. George

Can it still be called a radio station even if it didn't have a broadcast tower? WPOW and KRGY were two such stations. Their shows were transmitted over public address systems to thousands of Allied prisoners of war housed in Stalag Luft III.

Stalag Luft III, which opened in April 1942, was ninety miles southwest of Berlin, Germany. The camp housed mostly Allied officers and became the historical setting for the movie *The Great Escape*.

Long terms of imprisonment and deplorable conditions played heavily on the camp's moral. Several types of entertainment were derived to give the prisoners a form of self-expression and diversion from the effects of camp life, and thus boost the overall moral. Forms of entertainment included a wide range of hobbies and crafts.

Surprisingly to the prisoners, there was much talent to be found among their ranks, including professional actors and musicians. The men built theaters in which they performed plays and concerts. The YMCA provided recordings and gramophones. They also supplied enough instruments so that each compound could form its own band, playing all kinds of music; jazz, swing, classical, etc.

Besides attending the theater, prisoners were able to listen to music or drama plays over the compound's public address system. WPOW and KRGY also provided news, educational programs, and comedy.

Talents included Director Jim Aubele of WAK-WCLE, Cleveland, Continuity Chief Dick "Ross" Rossignol of Mutual Hollywood, and Chief Announcer Ted Brown of Roanoke's WSLS.

Every effort was made to resemble stateside broadcasts, including advertisements. So while the prisoners were some 4,000 miles away from home, they were comforted and entertained by "KRGY, an overseas division of the American Broadcasting System."

Wireless Wanderings



JIM SNYDER

When I settle down, late in the afternoon to watch the network news on television, frequent sponsors of the broadcast are Thompson's Waterseal and Little Caesars Pizza. The voice in these commercials is the very distinctive one of Jackson Beck. Every time I hear that voice I say, "I know him!" Well, actually I don't, but I think that Jack has been at almost all of the Newark conventions that I have attended over the years, and through that contact I feel that I really do know him. Of course I have spoken to him on those occasions and he is usually a participant in the re-creations and programs. And, as I said, he has a very distinctive voice that is quickly recognized.

That "voice" is attending these conventions because of his part in numerous radio series, sometimes in the starring role and sometimes in a support role. Many of us remember him particularly because of his participation in the "kiddie" shows (Superman, Mark Trail, and he was THE Cisco Kid) but he played many types of roles in many types of shows.

Thinking about his voice led me to thinking about others. In addition to Beck, there are certainly many other recognizable voices. But there were two that became particularly identifiable to me the more I listened to old time radio. I started listening for those two voices because it usually meant that they were in something that I would enjoy.

The first of these was William Conrad. I suppose in radio he was most closely identified with Gunsmoke. Actually, though, I identified with him from Escape. I loved (and still love) that series and his voice seemed to me to be made for that show. I guess I came to view Escape as HIS show. Beyond that his voice seemed to be all over the place. It, like Beck's, was very recognizable and I seemed to hear it in thousands of shows. This voice was one of my favorites.

The third voice had the lead role in Have Gun Will Travel. I didn't particularly care for the show but the voice mesmerized me. It belonged to John Dehner. I then kept hearing that voice all over the dial. It seemed to be the ultimate villain's voice, even though he was often the hero such as in Have Gun or in Frontier Gentleman.

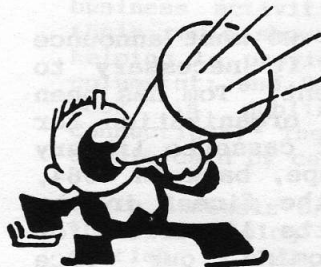
The more I heard this voice the more intrigued I became with it. I had no idea what Dehner looked like and I didn't want to know. My whole view of Conrad came crashing down when I saw what he really looked like on television. I didn't want to destroy the mental stereotype that I had of Dehner in my mind's eye. In fact, I didn't even know his name, just the

voice. Then one night, watching television, there was that voice and the face that went with it was an exact match for the mental image I had of this man. So, I watched the closing credits closely and that is when I first had a name to go with that voice.

Today, what the actor looks like seems to be of prime importance. When I lived in Michigan most of the local newscasters were a bunch of nitwits, but very "pretty" people. There was, though, one of outstanding ability and the station released him because he was bald and that didn't fit the image of what an on camera personality should look like. In radio the actor could look like anything because it was the voice, and voice alone, that would paint the picture of what the character looked like. I could never visualize the real William Conrad as Matt Dillon. But the mind's eye could turn him into a completely believable character who would look exactly the way he should.



There has been a change in our reel-to-reel library operation. Jim Watson is no longer able to handle the "variety" portion of this library, so all requests for reels, both in the "series" section and the "variety" section, as well as for the catalog for this library, should be sent to Scott Jones, 4741 East Grant Avenue, Fresno, California 93702.



ANNOUNCING

NARA member Al Balk has notified us of the "Library of American Broadcasting" located on the ground floor of the Hornbake Library at the University of Maryland in College Park. The library has a wide-ranging collection of audio/video recordings, books, pamphlets, periodicals, personal collections, photographs, scripts, and vertical files devoted to the history of broadcasting. The library is concerned with the preservation of these materials but also with making them accessible to the public. Al tells us that the archive is easily reached from Washington, D.C. by shuttle bus from the Metro Green Line's College Park station. They also welcome research requests by phone (301) 405-9160 and e-mail bp50@umail.umd.edu

Book Review

by Chuck Seeley

And The Show Goes On by Sheldon Leonard, Limelight Edition 2/95, hardcover, \$25.00.

Most everyone in NARA knows Sheldon Leonard from either his numerous movies or his many radio show appearances or his varied television credits. I became a Leonard fan from his appearances on TV's *I Spy*, which he also created and produced. In it, he played a bad guy, and I recognized him from a bunch of 40's movies, but couldn't put a name to the face until then.

Half of the book's 200-plus pages deal with Leonard's TV shows, most of the rest concern his childhood, stage, and movie work. There's a chapter on his involvement with OTR and, frankly, it isn't anything you haven't seen before. He talks about rushing around between studios and tells the usual Jack Benny stories, but there's nothing fresh here. The OTR chapter seems a bit of an afterthought, just acting as a bridge between the movie and TV sections.

While I enjoyed his tales of the *I Spy* production, Leonard turned me off in general because he keeps going on about how much money he made at each job. I don't see this one being worth \$25. If you're interested, get it at the library.



It is with great regret that we must announce that Tom Monroe has found it necessary to resign as NARA's vice president. Tom has been a very active member of our organization for many years. He took over our cassette library when it was in very poor shape, back in 1984, and turned it into one of the finest in the country. He was the cassette librarian for eleven years before becoming our vice president for operations two years ago. We indeed appreciate all that Tom has done for NARA, and for the hobby in general, over the years. We hope that he will feel that he can return to an active role at some future date.



Several new books related to old time radio have come out.

You might want to consider some of the following:

The long awaited 2nd edition of THE BIG BROADCAST: 1920 to 1950 by Frank Buxton and Bill Owen just came out in January. The original publication of this work was in 1972 and in this one the authors have updated, corrected, and added considerable information. This has long been one of the basic reference books of the hobby and this one promises to be even more useful with the changes that have been made. This work is 320 pages in length and is priced at \$59.50 plus \$3.00 shipping. It can be ordered directly from the publisher, Scarecrow Press, with a credit card, by calling (800) 462-6420.

PRINT AND BROADCAST JOURNALISM: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION by Edd Applegate is a recent (August 1996) publication. The author is an Associate Professor of Journalism at Middle Tennessee State University. In this 224 page book, he deals with such subjects as news balance and objectivity, freedom of the press, and news coverage of minorities. While radio is discussed, it takes a rather minor role in this book. The major information on radio is 20 pages giving the "National Association of Broadcasters Radio Code," which was cancelled back in 1982. The book comes from Praeger Publishers and is priced at \$55.00. With a credit card, it can be ordered directly from the publisher by calling (800) 225-5800.

GEORGE BURNS AND GRACIE ALLEN: A BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHY came out in August, 1996. It was written by Cynthia Clements (librarian at Richland College in Texas), and Sandra Weber (free-lance writer). This 444 page book is divided into several sections detailing the careers of Burns and Allen, together and individually. It starts with a 78 page biography. This is followed by detailed lists of their different kinds of show business activities. There is a 79 page detailed log of their radio shows. Two NARA personalities are credited with helping to provide information for this book: Frank Bresee, columnist; and Scott Jones, our reel-to-reel librarian. The book is published by Greenwood Press of Westport, Connecticut. The price is \$69.50, and can be ordered with a credit card by calling (800) 225-5800.

Chris Lembesis and Randy Eidemiller have revised and updated their "radiolog" of the SUSPENSE radio series. This 1996 edition is 122 pages long and includes all titles, star credits, broadcast dates and schedule changes for the 944 shows that were aired in the twenty years this series was broadcast. As with their other logs, this one gives some of the history and other information about the show. You may order it for \$25.00, postpaid, from Randy Eidemiller, 7700 Lampson #37, Garden Grove, California 92641.



Report

by
Don L. Aston

I was there. I attended the 21st Annual Friends of Old Time Radio Convention again. I was there each October since 1980 except for 1993 and 1995. I am already making plans to be there in 1997. Same place and time. I would recommend that all of you interested in old time radio to try and be there next year too. This is the biggest, best, and oldest OTR convention in the hobby.

I drive to this convention from California because I have a pick up truck load of stuff to unload. I haul with me everything from OTR on cassette to logs and video serials. I am usually in the largest of the dealers rooms selling and meeting again all those wonderful people involved in the collecting and preserving of vintage radio. I bet I talked to many of you reading this article. I had fun again this year as I always do and came away on Sunday morning saddened that once again it would be a whole year before the next convention in Newark.

I arrived Wednesday afternoon. It was a pleasant day in New Jersey and already many Old Time Radio Buffs were present in the hotel. I checked into my room which was on the 9th floor on the Newark side of the hotel. I had wanted the New York side so I could look at the famous skyline, but this time it wasn't to be. I got to look down into the local prison yard instead. After settling into my room and taking a short nap, I was ready to venture down stairs and begin setting up in the Dealers and traders room. I proceeded to meet various people I hadn't seen for two years. There was Ed Carr. Unsmiling as usual and seemly pleased to shake my hand. Ted Davenport was very glad to see me and I was warmly greeted by Jay Hickerson who is responsible for the whole thing. Gary and LaDonna Kramer were working hard setting up there display across from mine.

After getting my stuff unloaded, I kept looking for my business partner, Terry Salomonson who was bringing a lot of stuff from Michigan. He wouldn't arrive until Thursday due to lots of fog on I-80 in Pennsylvania. Fret Fret on my part.

I went into complimentary Wine and Cheese party held Wednesday Evening for conventioners and bumped into our editor Jim Snyder. He said "Hi Don" and without taking a breath asked me "Would I do the Convention Article for the NARA News?" I replied "ah - ah..." and he said "I knew you would be willing. Thanks." Then we settled down to wine and cheesing and generally meeting lots of the other folk. The Ramlows, Don and Mary, sat down with Jim and I. They had just arrived and would soon be very busy video taping the entire convention. Ted Davenport sat down with us for a moment and then he and I went into the dining room for something more substantial than wine and cheese. The Ramlows were to

follow , but they must have gotten busy setting up their cameras to record the events for posterity as they never came to the dining room.

I had to remain awake this first evening until 11:30 PM as my wife Jeanette was flying in from Los Angeles and was do to arrive at the Newark Airport at that time. I went to meet her. Newark Airport has a new monorail that moves you around to the different areas and to where the hotel shuttles pick you up. It quits running at 11:00 PM. We had to go from area 1 to area 6 by airport bus. It was a real roller coaster white knuckle ride, but we survived and eventually got to the shuttle area where the hotel's shuttle took us safely to the Holiday Inn and to bed.

I should mention that originally this convention was an afternoon affair held on a Saturday in October. That was way back in the Dark Ages. It moved out of the back yard to Bridgeport, Connecticut and was an all day Saturday affair. Some of us began to arrive on Friday afternoon to prepare for Saturday. Jay Hickerson felt obligated to plan something for the early arrivals on Friday night. Next thing you know we are arriving Thursday afternoon to prepare for Friday and Saturday. Again Jay felt obliged to plan a bit of programming for Thursday. Well, you know what happened. Some arrive on Wednesday to prepare for Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Jay is still planning. We only have wine and cheese on Wednesday right now, but next year ??? I really hope not any thing more. Three Days is a lot.

What a three days they were. Thursday began at noon with a presentation of the making of a new A & E Biography - Arthur Godfrey. That was followed with panels on Archives and Museums. NARA was mentioned. Comics Strips to Radio and beginning an OTR Collection by Bob Burnham who also writes for the NARA News continued the program. The day was capped of with a Lone Ranger Penal and then a re-creation of a script especially written for the convention by Jim Nixon titled "The Wizard". The cast for the re-creation included John Hart as the Lone Ranger. He was the Lone Ranger before Clayton Moore got the Masked Man's Mask. John Hart was also The Phantom and Jack Armstrong in the Saturday matinee serials we all went to see at the local movie house. Others in the cast of this re-creation were Fred Foy, Reg Jones, Fran Striker, Jr. Dick Beals, and Bob Hastings. Great show.

Friday broke with ominous warnings of rain storms. After fortifying myself with a good breakfast, I headed to the dealer's room and prepared to deal with the crowds. There were lots of people.

Jack Palmer began my day by refusing to part with any of his money at my table. It seemed that he would rather have me pay him to take something from me. I just couldn't accommodate him. Oh well, he always appears a bit difficult to work with. I was happy to see him anyway.

Ed Clute and Arthur Anderson of Lets Pretend fame began the morning by conducting a panel on Radio Jingles and Themes. Ed

played them on his marvelous piano. Our own Jack French presented a talk on Radio Premiums. At 1:00 we were treated to a re-creation of Dick Tracy and the Case of the Blackmailing Swamie. This was directed by Steve Lewis and produced by Max Schmid of WBAI Radio. The afternoon sessions included a panel on Science Fiction on Radio. Irv Settle presented "The Golden Days of Radio and the afternoon concluded with an Author's Panel with Ron Lackman, Cynthia Clements and Bill Owen.

Cocktails began at 5:30. After dinner and a raffle where everybody else won something but me, the Convention was treated to a special guest, Eddie Bracken' who was presented with the NBHF (National Broadcasters Hall of Fame) Award by Art Schreiber and Fred Shay.

The first post dinner re-creation was BOBBY BENSON starring two of the original cast, Clive Rice and Ivan Curry. Then we had a surprise. Will Hutchins had a part here. Many people were very surprised with Will's presence. I wasn't all that surprised because Will Hutchins and his wife shared my dinner table with my wife and I and 6 others. How did a T.V. and Movie star get invited to this OTR convention? Well, Will Hutchins brought John Hart. Will Hutchins was Sugarfoot in the Warner Brothers T.V. Series of that name and was also Dagwood Bumstead on T.V. Ah Shucks! He still sounds like Sargarfoot.

The second re-creation was THE MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER "The Last Survivor" starring Ralph Bell, Lon Clark, Bob Dryden, and Ted Mallie. The whole evening was another great event. Really, just lots of fun.

Saturday it was pouring rain. Buckets were all over the hotel lobby and the stairwells. The wind was blowing and it was just miserable outside the hotel, but inside the convention just kept on conventioning. John and Larry Gassman put on the first panel titled From Vaudeville to God (Burns and Allen). That was followed by a really fine presentation of Minorities on Radio with Mitchell Weisberg and Maurice Ellis. Lee Munsick then held a discussion with Gene Rayburn and Bob Lissauer held a talk about American Popular Music on Radio. Raymond Edward Johnson did his annual presentation. The Dealers had to close at 3:00 so the room could be set for the evening's big bash. The afternoon continued with a salute to NBC and its 70th Anniversary. Dick Dudley was the Moderator with Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Fred Collins, and Ruth Last participating.

At 4:00 A Re-creation of The Mercury Theater of the Air "Treasure Island" with Dick Beals, Elliott Reid, Jackson Beck, and Sybil Trent entertained everybody. Another great.

Returning to the lobby, after putting on a tie, my wife and I participated in the cocktails before dinner and corned Jack French. He tried several times to excuse himself, but we just had so much to say. Finally, he bought his way out by presenting me with a check made out to NARA for \$135.00. This was the amount he raised for NARA by selling his list of where to find old time radio shows to buy and trade.

After dinner, Don Ramlow was very surprised when his name was read by Jim Snyder as the winner of 1996 ALLEN ROCKFORD AWARD. This is presented to someone who has done a lot to help preserve and keep alive vintage radio. Don not only video tapes, Mary also helps, the entire convention, but he writes and directs many of the re-creations. Everyone felt it was an award long over do. Incidentally, Don is a NARA member.

After the awards and Don Ramlow was allowed to get back behind his camera, we were entertained by two re-creations. The first was The Lone Ranger's "20th Anniversary Show" w/John Hart, Dick Beals, Fred Foy, Earl George, Elaine Hyman, and Jackson Beck. This was followed by a re-creation of "The Canterville Ghost" w/Jean Gillespie, Rosemary Rice, Clive Rice, Ivan Cury, Louise Erickson, and Will Hutchens.

The final bit of entertainment was provided by the impressionist Will Jordon who kept the audience enthralled with his many, many impersonations of such celebrities as Ed Sullivan, Jack Benny, Humphrey Bogart and lots of others. Not only did he do voices, but he did faces and walks. Really good!

It was over, or at least I thought it was over. Jeanie and I slowly made our way to the elevator and the 9th floor. Turning into the hall, we found many friends waiting for the party in our room. I believe we had over 10000 people dropping into and out of our room until the next door neighbors complained of the noise about 1:00 AM. There was a bit of excitement about 11:00 PM when the ceiling over the hallway began to leak. The hotel management arrived and said we have a leak and would we like to move to a smaller room with only a tiny twin bed. Our guests were outraged that we would consider moving. Where would they go they shrieked. We stayed as the puddle was not over our kingsize bed and carried on in the best California tradition until our neighbors refused to come over, complained and went to bed.

Sunday morning came too soon. Jeanie had to leave for the airport at 6:30 to catch a 7:30 flight that would eventually leave at 9:30 because of storm delays. I left right after I put her on the shuttle bus and began my trek back west. I had to be in Phoenix by Thursday afternoon and I had to go by way of California. Off I trucked much lighter than when I came.

I was sad that it was over. I keep saying this is my last year but on the Sunday after its all over, I say, "See you next year."

Don Aston has been a NARA member for 24 years. He has been our outstanding Secretary/Treasurer for the last 18 years. We present, here, his picture as it has appeared in the NARA NEWS over the years.



1982



1983



1995

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



REPORT

by
Jim Snyder

This was my third SPERDVAC convention in as many years, although I will have to miss both it and the Newark convention in '97 because of travel plans. The convention didn't open until the middle of the afternoon on Friday, but many participants arrived on Thursday and so there was much socializing that evening.

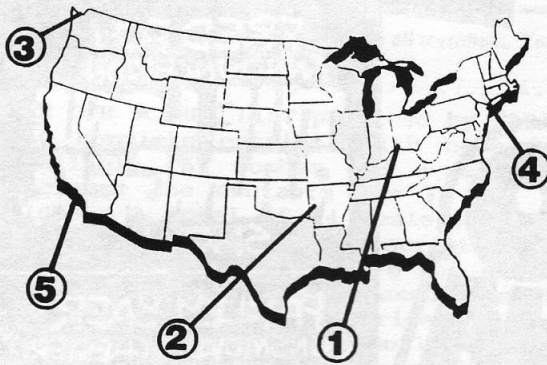
A highlight of the convention was the presentation of three "Ethel and Albert" re-creations featuring Peg Lynch (the author and actress from the series) and Parley Baer (Chester from "Gunsmoke"). NARA member Barbara Watkins directed a re-creation of the "Aldrich Family" on Friday afternoon. That same evening, three NARA members (Barney Beck, Ray Erlenborn, and Bob Mott), all of whom were network sound effects artists, put on an hour-long program that was titled "sound effects demonstration." While that was certainly a part of it, the presentation was much more than that. Interspersed with a lot of comedy, written by Bob, were many interesting and fun stories of their experiences from the past. Saturday evening there was an outstanding re-creation of "Command Performance" put together and directed by another NARA member, Frank Bresee. Like the sound effects presentation this was lots of fun and laughs. The Sunday morning presentation was a cast reunion of "One Man's Family."

Once again, this year, the dealer's room was minimal. Because of SPERDVAC's restrictive policies, I counted a total of only six dealers in a rather large room, and much of what they had on display had nothing at all to do with radio.

We were very proud to see three of our NARA members (Barney Beck, Ray Erlenborn, and Bob Mott) given "Lifetime Achievement Awards" for their contributions to radio during it's golden age.

We certainly want to thank the convention staff, headed up by Larry Gassman, for an outstanding weekend. On a personal note, I want to express my appreciation to our three sound effects artists and to Frank Bresee for spending literally hours with me, filling your editor in on the lore of old time radio.

CONVENTIONS:



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

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

- ① **THE 11TH ANNUAL OLD TIME RADIO AND NOSTALGIA CONVENTION** is scheduled for April 18 and 19, 1997 at the Marriott Inn on the north side of Cincinnati, Ohio, just off I-75. The person to contact for information is Bob Burchette, 10280 Gunpowder Road, Florence, Kentucky 41042. Phone (606) 282-0333.
- ② **THE 13TH ANNUAL LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY CONVENTION** will be held June 20 and 21, 1997 (please note the date change from earlier information) in Mena, Arkansas at the Best Western Lime Tree Inn. This event is normally held on the 4th Saturday in June each year. For information please contact Tim Hollis, #81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, Alabama 35062. Phone is (205) 648-6110.
- ③ **THE 5TH ANNUAL RADIO RALLY** of the Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound will be June 27 and 28, 1997 in Seattle, Washington. This convention is held on the last weekend in June each year. Contact person is Mike Sprague, P.O. Box 723, Bothell, Washington 98041. Phone is (206) 488-9518.
- ④ **THE FRIENDS OF OLD TIME RADIO CONVENTION** is held at the Holiday Inn North at the Newark, New Jersey airport. 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 convention dates are:
 - 22nd Annual Convention -- October 23 thru 25, 1997
 - 23rd Annual Convention -- October 22 thru 24, 1998
 - 24th Annual Convention -- October 21 thru 23, 1999
- ⑤ **THE SPERDVAC CONVENTION** is held each year at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Los Angeles International Airport. A free shuttle service is provided for those flying. The person to contact for information is Larry Gassman, Box 1163, Whittier, California 90603. He can be reached by phone at (310) 947-9800. Future dates:
 - 14th Annual Convention -- November 7 thru 9, 1997
 - 15th Annual Convention -- November 13 thru 15, 1998

**CINCINNATI'S
11th ANNUAL**

SPECIAL GUESTS

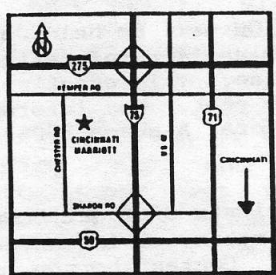
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Non-commercial ads are free to all members. Your ad will be placed in one issue, but you can resubmit it as often as you like.

The OTR SOURCE LIST prepared by NARA is now a full 6 pages and contains 140 complete entries, with name, address, telephone numbers, and if available FAX number and e-mail address. This most recent revision includes the contacts for 19 OTR membership clubs and another 9 fan clubs. A total of 44 dealers are set forth including those who sell audio recordings, books, scripts, blank tape, etc. The list contains 9 OTR publications which are not affiliated with any OTR club as well as 27 different libraries, museums, state, and college audio archives. Ten antique radio and historical societies are detailed as well as the contacts for the six annual OTR conventions in the U.S. The OTR Web Site section has been expanded and now includes a dozen of these addresses on the Internet. To order yours, send \$2.00 in cash or stamps (no checks please....this item cannot justify a trip to the bank and the post office) to Jack French, 5137 Richardson Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032. All requests filled same day by return first-class mail. Help us keep this list current by sending your additions and corrections to Jack French at the above address.

HELP!! How would you like to exchange OTR shows for old and new radio theatre from the BBC UK or Danish radio? Living outside the USA disqualifies me from receiving tapes from NARA. I would also be interested in buying a large quantity of programs. Some of my favorite shows: Kathy & Elliot Lewis On Stage, X-Minus One, Gunsmoke, Lux Theatre, FBI in Peace and War, Gangbusters, and many more. Please write to Erik W. Olsson, Clausholmvej 214, Arslev 8900 Randers, DENMARK.

WANTED: April 9, 1950 Luella Parsons Show. Contact Clyde Smith, 11 Buena Vista Road, Belle Terre, NY 11777-1206.

NARA needs your help. We are working on an OTR project with the National Park Service at Death Valley National Park. They would like radio broadcasts that featured Walter Scott (a.k.a. Death Valley Scotty). He was honored in a "This Is Your Life" broadcast. Also he was apparently featured in a series of broadcasts from the university radio station of the College of the Pacific, probably in 1948 or 49. If you have access to any broadcasts with Scott, or information about them, please contact your editor (address inside the front cover).

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Jack French for a very large financial donation earned, from sales of the "OTR Source List."

The following for contributions to the cassette library:
Andy Blatt (Vintage Broadcasts) - Staten Island, New York
Bob Burnham (BRC Productions) - Livonia, Michigan
Dean Case - Fon du Lac, Wisconsin
Ted Davenport (Radio Memories) - Little Rock, Arkansas
Keith Gamble - Melrose, Massachusetts
Henry Hinkel (Crabapple Sound) - Amsterdam, New York
Gary Kramer (Great American Radio) - Genesee, Michigan
John Ochsenrider - Farmland, Indiana
Ivan Schnell (Shadow's Cave) - Wichita, Kansas
Ken Thomason - Oklahoma

Hank Hinkel, who has agreed to become one of our "regular" columnists in the NARA NEWS. Also, appreciation is extended to Charles Sexton who was one of our regulars but has had drop out. The contributions of both of these gentlemen are greatly appreciated.

Roger Hill for the contest, and prizes, that are announced on page 27.

Alfred Balk for the information on the Library of American Broadcasting which is given on page 38.

Gene Larson for the centerfold in this issue and Jack Palmer for a future centerfold.

Roger Hill, Gene Larson, and John Pellatt for clippings and supplementary materials.

Our columnists in this issue: Don Aston, Frank Bresee, Bob Burnham, Jack French, B.J. George, Roger Hill (2 articles), Henry Hinkel, Jack Palmer, John Pellatt, Chuck Seeley, Ray Smith, Hal Stephenson, and Ken Weigel.

Those who have already sent in articles for future issues: Frank Bresee (8 articles), Hal Stephenson (4 articles), Gene Larson (3 articles), Jack French, Roger Smith, Ken Weigel, Bob Burnham, Bob Mott, and Jack Palmer.

Our paid advertisers in this issue: Cardinal of California and Ziplow Productions. You'll find their ads on page 49.

Many Thanks!!!

DEADLINES:

March 15 for the spring issue.
June 15 for the summer issue.