

CHUCK SCHADEN'S APRIL — MAY, 1990

NOSTALGIA DIGEST

AND
RADIO
GUIDE

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Since

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NOSTALGIA DIGEST

BOOK SIXTEEN CHAPTER THREE
 APRIL-MAY, 1990

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HELLO, OUT THERE IN Radioland!!

When we walked into that small Evanston radio station to do our first *Those Were The Days* broadcast on May 2, 1970 we never dreamed that some day we would be celebrating the milestone that's almost here.

Twenty years on the air with the good old radio shows!

We can hardly believe it.

Twenty years!

We're bursting with pride, excitement and emotion as we anticipate the occasion.

We've devoted much of this expanded issue of our *Nostalgia Digest* to our broadcast anniversary.

As we recall many of the events of the past twenty years, we hope you won't think we're boasting too much. Actually, we're remembering—with a great deal of respect—all the people who have helped us further the cause of "old time radio" during the last two decades.

It's been an amazing experience and we are lucky to have been at the right place at the right time. We are lucky to have been able to turn our hobby into our work.

We have been very fortunate to be at the receiving end of so much wonderful support—from radio stations, from sponsors, from listeners, from family and friends.

So, as we wrap up twenty years of broadcasts, what more can we say?

How about, "Stay tuned and don't touch that dial!"

Our twenty-first year begins on May 5, 1990.

Thanks for listening.

Chuck Schader

Getting On The Air and Staying On The Air!

When we first thought about going on the air with our collection of old time radio programs, we were doing some public relations/advertising work for the Bank of Lincolnwood in Lincolnwood, Illinois.

We approached them with an idea for a one-hour program of vintage radio shows hosted, naturally, by yours truly. They seemed receptive to the idea and asked for a pilot recording to indicate, generally, the type of program we had in mind.

In the fall of 1969, we prepared an audition tape for the Bank. (That tape will be played on the air for the first time on our *Those Were The Days* 20th Anniversary broadcast, April 28, 1990.)

After listening to the audition, Bank officials indicated that our old time radio nostalgia show might have some merit as an advertising vehicle for their financial institution.

In early 1970, the Bank contacted

veteran broadcaster Buddy Black who had become general manager of Evanston radio station WNMP. Black was immediately enthusiastic about the idea and welcomed the opportunity to carry the program under the sponsorship of the Bank of Lincolnwood.

At this point, the Bank wanted some additional time to consider the proposition.

Radio station WIVS in Crystal Lake, operated by Mal Bellairs, had been playing some old time radio rebroadcasts and we were anxious to get our program on the air. Buddy Black, too, was eager to bring vintage radio to WNMP.

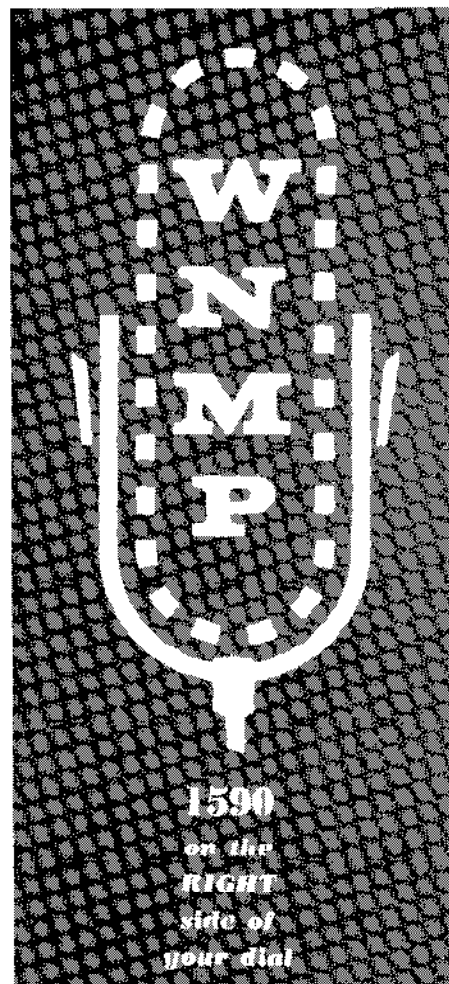
However, the Bank could not decide; it wanted more information about the proposed program. We appeared at a meeting of Bank officers to further outline the series and what we thought it could do for the Bank's image and marketing goals. Buddy Black provided additional information on his station and the audience it was reaching.

Still, no decision was made.

We had offered our old time radio concept to the Bank on an exclusive basis and were hoping to get on the air with the show. At this point we wanted them to make a decision — either way. If they said no, we could at least pursue another potential advertiser.

In the meantime, Buddy Black was getting impatient, too. In fact, he did not wait for the Bank to make up its mind. He obtained some vintage programs and on March 21, 1970, Black went on the air with a three-hour Saturday afternoon show, Radio Yesteryear.

When we learned of this, we asked for and received from the Bank of Lincolnwood a release from sponsorship consideration.



We spoke with Buddy Black who told us we would be permitted to host a WNMP show if we provided a sponsor (to pay for the air time).

In early April, we approached John Reed, Executive Vice President of North West Federal Savings, who immediately committed to a one-year sponsorship of the show and we went on the air with our first *Those Were The Days* program on Saturday, May 2, 1970.

Six months into that first year we asked Reed how he felt the show was doing for North West Federal. He said they had diverted some funds for billboard advertising to sponsor our radio series. In

all their previous years of advertising on billboards, he said, no one had ever written, called or come in to say how much they liked the billboards! But a great many people had expressed heartfelt thanks for sponsoring *Those Were The Days*. And accounts were being opened!

North West Federal's sponsorship of *TWTD* continued for almost twelve years, until February 27, 1982, when they merged with Talman-Home Federal Savings, which picked up the sponsorship for two more years, until April 28, 1984.

Cragin Federal Bank for Savings stepped in the very next week, May 5, 1984, and has been with us ever since.

We've been fortunate to have many long-running sponsors for our programs over the years.

Edens Plaza Shopping Center was a regular from June 7, 1975 until July 28, 1984.

Nelsen-Hirschberg Ford joined us on October 24, 1971 and stayed until April 26, 1980.

Paterno Central-Milwaukee Liquors has been with us since April 1, 1972.

Paul Meyer Shoe Store began *TWTD* sponsorship on December 1, 1973.

Townhouse TV and Appliances joined our old time radio show on February 23, 1974.

Film To Video Labs became a sponsor on October 22, 1983.

The End of the Line Caboose Motel was added to our client roster on December 13, 1985.

We're extremely proud that we have been able to have so many long-running sponsors for our broadcasts.

We're grateful to all those who have chosen to advertise on *Those Were The Days* and our other programs over the past twenty years.

And, of course, we're grateful to the listeners who patronize those sponsors. It's what makes our broadcasts of old time radio possible.

—Chuck Schaden





Chuck Schaden's Broadcast Chronology

1970

- 4-25 Chuck Schaden is introduced to WNMP listeners by station General Manager Buddy Black.
- 5-2 *THOSE WERE THE DAYS* premieres, WNMP, Evanston, Illinois, Sat. 1-4 p.m.
- 8-1 TWTD Program Guide debuts, listing broadcast schedule. Forerunner of Nostalgia Digest, the Guide is sent free to listeners who mail in a boxtop!
- 9-20 TWTD moves to Sunday during 11 week Northwestern University football season, WNMP
- 11-2 WNMP call letters changed to WLTD
- 11-8 First TWTD show on WLTD after change of call letters.

1971

- 9-19 TWTD moves to Sunday during 11 week Northwestern football season, WLTD

1972

- 4-9 *HALL CLOSET I* premieres on WLTD, Sunday afternoons, 1-4 p.m.
- 7-7 *HALL CLOSET I* final broadcast, WLTD, after 13 programs
- 9-1 TWTD Guide becomes regular listing in North West Federal publication.
- 9-16 *HALL CLOSET II* premieres on WLTD, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., WLTD
- 9-17 TWTD moves to Sunday during 11 week Northwestern football season, WLTD
- 11-25 *HALL CLOSET II* final broadcast, WLTD, after 11 programs
- 11-27 *HALL CLOSET III* premieres on WLTD weekdays, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.
- 12-2 *RADIO FOR KIDS* premieres on WLTD, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

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1973

- 1-8 Schaden becomes General Manager and Program Director of WLTD
- 9-15 TWTD begins 11 week hiatus for Northwestern football, WLTD
- 10-3 *WHEN RADIO WAS RADIO* premieres WBEZ, Chicago 8-9 p.m. Thursday with Saturday repeat broadcast.

1974

- 4-28 *FIBBER MC GEE & THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF RADIO*, 7-week series with Jim Jordan and Chuck Schaden premieres nationally, is heard locally on WGN, Chicago.
- 6-15 Schaden resigns as WLTD General Manager and Program Director; his old time radio broadcasts continue on the station.
- 9-14 TWTD begins 11 week hiatus for NORTHWESTERN Football, WLTD
- 10-20 *40th ANNIVERSARY SALUTE TO MUTUAL* produced and hosted by Schaden as 4-hour special on WLTD, Mutual affiliate
- 12-1 *Nostalgia Newsletter and Radio Guide* debuts; contains TWTD listings.
- 12-2 *HALL CLOSET SPECIAL* premieres on WTAQ, LaGrange, Monday, 8-10:30 p.m.

1975

- 3-3 *WHEN RADIO WAS RADIO* premieres, WAIT, Chicago, Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.; 5 minute programs.
- 4-26 TWTD Fifth Anniversary Broadcast, WLTD
- 6-1 *OLD TIME RADIO & ALL THAT JAZZ* premieres, WWMM, Arlington Heights, Sun. 7-9 p.m.
- 6-2 *HALL CLOSET IV* premieres, WXFM, Mon.-Fri., 3-5 p.m.
- 7-26 *RADIO FOR KIDS* final broadcast, WLTD, after 120 programs.



FIBBER MC GEE AND THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF RADIO was heard nationally in 1974. From left: announcer Larry Thor; producer Todd Kaiser; Chuck Schaden; director Jim Dolan; Jim Jordan; writer Phil Leslie; agency rep Bill Watson.

- 7-26 *THOSE WERE THE DAYS*, final broadcast, WLTD, after 251 programs
- 7-31 *HALL CLOSET III* final broadcast, WLTD, after 689 programs
- 8-2 TWTD takes 5 week hiatus before moving to WNIB, Chicago
- 8-28 *HALL CLOSET IV* final broadcast, WXFM, after 65 programs
- 9-1 *HALL CLOSET V* premieres WXFM, Chicago, Mon.-Fri., 8-10 a.m.
- 9-1 Schaden opens Nostalgia Broadcast Center at 5901 N. Cicero, Chicago. *HALL CLOSET* and TWTD programs now broadcast from this location.
- 9-6 *THOSE WERE THE DAYS* premieres on WNIB, Chicago, Saturday, 1-5 p.m.

1976

- 1-29 *WHEN RADIO WAS RADIO* final broadcast, WBEZ, after 122 programs
- 2-5 *WHEN RADIO WAS RADIO* begins series of re-runs on WBEZ.
- 4-26 *HALL CLOSET SPECIAL* final broadcast, WTAQ, after 65 programs
- 5-30 *OLD TIME RADIO & ALL THAT JAZZ* final broadcast, WWMM, after 53 programs.

- 9-1 *HALL CLOSET V* moves to 7-9 a.m. from 8-10 a.m., WXFM

1977

- 2-1 Schaden joins North West Federal Savings as VP and Director of Public Relations
- 2-1 *HALL CLOSET V* becomes pre-recorded series on WXFM
- 2-26 *WHEN RADIO WAS RADIO* re-runs conclude on WBEZ after 57 programs.
- 4-8 TWTD broadcast time moves today from 4-7 p.m. because of special opera broadcast on WNIB; 345 listeners call before 4 p.m. asking what happened to TWTD!
- 7-1 *HALL CLOSET V* final broadcast, WXFM, after 480 programs
- 11-26 *WHEN RADIO WAS RADIO*, final broadcast, WAIT, after 858, 5-minute programs

1979

- 5-15 *WHEN RADIO WAS RADIO* resumes sporadic re-runs, WBEZ, Thursday, 8-9 p.m.

(Continued on next page)
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1980

- 4-1 Schaden's Nostalgia Broadcast Center moves to 9004 Waukegan Rd., Morton Grove. HALL CLOSET and TWTD programs now broadcast here and are open to the public
- 4-26 TWTD Tenth Anniversary Broadcast, WNIB; celebrations in auditorium at North West Federal Savings

1982

- 7-2 Schaden resigns NWF/Talman position to devote full time to Old Time Radio and other related interests and activities

1983

- 9-12 RADIO THEATRE premieres WCFL, Chicago, Mon.-Fri. 9-11 p.m.
- 10-1 Nostalgia Newsletter becomes Nostalgia Digest and Radio Guide.
- 10-4 Museum of Broadcast Communications formed: Schaden is a member of the founding Board of Directors.
- 10-10 RADIO THEATRE, WCFL, adds another hour, expands to 8-11 p.m.

1984

- 5-18 RADIO THEATRE final broadcast, WCFL, after 180 broadcasts
- 6-30 WGN RADIO'S 65th ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM, produced and hosted by Schaden, WGN, Chicago, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- 7-2 RADIO THEATRE premieres, WAIT, Chicago, Mon.-Fri., 7-11 p.m.

NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

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ADDRESS CHANGES should be sent to Nostalgia Digest, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. The Post Office does NOT automatically forward the Digest which is sent by bulk mail.

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1985

- 4-27 TWTD Fifteenth Anniversary Broadcast, WNIB; celebration at Tuxedo Junction
- 12-13 RADIO THEATRE final broadcast, WAIT, after 380 programs
- 12-16 OLD TIME RADIO CLASSICS premieres, WBBM, Chicago, Mon.-Fri. 8-9 p.m.

1986

- 6-1 CHUCK SCHADEN'S NOSTALGIA premieres on Cable TV systems in Chicago area. Series consists of 12, 60 minute shows

1987

- 6-12 Schaden donates collection of over 48,000 vintage radio programs to Museum of Broadcast Communications.
- 6-12 Museum of Broadcast Communications opens at River City complex, Chicago.
- 6-12 RADIO CLASSICS SPECIAL, WBBM. Schaden hosts first remote broadcast from Museum of Broadcast Communications, 7-9 p.m.
- 6-13 Nostalgia Broadcast Center moves to Pierre Andre Memorial Studio at Museum of Broadcast Communications.
- 6-14 OLD TIME RADIO CLASSICS, WBBM, expands, adds Sat. and Sun. broadcasts, 8-10 p.m.

1989

- 12-1 Nostalgia Digest observes 15th Anniversary with special issue.
- 12-12 Museum of Broadcast Communications Board of Directors elects Schaden Vice President

1990

- 1-6 THOSE WERE THE DAYS PROGRAM NUMBER 1,000 since May 2, 1970.
- 1-13 THOSE WERE THE DAYS PROGRAM NUMBER 750 ON WNIB
- 4-28 THOSE WERE THE DAYS 20th Anniversary Program, features Fibber McGee & Molly recreation, celebration at Museum of Broadcast Communications.

Those Were The Days Guest Hosts and A Host of Guests!

When Ken Alexander became "permanent" guest host of our *Those Were The Days* program on September 26, 1987, Ken said, "Why, thank you, Chuck."

And ever since, when we've been off for an afternoon or away on business or vacation, Ken has been our man behind the microphone.

To date, he has subbed for us a total of 16 times.

After Ken, Karl Pearson holds the first runner-up record for the most appearances as *TWTD* guest host during the past 20 years. He has occupied our seat 13 times, most notably in July, August and September, 1981. That's when we took 10 Saturdays off and Karl presented a "TWTD Summer Festival of Radio, 1936-45."

In addition, Karl, our "resident" authority on the big bands, has joined us another 18 times for programs devoted wholly or in part to the swing era.

Our boyhood pal, Dan McGuire sat in for us three times; Mike Schwinuner, a friend from the WLTD days who hosted his own show, "The Yesterday Shop," subbed on *TWTD* two times; and Gary Schroeder, one of our earliest "behind-the-scenes" people played guest host twice.

WLTD announcer Robert Elenz, sportscaster-writer Michael Haggerty, and producer-writer Mark Nelson each subbed one time as guest host. And once, we left *TWTD* in the capable hands of co-guest hosts, bringing together comic book historian Joe Sarno and author-professor J. Fred McDonald for a Saturday afternoon.

Record collector and historian Richard Wagner has been with us — sometimes

live, sometimes pre-recorded — on seven occasions.

Phil Schwimmer, the world's greatest advocate of barber-shopping, has been on hand at least four times extolling the virtues of the SPEBSQSA, often bringing one or two Barbershop Quartets with him.

Dave Denwood was on the air with us four times in the early 1970s, speaking about the great film studios: Metro Goldwyn Mayer, Twentieth Century-Fox, and Warner Brothers. That was before we became partners to open our Metro Golden Memories Shop.

We've had lots of special guests in our studios over the past 20 years.

We've been joined by members of the Twentieth Century Railroad Club; Tony DiGaudio and Chuck Huck of the Bacon Grabbers Tent of the Sons of the Desert Laurel and Hardy Fan Club; Bert Katz and Barry Janov of the Antique Radio Club of Illinois; Riverview historian Chuck Wlodarczyk; John V. Leigh, our former principal of James Giles Elementary School; Chuck Roehl of the Steinmetz High School Alumni Association; Alan R. Lind, author of a book on the "Chicago Surface Lines"; and Jack Mathis, author of a book on Republic movie serials, "Valley of the Cliffhangers."

But the long-time record holder for guest appearances on *TWTD* belongs to film buff Bob Kolosowski who first visited us on July 14, 1979 with a brief review of vintage movies coming up on TV in the week ahead.

Since then, Bob has become our "resident" movie historian and thus far he has spent 31 Saturday afternoons with us, mostly on shows devoted to highlighting the talents of movie greats.

Looking back on 20 years of *TWTD* shows, it's been wonderful to have spent so much time with all these special people. They have added greatly to our broadcasts and to our enjoyment of the good old days.

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RADIO'S
OUTSTANDING
THEATRE
OF
THRILLS

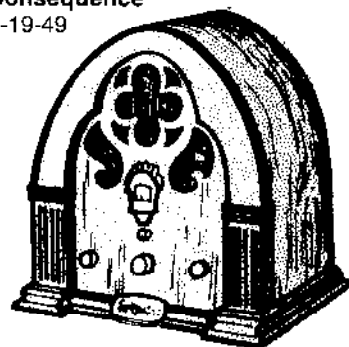
A DOZEN PROGRAMS FROM THE
GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO FEATURING
A DOZEN HOLLYWOOD STARS IN
OUTSTANDING MYSTERY DRAMAS

- | | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|--|
| 1 | EVE ARDEN
The Well-Dressed Corpse
1-18-51 | 7 | BOB HOPE
Death Has A Shadow
5-5-49 |
| 2 | LUCILLE BALL
The Ten Grand
6-22-44 | 8 | DANNY KAYE
I Never Met The Dead Man
1-5-50 |
| 3 | BETTE DAVIS
Goodnight Mrs. Russell
10-20-49 | 9 | BURT LANCASTER
The Big Shot
9-9-48 |
| 4 | KIRK DOUGLAS
Story of Markham's Death
10-2-47 | 10 | AGNES MOOREHEAD
The Thirteenth Sound
2-13-47 |
| 5 | FIBBER MC GEE & MOLLY
Backseat Driver
2-22-51 | 11 | RED SKELTON
The Search For Isabel
11-3-49 |
| 6 | CARY GRANT
Black Path Of Fear
3-7-46 | 12 | JAMES STEWART
Consequence
5-19-46 |

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Old Time Radio's Longest Running Shows

BY TERRY BAKER

This spring, Chuck Schaden celebrates the 20th anniversary of his *Those Were The Days* broadcasts.

Twenty years!

In the broadcasting industry a twenty year run is a remarkable achievement. During radio's "golden age" there were but a handful of programs that reached this plateau. Looking back, you may be surprised to learn how long (or short) your favorite shows lasted.

ON THE AIR LESS THAN 10 YEARS

One of the most popular comedies of the early 30's was **THE FIRE CHIEF** starring Ed Wynn. A top vaudeville comedian since 1904, Wynn had over a dozen Broadway shows to his credit when he was approached by an official from Texaco about bringing his talents to radio. Wynn initially refused this offer because he felt his act relied too heavily on visual gags and would thereby be lost on radio audiences. He finally agreed to the show after being offered a salary of \$5,000 a week.

The show first aired on April 26, 1932 and was ranked 3rd in the ratings after its first season. The program was performed before a studio audience with Wynn in costume, often mugging to the crowd just as he did during his days in vaudeville. The show remained popular for two more years but comedy styles had already begun to change and Wynn was unable to change with them. Younger comics with fast-paced routines were moving into radio and Wynn, who had perfected his type of comedy over three decades could not



ED WYNN
3 Years

compete. The Fire Chief was gone after just three seasons.

The thriller **LIGHTS OUT** was certainly one of the most innovative of all radio programs. No show made greater use of the listeners' imagination than this one. The brilliant use of sound effects created images so vivid that NBC would only air it after midnight so as not to frighten younger listeners.

Although created by Wyllis Cooper in 1935, it is Arch Oboler whom we most remember and credit for the show's success. He took over the show in 1936 serving as writer, director and narrator. Each week Oboler frantically tried to top his previous efforts and after just two years had "burned himself out." He quit the show in 1938 but it continued for one more

RADIO'S LONG-RUN SHOWS

season. In 1942, Oboler revived the show on CBS but this effort lasted only a year. Definitely not for the squeamish, the unique style of Lights Out made it a most memorable experience for all who heard it during its five year run.

Abbott & Costello were able to parlay guest appearances on The Kate Smith and Chase and Sanborn Hours into a show of their own. Vaudeville partners throughout the 1930's, this duo incorporated many of their stage routines and mannerisms into their radio program. Bud Abbott was the clear thinking one while Lou Costello portrayed his scatterbrained companion.

Beginning on October 8, 1942 on NBC, **THE ABBOTT & COSTELLO SHOW** remained a prime time feature until 1948, then continued as a Saturday morning series on ABC for another three years. In a roundabout way, it was their show that led to the creation of the **JIMMY DURANTE-GARRY MOORE PROGRAM**. When Lou came down with rheumatic fever in 1943, Durante and Moore were brought together as replacements and this new show became successful in its own right, lasting eight seasons.

Other shows like **THE LIFE OF RILEY** (8 seasons), **LIFE WITH LUTGI** (5), **OUR MISS BROOKS** (8), and **PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE** (8) would likely have had longer runs had they started sooner. These shows all began in the mid to late 40's and by the time they ended, nearly all the audience had left radio for television.

ON THE AIR 10-15 YEARS

It would not have seemed likely that **RED SKELTON** would become a popular radio entertainer. Like Ed Wynn, Skelton was considered a visual comic. Red's specialty was the art of pantomime which he had developed over many years, first



RED SKELTON
11 Years

as a circus clown, then on the vaudeville stage. But Skelton had other talents as well.

During his stage career, Red had developed several characters to use in his act. When Raleigh Cigarettes offered to sponsor him on a network program, Skelton brought these characterizations over to radio. Soon all America knew of the exploits of Clem Kadiddlehopper, San Fernando Red, Sheriff Deadeye, and Junior "The Mean Widdle Kid." The show began on October 7, 1941 and except for Red's one year of military service, remained on radio until 1953, 11 seasons in all.

Ozzie and Harriet Nelson were regular performers on Skelton's program during its early years. Already known for their musical talents (Ozzie as a bandleader, Harriet a singer), Red's show also gave them the chance to try their hand at comedy. They so impressed network executives that when Red left for military duty, CBS offered the couple a chance to star in their own series.

THE ADVENTURES OF OZZIE & HARRIET began on October 8, 1944.

The Nelsons played themselves and the program focused on their life at home with their sons, David and Ricky. Each week found Ozzie in some new predicament with Harriet and the boys having to bail him out. Ozzie and Harriet were an appealing young couple and audiences loved the fact that they were listening to a real-life family. They continued listening for ten seasons.

Listeners who preferred the unusual could always find solace behind the creaking door of the **INNER SANCTUM**. From 1941 to 1952, Inner Sanctum brought horror stories into thousands of American homes. The plots may have been farfetched at times but guest appearances by top Hollywood stars and first rate special effects usually made tuning in worthwhile.

Audiences also got a change of pace from the crimefighting antics of **MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY**. Creator Ed Byron patterned his lead character after real-life D.A. and presidential contender Thomas E. Dewey. Dewey had built a reputation as a hard-nosed prosecutor who wasn't afraid of pursuing major crime bosses. These were the traits that Bryon incorporated into his attorney.

A former law student himself, Byron made sure the shows were as realistic as possible. By scanning newspapers and law journals he fashioned stories that gave the program a sense of immediacy lacking on other crime shows. Mr. District Attorney was highly popular throughout its 13-year run (1939-1952) and won numerous civic awards along the way.

ON THE AIR 16-19 YEARS

THE RUDY VALLEE SHOW was the most popular of the early musical-variety programs. This show was an effort by NBC to give average Americans the chance to hear top vaudeville acts in the comfort of their own homes. Vallee, a rising young singing star was signed on as



RUDY VALLEE
16 Years

host and the show premiered on October 24, 1929.

The show's sponsor, Standard Brands, spared no expense in providing Rudy with big name guests and the best writers in radio. This, coupled with Vallee's growing popularity made the show a hit right from the start. A host of performers got their first big radio exposure on Vallee's program including Alice Faye, Frances Langford, and **EDDIE CANTOR**, whose own show would last for 16 years.

After ten seasons the ratings had begun to slip so Rudy decided to take some time off. After a brief five month layoff he returned with a new variety series in March of 1940 which lasted three years. Two other series followed but none were as successful as the first. Vallee totaled 16 years in radio, his career ending in 1947.

The performer getting the most out of his appearance on Vallee's program was a young ventriloquist named Edgar Bergen. Bergen was a virtual unknown when he and his dummy Charlie McCarthy first appeared with Vallee in December of 1936. By all sound logic a ventriloquist had no business becoming a radio star but that's the way it worked out. Bergen and

RADIO'S LONG-RUN SHOWS

McCarthy were such a hit that they were invited back several more times and within months had their own show.

THE CHARLIE MCCARTHY SHOW began on May 9, 1937 and make no mistake. Charlie was the star. Bergen did such an outstanding job creating and performing the character that people forgot that Charlie was merely a ventriloquist's dummy. Listeners saw Charlie as a mischievous child who said and did things we all wish we could get away with. Bergen created other characters over the years but none could compare with Charlie.

The show was ranked number one during its first three seasons and never really declined until the beginnings of television. Except for a one year hiatus in 1948, Charlie McCarthy remained on the air until 1956, 18 years in all.

THE CAVALCADE OF AMERICA never achieved the popularity reached by other drama series but it did outlast most of them. While other dramas focused on recreating plays or films, Cavalcade told true stories of persons and events that shaped American history.

A panel of experts was established to verify all historical data and some of the nation's best writers were brought in to keep the stories entertaining as well as informative. DuPont Chemical (sponsor throughout its run) brought in stars from Broadway and Hollywood as guests. The result was an interesting blend of facts and fun that stayed on the air from 1935 to 1953.

There were numerous other shows that didn't quite reach the 20 year plateau. This list included a slew of outstanding comedies such as **THE BOB HOPE SHOW** (19 years), **BURNS AND ALLEN** (18), **THE GREAT GILDER-SLEEVE** (18), and **THE FRED ALLEN SHOW** (16). **FIRST NIGHTER** lasted 18 seasons and the lesser-known drama **DR. CHRISTIAN** aired for sixteen.

ON THE AIR 20 YEARS OR MORE

The highest rated of the "prestige dramas" was **LUX RADIO THEATER** which entertained listeners for 21 years. The show premiered on October 14, 1934 and was not initially well received. The first two seasons saw the ratings decline steadily. In order to reverse this trend, the advertising agency handling the Lux account hired famed Hollywood director Cecil B. DeMille as producer-host. DeMille did not come cheap (\$1,500 a week), but Lux didn't care. DeMille's name was synonymous with quality and that's just the image Lux wanted to project.

Lux spent a fortune hiring the biggest stars in Hollywood to recreate their film or stage roles. The show was the most expensive in radio to produce but it was well worth the publicity Lux received by having a Hollywood starlet come out and praise the values of their soap. Each show became a major event and although DeMille left the series in 1945, the program continued for another decade, ending on June 7, 1955.

As "radio's outstanding theater of thrills," **SUSPENSE** surely lived up to its name. No show did a better job of building the dramatic tension of a story. As a rule, Suspense stayed away from "horror stories," instead telling tales of ordinary people dealing with unusual situations. This gave the show a wider appeal than the other thrillers on the air.

Along with the standard array of stars, Suspense provided some surprising guest performances. Top radio comics such as Red Skelton and Jack Benny were given the chance to shed their usual images and show off their acting abilities. One of radio's best efforts, Suspense remained on the air for 20 years. The show began on June 17, 1942 and last aired the day I was born, September 30, 1962.

While Suspense brimmed with excitement, **ONE MAN'S FAMILY** was exactly the opposite. The longest-running



JACK BENNY (23 years); **FREEMAN GOSDEN & CHARLES CORRELL** as **AMOS 'N' ANDY** (31 years); **CHARLIE MC CARTHY & EDGAR BERGEN** (18 years).

of all serialized dramas played out just like life. It told the story of the Barbour family living in San Francisco. Through the years, audiences came to know each character's strengths and flaws, learned of their hopes and dreams, lived through their triumphs and tragedies. To many, these characters, were as familiar as their own families.

Created by Carlton E. Morse, **One Man's Family** first began on a series of West Coast stations in April of 1932. One year later the show went to the full NBC network and remained there until May 8, 1959. This was not a show that one could enjoy by listening to merely a few episodes. **One Man's Family** had to be savored over time and a great many people did just that.

There were several other series that reached the 20 year mark. There is little more that can be said about **AMOS N' ANDY** or **THE JACK BENNY PROGRAM**. The longest-running of all radio comedies, **Amos n' Andy** (31 years) sparked a nationwide surge of radio sales after its debut in 1929. Jack Benny (23 years), with his superb cast and crew established a level of radio comedy that all others would be measured against. One

comedy that did measure up, both in length of service and rating points was the easy homespun humor of **FIBBER MCGEE & MOLLY** which aired from 1935 to 1957.

For music lovers there was **BING CROSBY** who crooned his way into American homes for 25 years. **THE VOICE OF FIRESTONE** provided a wide variety of musical selections ranging from classical to current hits of the day. Beginning in 1928 until the late 1950's, the show remained in the same time slot, always airing at 7:30 on Monday night.

Finally, a tip of the hat to two other series. **GANGBUSTERS** dramatized cases from FBI files and then asked listeners to help catch wanted fugitives. Detailed descriptions were given of the criminals and during the show's 23-year run, several hundred were reported captured. Don McNeill's **BREAKFAST CLUB** used audience participation in a different manner. Don combined songs and interviews with letters from listeners every weekday for 35 years and developed a style of broadcasting that continues to exist in various forms to this day.

Chuck Schaden has joined some very select company!

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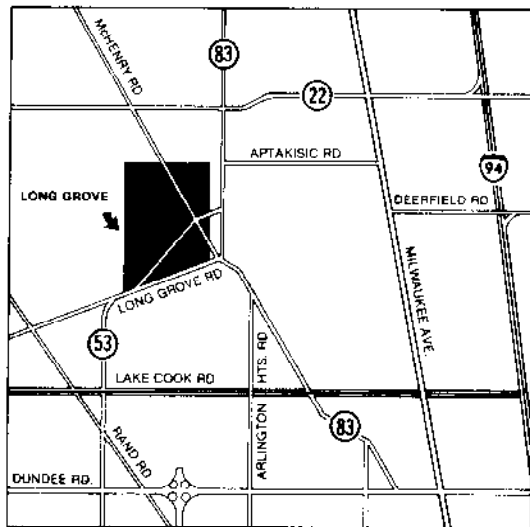
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I REMEMBER IT WELL...
**When We Left
Our Hero Yesterday...**
BY DAN MCGUIRE

According to my *Nostalgia Digest* and *Radio Guide*, this is the twentieth anniversary of Chuck Schaden's *Those Were The Days* program. Tempus truly doth fugit when we're having fun.

It seems like only yesterday that I proudly listened to my boyhood pal air his first broadcast from the modest Evanston studios of WNMP. I wish it was tomorrow. I'd tell him to rehearse more.

That premiere show had a few rough edges and faulty segues. Still, what it lacked in polish, Chuck more than made up for with his enthusiasm. The program's longevity evidences that several generations share his enthusiasm for radio's so-called Golden Age.

Radio reigned as our nation's primary entertainment medium when Chuck and I entered grammar school. During the school year, it greatly influenced our weekday routines.

Most days we came straight home and gratefully accepted an after-school snack from Mom. Then, unless the gang was doing something really exciting outside, we dutifully started in on our homework.

The goal was to finish by 4:30. Because from 4:30 until 6 o'clock, Chicago's major stations vied for the youthful audience with a continuous line-up of 15-minute serialized adventure programs. For radio-active kids like us, there were some painful choices as to where to tune the dial.

Some choices were easier than others. I was never a fan of Little Orphan Annie or Dick Tracy in the comics. So I didn't

get hooked on their radio shows. The round-eyed Annie was a girl, after all. As for Tracy, I was skeptical of a hero whose chin looked as though it could punch neat holes in a Pet Evaporated Milk can. Not to mention the cast of outrageously conceived villains with whom he did battle.

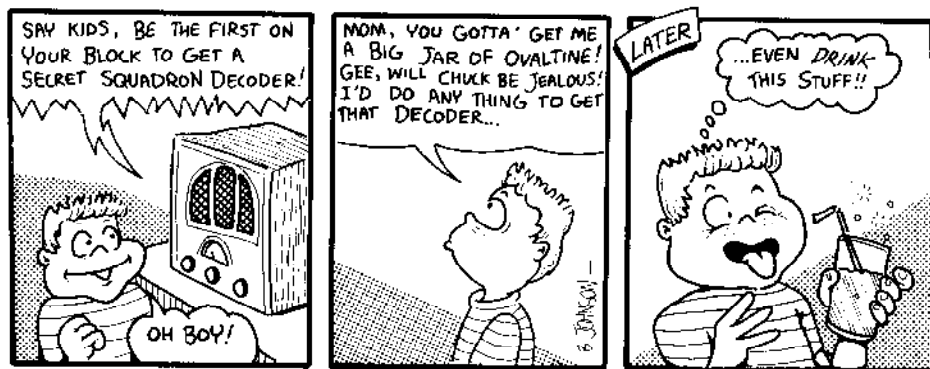
Terry and the Pirates fascinated me with its sing-song Oriental introduction. Storywise, though, I kept losing the drift. The plots weren't all that complex, but I listened sporadically. (Terry was an alternative choice when one of my regular shows dragged a little.) Also, I would get confused as to who were the good guys and bad guys among the many weird characters who populated the script.

It bothered me some that I wasn't more loyal, because Terry, Flip, Pat, Stoop, Dragon Lady and the rest of the Burma bunch were sponsored by Quaker Puffed Wheat and Puffed Rice ("It's shot from guns!"). The former was a regular on my breakfast menu. Some of my favorite shows, meanwhile, had sponsors I seldom patronized.

Captain Midnight, for instance. To be the first kid on my block who received a mail order Secret Squadron decoder, I persuaded my mother to buy a jar of Ovaltine. Then I was obliged to force feed myself countless glassfuls of a drink that was nothing like the chocolate treat I anticipated. Mom eventually dumped half the jar, with a parental lecture about the starving children in Europe.

Yet I was unshakeably loyal to the

I REMEMBER IT WELL



Illustrations by Brian Johnson

obviously weren't much older than me - junior high schoolers, at best. I couldn't figure how they could be gallivanting all over instead of stuck in school like us ordinary kids.

Perhaps because I'm a lifelong sucker for horse operas, Tom Mix was on my must-listen list. In his radio persona (as portrayed by Curly Bradley), Tom was one of my favorite cowboys.

While there was plenty of action in his stories, Tom wasn't essentially a fist-fighting, shoot-out type. Rather, he was a sort of Western detective. Along with Sheriff Mike Shaw ("Sassafras 'n' sour-dough, Taum!"), he unravelled mysteries that involved everything from disappearing cattle, to amnesia victims, to murder.

Tom's sponsor was Shredded Ralston ("bite size and ready to eat"), a product I consumed regularly. Thus, I was able to send in boxtops and dimes for dozens of the Tom Mix premiums such as are now treasures on display at the Museum of Broadcast Communications. Right off, of course, I was inducted into Tom's Ralston Straight Shooters.

A short-lived series I became attached to was *The Adventures of Tennessee Jed*.

I remember being upset when it faded from the airwaves. Yet I can't recall much about the show except that Jed was a sort of easy-going, backwoods version of Tom Mix. His claim to fame was his deadeyed accuracy with a long range deer rifle.

During the war, I was a devoted fan of Hop Harrigan, *Acc of the Airways*. With his mechanic pal, Tank Tinker, he flew many a patriotic mission. The show dripped with propaganda. Once Hop and Tank bravely headed into a potentially deadly situation with two captive German pilots aboard. Says one German to the other: "Da more I see of zese Americaners, da more I realize vot fools ve are to be fighting dem."

If I got an early start on my dial twisting, sometimes I'd tune in *Just Plain Bill*. Though actually a late afternoon soap opera for the ladies, it occasionally featured a robbery, or even a murder, in Sommerville, where Bill ran his little barber shop. (Maybe the writers hoped to hook a few husbands who arrived home early.)

With his gifts of gentle wisdom and observation, aided by his customers' penchant for gossip, Bill helped solve these and many of the townfolk's other problems. Usually right there in his shop. While weighing the facts of one muddled situation, Bill spent 17 days (not counting weekends) shaving the same customer.

Oh, and talk about exciting show openings. Whatever your age, if you had a radio in your home then you will recall perhaps the most dramatic opening of all!

Announcer: Faster than a speeding bullet!

Sound Effect: Reverberating gunshot.

Announcer: More powerful than a locomotive!

Sound Effect: Train charging down track. Whistle.

Announcer: Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound!

Sound Effect: Rush of great wind overhead.

First Voice: Look. Up in the sky. It's

a bird!

Second Voice: It's a plane!

Third Voice: It's Superman!

Of all the 15-minute after-school serials, I ranked Superman as Number One. Tom Mix was a close second. But I was a long-time Superman fan from both his comic books and daily newspaper comic strips. Not to mention his appearances on the silver screen and in *Big Little Books*.

Regular readers may recall that Batman was my all-time favorite comic hero. Unfortunately, he had no radio series. In one adventure, Superman was immobilized by a villain who acquired a chunk of Kryptonite. To my great joy, he was rescued by the Dynamic Duo — Batman and Robin! If the matter had been in doubt, that episode would have sewn up my subsequent loyalty to the Man of Steel.

Chuck shared my high regard for Superman, but our tastes differed on other programs. If he called me out to play while Tom Mix was on, I risked alienating my best pal by saying I'd be out later. The shoe was on the other foot, though, if I called him during *Dick Tracy*.

With so many gripping adventures pinning us down before the radio's little green eye, it's a wonder we ever got out to join the other kids on the block in afternoon school activities. Of course, we could skip even our most favorite shows for one day and not miss much (usually).

On Fridays, homework could be put off until the weekend. Other days we could play for an hour after school and defer homework until after supper. That might mean missing some prime time radio favorites, though.

We could try doing our homework while we listened. But don't let the folks catch your grades slipping because your mind was on *Sky King's* dilemma instead of the assignment.

Who says kids didn't have to deal with some tough decisions in "the old days?"

I wish I had known that Chuck would be rebroadcasting all those great serials just as I entered my second childhood.

mysterious midnight flier. The show's intro made me fairly quiver. The deep tolling of a tower clock. (You *knew* it was 12 midnight on a cloudy, moonless night.) The drone of a propeller airplane coming from far off, then roaring overhead. Announcer Pierre Andre's inimitable voice, mimicking the plane's approach: "Caaap. . . Tiiin. . . Miiid. . . NITE!"

By the time I joined him in his skylful of adventures, the captain had been in business for some time. Thirty years later, thanks to *Those Were The Days*, I caught up with the initial episodes and learned how he came to take on his special assignment.

Another program that snared me with its dramatic opening has several voices shouting sequentially: "Jack Armstrong!" Then announcer Franklin MacCormack elaborated: "Jack Armstrong - the aaaalllll American boy!" As if that wasn't enough, there followed that rousing theme song. "Have you *tried* Wheaties? The *best* breakfast food in the *land*!"

Under the protective tutelage of Uncle Jim, Jack, Billy and Betty traveled to exotic places around the world and continually became involved in bizarre adventures. Jack sounded as though he might be college age. Betty and Billy



NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

Jimmie Lunceford and his Orchestra

By KARL PEARSON

In the words of music critic Stanley Dance, the Jimmie Lunceford band was "one of the five greatest big bands of jazz." Admired by musicians and fans alike, the Lunceford band was one of the great Black bands of the Swing Era. Lunceford's organization was not merely a jazz or dance band, but also a band which put on first-class stage shows. The band could play either free-wheeling swing or ballads and also featured outstanding instrumental soloists and vocalists.

At the front of the organization was the leader, Jimmie Lunceford, a distinguished musician who played guitar, banjo, flute, trombone, clarinet, and the entire saxophone family. Born in Fulton, Missouri in 1902, the Lunceford family moved to Denver a few years later. While in high school he studied music under Wilberforce Whiteman, father of Paul Whiteman, and after graduation, continued his musical studies at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. Upon graduation from Fisk he accepted a teaching position at Manassa High School in Memphis, Tennessee where he doubled as music teacher and athletic instructor.

Jimmie's musical duties included being in charge of the school orchestra, out of which he formed a small jazz band, known as the Chickasaw Syncopators. The band began playing local dates and by 1928 had become proficient enough to find summer employment. A local Memphis doctor who owned a dancehall in Ohio provided a job for the band over the next two summers. Following the 1929 season, Jimmie and the band left Manassa High and decided to make a go of the band business.

At first the orchestra struggled along in the Cleveland area without much success. A move to Buffalo brought much better results. It was during this time that two Fisk alumni, Willie Smith (clarinet, sax and vocals) and Edwin Wilcox (piano and arranger) joined the band. Smith and Wilcox, along with two of Jimmie's former students, Jimmy Crawford (drums) and Moses Allen (bass), would each remain with Lunceford for at least twelve years.

Over a period of several years the band began to make a name for itself in the New York area, and in 1934 received an offer to play at New York City's famous Cotton Club. The Cotton Club's resident bandleader, Duke Ellington, was going to Hollywood to make a movie and a temporary replacement was needed. The Lunceford band had beaten out Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra (then considered the nation's top Black band) for the Cotton Club job!

The peak years for the Jimmie Lunceford orchestra were the period between 1934 and 1942, during which time the band recorded for Decca and Columbia. As Willie Smith once stated, "we made so many hit records, the record company would get mad, because there was a hit on both sides! Many Lunceford hits, such as "Tain't What You Do," "For Dancers Only," "My Blue Heaven," "Four Or Five Times," "Blues In The Night," "Charmaine" and "Well All Right, Then" became big favorites with the record-buying public.

There were many factors in the success of the band. The musicians had an intense



JIMMIE LUNCEFORD AND HIS ORCHESTRA

team spirit and a desire to see just how good they could be. Also, there was a great degree of competition between the different sections in the band. If the brass section, for instance, made a mistake in a number, the sax section would begin to stamp their feet in delight! Jimmie eventually put an end to this as he claimed it was ruining the band's broadcasts!

The men that comprised the Lunceford band were all first class musicians and many were outstanding soloists. Trombonist Trummy Young, drummer Jimmie Crawford, bassist Truck Parham and saxists Willie Smith and Joe Thomas were just a few of the many Lunceford stars. Several of the musicians were also featured as vocalists, either individually, or in a trio or a quartet. The entire band also doubled as a Glee Club, at a time when Fred Waring led the only other such group. Several of the bandsmen also were

featured in dance routines.

The actual men behind the music were the Lunceford arrangers. Ed Wilcox, one of the original members, set the initial style for the band. Eddie Durham, who doubled on trombone and electric guitar (he was a pioneer on that instrument) also contributed many swinging arrangements. But the most outstanding arranger of the Lunceford band was Melvin "Sy" Oliver, who contributed greatly to the band's success. Oliver, a modest man, who also played trumpet and sang, created many of the band's greatest hits.

Jimmie Lunceford was a real perfectionist and felt that it was important to pay attention to every detail regarding the band. His men rehearsed intensely, even to the point where the sax and brass sections took breathing exercises to enhance their intonation! In addition, the

NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

band also rehearsed its bows and had a diagram that showed each member their position on stage during the Glee Club numbers, along with the number of steps needed to get to that spot! The Lunceford band made a visual impression as well, being a very well-dressed group. Each band member had seven different band outfits.

In an age when radio exposure made many bands well-known across the country, the Lunceford band was a rare exception to that rule. Jimmie didn't rely on radio remotes and location jobs to maintain his band's popularity, but counted heavily instead on records and one-night stands. Lunceford's philosophy worked as the band drew large crowds in ballrooms and theaters wherever it played. The band also made many records, recorded for transcriptions, and appeared in films.

The glory days of the Lunceford band

began to wind down during 1942. Many of the musicians were unhappy with Jimmie, especially with the salaries they were earning. Several of the men felt that bandleaders in Jimmie's class (such as Duke Ellington) were paying better salaries. It was a known fact that the band was pulling in larger amounts every year, while salaries remained the same. Sy Oliver, the first to leave, had left in 1939 for a lucrative arranging position with Tommy Dorsey. Key men such as Willie Smith, Jimmy Crawford and Trummy Young left in 1942 and by 1944 there were only a few of the original stars in the band. Jimmie admitted a few years later that his men may have been right in their demands.

Lunceford continued to lead a band and make personal appearances across the country over the next few years. It was during one of those appearances (a one-nighter in Oregon) that Jimmie suffered a fatal heart attack and died on July 12, 1947.

The Way We Were 20 Years Ago



BY TODD NEBEL

It was twenty years ago that Chuck Schaden first told the band to play "Those Were The Days!"

And we are thankful he did, because in so doing he created the spark which lit the nostalgia candle - a candle which still burns.

In the spring of 1970, in an America which was wallowing in disillusionment and discontent because of participation in the Vietnam conflict and civil and social unrest, Chuck realized that the good old days would be a nice place to visit - especially during those unsettling times.

His first broadcast on May 2, 1970 was really the precipitator, and perhaps the catalyst, for a wave of nostalgia which would ensue and sweep the country. In films like *The Summer of '42*, *American Graffiti*, *That's Entertainment!*, *The Sting*, *Paper Moon*, and *The Godfather*; to television shows like *The Waltons*, *Banyon*, *Happy Days*, *Laverne and Shirley* and *M*A*S*H*; and finally to music like "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" by Bette Midler, "The Entertainer" for the motion picture *The Sting* and songs from *Cabaret*, nostalgia made the nation remember a simpler, and sometimes even a happier time in our country's history. With the birth of his *Those Were The Days* we fondly recalled a kinder and simpler time which we call the golden age of radio.

But during the spring of 1970, there was one prevailing issue that consumed our interests besides nostalgia and beyond the

already five year old Vietnam conflict - campus unrest in America.

The same week *Those Were The Days* premiered on radio, the McGovern-Hatfield Amendment to end the Vietnam War was introduced in the U.S. Senate. Ironically, the same week also saw the escalation of secret bombings over Cambodia, which had been authorized for months by President Nixon. In Nixon's April 30th speech announcing a full invasion of Cambodia, he proclaimed that the United States would never become "a pitiful, helpless giant." Nevertheless, a firestorm of protests developed with a passion so deep and wide that by mid-June a Gallup Poll showed that most Americans considered campus unrest to be our nation's greatest problem.

This unrest on college campuses reached its zenith when in May, following the murder of four students at Kent State University and two more at Jackson State College, hundreds of colleges and universities closed or went on strike, their classes suspended and examinations cancelled. Thousands of students then proceeded to leave school and march on Washington where events now seemed beyond all control. Many students and prominent clergymen considered the Cambodian action to be another deathtrap (another Vietnam), but others endorsed the decision. In fact, a Newsweek poll in mid-May showed that more than half of all Americans endorsed the decision and

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THE WAY WE WERE

supported it until the eventual U.S. troops' withdrawal from Cambodia on June 29, 1970.

This obvious division in what Americans held to be right and wrong (not only regarding the Cambodian issue) proved to be just another indication of what tumultuous times these were. Among other things, drugs challenged alcohol as the nation's favorite crutch, law abiding citizens who believed in the flag were ridiculed, square seemed evil, motherhood was being replaced by feminism, work was considered archaic, and disclosure and innuendo was considered as aiding a citizen's right to know (according to the networks!).

It was at this moment in time that a nervous Chuck Schaden first took the microphone and announced that he would be "bridging the gap between yesterday and today." In essence he was asking us to recall some of the better aspects of our past. Some of America's basic values, which were being dismissed as naive and innocent by the spring of 1970, could now

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be found and enjoyed again by listening to the shows from the golden age of radio.

Just as old time radio shows mirrored what was happening in the world during the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, so did television, music and movies reflect the spring of 1970. In television that season, the networks were healthy and prosperous and the top ten programs were:

1. Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In
2. Gunsmoke
3. Bonanza
4. Mayberry RFD
5. Family Affair
6. Here's Lucy
7. The Red Skelton Hour
8. Marcus Welby, M.D.
9. Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color
10. The Doris Day Show

In 1970, the average age of Americans was 28 — reflecting the present magnitude and size of the postwar baby boomers. To this end, CBS television executives, in their infinite wisdom, promoted the end of an era in their decision to "de-ruralize" their programming (national advertisers, they said, wanted only young, urban audiences). Therefore, the following season many of the top CBS programs found in the Nielsen ratings services best 25 programs, would eventually and quickly be phased out. These programs were The Red Skelton Hour, Hee Haw, The Beverly Hillbillies, Green Acres, Mayberry TFD, The Ed Sullivan Show and a victim of the policy on the ABC network, The Lawrence Welk Show.

On June 7, 1970, the Emmy Awards were telecast and among the recipients for outstanding achievement in television were Robert Young as best actor for his role as "Marcus Welby, M.D.," Susan Hampshire for best actress in "The Forsythe Saga," "Room 222" for outstanding new series, and "My World and Welcome to It" for outstanding comedy series.

On April 10th, the world of music was

stunned by the news that Paul McCartney would be leaving the Beatles due to personal reasons. That March, the Grammy Awards from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences were announced and among the recipients were Peggy Lee, Nilsson and the Fifth Dimension. Finally, the songs which ranked high on Billboard's listings that spring were (in order):

1. "Bridge Over Troubled Water" by Simon and Garfunkel
2. "Let It Be" by the Beatles
3. "ABC" by the Jackson Five
4. "American Woman" by The Guess Who
5. "Everything Is Beautiful" by Ray Stevens
6. "The Long and Winding Road" by the Beatles

The first half of 1970 saw the premiere of three big box-office films: *Patton* starring George C. Scott, *M*A*S*H* with Donald Sutherland and *Airport* starring Burt Lancaster. The 42nd Annual Academy Awards presentation took place on April 7, 1970, and the awards going to the best of 1969 were *Midnight Cowboy* for best picture, John Wayne as best actor in *True Grit* and Maggie Smith as best actress in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*.

There are those who might agree with me that the 60's actually ended in the spring of 1973 when President Nixon began to drown in Watergate and the Vietnam War had ended. For the United States, the spring of 1970 was part of one collective time, a time unlike any before or since, a nation at war with itself, disdaining the middle ground.

If ever there was a sea of tranquility established in all of the counterculture of 1970, Chuck's *Those Were The Days* was, and is still, the answer.

THANKS
to our
STAFF
Behind
the
Scenes



At the conclusion of most of our broadcasts, we usually take a moment to thank those who have helped us "behind the scenes."

These are dedicated friends who are very important to our programs; most of them are or have become fans of the golden age of radio.

They have served from time-to-time as engineers, technicians, production assistants, and volunteers.

Without their help, we really could not have had smooth-running broadcasts of vintage programs on the air for all these 20 years.

We express our sincere thanks for a job well done to:

Bob Abella
Carl Amari
Mary Bolton
Dennis Bubacz
Scott Castillo
Rick Garofalo
Kathy Garofalo
John Holzer
Mary Ellen Little
Todd Nebel
Mark Nelson
Todd Neumann
Mort Paradise
Patty Schaden Randstrom
Gary Schroeder
Mike Stosich
Matt Sonnenberg
Mark Vail
Ted Weber
Jeff Weigel
Jim Zarembski
and all the others.

Speaking of Radio

And Other Nostalgic Subjects



From the very beginning, we wanted to add something more to our *Those Were The Days* programs of vintage radio broadcasts. We hoped our listeners would like to learn about the radio era and the events that took place at the time of the old shows.

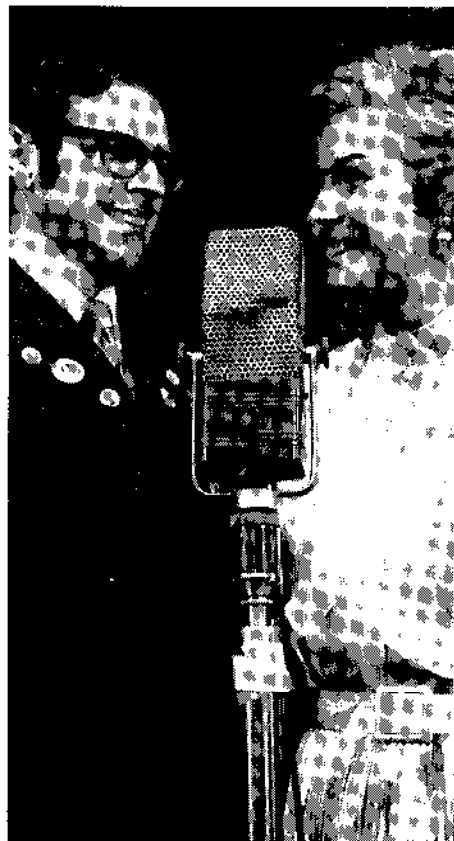
We have always tried to insert bits and pieces of information about the shows and the performers, but to add a special

dimension to our broadcasts, we knew we had to go to the original sources: the performers, writers, producers, directors and others who actually worked behind the microphones and behind the scenes.

It has been our good fortune to visit, meet and interview scores of people who helped make the golden age of radio golden.

Our first interview session occurred on June 16, 1970, just six weeks after our first program. We were invited to Sages East restaurant on north Michigan Avenue where a gathering of Chicago broadcast pioneers were being honored. We set up our microphone and we were off and running!

Within a year we were able to tape conversations with such broadcast greats as Jack Benny, Milton Berle, Hans Conried, Joseph Cotten, Mel Blanc and



CHUCK with SHIRLEY BELL COLE, radio's Little Orphan Annie.



CHUCK with PAUL BARNES, radio's last Captain Midnight.

others who visited the Chicago area.

And over the past 20 years we've recorded the recollections of lots of nice people who shared their personal memories of their work in radio,



CHUCK with HARRY ELDERS, star of *Curtain Time*.

television, movies and the era of the big bands.

We know their contributions to our broadcasts have been substantial. And, of course, they have meant a great deal to us.



CHUCK with JOHN GANNON and SARA JANE WELLS, Billy and Betty Fairfield on *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy*.



JACK BENNY with CHUCK SCHADEN backstage at the Mill Run Theatre

20 YEARS OF INTERVIEWS

1970

Paul Barnes
Shirley Bell Cole
Harry Elders
John Gannon
Sarajane Welles
Rita Ascot Boyd
Alice Carey Ricca
Jack Benny
Tony Randall
Freddy Martin
Maurice Copeland
Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.
Dick Jurgens
Milton Berle



ELLEN SCHADEN with JOHNNIE RAY and CHUCK

1971

Hans Conried
Paul Barnes
Rita Ascot Boyd
Harry Elders
Margaret O'Brien
Joseph Cotten
Rose Marie
Mel Blanc
Danny Thomas
Irene Dunne
Hal Peary
Imogene Coca
King Donovan
Pat O'Brien
Agnes Moorehead
Ken Murray
Sid Caesar
Vincent Price
Rudy Vallee
Van Johnson
Ralph Edwards
Ray Rayner
Don Ameche
Ginger Rogers

1972

Clyde McCoy
Vaughn Monroe
Ned Locke
John Scott Trotter
Paul Barnes
Don Gordon
Margaret Whiting
Martha Raye
Cesar Romero
Fahey Flynn
Dick Haymes
Louie Nye

1973

Johnnie Ray
Jim Jordan
Les Tremayne
Phil Leslie
Bret Morrison

1974

Gale Gordon
Jim Jordan
Phil Leslie
Hal Peary
Red Buttons
Bob Cunningham
Carleton KaDell
Barbara Fuller
John Gannon
Sarajane Wells
Marvin Miller

1975

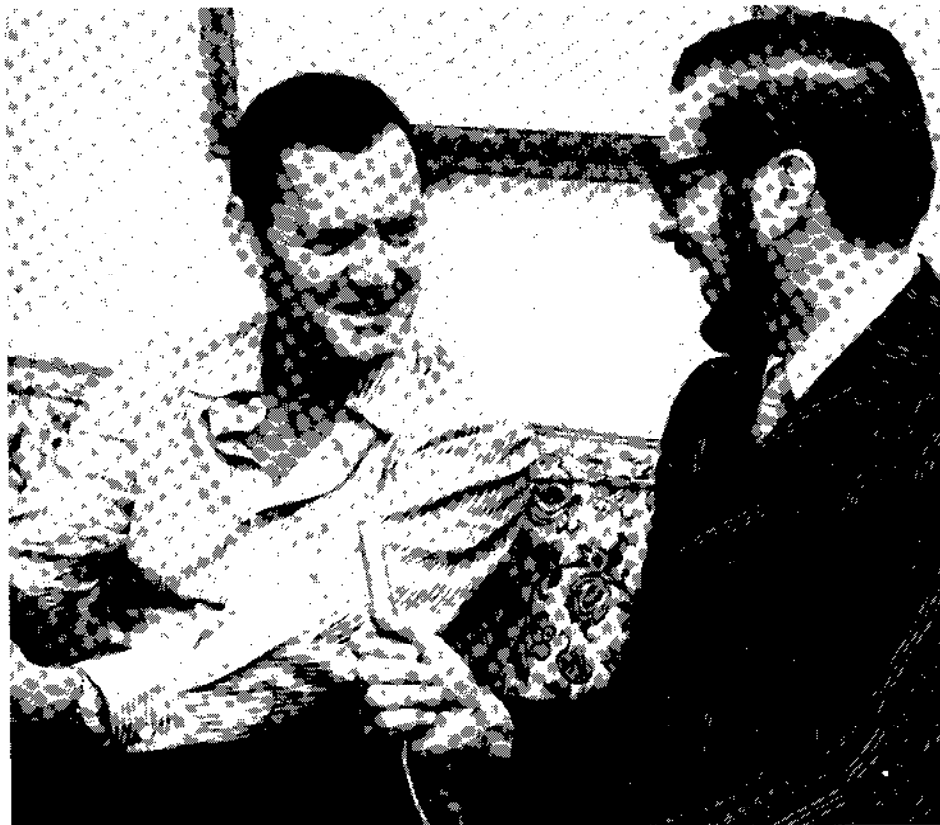
Eve Arden
Carroll Carroll
Barbara Luddy
Alan Reed
Olan Soule
John Guedel
Frank Nelson
Ken Carpenter
Sam Edwards
Harry Von Zell
Janet Waldo
Edgar Bergen

Jack Haley

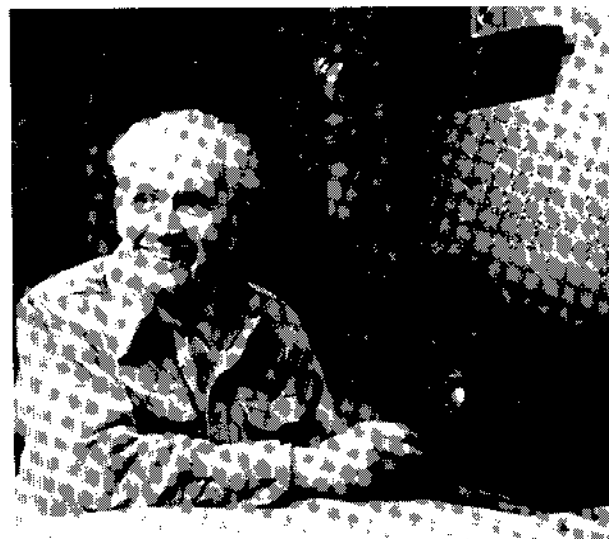
Art Hellyer
Carlton E. Morse
Howard Duff
Jay Jostyn
Lurene Tuttle
Elliott Lewis
Karl Swenson
Joan Tompkins
Ezra Stone
Kate Smith

1976

Irving Fein
Marion Marlowe
Dave Garroway
Bob Arbogast
Alice Reinheart
Anne Seymour
Greg Garrison
Charles Lyon
Arch Oboler
Norman Corwin
Betty Lou Gerson
Bill Baldwin
Jim Boles
Lillian Randolph
Russell Thorsen
Alice Frost
Hugh Studebaker
Dennis Day
Florence Halop
Art Linkletter
Bernadine Flynn
Mercedes McCambridge



TONY RANDALL with CHUCK



JIM (Fibber McGee) JORDAN

1977

Ricardo Montalban
Tex Beneke
Morey Amsterdam
Jack Brickhouse
Irv Kupcinet

1978

Vic and Sade cast

1979

Kirk Alyn
Michael Rye

1980

Buster Crabbe
Don Wilson
Bob Elson

Nostalgia Digest -27-

20 YEARS OF INTERVIEWS



BEA WAIN AND ANDRE BARUCH



TOMMY BARTLETT

1981

George Balzer
Milt Josefsberg
Ed Prentiss

1982

John Agar
Frankie Masters
Ruth Duskin
Lon Lunde

1984

Tyler McVey
Willard Waterman
Horace Heidt
Virginia Gregg
Sheldon Leonard
Jim Backus
Herb Vigran
Fran Allison
Parley Baer
Jim Jordan
Everett Mitchell
Shirley Mitchell
Frank Nelson
Veola Vonn
Tommy Bartlett



LES TREMAYNE

1986

Clayton Moore

1987

Richard Thorne
Ed Herlihy
Bob Atcher
Alice Faye

1988

Harry Elders
Candy Candido
Phil Harris
Marylee Robb
Del Sharbutt
Elvia Allman
Ray Singer
Andre Baruch
Bea Wain
Paula Winslow
Phil Cohan
Bob Hastings
Ned Locke
Ray Rayner
Jack Brickhouse
Kyle Kimborough
Howard Koch
Jay Andres
Carmel Quinn

1989

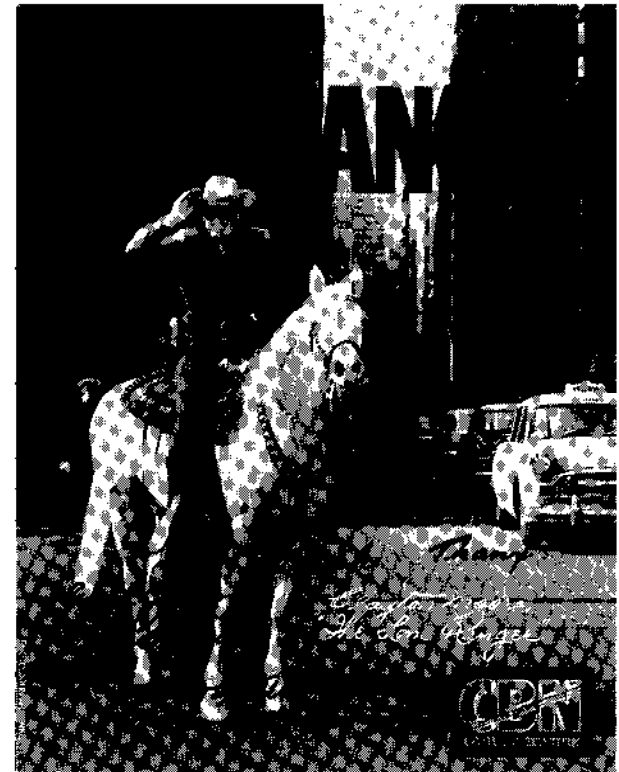
Jack Bivans
Harriet Nelson
David Nelson
Mike Wallace
Olan Soule



BUSTER CRABBE with CHUCK



GALE GORDON



CLAYTON MOORE as THE LONE RANGER

Fibber McGee and Molly

Follow in Jack Benny's Footsteps

For our 20th Anniversary broadcast this year, we are going to attempt to recreate a Fibber McGee and Molly radio show at our *Those Were The Days* studio at the Museum of Broadcast Communications at River City in Chicago.

Ken Alexander, longtime Chicago broadcaster and the star of the Mighty Metro Art Players, has written a complete script

based on the McGee characters and, with some able help from members of our listening audience, we're going to try to make that script come to life, live, on the air, during our *TWTD* program Saturday, April 28th.

(You may remember we did a live recreation of a Jack Benny script in February, 1988 and a good time was had by all!)

If you think you would like to be part of this effort—no professional talent is required, just a willingness to perform on the radio—you may want to audition for one of the ten roles that will be cast for this recreation.

We'll need aspiring actors to portray Fibber McGee, Molly McGee, Wallace Wimple, Teeney, Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve, Mayor LaTrivia, Mrs. Abigail Uppington, the Old Timer, Horatio K. Boomer, and announcer Harlow Wilcox. Also required will be a quartet to portray the King's Men and—of course—a sound effects man (or woman)!

We'll have on-the-air auditions during our *TWTD* program on Saturday, April 21st and those chosen for the April 28th recreation will have an opportunity to work with award-winning radio director Yuri Rasovaky.

If you're interested, drop a line giving your name, address and daytime phone number, no later than April 7, 1990. Be sure to mention which of the McGee characters you would like to portray on the air. Write to us at Box 421, Morton Grove, Illinois 60053.

There's no "talent fee" for your participation, but if you're selected for the live broadcast, you'll probably have some fun and you'll get a tape of your appearance plus a cast photograph.



SOUND EFFECTS for the Jack Benny recreation in 1988 were provided by Tony Lincoln.



JACK BENNY, DON WILSON and the SPORTSMEN were portrayed by Gary Stamm, David Katz and the Brandy Bunch Barbershop Quartet.



JACK BENNY and MR. KITZEL (Gary Stamm and Mike Schwimmer) go through their routine as director Yuri Rasovski beams with approval.

APRIL

Old Time Radio Classics — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M. SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	2 Lights Out This Is Your FBI	3 Milton Berle The Falcon	4 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	5 Dragnet Theatre Royale	6 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	7 Green Hornet Six Shooter The Falcon Jack Armstrong
8 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	9 Third Man Hopalong Cassidy	10 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	11 The Falcon Bill Stern	12 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	13 The Shadow Theatre Royale	14 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced
15 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	16 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	17 Great Gildersleeve Box Thirteen	18 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	19 The Bickersons Green Hornet	20 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	21 This Is Your FBI Hopalong Cassidy Milton Berle Jack Armstrong
22 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	23 Lum and Abner Third Man	24 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	25 Box Thirteen Milton Berle	26 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	27 Black Museum The Falcon	28 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced
29 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	30 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	PLEASE NOTE: All of the programs we present on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are syndicated rebroadcasts. We regret that we are not able to obtain advance information about the storylines of these shows so that we might include more details in our <i>Radio Guide</i> . However, each show we present is slightly less than 30 minutes in length and this easy-to-read schedule lists the programs in the order we will broadcast them on WBBM-AM. The first show listed will play at approximately 8 p.m. and the second will be presented at about 8:30 p.m. and so forth. Programs on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. Thanks for listening.				

MAY

Old Time Radio Classics — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M. SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Hopalong Cassidy Lum and Abner	2 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	3 Box Thirteen Abbott & Costello	4 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	5 This Is Your FBI Milton Berle Six Shooter Jack Armstrong
6 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	7 This Is Your FBI Black Museum	8 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	9 The Shadow Abbott & Costello	10 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	11 Lights Out Black Museum	12 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced
13 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	14 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	15 Abbott & Costello Six Shooter	16 Third Man The Bickersons	17 Great Gildersleeve Black Museum	18 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	19 Lights Out Theatre Royale The Falcon Jack Armstrong
20 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	21 Hopalong Cassidy Lum and Abner	22 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	23 The Bickersons Black Museum	24 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	25 The Shadow Third Man	26 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced
27 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	28 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	29 Green Hornet Third Man	30 Great Gildersleeve Fibber McGee	31 Possible Hockey RADIO CLASSICS To Be Announced	PLEASE NOTE: Due to WBBM's commitment to news and sports, <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> may be pre-empted occasionally for late breaking news of local or national importance, or for unscheduled sports coverage. In this event, vintage shows scheduled for <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> will be rescheduled to a later date.	

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1 - 5 P.M.

APRIL

PLEASE NOTE: The numerals following each program listing for *Those Were The Days* represents tuning information for each particular show. (9:45; 11:20; 8:50) means that we will broadcast the show in three segments: 9 minutes and 45 seconds; 11 minutes and 20 seconds; 8 minutes and 50 seconds. If you add the times of these segments together, you'll have the total length of the show (29:55 for our example). This is of help to those who are taping the broadcasts for their own collection.

SATURDAY, APRIL 7th RADIO AND THE CIVIL WAR

MR. PRESIDENT (1950) Edward Arnold stars as President Abraham Lincoln who, immediately after his inauguration, must concern himself with a war to prevent secession from the Union by southern states. Sustaining, ABC. (19:20; 9:30)

SUSPENSE (12-9-56) "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" stars Victor Jory in "a weird and wonderful story of the Civil War." A Confederate spy, about to be hanged by the Union army, contemplates his escape. Cast includes Larry Thor, Jack Krushen, Lou Merrill, Chet Stratton, Roy Glenn. A classic drama from the series. Sustaining, CBS. (14:23; 14:20)

LIVING FICTION (5-1-54) "Red Badge of Courage" by Stephen Crane is dramatized by Northwestern University students. Famous story of the Civil War. Sustaining, WMAQ, Chicago. (12:35; 16:55)

YOU ARE THERE (11-7-48) "Lee and Grant at Appomattox." It's Palm Sunday, April 9, 1865. General Grant's Union forces have Confederate General Lee's men outnumbered and surrounded. CBS covers the event with newsmen Don Hollenbeck, Quincy Hall, Ken Roberts, John Daly reporting. Cast includes Bob Reddick, Eric Dressler, Statts Cotsworth, Jackson Beck. Sustaining, CBS. (17:15; 10:45)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST is **JEFF WEIGEL**, a behind-the-scenes member of our *TWTD* staff, who's a teacher and Civil War historian. He'll be on hand to help us observe the 125th anniversary of the end of the War Between the States.

SATURDAY, APRIL 14th EASTER GREETINGS

HOLLYWOOD STAR TIME (4-21-46) "The Song of Bernadette" starring Vincent Price, Lee J. Cobb and Vanessa Brown in a radio performance of the 1943 film, the story of the miraculous apparition of the Blessed Virgin to a poor village girl. Frigidare/General Motors, CBS. (28:45)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (3-23-48) Jim and Marian Jordan as the folks from Wistful Vista. Molly

wins an Easter dress. Gale Gordon, Bill Thompson, Arthur Q. Brian, Harlow Wilcox, King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (11:40; 11:45; 6:18)

THE SHADOW (3-28-48) "Death and the Easter Bonnet" starring Bret Morrison as Lamont Cranston and Grace Matthews as the lovely Margo Lane. Margo buys the "wrong" hat at Baroness Yolanda's Hat Shoppe. Blue Coal. MBS. (14:35; 14:35)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-17-49) Jack gets ready for his Easter stroll down Wilshire Boulevard. Mary Livingstone, Mel Blanc, Don Wilson, Frank Nelson, Dennis Day, Artie Auerbach, Sheldon Leonard, Phil Harris. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (17:49; 8:45)

PHIL HARRIS—ALICE FAYE SHOW (4-17-49) Alice has invited her daughters' school principal to dinner on Easter Sunday. Elliott Lewis is Frankie Remley, Robert North is Willy, Walter Tetley is Julius, and the Harris girls are played by Jeanine Roos and Anne Whitfield. Rexall, NBC. (18:45; 9:05)

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (4-9-52) Willard Waterman stars as Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve with Walter Tetley as Leroy and Lillian Randolph as Birdie. The family persuades Gildy to get up at 4 a.m. to attend the Easter Sunrise Service. Birdie sings "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" Kraft Foods, NBC. (14:20; 15:15)

SATURDAY, APRIL 21st

LUX RADIO THEATRE (4-19-37) "Alibi Ike" starring Joe E. Brown with William Frawley, Helen Chandler, Roscoe Karnes, Frank Nelson and Cy Kendall in a radio version of the 1935 film. Chicago Cubs' star pitcher Ike Farrell loses a game because of trouble with his girl, but mobsters trying to fix the game think he's cooperating with them in this baseball comedy by Ring Lardner. Cecil B. DeMille produces. Lux Soap, CBS. (22:30; 13:50; 21:50)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (10-19-48) Jim and Marian Jordan star as the Squire of Wistful Vista and his wife go to the repair shop to retrieve their portable radio. Cast features Gale Gordon, Bill Thompson,

Arthur Q. Brian, Harlow Wilcox, King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (11:20; 10:15; 7:10)

CHARLIE MC CARTHY SHOW (1952) Edgar Bergen welcomes guest star Marilyn Monroe who is engaged to marry Charlie! Show features Mortimer Snerd, Dave Barry, Jack Kirkwood, Ray Noble and the orchestra, announcer Bill Baldwin. Richard Hudnut Products. CBS. (13:55; 15:05)

KRAFT MUSIC HALL (2-24-49) Al Jolson stars with Oscar Levant and guests, the Andrew Sisters. Ken Carpenter announces; Lou Bring and the orchestra. AFRS rebroadcast. (2-24-49)

SPECIAL NOTE: During this program we will have on-air auditions for parts in the Fibber McGee and Molly Show recreation we have planned for our *TWTD* broadcast of April 28th. (See the story on page 30 of this issue of *Nostalgia Digest*.)

SATURDAY, APRIL 28th

Chuck Schaden's 20th Anniversary Show "Thanks for Listening"

As we complete twenty years of *Those Were The Days* broadcasts we'll express our appreciation with what we hope will be a very special program.

We'll offer our 1969 audition tape for your consideration. Would you have approved our old time radio concept?

We'll also tune in to two other anniversary specials as we listen to a salute to Bing Crosby on his 20th anniversary in show business and a look at 20 years of world-wide news broadcasts by CBS radio.

Our studio at the Museum of Broadcast Communications will be the site of a Fibber McGee and Molly recreation.

And finally, if time permits, we'll present a "real" Fibber McGee and Molly broadcast!

Don't miss it if you can!

Here's the line-up:

NOSTALGIA (1969) Chuck Schaden hosts a program of old time radio clips designed to be an audition tape for a prospective sponsor, Bank of Lincolnwood. (15:30; 13:40)

SALUTE TO BING CROSBY (1-9-51) Art Linkletter hosts an all-star tribute to Bing Crosby on the occasion of his 20th anniversary in show business. Stopping by to praise Bing are Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll, Louis Armstrong, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, Ella Fitzgerald, Judy Garland, Bob Hope, Dorothy Kirsten, Mary Martin, William S. Paley, Jack Teagarden, Jud Conlon's Rhythmairs, John Scott Trotter and the orchestra. Sustaining, CBS. (10:55; 15:00)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY RECREATION (4-20-90) A live broadcast of a newly written script by Ken Alexander, based on the Fibber McGee and Molly radio programs. Our cast will include listeners who have auditioned for the various roles in the sketch: Fibber, Molly, Harlow Wilcox, Wallace Wimpole, Teeney, Gil-

dersleeve, Mayor LaTrivia, Mrs. Uppington, the Old Timer, Horatio K. Boomer, the King's Men, and the sound effects man! For more details see the story on page 30 of this issue of *Nostalgia Digest*.

WE TAKE YOU BACK (3-13-58) A special 20th anniversary program commemorating the start of regular CBS news broadcasts in 1938. Dallas Townsend hosts this look at the "new form of journalism"—radio news reports from around the world. Heard are Edward R. Murrow, Robert Trout, William L. Shirer, H.V. Kaltenborn, John Daly and others. Sustaining, CBS. (16:05; 13:45)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (10-21-47) Jim and Marian Jordan are joined by regulars Gale Gordon, Arthur Q. Brian, Bill Thompson, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. The McGees must go downtown to the Wistful Vista Finance Company to make a late payment on their car. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (8:45; 11:35; 9:10)

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1 - 5 P.M.

MAY

SATURDAY, MAY 5th

DAVID HARDING, COUNTERSPY (9-8-49) "The Case of the Courageous Come-On" stars Don McLaughlin as Harding with Mandel Kramer as Peters, investigating a con game promoting Hollywood and Broadway stars. Pepsi Cola, ABC. (14:20; 14:15)

MY FRIEND IRMA (2-10-52) Marie Wilson stars as Irma Peterson with Cathy Lewis as her roommate, Jane Stacy. Irma tries to become an assistant to a magician. Cast includes Hans Conried, Alan Reed, John Brown. Ennds Chlorophyll Tablets. CBS. (14:05; 15:12)

YOUR HIT PARADE (2-8-47) Andy Russell and guest Dinah Shore sing the top-tunes of the day, plus a few extras. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (9:00; 8:45; 10:55; 9:30)

SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE (1-21-51) "Spellbound" starring Joseph Cotten and Mercedes McCambridge in a radio version of the 1945 Alfred Hitchcock film. Hitchcock hosts and narrates the story of a psychiatrist who tries to uncover her patient's hangups. Cast includes Herb Butterfield, Howard McNear and William Tracy. Jimmy Wallington announces. Anacin, RCA Victor, NBC. (12:52; 11:45; 14:15; 14:30)

RED RYDER (9-6-46) "America's Famous Fighting Cowboy" in an adventure called "The Crooked Gambler." Brooke Tempe stars as Red. Sustaining, NBC Blue. (11:14; 13:38)

SATURDAY, MAY 12th
REMEMBERING MA PERKINS

MA PERKINS #1622 (1939) Wednesday: Why hasn't Paul Henderson proposed to Fay? Virginia Payne stars as Ma. Rita Ascot is Fay. Murray Forbes is Willy Fitz. Jonathan Hote is Paul. Announcer is Dick Wells. Oxydol, NBC. (14:15)

MA PERKINS #1623 (1939) Thursday: Paul tells Ma what he really feels about Fay. Oxydol, NBC. (13:35)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (8-1-70) Rita Ascot Boyd and Alice Carey Ricca talk with Chuck Schaden about their careers in Chicago radio during the golden age. Rita was, among many other things, Fay on Ma Perkins. Alice was a radio casting director. Conversation recorded at Findlay Galleries, Chicago. (22:45)

MA PERKINS #1624 (1939) Friday: Paul pops the question! Gilbert Faust appears as John Perkins. Oxydol, NBC. (13:45)

MA PERKINS #1625 (1939) Monday: Fay and Paul make plans for their wedding as the family gathers. Charles Egleston as Shuffle Shober, Dora Johnson as Evy, Cecil Roy as Junior, Fred Howard as C. Pemberton Toohey. Oxydol, NBC. (13:35)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (8-1-70) The conversation continues with Rita Ascot Boyd and Alice Carey Ricca. (14:10)

MA PERKINS #1643 (1939) Thursday, about three and a half weeks later: Fay asks Paul to choose between his career as a congressman and marriage with her. Oxydol, NBC. (13:55)

MA PERKINS #1644 (1939) Friday: A dejected and rejected Fay is given comfort by Ma. Oxydol, NBC. (13:45)

THOSE WERE THE DAYS (5-29-71) Excerpt featuring a live recreation of an original Ma Perkins script from January 2, 1941, starring Rita Ascot Boyd. Viola Berwick, Johnny Coons, Bob Kennedy and Phil Bowman. The cast is interviewed before and after the fond and loving recreation, which follows the Fay-Paul storyline. WLTD, Evanston. (11:50; 18:15; 7:00)

MA PERKINS #2138 (1942) Thursday, about a year and a half later: A sad day for Ma as she and the family travel to Arlington National Cemetery to bury her son-in-law, Fay's husband Paul Henderson, who died for his country. Oxydol, NBC. (14:30)

MA PERKINS #2139 (1942) Friday: Early in the morning, on the day after Paul's funeral, Ma offers words of comfort to her grieving daughter, Fay. Oxydol, NBC. (13:25)

NOTE: This sequence of episodes from the long-running Ma Perkins series will demonstrate beautifully the impact that daytime dramas had on American life during the radio era.

SATURDAY, MAY 19th

ADVENTURES OF OZZIE AND HARRIET (1-9-49) Harriet is concerned about David and Ricky's obsession with sports heroes. Cast features John Brown, Tommy Bernard, Henry Blair, Janet Waldo. International Silver Company, NBC. (15:10; 14:54)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (3-19-45) "Grissly's Millions" starring Pat O'Brien and Lynn Bari in a radio version of the 1944 Republic motion picture, a murder mystery about the death of a wealthy man and the manhunt for his killer. Otto Krueger is guest producer. Lux Soap, CBS. (17:55; 19:20; 20:25)



A CAST OF BROADCAST PROFESSIONALS recreated a MA PERKINS episode on THOSE WERE THE DAYS in 1971. That recreation will be rebroadcast on May 12, 1990. Shown are, from left, director-announcer Phil Bowman; "Shuffle Shober" Johnny Coons; and "Ma Perkins" Viola Berwick.

MEET THE MEEKS (10-4-47) Mother puts the entire family on a diet. Cast features Fran Allison, Forrest Lewis, Beryl Vaughn, Cliff Soubier. Sustaining, NBC. (15:10; 15:15)

X MINUS ONE (6-12-56) "If You Was A Moklin" stars Joseph Julian, Patricia Wheel, Karl Weber. Inhabitants of the planet Moklin begin to penetrate the ranks of Earthlings. Sustaining, NBC. (13:00; 12:10)

ONE NIGHT STAND (6-7-44) Eddy Howard and his orchestra in a remote broadcast from Frank Dailey's Terrace Room, Newark, New Jersey. Selections include "Of Thee I Sing," "I'll Get By," "St. Louis Blues," "I Found A New Baby," and "Deep Night." AFRS. (8:35; 10:40; 10:10)

SATURDAY, MAY 26th
CHICAGO RADIO IN THE 1960s

RON RILEY & CLARK WEBER (1968) The two disc jockeys from WLS, Chicago team up for a special "oldies" broadcast to servicemen in Viet Nam. Music by Leslie Gore, the Beatles, Everly Brothers, Percy Sledge, Dave Clark 5. AFRTS. (11:55; 11:25; 8:20)

CHUCK BENSON & KURT RUSSELL (1967) A slice of WIND, Chicago with the two evening disc jockeys "on the WIND," introduced by Walt Hamilton. WIND, Chicago. (8:15)

FLOYD BROWN (1967) The mid-day host on WMAQ when the station's format was undergoing some changes. Music by Sandler and Young, Maria Dallas, and Ed Ames. WMAQ, Chicago. (11:00)

SUPPER CLUB (3-6-61) Art Hellyer hosts an early-evening program of live music, comedy and chatter with vocalists Carol March and Bob Vegas, guest comedian George Bloom, and Joe Vito and the band. A feature of the "Showmanship Station." Participating sponsors. WBBM, Chicago. (17:05; 7:00)

WALLY PHILLIPS (12-18-64) The mid-morning host plays records, solves listeners problems and sells products! WGN, Chicago. (13:30)

ERNE SIMON (2-10-62) "Big Ern" has lots of fun on a Saturday edition of his morning record show, with music by Joey Dee, Lawrence Welk, Sam Cook, the Highwaymen, Connie Francis. WJJD, Chicago. (24:00)

BERNIE ALLEN (4-12-67) The mid-day disc jockey offers "Music for Young Mods" and plays records by Nancy Sinatra and Roger Miller. WLS, Chicago. (15:25)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST is RICK GAROFALO, a behind-the-scenes member of our TWTD staff, who's a broadcast technician and collector of "recent radio" sounds from the 60s and 70s.

Broadcast Highlights and Mini-Milestones



We've had a great time during the past twenty years!

And it hasn't been only with our on-the-air broadcasts.

We've had many opportunities to meet fans of the good old days.

Our first occasion to visit with listeners was in 1971 when we decided to show a couple of hours of vintage silent and sound comedies starring Laurel and Hardy, Charlie Chase, Charlie Chaplin and others at the home office of our sponsor, North West Federal Savings on west Irving Park Road. We invited listeners to attend the free program and we had a full house . . . about 100 turned out!

We scheduled a few other "Nostalgia Nights" at North West Federal (all held in the employees' basement lunch room) and then, on May 6, 1972, we began the "Memory Club" which met every Saturday evening at North West Federal and featured vintage and classic movies from the 1930s and 40s. Admission of \$1 was used to defray the cost of film rentals. A version of the "Memory Club" continues to this day at the Falman Theatre at the same location — formerly North West Federal — on Irving Park Road.

In 1974, we began a three year stint teaching a class on the history of radio and television programming for students at Columbia College in Chicago. We taught a similar course in 1979 for the Center for Special Programs at Elmhurst College and, in 1980 for the Elmwood Park Arts and Humanities Commission.

Dozens of Monopoly enthusiasts were brought together on March 9, 1975 for the first of several *Those Were The Days* Monopoly Tournaments (at North West Federal).

We went to the University of Chicago on October 6, 1976 to host an evening of the Chicago Comedy Festival and moderate a panel on Vic and Sade.

The next month marked the 55th Anniversary of the historic Chicago Theatre and on November 4, 1976 we appeared on the stage of that landmark Loop theatre (where we had spent many an afternoon of our youth) with a presentation on vintage radio in a program sponsored by CATOE, the Chicago Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts.



CHUCK WITH A GROUP OF MOVIE FANS AT A "NOSTALGIA NIGHT" NORTH WEST FEDERAL SAVINGS, OCTOBER 2, 1971



A WONDERFUL NIGHT AT THE CHICAGO THEATRE NOVEMBER 4, 1976



CHUCK with TEX BENEKE AT RAVINIA PARK AUGUST 10, 1977

On May 7, 1977, we hosted and produced, along with amusement park historian Chuck Wlodarczyk, a "River-view Night of Nostalgia" at Lane Tech High School.

Later that same summer, on August 10, we served as emcee at Ravinia Park for the "Nostalgic Sounds of the Summer of '42" with Tex Beneke, Helen O'Connell and Ray Eberly.

On February 17, 1985, as part of a *Those Were The Days* Jack Benny Month, we climbed aboard the 20th Century Railroad Club's "Jack Benny 39th Birthday Special" with Frank Nelson, Veola Vonn and 400 other fans and headed for Waukegan, Illinois for an unforgettable day of fun at Jack Benny Junior High School.

HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

And on April 30 and May 7, 1989 we were in the Kraft Television Theatre at the Museum of Broadcast Communications.



CHUCK WITH HELEN O'CONNELL
AT RAVINIA PARK
AUGUST 10, 1977

visiting with listeners and talking about the good old days of radio and what they meant to us as we grew up with them in the 1940s. (The presentations were recorded and have been released on our two-cassette tape set called, what else, "Those Were The Days.")

We have a background in journalism and through all these years of broadcasting old time radio, we have had many opportunities to keep busy at the typewriter.

Most obvious, of course, is our *Nostalgia Digest* and *Radio Guide* which we've written, edited and published since December, 1974 (when it was called the *Nostalgia Newsletter*).

But we've been called on to do some other writing, too.

On July 31, 1976 the *Chicago Tribune* carried an article we wrote entitled "A Lament for Radio's Golden Age." The *Chicago Daily News*, on November 12, 1977, in a front page "obituary-feature" following the death of Bing Crosby, carried our story, "Transcribed! Bing Put Recordings in Radio" about Crosby's



RADIO STAR FRANK NELSON ABOARD THE 20th CENTURY RAILROAD CLUB'S "JACK BENNY 39th BIRTHDAY SPECIAL" BOUND FOR WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS, FEB. 17, 1985.



AUTHOR OF WBBM RADIO: YESTERDAY AND TODAY (1988)

pioneering of pre-recorded broadcasts.

We've reviewed a few books, too, including "Vic and Sade: the Best Radio Plays of Paul Rhymer" (*Sun-Times*, September 26, 1976); "Radio Comedy" by Arthur Frank Wertheim (*Sun-Times*, July 22, 1979); "That's Not All Folks" by Mel Blanc (*Tribune*, August 21, 1988); and "Flywheel, Shyster, and Flywheel" by Michael Barson (*Tribune*, November 6, 1988.)

And we've written a couple of books: "The Cinnamon Bear Book" (1987) and "WBBM Radio Yesterday and Today" (1988).

It's been a good time for us and, we hope, for listeners, readers and fans of the good old days.

Here are some other broadcast highlights and mini-milestones from the past twenty years:

1970

- 10-25 TWTD presents first annual Halloween Show.
- 11-22 TWTD presents first annual Thanksgiving Show.
- 12-5 Cinnamon Bear revival begins on TWTD with selected episodes.
- 12-28 Schaden recognized by Newsweek Magazine as old-time-radio broadcaster-collector-historian

1971

- 2-20 "Remember Sunday" begins 7-week TWTD recreation of a week from the past.
- 5-29 "Ma Perkins" script is broadcast "live" on TWTD with professional cast.
- 11-22 CINNAMON BEAR series begins twice daily broadcasts, WLTD, noon and 3:30 p.m.

HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

1972

- 1-1 TWTD expands to 6 hours for special New Year's Day edition, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- 5-27 DesPlaines Theatre Guild presents live, original drama on TWTD, WLTD.
- 6-3 Jack Benny is subject of entire TWTD program for the first time.
- 9-24 TWTD first remote broadcast; Wilmette Centennial Fair, downtown Wilmette.

1973

- 7-21 First "Christmas in July" broadcast on TWTD.

1974

- 3-23 TWTD Salute to Irving Berlin on his 88th birthday.
- 4-13 "Easter" is subject of TWTD broadcast for the first time.
- 6-8 TWTD expands to 5½ hours for Tribute to Glenn Miller, 1-6:30 p.m.
- 7-27 TWTD pre-empted on WLTD for coverage of Evanston Garage Sale.
- 12-24 "Christmas Eve in the Hall Closet" is 10 hour special on WLTD.

1976

- 3-1 METRO GOLDEN MEMORIES opens at 5120 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago.
- 3-6 "The Week That Was—Sun. through Sat." begins another 7-week TWTD look at radio's past.
- 6-19 Schaden runs his own engineering control board on the air during broadcast for the first time. He survives!

1977

- 5-1 Metro Golden Memories Shop moves to larger quarters at 5941 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago.
- 5-7 "All This And World War II" begins 5-week TWTD salute to wartime radio.
- 10-22 Entire TWTD broadcast schedule pre-empted for the first time for a special memorial tribute to a major show biz personality (Bing Crosby).
- 12-24 TWTD expands to 6 hours for special Christmas Eve broadcast, WNIB.

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1978

- 5-6 "Fibber McGee & The Good Old Days of Radio," 7-week recreation begins on TWTD.
- 10-7 TWTD memorial tribute to Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy (9-30-78)

1979

- 2-3 "Jack Benny Month" begins; first time TWTD devotes full month honoring the popular radio comedian.
- 5-5 "Complete Broadcast Day" from 9-21-39 begins 7-week rebroadcast on TWTD.
- 6-23 TWTD memorial tribute to Jack Haley (6-6-79).

1980

- 3-1 TWTD memorial tribute to Jimmy Durante (1-29-80).
- 4-1 Metro Golden Memories opens at a second location, 9004 Waukegan Rd., Morton Grove.
- 5-3 "Radio From A to Z" begins 4-week special on TWTD.

1981

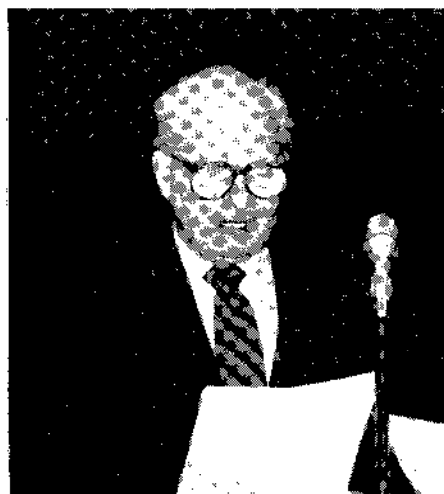
- 6-1 Metro Golden Memories closes Morton Grove location, consolidates with store at 5941 W. Irving Park, Chicago.
- 7-11 "A Sound Picture—1936-45" begins 10-week TWTD summer series; Karl Pearson hosts

1982

- 8-21 TWTD memorial tribute to Henry Fonda (8-12-82).

1983

- 3-19 TWTD memorial tribute to Arthur Godfrey (3-16-83).
- 4-16 TWTD memorial tribute to Jack Webb (12-23-83).
- 6-11 TWTD memorial tribute to Jim Ameche (2-4-83).
- 10-22 TWTD memorial tribute to Pat O'Brien (10-15-83).



KEN ALEXANDER, veteran broadcaster, became "permanent guest host of "Those Were The Days" on September 26, 1987.

1984

- 3-3 TWTD begins a 4-week "Salute to Humphrey Bogart"
- 4-21 Schaden uses Bill Griskey's vintage NBC microphone on the air for the first time, TWTD.
- 11-10 TWTD birthday salute to Jim Jordan, age 88 on 11-6-84.
- 12-10 RADIO THEATRE, WAIT, begins 5-night Tribute to Glenn Miller on the 40th anniversary of the bandleader's disappearance. Karl Pearson co-hosts.
- 12-24 RADIO THEATRE on WAIT expands to 3 p.m.-midnight for Christmas Eve Special
- 12-31 RADIO THEATRE, WAIT, expands to noon-midnight for New Year's Eve Special

1985

- 4-13 TWTD memorial tribute to Harold Peary (3-30-85).
- 11-2 TWTD memorial tribute to Orson Welles (10-10-85).

1986

- 3-1 Metro Golden Memories moves to larger location at 5425 W. Addison, Chicago
- 4-5 TWTD memorial tribute to James Cagney (3-30-86).

- 5-3 TWTD begins 5-week series, "Radio in the 30s"
- 6-21 TWTD memorial tribute to Benny Goodman (6-13-86).
- 7-12 TWTD memorial tribute to Rudy Vallee (7-3-86).
- 9-27 TWTD memorial tribute to Frank Nelson (9-12-86).
- 11-1 TWTD begins 2-week "60th Anniversary Salute to NBC"
- 11-6 Jim Jordan celebrates 90th birthday, receives hundreds of cards and letters from TWTD fans.

1987

- 6-13 Ken Alexander joins TWTD staff as announcer.
- 6-27 TWTD memorial tribute to Fred Astaire (6-22-87).
- 7-11 TWTD memorial tribute to Danny Kaye (3-3-87).
- 9-12 TWTD begins 3-week "60th Anniversary Salute to CBS"
- 9-26 Ken Alexander become permanent guest host of TWTD whenever Schaden is absent.

1988

- 2-27 TWTD presents recreation of Jack Benny Radio Show. Listeners are cast in all roles.
- 4-9 TWTD memorial tribute to Jim Jordan (4-1-88).
- 5-6 RADIO CLASSICS, WBBM, special 2-hour remote broadcast from Wrigley Building for 65th anniversary of station from an original broadcast site.
- 7-2 TWTD memorial tribute to Dennis Day (6-22-88).
- 10-29 RADIO CLASSICS, WBBM, special 2-hour broadcast for 50th anniversary of Orson Welles, "War of the Worlds" program.
- 11-5 "65th Anniversary Salute to WBBM Radio" special on TWTD, WNIB.

1989

- 5-6 TWTD memorial tribute to Lucille Ball (4-26-89).
- 6-17 TWTD broadcasts Fran Allison Memorial Service from Museum of Broadcast Communications, "live" on WNIB.
- 10-21 TWTD memorial tribute to Bette Davis (10-6-89).

TAKE A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE!

**RETURN
TO THOSE THRILLING
DAYS OF
YESTERYEAR
AS
CHUCK SCHADEN
REMINISCES!**

Join him on the floor in front of the old Zenith console radio (with the flickering green eye), tuning in to The Shadow, Jack Benny, Fred Allen, and the Lone Ranger . . . helping Dad build a fire in the coal furnace and listening to Inner Sanctum . . . watching Mom do the

Monday wash to the accompaniment of soap operas and Ma Perkins . . . running home after school to decode Captain Midnight's secret message. Chuck recalls Abbott and Costello, the Bickersons, Bergen and McCarthy, and fondly remembers Amos 'n' Andy's Fresh Air Taxi Company, Jack Benny's Maxwell, and Fibber McGee's closet.

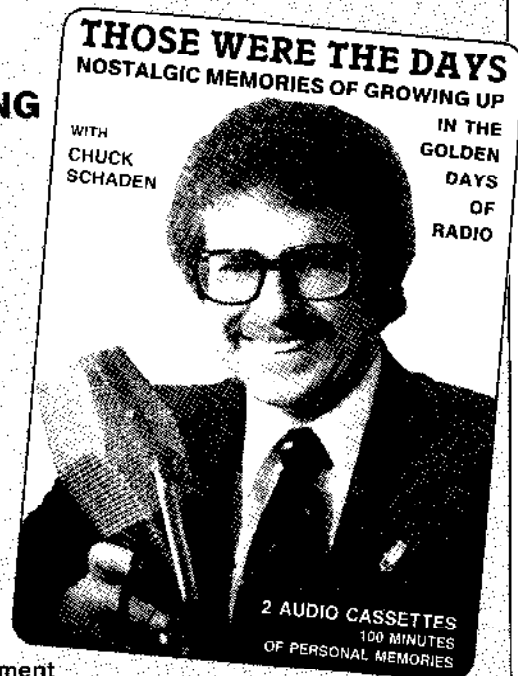
Recorded before a live audience at the Museum of Broadcast Communications, Chicago, which shares in the proceeds of the sale of these tapes.

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This cassette set is attractively packaged in a colorful vinyl album and is available for only: **\$12.95** at Metro Golden Memories in Chicago or at the Museum of Broadcast Communications, River City, Chicago.

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The Saga of WNMP/WLTD: The Little Station That Could!

In May of 1946 the Federal Communications Commission granted a broadcast license to the Evanston Broadcasting Company to operate a 1,000 watt daytime-only radio station at 1590 kilocycles on the AM dial.

Equal partners in the ownership of Evanston Broadcasting Company were Fred S. Newton, President; Angus D. Pfaff, Vice President; and James M. MacTaggart, Secretary-Treasurer.

Radio station WNMP (Newton-MacTaggart-Pfaff) went on the air on September 29, 1947, with transmitter and studios located at 2201 Oakton, Evanston.

In 1956, WNMP moved its studio and offices to the First National Bank Building, 1580 Sherman Avenue, Evanston.

By 1958, Pfaff, who was the station's first general manager, had become principal owner of the Evanston Broadcasting Company and Channing Overton became general manager. Pfaff died in 1959 and his wife became president of the company.

On November 13, 1960, Mrs. Pfaff sold WNMP to the Semrow Broadcasting Company, owned by Otto and Harry Semrow. In 1962, studios were relocated from the First National Bank Building to the Penthouse of the Orrington Hotel, 1710 Orrington Avenue, Evanston. Overton was retained under the new ownership as general manager until 1964 when he was succeeded in that post by William Bishop. In 1965, Sid Roberts became WNMP station manager.

On January 1, 1970, WNMP became the property of Cummings Communication Company, a firm owned by investor Alan

Celebrating Radio's Golden Age



H. Cummings and Buddy Black, a well-known Chicago radio performer who had recently sold station WEBH which he had owned and operated for a time in the Edgewater Beach Hotel. Cummings was Chairman and Chief Operating Officer while Black assumed the role of President and General Manager.

In November, 1970, the FCC granted a change of call letters and the station became known as WLTD.

In August, 1972, Buddy Black left the station, parted company with Cummings, and Floyd E. Beaton became General Manager of WLTD.

By the end of the year, Beaton was transferred to another station owned by Cummings and in January, 1973 Chuck Schaden became general manager of WLTD.

SAGA OF WLTD

For most of its first twenty-some years, radio station WNMP was known for its presentation of light, classical recorded music. Part of that classical format continued on WLTD in the early 1970s, mixed with a variety of easy-listening instrumentals, talk, big bands and, beginning in the spring of 1970, old time radio shows.

By the time Schaden became general manager, his old time radio shows had expanded from Saturday afternoons to weekday mornings. Now, he began adding some personalities to the station's program line-up.

Bruce DuMont, who had been a producer for Howard Miller on radio and Jim Conway on TV, became host of "Montage," a mid-morning program of interviews, listener participation and special events. Bill Nigut an actor-writer hosted "Two Way Street," a noontime show featuring narratives, stories, comedy and music. Ted Weber offered "In Your Town," an afternoon program featuring music, news, features and celebrity interviews. Steve Hart presented a radio "puppet show" for the kids called "Open A New Window." Mike Schwimmer, and later Don Lucki, hosted and produced "The Yesterday Shop," a program of big band music.

With this line-up of broadcast personalities, WLTD began to take on a personality of its own. The station was being more and more recognized by listeners and a few sponsors, too.

In May, 1974, Norman Mark, radio-TV critic for the *Chicago Daily News* wrote:

WLTD has become the most different radio station in the Chicago area. Where else but on WLTD can someone hear the Equity (actors' union) casting call at 3:06 p.m. (on the Weber Show)? Where else on the AM or FM dial can someone tune in from 7 to 10 a.m. Monday through Friday or from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday to

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hear the vintage tapes of Fred Allen, Jack Benny, Baby Snooks, Suspense, the Lux Radio Theatre or Mr. District Attorney? Name one other station that offers big band records from 4 to 6:30 p.m. weekdays.

WLTD has never appeared in any rating book. But sit in the WLTD studios, which are at the end of a many-holed street behind the Orange Crush plant in Evanston, and watch the phone lines light up. Someone out there is listening to WLTD.

Gary Deeb, radio-TV critic for the *Chicago Tribune* wrote:

WLTD is the suburban 1,000 watter that shames many of its giant competitors in the field of broadcast creativity.

Ron Powers, radio-TV critic for the *Chicago Sun-Times* wrote:

WLTD's signal doesn't get very far south, and its range north and west isn't exactly transcontinental, either. That's the blessing. The curse is that this small, community-oriented broadcast radius (which really is the ideal in radio) has the approximate effect on sponsors that garlic has on a vampire. Mass-ratings procedures require small stations such as WLTD to compete in the same audience-gathering sweepstakes as the giants, such as WGN. A time-buyer glancing at a ratings book sees that WLTD registers as hardly a blip. That is, its audience is contained mostly in Evanston, rather than spread out across an eight-county market area. So the advertisers' money gets poured into the mass-market appeasers, and the maverick WLTD's of the world struggle for sheer survival.

But the station was surviving. None of the on-air personalities was paid by the station. They were given the opportunity to sell a portion of time on their own programs to their own clients for their own benefit. The station had some "house account" advertisers and a meager budget for a salesman, but WLTD was a hard sell, for many of the reasons mentioned by Powers.

In the spring of 1973, Schaden decided what the station needed more than a general manager was a general sales manager with a good deal of experience in selling advertising on a low-powered, but good-sounding radio station. Schaden,



who was really more interested in programming than in broadcast administration, offered to step down as general manager in favor of a sales-oriented individual and be on hand as a programming consultant while continuing with his various old time radio shows on WLTD.

As a consequence, Bob Larson, a former broadcaster and executive recruiter, was named general manager of WLTD in June, 1974.

But by the beginning of 1975, Cummings Communications had decided to sell the station, Larson left and Ernest Anastos became general manager.

Anastos had some programming ideas of his own for WLTD and the events that followed were reported in the press.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, March 21. Gary Deeb: WLTD, the small suburban radio station that puts most of Chicago's broadcast giants to shame when it comes to creative, meaningful programming, is being transformed into just another ineffectual music outlet. The hatchet officially falls in mid-May when all personalities will be let go. Chuck Schaden, Bruce DuMont, Bill Nigut, Ted Weber, Don Lucki, and Mike Schwimmer all have been given notice by Ernie Anastos, the station's new general manager.

Anastos told the air staff the firings and format change are necessary because the station is a chronic money loser. The personalities argue, however, that proper effort never has been made to sell the station's air time. ... Anastos reportedly is a partner in a new company that is expected to purchase WLTD from Cummings Communications very soon and change the call letters to WSHR.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, March 21. Norman Mark: The unique talk and old-time radio format of WLTD, Evanston, is about to be phased out. WLTD will have more music as of May 30. Ted Weber, Bruce DuMont and Bill Nigut, three talk show hosts, are in danger of losing their jobs. The rumor mill says that WLTD will be sold to a man who formerly owned a wallpaper music station. By changing formats before the sale, it may be possible for the new owners to head off expected community protests over the loss of WLTD's unique format. The community should howl anyway.

SAGA OF WLTD

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, March 24. Gary Deeb: Among the Goliaths of Chicago radio, little WLTD is merely one of the many Davids. The station is strictly a day-time operation that signs off at sundown. Its 1,000 watt signal at 1590 on the AM dial is just fair. And the WLTD studios, strategically located behind the Orange Crush plant in Evanston, are a bit on the tacky side. No matter, WLTD is one of this area's finest radio stations. The personalities actually open their mouths and offer listeners something more than the time, temperature and call-letters. In fact, WLTD is sort of a "junior WGN," where each program is separate and distinct from the others.

If you listen to WLTD and like it, better enjoy it while it's still around. Because beginning May 17, the station's uniqueness likely will vanish in a cloud of fancy rhetoric. The new general manager of WLTD, a young but veteran broadcaster named Ernie Anastos, last week put the hatchet to old time radio guru Chuck Schaden, talk show hosts Bruce DuMont and Bill Nigut, variety interviewer Ted Weber, big band host Don Lucki, and weekend man Mike Schwimmer. In 60 days their daily programs will cease to exist and will be replaced by programs Anastos says "will better serve Evanston and the North Shore communities the station is licensed to."

Such statements give one the impression that Anastos never has bothered to listen to WLTD. The current personalities provide a product of which the North Shore can be proud, and afternoon host Ted Weber, in particular, covers Evanston and other northern suburbs like the proverbial blanket. "But the station is floundering and losing a lot of money," argues Anastos.

Well, there's certainly no doubt about that. I've seen gas stations operated with more professional business acumen. Since buying the station a few years ago, Cummings Communications has treated WLTD like nothing more than a handy tax writeoff. The station has had inexperienced time salesmen barely out of their teens . . . or, more often, no salesmen at all.

"In the two years I've had my show there," says Weber, "station ownership has not made one competent effort to sell airtime and make a profit."

This indeed is strange, since WLTD personalities like Weber, Schaden and DuMont have hustled their programs to sponsors on their own (as permitted in their contracts) and have made a personal profit in the process.

Meanwhile WLTD fans have flooded the station with protests, tying up phone lines on station talk

shows and bitterly denouncing Anastos for firing the air staff.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, March 25. Aaron Gold in Tower Ticker: I join my colleague Gary Deeb in urging the public to flood WLTD general manager Ernie Anastos with calls and letters hoping he'll reconsider the firing of Chuck Schaden, Ted Weber, Bruce DuMont, and Bill Nigut.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, March 28. Norman Mark: Mrs. E.S. of Glencoe enjoys listening to WLTD radio. She likes it as it is. (She) wants to know how many other people like WLTD and would do something to save it. So, on the advice of this column, she got a post office box. Anyone wishing to save WLTD can send his or her address to . . . Glencoe, Illinois. Maybe one day you'll all decide what is to be done, and do it.

It's one good way to fight the feeling of helplessness we all share. Monstrous events seem to happen all the time without our permission. Broadcasters help foster that notion by firing people we enjoy or dumping programs we love without consulting us.

It should be noted that just what WLTD will be after the change has yet to be made clear to the audience or reporters. WLTD has yet to tell the FCC about its planned format change, and hasn't taken a community survey to see if its audience wants the change.

Mrs. E.S. got that post office box because she likes WLTD. If a few more people were willing to speak up, there's a chance WLTD's format would remain as is or go through minimal changes. It's a simple choice: Complain now or continue to be vaguely discontented.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, April 2. Gary Deeb: There's a slim possibility that Ernie Anastos, new general manager of WLTD Radio, may reconsider the axing. . . . Protest mail to the Evanston station has been heavy, and Anastos last week aired an "editorial" asking for more listener comment. Now's the time to write.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, April 9. Gary Deeb: An overwhelming outpouring of protest mail has saved most elements of WLTD Radio's unique program format, The Tribune has learned. Ernie Anastos, new general manager of the Evanston daytime station, is reversing his decision to fire the entire air staff. It's understood the turnabout is the direct result of more than 1,500 letters of complaint that have flooded WLTD since March 21 when The Tribune revealed the situation. Anastos confirmed Tuesday that Chuck Schaden and Bruce DuMont will continue their



CHUCK SCHADEN
AT WLTD, EVANSTON
JULY 6, 1974

daily programs. Both are expected to sign new one-year contracts this week.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, April 9. Norman Mark: Good News: Chuck Schaden has signed a new, one-year non-cancellable contract with WLTD in Evanston. It looks like the battle to save the unique WLTD format may be won. WLTD is also reportedly talking with Bruce DuMont and Bill Nigut about extending their shows. The angry protests of the listeners over a proposal to add music to the station format have been heard.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, April 10. Gary Deeb: Just a few days ago Chuck Schaden, Bruce DuMont, and Bill Nigut all were about to lose their livelihoods. They had been fired as on-air personalities at WLTD Radio. Their contracts were cancelled. Each had till May 17 to find another gig. Today all three are smiling again. "This is just like a Frank Capra movie," says Schaden. And meanwhile General Manager Ernie Anastos waxes philosophical. "It is the wise man who sits back and really evaluates the situation," intones Anastos.

Coming from Ernie, that's no idle comment. It's also a spectacular turnabout. In less than 20

days since The Tribune revealed his plans to axe the entire WLTD air staff, here's what happened:

Listeners, sponsors, and ad agencies sent several thousand protest letters to the station, to newspapers, and to the FCC. At WLTD alone, the angry mail topped 1,500. Phone calls poured into the station every day from listeners complaining bitterly that Anastos was "stealing" their radio station. One day Anastos decided to go on the air to chat with callers. He got bombarded and hasn't done it since. Finally, with a storm he never expected raging all around him, Anastos this week sat back, evaluated the situation . . . and punted. He agreed to draw up new one-year contracts for Schaden, DuMont and Nigut.

Any way you look at it, WLTD's unique format of talk, interviews, nostalgia, and variety has been rescued. And for the many loyal folks who listen to the 1,000 watt Evanston daytimer, it's a stunning victory.

One thing is certain above all: Cummings Communications, owner of WLTD, had better come out of its cave and display a bit more concern for the station. WLTD's splendid personalities and varied programs have yet to be backed by a competent effort by station management to sell airtime to sponsors. Nearly all commercials heard on WLTD have been hustled by the air personalities. The station itself sells next to nothing.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, April 10. Norman Mark: Good News: Nearly the entire WLTD format will be saved as a result of more than 1,500 listener protests spurred, in part, by newspaper criticism of a proposed format change. It means we people in the audience can affect broadcaster decisions. Congratulations, WLTD fans!

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, April 16. Norman Mark: WLTD and Bruce DuMont have failed to agree on a new contract. This indicates that WLTD is willing to offer entertainment, with Chuck Schaden, but not the tough interviewing of DuMont. It's an area on which citizens groups ought to question the WLTD management.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, April 21. Norman Mark: WLTD, Evanston was sold Monday to Frank Kovas a former owner of WKFM, The Daily News learned. The sale takes place in the midst of a growing controversy over the format of the station, which the current owners, Cummings Communications, recently attempted to change. Less than a month ago, all employees of the station were scheduled to be fired. After protests from more than 1,500 listeners, those plans were delayed. (Continued on next page)

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SAGA OF WLTD

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, April 23. Gary Deeb: Bruce DuMont, the talented and personable talk show host, will take his program to another station next month after failing to reach a new contract agreement with WLTD Radio general manager Ernie Anastos. Anastos, you'll recall, changed his mind about firing Chuck Schaden and Bill Nigut after angry listeners deluged the station with nearly 2,000 protest letters. DuMont was also expected to be retained but he and Anastos didn't hit it off so well at the bargaining table. Meanwhile, Monday's announcement that WLTD has been sold to Frank Kovas Jr. merely confirms this column's recent forecast to that effect.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, June 6. Norman Mark: WLTD now sounds like a wallpaper (background) music station for much of the day. WLTD was once unique. It offered Chuck Schaden's old time radio, Bill Nigut's poetry readings and Bruce DuMont's tough talk shows. Then Frank Kovas ... decided to take control of WLTD ... everyone there was fired. Later, Nigut and DuMont couldn't reach an agreement with Ernie Anastos, the station manager, and they left.

Today, Anastos shouts, "WHAT'S WRONG WITH MUSIC?" In April, he was saying he would defend the station as it was then, with its blend of talk and personalities. Now he argues that the North Shore really wants to listen to more Percy Faith recordings.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, June 13. Norman Mark: Prediction: Look for Chuck Schaden, the old time radio fan, to leave WLTD, Evanston, once the station is sold. The format of the station and Schaden's shows are not compatible.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, July 23. Norman Mark: Sad Note: After five years with WLTD, Evanston, Chuck Schaden and his old-time radio shows will leave that station as of July 31. Schaden told me, "My kind of programming is not compatible with their kind of programming." Despite having a widely publicized, non-cancellable contract, Schaden exits because "I don't want to quarrel with those people."

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, July 24. Gary Deeb: After jousting with station boss Ernie Anastos, old time radio host Chuck Schaden is taking his morning Hall Closet off WLTD at the end of the month. Schaden's doing a 3-to-5 p.m. gig at WXFM, which will become a 7-to-9 morning stint beginning Sept. 29. In addition, he's shifting his Saturday afternoon show to WNIB-FM.



BRUCE DU MONT
A FEW YEARS AFTER WLTD

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, July 30. Gary Deeb: And then there were none—The departure of old-time radio kingpin Chuck Schaden from WLTD at the end of the month will mark the final step in the homogenization of the North Shore station. New owner Frank Kovas and general manager Ernie Anastos have succeeded in smothering every ounce of creativity that existed at WLTD when they took over in the spring. "It's sad to leave the place where you got started," says Schaden, who once managed WLTD. "But I just decided it was no longer worth it. It was obvious to me that I had no future at 'LTD.'"

And the ironic postscript to this sorry tale appeared in the April-May Arbitron ratings. Little WLTD for the first time found itself listed among the giants and medium-size powers of Chicago radio. It was a crucial milestone for the 1,000 watt daytime outlet. But it didn't salvage anybody's job.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, September 25. Gary Deeb: Last spring WLTD Radio, the 1,000 watt daytimer in Evanston scored a remarkable achievement—it drew enough listeners to get listed for the first time in the Arbitron ratings. Then new owner Frank Kovas and his personal hatchet man, general manager Ernie Anastos,

decided to clean house ... thus transforming a splendid little radio station into an ineffectual music outlet. They said they wanted better ratings.

The latest Arbitron survey came out last week, the first such report since Kovas and Anastos pulled out the machete. The survey contains no trace of WLTD. Its ratings are invisible. Congratulations, Frank and Ernie.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, Jan. 22, 1976. Gary Deeb: Ernie Anastos was fired this week as general manager of WLTD Radio. He was bounced by new station owner Frank Kovas. Ironically, it was the Kovas-Anastos team that fired the entire WLTD air staff last spring, just as the station was making its mark in the ratings. Since then, WLTD virtually dropped out of sight.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, Oct. 20, 1976. Gary Deeb: Ernie Anastos, the man who helped ruin WLTD Radio in Evanston last year, now anchors weekend news at WPRI-TV in Providence, R.I. Anastos was hatchetman for incoming WLTD owner Frank Kovas and turned a fine radio station into an ineffectual Muzak machine.

In 1975, WLTD adopted a "beautiful music" format and in mid-April, 1979 the call-letters were changed to WONX.

In 1980, the station switched to a Spanish language format which continues to this day.

EPILOG

Chuck Schaden is observing his 20th anniversary as host of vintage radio shows in the Chicago area.

Bruce DuMont is political correspondent for WTTW-Channel 11, host of Inside Politics on WBEZ, and is president of the Museum of Broadcast Communications.

Bill Nigut is a respected political reporter on television in Atlanta, Georgia.

Ted Weber hosts a daily talk and interview program on radio station WIZZ in his hometown, Streeter, Illinois.

Mike Schwimmer is a successful musician, playing "washboard" in jazz bands and has a thriving business selling piano rolls.

Don Lucki is a broadcast personality on the Satellite Radio Network.

Ernie Anastos is an anchorman at WCBS-TV, Channel 2, New York.

4M
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Twenty
Years
of
Movies



By BOB KOLOSOSKI

While Chuck Schaden looks back over a twenty year broadcasting career, we'll take a look at the last two decades of motion pictures.

By 1970 movies had gone through a decade of turmoil. Studios released their grips on actors and the studio system had breathed its last breath. This opened the door for independent producers to begin turning out films in quantities equal to the established studios. This, in turn, created many new opportunities for new directors to work on the smaller films independent producers were turning out.

A superb group of film makers had developed to add some zip and vitality to the industry. Producers, directors and actors were dedicated to making films and entertaining an audience hungry for good films. The most dominant force in this new age of film people has been a handful of directors who have achieved superstar status. These directors began to surface in the early 1970s and are now the foundation of movie making.

One of the earliest and consistently best directors to emerge around 1970 was Woody Allen. His 1970 film "Take the Money and Run" was low budget, crude and funny. It made a small profit and thus assured him another project. Allen has written, directed and acted in several features including "Bananas," "The Purple Rose of Cairo," "Annie Hall" and his latest venture "Crimes and Misdemeanors."

Mel Brooks started out with a bang writing and directing "The Producers" and "The Twelve Chairs" in the early 1970s. Then in 1974 he wrote, directed and acted in "Young Frankenstein" and "Blazing Saddles." His irreverent wit and approach to comedy was at its peak. He has continued to make funny movies but none has topped his 1974 dynamic duo.

Sylvester Stallone wrote the screenplay for "Rocky" in 1976 and was wise enough to insist on playing his own creation on the screen. The night I saw "Rocky," the 300 to 400 people in the audience were of one mind—Rocky was to win the fight. They cheered and I joined along. It was mass hypnosis and we all wanted Rocky to pulverize the champ. Rocky lost the fight, but Stallone won the right to a sequel. Now he writes, directs and acts in many of his films but hasn't been able to duplicate the magic of the original "Rocky."

The "Man With No Name" was Clint Eastwood and his game was spaghetti western. Then in 1971 Eastwood directed and starred in "Play Misty For Me." It was a taut thriller and started him on a career in front of and behind the camera. He turned to directing westerns: "High Plains Drifter," "The Outlaw Josey Wales," and "Dirty Harry" films. His brilliant career is still going strong and I hope someday he straps on his six shooters and gets back in the saddle again.

The movies in the past 20 years have been influenced the most by two young



WOODY ALLEN

directors who literally turned Hollywood upside down. Steven Spielberg and George Lucas were fresh out of USC film school in the early 1970s and were ready, willing and able to tackle major films. Lucas lead off in 1972 with "American Graffiti" followed by Spielberg's 1975 "Jaws." Then Lucas wrote and directed "Star Wars" and the rest is galactic history.

With the enormous success of "Star Wars," Lucas decided to abandon directing for producing. In 1981 he hired his friend Spielberg to direct "Raiders of the Lost Ark." This slam-bam film combines the thrills of a roller coaster ride with the non-stop excitement of the "B" serials shown at Saturday matinees. The film left its audiences breathless and asking for another Indiana Jones film. "The Temple of Doom" was OK and "The Last Crusade" was closer to the original, but had Sean Connery as Indy's father to give it a touch of class. Spielberg's talent extends to drama with "The Color Purple" and "Empire of the Sun." "E.T." is destined to be a classic as is "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

Lucas and Spielberg were supported by Frances Ford Coppola whose "Godfather" films comprise a masterpiece in film-making. Brian De Palma has been accused of being a second-rate Hitchcock, but with "Body Double" in 1984 he surely equaled the master. His first excursion into the macabre—"Sisters" in 1973—was a suspenseful film reminiscent of "Rear Window." De Palma's remake of "Scarface" and "The Untouchables" have brought him wide acclaim and bigger audiences for his films.

Martin Scorsese scored first with "Mean Streets" in 1973 and then followed with the urban horror story "Taxi Driver" in 1976. "Raging Bull," however, has been his best film to date with star Robert DeNiro winning the best actor award in 1980. Two years ago Scorsese released "The Last Temptation of Christ" and started a controversy because of its depiction of Jesus Christ having human desires. Scorsese is a film maker whose work is worth watching.

John Hughes is the Preston Sturges of the 1980's. He seemed to have cornered



CLINT EASTWOOD

FILM CLIPS

the teenage audience with the films "Sixteen Candles," "Pretty in Pink," and "Ferris Bueller's Day Off." Like Sturges, his career has burned bright like a flare but the flash is slowly fading. His work has been uneven, and at times uninteresting but highly successful.

These directors have replaced a generation of movie men who have passed the "action" on to the new generation. The same can be said for actors. John Wayne, Fred Astair, James Cagney, Henry Fonda and other stars are gone and in their place we have a wild mixture of mature leading men and brat packers. Paul Newman is 60 years old but still sets the flames roaring in the hearts of female patrons. Sean Connery has been declared the sexiest man alive and Michael Caine makes movies at a pace that would exhaust a Warner's player of the 30's. Robert Redford is comfortable in middle age and Gene Hackman always gives a performance worth seeing. Jack Nicholson has been in some awful movies, but has never been awful. Robert DeNiro can do it all—and will. Mel Gibson will always be "Mad Max" even if he does Shakespeare. Harrison Ford has developed into a good actor and likeable person. William Hurt has taken big risks with his career and probably will continue to do so. Kurt Russell, Dennis Quaid and James Woods are the "B" stars of the 80's and probably won't hit an "A" in the 90's.

As for the ladies, the field is wide open, but Meryl Streep is leading the pack. "Sophie's Choice," "Out of Africa" and "Silkwood" are just a few of the films to feature a fine Streep performance. Her career thrives in a male-dominated industry and her name alone is all it takes to attract an audience. When teamed with Robert DeNiro in the awesome "Deer Hunter" or the tender "Falling in Love," the chemistry percolates. She is the finest actress working in films today.

Kathleen Turner paints a pretty picture



JESSICA LANGE

on the screen but is no great shakes as a serious actress. Sally Field was the "Flying Nun" and soared to great roles in "Norma Rae" and "Places in the Heart"—both Academy Award winning performances. Who would have thought that Cher would win an Oscar ("Moonstruck," 1987) and emerge as a fine actress—but she did.

Jessica Lange escaped from King Kong's clutches and made "Country," "Francis," "Crimes of the Heart" and "Sweet Dreams." She has been nominated for the Academy Award three times, but hasn't won—yet.

Bette Midler is fun to watch and packs more energy into her work than the Seven Dwarfs. Her presence in "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" and "Ruthless People" made the films for me. Glenn Close is an intense actress; just see "Fatal Attraction" or the "Jagged Edge." Sissy Spacek has trouble picking scripts. The one exception was "Coal Miner's Daughter" in 1980. We've watched Jodie Foster grow up on the screen. She has taken her craft seriously and matured into a fine actress.

Comedy is a tricky proposition in movies and what some film-makers think is funny could be sour to an audience. The last 20 years have seen men like Jerry Lewis and Bob Hope fade from the movie scene. The men who make us laugh now are a mixed bag of clowns.

Steve Martin stumbled onto the movie scene a decade ago as "The Jerk" and through a series of hits and misses he is the top funny man in films. "Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid," "Roxanne," "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" and "Parenthood" have reinforced his place in film comedy.

Bill Murray rode "Ghostbusters" to film stardom with a barrage of one-liners. John Candy is the Oliver Hardy of the new generation—he often could use a Stanley. Dan Akroyd was funny with John Belushi, but alone he's not quite as funny as he thinks he is.

Mysteries and detective stories have survived and thrived in the last two decades. Hitchcock's last good film, "Frenzy," made in 1972, has some genuinely chilling moments and an inept police detective that throws out straight lines as well as Bud Abbott. Brian De Palma's "Dressed to Kill" would have made Hitchcock gloat. "Body Heat" made in 1981 was a great murder mystery with William Hurt and Kathleen Turner fogging up the screen with smoldering love scenes. Roman Polanski's 1974 "Chinatown" was a great attempt at recreating the detective movies of the 40s and who else but Jack Nicholson could get away with wearing a bulbous bandage on his nose for half a movie. "Murder on the Orient Express" took murder out of the alley and put it on a European luxury train where super-sleuth Hercule Poirot (as played by Albert Finney) could solve it. "All the President's Men" was a mystery (without a murder) but combined the best elements of a detective story, newspaper picture and Hitchcock thriller rolled into one neat package.

If you want to see something really

scary, this was the era of slimeball slasher films and gore to the max. However, there were a handful of genuinely good horror films. "The Exorcist" was a gross but terrifying film that pitted a priest against the devil—in person. Attendance at my church rose dramatically after its release. The 1982 remake of "The Thing" had a better alien than the original but lacked the pace of the original. And if "Aliens" was on your list of great horror films, you've developed nerves of steel. Lon Chaney, Jr. was a great werewolf but "The Howling" produced wolfmen and wolfwomen that made Mr. Chaney look like a puppy. Vampires have become very popular subjects of horror films and two good movies with a blood-sucking theme are "Near Dark" and "The Lost Boys."

"Patton," "My Favorite Year," "Oh, God," "On Golden Pond," the "Paper Chase," "Superman," "Batman," "Romancing the Stone," "The Big Red One," "The Conversation," "The Killing Fields," "Murphy's Romance," and "Radio Days" are movies that kept me at the box office buying movie tickets. Dustin Hoffman, Angelica Huston, Tom Cruise, Sigourney Weaver, Michael Douglas, Shirley MacLaine, Bruce Lee, Linda Hunt, Eric Roberts and Geraldine Page are more actors and actresses that have made the last twenty years exciting at the movies. Walt Disney-Touchstone studios have been the comeback story of the decade and the "G" movie is appearing more often now on movie screens.

Movies have always been and will always be a marvelous form of entertainment as long as talented men and women use the medium tastefully. If the winner of the best picture Academy Awards are any indicator of the excellence we've had, then films like "Patton," 1970; "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," 1975; "Ordinary People," 1980; and "Out of Africa," 1985, verify that movies are better than ever.

The last 20 years were great. But tomorrow is another day.

Those Golden Years of Radio

BY RUSS RENNAKER

Here is a story I remember vividly, even until this day.

The date was September 1, 1939.

I was a broadcast engineer with CBS "Special Events" working out of Washington, D.C.

I had been assigned to Newport News, Virginia to do a broadcast of Eleanor Roosevelt launching a new ship. We got the ship launched all right but when I got back to the hotel there was a message for me to report back to Washington as quickly as possible. Hitler had invaded Poland! I was assigned to the Polish Embassy to do a broadcast by the Polish Ambassador to the United States.

In those days, and perhaps still to some extent, CBS and NBC competed desperately with each other trying to get a news scoop, or get a flash on the air first. We were told to try and get the Ambassador to speak over CBS first if possible. I set up my remote equipment on the second floor of the Embassy building near a window opening out on an enclosed court at the side of the building. There was nothing to do but wait for the telephone people to get our wires run in from the alleys to give us the circuit back to the studios. The telephone company installers were working frantically. There were three networks and I don't know how many local stations involved. "Pooling" a broadcast was not heard of as yet!

I glanced out the window and saw some telephone men stringing wires from a pole in the alley to the building, and one fellow was on a ladder against the wall just outside my window. I shouted out to him. "How long 'till we get a hookup?" He replied that it wouldn't be very long as all he had to do was run the wire into the basement and then back up on the "house cable." I said, "Are those the CBS wires

you have there?" and he said they were. How lucky could I be? "Forget the house cable," I shouted, "just hand me the wires through the window," and before he knew what was happening I had the wires pulled through the window, snipped them off with my side-cutters, and was hooking them up to the equipment.

I shouted to the announcer, "We're ready to go! Put the ambassador on." We beat NBC that day by about thirty minutes!

• • •

In 1940, the Glenn Miller band was doing a prime time radio program for Chesterfield cigarettes. The band was making theater appearances across the country and the radio broadcast was done each week from the stage of whatever theater they happened to be playing, and was a part of the stage program.

The regular CBS engineer on the program got appendicitis two days out of New York and I was sent out to Columbus, Ohio to pick up the show.

The telephone wires were ordered in ahead of time by the traffic office in New York and were supposed to be all ready for the broadcast when we got there. I went down to the theatre in the afternoon to check on everything, and sure enough the wires were terminated on connector blocks in the wings on the left side of the stage which was fine with me.

In those days the stage show was given twice each evening in between the feature motion picture. That meant the stage was dark when the picture was being shown and I had to grope around back of the giant screen in the dark, except for the back-light from the screen itself.

I set up my equipment in the wings at the left side of the stage, being as quiet as I could so as not to disturb the audience



GLENN MILLER AND HIS ORCHESTRA IN FILM, "ORCHESTRA WIVES" (1942)

watching the picture. About thirty minutes before show time the rest of the CBS people began to arrive. The producer took one look at the setup I had made and whispered to me.

"Russ, it's all wrong! Your equipment must be on the right side of the stage instead of the left. Glenn insists, and he won't stand for it being changed at this late date!"

I was dumbfounded. Here we were a half-hour till air-time and the wires were brought in on the wrong side of the stage. What to do?

I borrowed a flashlight from a stage-hand and went down under the stage to see where the wires came from. It was dark and dirty down there but fortunately the wires had been run in from the far side of the building and had crossed under the stage. I could see there was enough slack to reach back to the right side of the stage.

Fumbling around under the stage in almost total darkness I spotted a hole in the stage floor about the size of a quarter near

the right wings. I had about twenty minutes to go! I pulled the wires back down into the basement and dragged them back under the stage to the right side, then stuffed the wires up through the hole in the stage floor and quickly went back upstairs and moved my equipment over to the other side of the stage — still working behind the movie screen of course! Once I heard someone whisper "douse that light!" but by this time I was working frantically to make the deadline and couldn't care less.

I pulled the pairs up through the hole and guess what? All the identification tags had come off coming through the hole!

On a nationwide network commercial program such as this, the traffic office orders in three separate pairs of wires. One is the "cue pair" — that's the one on which we hear the preceding program so we'll know when to start our program; one is the line on which we sent the program out; and the third is a spare, in case the regular line fails. Each pair must be connected to the correct connections on the

GOLDEN YEARS OF RADIO

equipment. So, with only minutes to go I had to decide which was which. The cue pair was easy. I just put my headphones across each of the pairs until I heard the program that preceded ours. But I had no way of knowing which of the other two was the "broadcast" pair. If I got the wires on the wrong connection the circuit would be dead and the program would go nowhere. So I took a lucky guess! I had visions of early retirement from CBS!

The motion picture ends and the big screen disappears into the ceiling and the house lights go up. There, amid a dozen spotlights, sits the Glenn Miller orchestra in all its splendor — and poor little Russ with dirt all over my clothes and sweat running down my face. The cue comes and, with fingers crossed, I cut us into the network. I don't mind telling you the sound of the opening strains of "Moonlight Serenade" (Miller's theme song) coming back over the cue circuit was the sweetest music this side of heaven!

The band was on its way to Hollywood to make a movie called "Sun Valley Serenade" starring Sonja Heine, and in all the time I was with the show I never made that mistake again. So far as I know neither Glenn Miller, nor my boss, ever knew the trouble I had getting that broadcast on the air. Incidentally I never did get to see the movie that was playing that night!

Russ Rennaker was born in rural Indiana in 1906. He obtained his amateur radio license at age 13 and commercial operators' license in 1926. In 1929 he built a 100 watt broadcast station in Marion, Indiana, and later worked for WFBM in Indianapolis. In 1934 he joined WBBM-CBS, Chicago as a broadcast engineer and was transferred to WJSV, Washington, D.C. in 1939. He was with the State Department during World War II and after the war joined ITT in Telecommunications. He retired in 1973 and still operates his amateur station, W9CRC. These memories of his radio days are from his soon to be published book, *Those Golden Years of Radio*.

WE GET

WILDWOOD, IL — For years I've been haunted by a memory of a radio show that began with the sound of a distant train whistle and a tune that brought pictures of a vast, frozen landscape to mind. I think the music may have been Sibelius "Findlandia," but I'm not sure. Certainly his music stirs some of the same feelings in me. Keep up the good work. I don't like all of your programs (I've outgrown the Cinnamon Bear and so have my children) but it's a treat to tune in to radio that exercises the imagination again. I've never been able to stomach television soap operas, but Ma Perkins, Our Gai Sunday and others were staples of my childhood. What I especially liked was the fact that I could pick up on the stories from summer to summer — with an occasional auspicious sick day throughout the school year. I can't see myself as Krystal on "Dallas," but I sure could imagine myself as any of my heroines on radio because I created the image, not some casting director. — **TESS SCHMEIG**

P.S. I've just played through a Sibelius tape and the music from the radio show was "Walse Tristesse" accompanied by the sound of a distant train whistle.

(ED. NOTE — "Walse Triste" was the theme used to set the scene for the great Carleton E. Morse adventure, "I Love A Mystery.")

LIBERTYVILLE, IL — Thank you for your kindness to me while I was shopping at Metro Golden Memories. I am the "Gone With The Wind" junkie that you helped find all kind of great treasures. Later that evening, I was listening to your program on WBBM, and was pleasantly surprised to hear my favorite, The Lone Ranger. I really had to laugh when you related how you used to lay on the floor and listen to the old Zenith when you were a child in Norridge. Well, I was a child in a small coal mining town in southwestern Pennsylvania, and I used to lay on my grandmother's floor and listen to the old Philco, with the big "eye" on the front of it. My mind started to race back to those years and I started to remember The Shadow and how I was so afraid of that show, that I had actually believed that such a person existed. The show did not affect me at all. . . unless you count the fact that I wet the bed until I was 32 years old! Ha! — **MILLIE MASKEVICH**

NEGAUNEE, MICHIGAN — I have been listening about three or four years. I live about 400 miles north of Chicago and the radio reception often isn't very good. I also work three different shifts so I miss quite a few, but I listen as much as I can. We had an old radio program on the local college radio station WNMU for a while, but it went off the air. I wish every area had a local radio program such as yours. Radio is good entertainment if there is something on besides music. Keep up the good programming. — **PAUL JARVI**

LETTERS

ORLEANS, ONTARIO, CANADA — Many thanks for the many years you have sent me *Nostalgia Digest*. You can't imagine what a thrill it is every two months to read through a new issue. It is time, once again, to renew my subscription for another two years. I wouldn't miss it for all the other magazines on the market. None speak so personally as this one does. The activities we read about from "yesterday's youth" come to life, so that one can actually re-live these episodes. Even though we grew up in a different country, we still have so many of these things in common.

— **JUERGEN KAISERLING**

WESTVILLE, INDIANA — I just received my first *Nostalgia Digest* issue. I had anticipated it being good, but it is more than that. It is a part of America's past and the people we all love so much. This, in turn, makes me feel as if I am part of the radio family that brought me so much happiness when I was a boy. I would like to say to Radio Buifs everywhere that your *Digest* is the buy of the year. I don't know anyone who enjoys the old classics, young or old, who wouldn't enjoy it. It is truly the best investment I've made for entertainment ever, and you better believe I will renew my subscription every year.

— **RONNIE LEE MITCHELL**

RENSELAER, INDIANA — Let me say how much I enjoy *Radio Classics*. As we have no TV, my family and I look forward each night to hearing your program and are very disappointed when there is some sports show playing. Also, I wanted to ask you a question. I have a book entitled "Jack Benny, An Intimate Biography" by Irving A. Fein, and was wondering if this is a valuable book? — **DEBBIE HAUSE**

(ED. NOTE — It's a valuable book for fans of Jack Benny and it's long been out of print. If you can find a copy nowadays, you'll probably have to pay as much as twice the original price. There are two other books about Benny that are desirable, but also out of print: "The Jack Benny Show" by Milt Josefsberg and "Jack Benny" by Mary Livingstone. Occasionally, a copy can be found at Metro Golden Memories, in the used book section.)

CHICAGO — Enjoy your program greatly and am annoyed when all the sports preempt your broadcast. — **EVELYN REICHEL**

CHICAGO — That one-hour Suspense program you aired a couple of weeks ago called "In A Lonely Place" with Robert Montgomery was truly superior entertainment. Keep up the good work! — **WILLIAM E. POWELL**

PRESQUE ISLE, WISCONSIN — What a revoltin' development this is! I've moved up to Northern Wisconsin from Dundee, Illinois and I can't stand it any longer. Not Wisconsin, but the fact that I am unable to listen to and record *Those Were The Days* on Saturday afternoons. I started recording your programs in 1979 on 2400 foot reels at 1 7/8 ips and continued to do so until we moved. Now I'm devastated because I can't listen to and record your program. My only hope is to ask for help from one of your devoted listeners. If anyone records your full Saturday program on reel-to-reel tape and would like to trade (or whatever) I would greatly appreciate them contacting me.

— **EDWARD J. SERMONTI**

(ED. NOTE — If any reader would like to help, drop Mr. Sermonti a note at HC 1, Box 390, Presque Isle, WI 54557.)

ELGIN, IL — I particularly enjoyed listening to the Christmas shows of 1942. I was born December 27, 1942, so I like to think my parents heard many of those shows while waiting for my arrival. P.S. Where is your brother's store in Ohio? — **MARY ELLEN LONG**

(ED. NOTE — Ken Schaden will be glad you asked about his End Of the Commons General Store, 8719 State Route 534, Mesopotamia, Ohio. That's in Northeastern Ohio, between Cleveland and Youngstown. Call (216) 693-4295 for specific directions. Ken will be delighted to hear from you!)

CHICAGO — As I find my life becoming less chaotic, I realize I again have time to enjoy *Those Were The Days*. Now I plan to be home Saturday afternoons at one o'clock to listen to WNIB. I just tell friends, "I already have plans for the afternoon." Thanks for bringing so much happiness to so many. Although many of the programs are from my parents' era, I really enjoy listening and then sharing them with Mom. Keep 'em coming! — **MRS. ALICE SULLIVAN**

CHICAGO — Enclosed is a check for a one year subscription in my daughter's name, Miss Treia Hanson. While I originally introduced her to *Radio Classics* five years ago on weekly trips home from Milwaukee, she has become a real fan. You might be interested to know she is currently a freshman at Marillac High School in Northfield. In addition to old time radio, she is an avid reader and horse rider. On behalf of her and myself, I want to thank you for providing many hours of enjoyment. We have been to the Museum of Broadcast Communications several times and to your store. — **FRAN HANSEN**

MENDOTA, IL — Thank you for reviving Paddy O'Cinnamon! I am a second grade teacher who remembers vividly the radio series from the late 40s. I, too, used to rush home from school to listen to each episode. Last year my husband bought the tapes for me for Christmas. So this year I used them in my classroom. The children love it!

— **MRS. AUGUST HOLLAND**

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WE GET LETTERS

MORRIS, IL — Guess what I received in the mail today? You bet—my Jack Benny issue of the *Nostalgia Digest* and boy, am I excited! Although I'm only 19, I love old time radio, especially Jack Benny. In fact, thanks to your program on WBBM, I became more interested in the innocent years, 1930-60. As a result, I changed my college major to history and am soon to achieve one degree and then another in two years. Thank you for all you have done for those of us who were unable to have lived when these shows were originally aired. We're part of the un-cultured generation and I for one am sick and ashamed of it. Only with shows like yours can we bridge the generation gap and make life a little more interesting for everyone. Thanks again, congratulations on 20 years and 1,000 shows on *Those Were The Days*. (I've only discovered it one year ago), and keep up the great work.
 — MARK R. LINKE

MT. PROSPECT, IL — I have been listening to you since the early 70s, but I was not fortunate enough to hear your first show when it was originally aired. While listening to the rebroadcast of your first show I reflected on how the radio programs reflect the events of their period. The Mutual newscasts and advertisements for North West Federal Savings brought back memories of another period in my life the same as Bob Hope's and Jack Benny's jokes must bring back memories to those old enough to have lived through the period of the original broadcast. It had been a long time since I had heard so much news about the Viet Nam War and other topics of the 1970s. I think rebroadcasting your original show was a great idea, and I hope you will be able to stay on the air for another 20 years!
 — LEONARD BUSS

CHICAGO — We've been with you from the beginning and continue to enjoy your program. Congratulations on your anniversary! We recently purchased almost \$2,000 worth of kitchen appliances from Townhouse because they sponsor your program.
 — ART AND FLORENCE HURTER

CHICAGO — Congratulations and happy anniversary on your 1,000th broadcast. Really enjoyed hearing your first broadcast of *Those Were The Days*. Here's to several thousand more!
 — ROBERT ROSTERMAN

CICERO, IL — Congratulations on 20 years of bringing old time radio to the Chicagoland area. Here's wishing you another 20. I'm a 14 year listener.
 — RICHARD BILEK

EVANSTON, IL — Isn't it amazing that we are now getting nostalgic about your first shows? I'm not sure when I first started listening to you when you were broadcasting from Evanston, but I do remember finding

the station because I read that the Cinnamon Bear was going to be broadcast and I wanted my children to be as excited about the series as I was when I was a child. Keep on broadcasting because radio is still the best entertainment.
 — PAULA RUEL

EAST PEORIA, IL — I have been listening for some time and want to thank you for the many hours of pleasure. I am truly an OTR fan and seldom will I miss your show. I wish we could get the FM station down here so that I could also listen on Saturdays. By the way, our trip to Metro Golden Memories was also an enjoyable experience.
 — BILL IHNOW

GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO — Here's a check for another two years of the *Digest*. Wish we could get the programs out here. Maybe we'll try a special antenna. Very good articles on Jack Benny this month.
 — JIM HARVEY

BLUE ISLAND, IL — Thanks for all the wonderful shows you give us every week! However, I am curious as to why the listings for the daily shows on WBBM are not what is shown in the *Nostalgia Digest*. Last night, Jan. 16, the listing shows Charlie McCarthy and Lone Ranger. Instead, you gave us The Falcon and This Is Your FBI. Is there a way to correct this?
 — CAREY L. AREND

NORTHBROOK, IL — Imagine two months without knowing the lineup for the weeknight *Radio Classics* show! I can't even consider it. So please, Chuck, send me the schedule as soon as it's available in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.
 — PAUL HURDER

CHICAGO — Please send me your *Radio Classics* schedule when available. I listen as often as possible and personally despise those sports interruptions. Keep up the good work.
 — ED ANDREWS

BELVIDERE, IL — I have very negative feelings that you sell a subscription at \$2 per issue, then ask subscribers to send a self-addressed envelope to obtain the information. I otherwise greatly appreciate your enterprise. Especially enjoyed your #1 program.
 — DAVID BABB

DEERFIELD, IL — Please send the program information for February and March when it's ready. I fail to understand why I have to provide you with a stamped self-addressed envelope because you weren't ready at press time. Does this mean you will extend my subscription one extra issue? Anyone can screw up. You have provided us with a lot of pleasure since the early 70s. Keep up the good work.
 — HOWARD SUTKER

(ED. NOTE — In our February-March issue we regretted not being able to include the *Radio Classics* schedule because of programming considerations

WE GET LETTERS

beyond our control. Our January schedule was disrupted because of the unanticipated demise of the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre and we had to scramble and shuffle programming. We have said before that the vintage shows on *Radio Classics* are obtained by WBBM from broadcast syndicators who do not always provide material in time to meet our publication deadlines. We've always been able to print the schedule, even though we've had to bend printing deadlines. But the schedule for February and March was not available until mid-January, long after we needed to print and mail the Feb.-Mar. issue. We hope readers will understand and we hope the problem will not repeat itself. We cannot extend the life of any subscriptions, but readers who wish to cancel their subscription for this—or any other reason—will receive a *pro rata* rebate of the unused portion of their subscription by writing to us at Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053.)

WILDWOOD, IL — Here's my two year renewal for *Nostalgia Digest*, a well-balanced collection of yesteryear by a staff who does their homework. You do keep my recorders humming on *TWTD* each Saturday. I'll miss the creaky door and E.G. Marshall welcoming us to the CBS Mystery Theatre, but am confident your selections will not disappoint my family. All of us truly appreciate your efforts.— **DAVID WHITE**

SOUTH BEND, INDIANA — I am so disappointed that the CBS Mystery Theatre has been taken off the air. If it becomes available again, please return it to the schedule. It was the best. — **MARY F. CAPPS**

DARIEN, IL — We enjoy the nice, clean family nights. Wish there were less Mystery Theatres and more Lone Ranger, Green Hornet and comedies that our 8-year-old enjoys. — **MR. & MRS. GREG RASSI**

SCHAUMBURG, IL — I don't normally write to magazines or radio stations, but in this case I am extremely upset! Why have the CBS Mystery Theatres been removed from broadcasting? They are scheduled in your program grid, but you have not been playing them. If you have announced a reason, I missed it. I know there is a lot of controversy about this series, but we are crazy about the series and I get very irritated when you don't play them. My comment to those who don't like the program is simple: don't listen to them. Personally, I can't stand the big band and other musical programs, so guess what: I don't listen.

— **ALAN SKEPNER**

(ED. NOTE — The CBS Radio Mystery Theatre was withdrawn from rebroadcast syndication as of December 31, 1989, with no reason given. Our guess is economics. If they should become available again, we'll try to add them to our *Radio Classics* schedule.)

CHICAGO — I am glad you have dropped CBS Radio Mystery Theatre since I never liked it. However, I always want to hear the Charlie McCarthy shows.

— **FRANK LUMMIS**

WEST CHICAGO, IL — Thank you, thank God, and thank everyone responsible for getting rid of that CBS Mystery Theatre "neo-old-time-radio" garbage. The only time I'd listen to WBBM was for the Blackhawk games. I wouldn't even listen to the news during the day (I moved to WMAQ) because of my hatred for that junk in the guise of "old time radio." Now that will change. I'd rather listen to 'BBM anyway.

— **NORBERT L. HAUBER**

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, WISCONSIN — I'm sure I'm not alone when I say that I was surprised and dismayed when you announced that Mystery Theatre had been withdrawn from syndication and that you would stop airing the shows. What a bummer!— **W. CORNWELL**

RIVER FOREST, IL — Last summer I was so enthralled about One Man's Family, I had a friend tape all of a Saturday's show when I was forced to be out of town. Please schedule another series. I recall a saga about Pinky's trials a few years ago.

— **MRS. ALLEN F. SCHMITT**

GENESE, IL — Thanks very much for the autographed picture I received from you the other day. I was really surprised because I didn't know that my son had written to you. It is nice to get a gift from a shopping mall, but to get an autographed picture of someone that you listen to on the radio almost every night (except hockey nights) is really a thrill that will always be treasured. I'm hoping to buy a tube-type floor model radio soon so I can enjoy your shows more. I wish I could tell you which shows I like the best but they are all so good, regardless if it is comedy, westerns or drama-suspense. Again, thanks for your picture and the great old shows you play. — **ARVID HAGBERG**

PRINCETON, IL — Way back in 1930, I listened to a program called, *Og, Son of Fire*, a caveman story. I remember two of the characters, *Og* and his Indian friend *Big Tooth*, but there was a woman whose name I don't remember. The story was sponsored by Libby Canned Milk. Have you ever heard of this program?

— **WM. B. FULLER**

(ED. NOTE — *Og, Son of Fire* was a prehistoric adventure series first heard over CBS in 1934. The female character on the show was called *Nad* and the series was written by Irving Crump, author of the original *Og* stories. We've never come across a recording of this particular program.)

FRANKLIN PARK, IL — I can't tell you how much I enjoy your programs, mostly Saturday afternoon. I get very upset if I am interrupted during this time! I was born in 1943 and don't remember much about radio of that era. My husband was born in 1944 and

members a lot about the old radio shows. I just love these shows now. I'm so glad I discovered your show. Collecting radio classic tapes is becoming more of a hobby with me every day. Thanks for your wonderful programming. At least for a few hours we are brought back to a simpler, more innocent time. I think this is a big part of the fascination for me.

— **SHARON STEWART**

COLUMBUS, INDIANA — Just moved to Indiana from Chicago and really miss your show on Saturdays. I'm delighted to be able to get you most evenings, however. I learned about radio in my youth—before TV—and would listen even after we got a television set when I was ill and confined to my bedroom. I still visit my parents in Chicago every other weekend and my Friday night drive to Chicago and Sunday night drive home are made easier because of you.

— **LILA J. PAGNI**

CHICAGO, IL — As usual you're doing a great job. I've started out 1990 with four fractured toes in my left foot, so I can spend more time listening to you at home! Too bad WBBM doesn't give you a little more respect. On occasion they have cut into your broadcasts with a news bulletin that could have waited until 9 p.m. Hope you get to your store this year. Save a spot for my 1954 Packard to park in front.

— **AL TEEPLE**

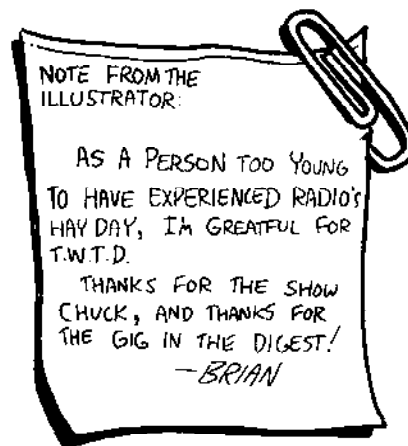
Steinmetz High School, Class '55.

(ED. NOTE — Space for Packard reserved; WBBM is a news station; hope your toes are better!)

AKRON, OHIO — In August, 1990, some co-workers and I will be attending the Letter Carriers National convention in New Orleans. We are going round-trip by Amtrak. I have been told that we have a six-hour layover in Chicago. My wife and I would like to take this opportunity to visit the Museum of Broadcast Communications and/or Metro Golden Memories. Can you let us know how far from the Chicago train station we will be, or if it will be possible to visit one or the other in six hours.

— **PAUL MERLO**

(ED. NOTE — The downtown Amtrak station is only a few minutes away from the Museum by cab, so we hope you'll be in town on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, when the MBC is open from noon to 5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; or Sunday, noon to 5. The Museum is closed to the public on Monday and Tuesday. Hope you can stop in. We think you'll enjoy your visit. Metro Golden Memories is about 20 minutes from downtown Chicago . . . five miles west of Wrigley Field on Addison Street. A cab will cost quite a few dollars, but you certainly could "do" the shop in your layover time. The store is open seven days a week, Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday noon to 5. There is, of course, public transportation available to the MGM Shop, but it might be more than an out-of-towner might want to tackle. Anyway, we hope you'll pay a visit to MGM or MBC when you get to our Windy City.)

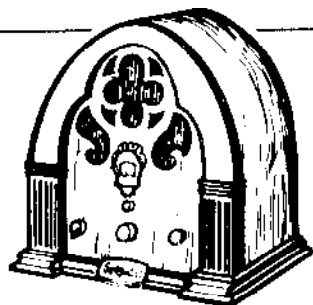


FOND DU LAC, WISCONSIN — As I renew my subscription, I'm enclosing a bit of information because I know you sometimes include material on the big bands. The Jan Garber Band was probably the best known and loved band which broadcast from the Aragon and Trianon in Chicago. In fact, Pierre Andre was the one who coined Jan's slogan, "the Idol of the Airlines." The band is still active today with the blessings of Jan's widow, Dorothy, who now resides in Shreveport, LA and which I have the honor to be heading.— **RON HARVEY**

RACINE, WISCONSIN — Remember this little ditty from out of the past: "Tie a little string around your finger, so you remember me . . ." That's all I remember, but that was the theme song of the Jolly Joe program that was on every morning over (I think) WENR/WLS. My mother turned it on first thing every day as I was growing up here in Racine, and later, I recognized Jolly Joe's voice to be the same as Joe Kelly's on the Quiz Kids. I remember he always urged us to eat hot cereal every morning, so he may have been sponsored by a cereal company. We always waited to get dressed during the program's daily dressing contest so we could beat the girls. Jolly Joe had this magic telescope so he could watch all of the little boys and girls get dressed every morning and see who dressed the fastest. Then he would announce the winner. I sure did my part, dressing as fast as I could so the boys would beat the girls. — **ELTON DORVAL**

(ED. NOTE — Lots of people remember Jolly Joe from the late 30s and early 40s. We remember Joe Kelly from the Quiz Kids, but not from his stint as Jolly Joe. Joe was probably replaced in the 1940s by Happy Hank (whom we do remember). Hank had much the same kind of show as Joe, but instead of a telescope to see the kids at home, he watched through the little green "eye" on our radio as we hurried to pick up our clothes from the floor and clean up our room! The sponsor we remember is Coco Malt. Ahhh, those were the days!)

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TAPE #3 (11-29-42) Sketch: "Three Men in a Tank" about soldiers in Africa; (10-10-43) Jack returns from overseas camp tour.

TAPE #4 (1-23-44) Alexis Smith guests from Army Air Field; (2-6-44) Jack recalls how he joined the Navy in World War I.

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TAPE #6 (11-19-44) Guest Larry Adler from US Naval Hospital. Jack recalls his days in the Navy; (4-8-45) Guest William Powell at Turney General Hospital.

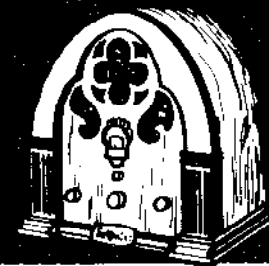
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