

NOSTALGIA DIGEST

AND
RADIO
GUIDE



LUM AND ABNER

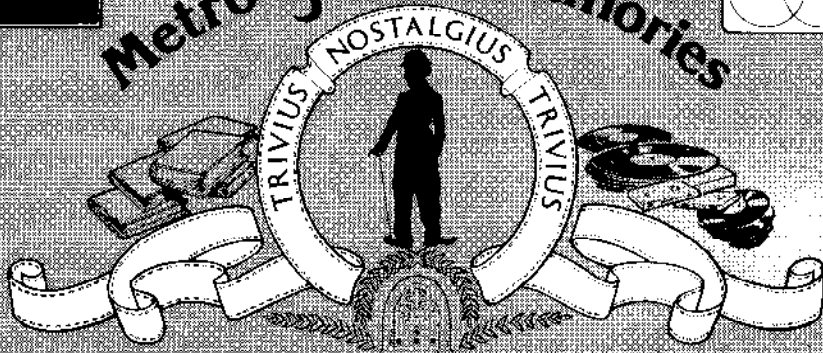
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NOSTALGIA DIGEST.®

BOOK SEVENTEEN

CHAPTER ONE

DECEMBER, 1990-JANUARY, 1991

HELLO, OUT THERE IN RADIOLAND!!

Thank you. Thank you very much. This issue of the *Nostalgia Digest and Radio Guide* marks the beginning of our seventeenth year of publication.

We want to express our thanks to every subscriber. Many have been with us since our first issue in December, 1974. We really appreciate your support and thoroughly enjoy hearing from you.

We also say thanks to those who are regular columnists and contributors to these pages.

We can always count on **Dan McGuire**, **Bob Kolososki**, **Karl Pearson** and **Todd Nebel** to come up with fascinating material for each issue. Artist **Brian Johnson** adds some fine illustrations to Dan's column and **Terry Baker** checks in again with his seventh consecutive December-January cover story.

Others who have added their prose to these pages during the past year include writers **Russ Rennaker**, **Bill Oates**, and **Bob Ledermann**, and photographer **Margaret Warren** (our resident shutter-bug who manages to capture lots of our "live" activities at the Museum of Broadcast Communications).

Special thanks, too, to **Holly and Bob Wilke** and the staff at **Accurate Typesetting** in Chicago and to **Joe and Andy Olcott** and the folks at **Booklet Publishing Company** in Elk Grove.

The last twelve months have been very special for us as we celebrated 20 years of Old Time Radio broadcasting and dedicated the Fibber McGee and Molly exhibit at the Museum.

Now we have yet another milestone to observe.

We began broadcasting our *Old Time Radio Classics* program on WBBM Newsradio 78 on December 16, 1985 so it's time to celebrate our

Celebrating Radio's Golden Age



fifth anniversary of nighttime shows. We have made many new friends with our programs beaming out on WBBM's powerful 50,000 watt signal and we're delighted we were able to add Saturday and Sunday evening broadcasts to the original Monday thru Friday schedule. (And we appreciate the patience of the fans of vintage radio during the football and hockey seasons!)

Speaking of *Old Time Radio Classics*, our traditional Christmas presentation of the Cinnamon Bear will be heard this year on WBBM throughout the month of December. Check the Calendar on page 16.

And when the Cinnamon Bear turns up, we know it's time for another happy holiday season.

Please accept our best wishes to you and your family for a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with good old memories.

Thanks for listening.

LUM AND ABNER

The Men From Pine Ridge

BY TERRY BAKER

Radio relied on the use of dialects for a large part of its comedy material. Audiences and performers alike had grown accustomed to this type of humor which had flourished for years on the vaudeville stage. Most radio comedies either revolved around ethnic characterizations or included such characters as part of the supporting cast. "Hillbilly humor" also depended heavily on the use of such dialects and no show of this type was more popular than "Lum 'n' Abner."

"Lum 'n' Abner" was the creation of two Arkansas gentlemen, Chester Lauck and Norris Goff. Born just a few miles apart, their respective families moved to Mena, Arkansas where the boys met in

grade school and became good friends. Lauck was four years older but the age gap didn't seem to matter and they remained friends throughout their school years.

Both went away to college, then returned home to get married and find employment. Lauck was hired as manager of an auto finance company while Goff took a job in his father's grocery business. The two still visited frequently and found themselves passing the time just as they had done during their youth. They enjoyed imitating other voices they would hear, whether from the radio or those of friends and neighbors. Over the years they had become quite proficient and in a short time would have an opportunity to show off their hidden talents.

Early in 1931, a local radio station broadcast a benefit to raise money to help those Mena residents hurt by recent floods. Lauck and Goff intended to take part by performing a blackface routine they had been practicing. Upon arriving at the studio they were surprised to find numerous other performers planning to do the same type of act. With the incredible success of "Amos 'n' Andy", it was natural to find a few imitators but there were just too many of them. If Lauck and Goff wanted their talents to be noticed they would need to come up with another act, and fast.

While waiting to go on, the men decided to alter their routine and try out some other voices they had been working on. These were loosely based on folks that lived in the Arkansas hills. Within minutes the characters of two country bachelors began to emerge. Chester portrayed Lum Edwards and Norris was Abner Peabody



LUM AND ABNER of Pine Ridge, Arkansas. They were Chester Lauck and Norris Goff, boyhood friends who met in grade school.

and they stepped in front of an audience for the first time as "Lum 'n' Abner."

Although they ad-libbed their way through most of the act, station KTHS in Hot Springs, Arkansas thought enough of their performance to offer them a job. On April 26, 1931, "Lum 'n' Abner" went on the air as a regular series appearing five nights a week.

Since neither Lauck nor Goff had any previous radio experience, they were unsure as to what style their show should take. They determined it would probably be best to pattern it after one already proven to be successful. Taking elements from "Amos 'n' Andy," "Lum 'n' Abner" became sort of a comedy/soap opera. The emphasis was on comedy but there was a hint of drama that hopefully would keep listeners tuning in the following night.

The show's setting was the fictional town of Pine Ridge, Arkansas. Most of the action took place at the "Jot 'em Down Store," the local general store which was owned by Lum and Abner. Not much ever happened in Pine Ridge so the boys had a lot of free time on their hands. Most of it was spent playing checkers and visiting with customers.

Lum was the more levelheaded of the two but seemed to have difficulties where women were concerned. Abner was already married and spoke of his wife frequently. He liked to gamble (especially on checkers) and was more irritable than Lum and a bit more vulnerable to the schemes of outsiders.

Lauck and Goff wrote their own scripts and, besides the two main characters, supplied voices for all the other townsfolk as well. Lauck took on the roles of

Famous Network Stars
LUM and ABNER

Lovable old characters from the hill country

NOW ON
WLW — 7:15 E. S. T.
WGN — 8:30 C. S. T.
WOR — 9:30 E. S. T.
WXYZ — 9:30 E. S. T.

EVERY EVENING EXCEPT SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

HORLICK'S
THE ORIGINAL
MALTED MILK

LUM AND ABNER

Grandpappy Spears, Snake Hogan and handyman Cedric Wehunt. Goff was Doc Miller and local con man Squire Skimp along with several others. The show was well written and executed and could stand up against anything the networks had to offer.

It did not take long for word of their talent to spread. Within months of their debut, The Quaker Oats Company contacted them about moving their show to the network. The company was searching for a program to serve as a summer replacement for the daytime musical variety show "Gene and Glen" which Quaker sponsored. A representative had heard "Lum 'n' Abner" and was very impressed with the show.

Chester and Norris were brought to Chicago for a formal audition and the show made its first network appearance over NBC Red stations in July of 1931.

"Lum 'n' Abner" aired six days a week and slowly built up a small but devoted following. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the show's audience lived in rural areas which could easily relate to the relaxed lifestyle that "Lum 'n' Abner" presented. The show would never garner huge ratings (it was ranked 32nd during its best year) but its audience remained loyal throughout the program's long run. In fact, the small town of Waters, Arkansas actually petitioned and got permission from Congress to formally change its name to Pine Ridge in honor of the show's setting.

In the fall of 1935, "Lum 'n' Abner" finally became part of NBC's regular evening schedule, appearing five nights a week over the Blue network. For a time Lauck and Goff continued to do everything themselves but the work load proved to be too much. Zazu Pitts, Andy Devine and Clarence Hartzell were eventually added to the cast and additional writers brought in to help with the scripts. Fortunately these changes did not affect the style or quality of the program.

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The show moved a lot over the years, eventually appearing on all the major networks for a variety of sponsors ranging from Alka-Seltzer to Ford Automobiles. But wherever it went, the program remained the same. Except for two years during the late forties when the show became a half-hour situation comedy, "Lum 'n' Abner" remained a fifteen minute serial that aired between three and five times a week.

The comedy was never presented in a derogatory manner. Chester and Norris had grown up in the country and the characters they presented were done lovingly and with deep respect for those people who lived in these areas. Listeners must have sensed this because through the years the show received not one letter of complaint. Audiences continued listening in until May of 1953, making "Lum 'n' Abner" one of radio's longest running comedy-dramas.

As other radio programs moved to television, there was talk that "Lum 'n' Abner" might do the same. Chester and Norris appeared in several motion picture films during the early 40's so they did have some experience before the cameras. They likely would have done quite well on television but health problems cancelled any such plans. Goff was stricken with cancer and though he eventually recovered, the illness forced him into early retirement.

Norris settled down in Palm Springs while Lauck moved to Houston and took a job in the public relations department of a local oil company. The two remained in close contact over the years and in 1968, they began syndicating their old programs to interested stations across the country. This enabled a whole new generation to enjoy the antics of "Lum 'n' Abner."

Both men are gone now. Goff passed way in June of 1978 at the age of 72. Lauck was 78 when he died two years later. They played a very important role in radio history and brought laughter to millions of Americans for 22 years.

Remembering Uncle Mistletoe

BY ROBERT P. LEDERMANN

*They hadn't slept long when an odd little guy
A-riding a carpet flew in and said, "Hi
"My name's Uncle Mistletoe . . . just take my hand
"We're going to journey to Santa Claus Land"*

— portion of "A Christmas Dream"
1946 Marshall Field & Company
display window poem by Helen McKenna

Like the Cinnamon Bear and Rudolph, the Red-nosed Reindeer, Uncle Mistletoe is a Christmas character. He was created in Chicago to promote sales and good will for Marshall Field and Company.

Uncle Mistletoe is fondly regarded by thousands as a Christmas tradition. Something of an angel, something of a Pickwickian character, Uncle Mistletoe is short and has a jolly round face, large eyebrows and a head of fluffy white hair on which sets a black top hat. He gives you the impression that once you've seen him on the street, you would feel you always knew him . . . until he turned the corner and you saw those gauzy, white wings fluttering behind his bright red coachman's coat. These wings enable him to fly about as ambassador of good will for Santa Claus, checking to see where he might find children who remember to take the time to be kind. Sometimes Uncle Mistletoe flies on his magical carpet, similar to those used in the story of the Arabian Nights.

Uncle Mistletoe was created by Johanna Osborne who, as a child, loved those Arabian Nights stories. In the 1940s, Johanna was working at Marshall Field's as assistant to John Moss, architect and designer, who was responsible for decorating Field's store windows. In 1944

he designed windows using Clement C. Moore's poem, "A Visit From St. Nicholas."

Moss found his assistant to be excited about all things Christmas and he asked her to develop some ideas for Field's 1946 windows. This was early in 1946 so she had the time to create what would reflect Marshall Field's own image and encourage the spirit of joy in a new way at Christmastime.

And so, one spring evening in Williams Bay, Wisconsin, Johanna began thinking of this new little character. Her husband, Addis, recently discharged from the



UNCLE MISTLETOE

service, was studying architecture and so she asked him to make a sketch for her as she described the Christmas character in her mind. Addis enjoyed doing this and soon the character was visually created.

She showed her husband's sketches and told her ideas to Moss and Lawrence Sizer, Field's vice president and they were both enthusiastic.

Johanna wanted to call her character "Uncle Marshall" for Marshall Field, but after conferring with Moss and Helen McKenna, a copywriter who wrote Field's story window poems, they decided to call him "Uncle Mistletoe, the Spirit of Christmas."

This led to the first Uncle Mistletoe story window at Field's State Street store. Titled "A Christmas Dream," it followed a simple, but magical story. It was about a young boy named Jim-Jam and his sister Joann. On Christmas Eve they prepared themselves for a good night's sleep with great anticipation of Christmas Day. While fast asleep and dreaming, Uncle Mistletoe appears at the bedroom window and transports them on his magical flying carpet to the North Pole for a visit with Santa Claus.

This happy character, with his nineteenth century clothing, offered a feeling of limitless fantasy, offering something old along with something new.

Field's Christmas windows were so popular in 1946 that they were repeated again the next year as children pressed their noses to those massive windows on State Street, somehow feeling that Uncle Mistletoe was real.

With his popularity in 1947, Uncle Mistletoe appeared in Field's various newspaper ads and was used as a Christmas symbol for all Marshall Field stores. He turned up on Christmas ornaments, as a hand puppet, a coin bank and more.

In the late 1940s, Fields even created a television show for their new star. Uncle Mistletoe on TV was a hand puppet, about



UNCLE MISTLETOE chats with **JOHNNY COONS**, which is a pretty good trick, since Johnny provided the voice of Marshall Field's Christmas character.

eighteen inches high, and his voice was created by veteran radio and TV performer Johnny Coons, who was not seen on screen. Appearing with Uncle before the cameras was Jennifer Holt, appearing as Aunt Judy.

Johnny Coons was heard on radio in dozens of roles, most notably on the "Ma Perkins" and "Vic and Sade" broadcasts, and on TV's "Noontime Comics" and "King Calico" (another puppet show). Jennifer Holt, daughter of movie cowboy Jack Holt and sister of Tim Holt, was an actress and was featured in such westerns as "Deep In the Heart of Texas" and "Lone Star Trail."

The quarter-hour program, "Adventures of Uncle Mistletoe" premiered on November 15, 1948 and was telecast three times a week from the 44th floor "penthouse" studios of WENR-TV in the Civic Opera House. It was produced for Fields by Steve Hatos and directed by Ed Skotch. Music was provided by Porter Heaps and later supplied by Adelle Scott.

Uncle Mistletoe started a "Kindness Club" and asked young viewers to write him a letter describing one good deed the viewer had done. In return, kids would receive a copy of the "Kindness Club Song" and a Kindness Club button on which was a likeness of Uncle Mistletoe (designed by Addis Osborne). Today, the Kindness Club buttons are a real prize for a true collector.

"The Kindness Club Song" and another tune, "Welcome to Wonderland" were recorded by Johnny Coons and Jennifer Holt. (This rare recording originally sold at Field's for 79 cents.) Another song, "Uncle Mistletoe" by Leonard Whitcup and Ray Madison was also recorded by Johnny Coons on the Decca label and featured "Uncle Mistletoe's Christmas" on the flip side. "Uncle Mistletoe's Christmas" was also recorded by Eddy Howard on the Mercury label and by "Texas" Jim Robertson and the Three Sons on RCA Victor.

The Club's membership grew to 15,000 by June, 1949. Doris Larson succeeded Jennifer Holt as Aunt Judy and by 1951 Uncle Mistletoe was the only children's show with a higher rating than Kukla, Fran and Ollie. There were more than 700,000 television sets in use in Chicago at that time and 23 percent of them were tuned to the Uncle.

By 1952 the show moved from WENR-TV to WGN-TV. By this time Uncle Mistletoe had added some new puppet friends, but the show lasted only thirteen weeks.

It's been a good long time since Uncle Mistletoe has been on television, but for many years, during his holiday visits to Marshall Field and Company, Uncle Mistletoe has resided in the "Cozy Cloud Cottage" with his charming wife "Aunt Holly" (created by Johanna Osborne in 1948) and Santa.

And each year since 1946, Mistletoe has been fitted with a new, clean set of clothes for his special distinctive place of honor atop Field's great Christmas tree, three



stories high at the State Street store. He looks down and observes all that's happening below.

To this day, shoppers still come to pay a visit to Uncle Mistletoe atop that great tree in the famous Walnut Room on the seventh floor at Marshall Field and Company in Chicago's Loop.

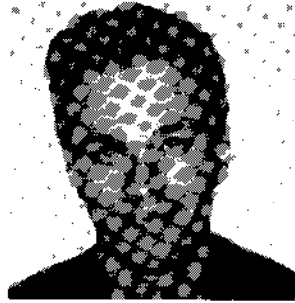
The wonder of childhood fantasy remains in us all when we see Uncle Mistletoe and remember the Spirit of Christmas.

Robert P. Ledermann is a collector of Chicago memorabilia and an authority on the legend and history of Uncle Mistletoe. He is presently working on a book about the beloved Christmas character. Portions of this article originally appeared in the Fall-Winter 1982 issue of Chicago History published by the Chicago Historical Society.

A CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Lionel Barrymore as Scrooge

BY TODD NEBEL



The familiar story of Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" was brought most prominently to the radio

airwaves by Lionel Barrymore on December 25, 1934.

For the next twenty years, Barrymore portrayed the miserly Scrooge over a variety of radio programs. Other radio stars also delivered Scrooge to the listening public—Basil Rathbone, Edmund Gwenn, and Hugh Studebaker—but Barrymore's performances became the most popular.

Lionel Barrymore was the eldest of America's number one stage family which included siblings Ethel and John. Lionel also performed on the silver screen in "A Free South" in which he won an Oscar for Best Performance in 1931. He also directed movies and later portrayed Dr. Gillespie on the Dr. Kildare radio program.

But Barrymore's most famous role in radio was that of Ebenezer Scrooge. As John Dunning states in *Tune in Yesterday*, "Until his death on November 15, 1954, Barrymore, with almost clockwork regularity, captured the very essence of 'that grasping, clutching, conniving, covetous old sinner, Ebenezer Scrooge.'"

During the twenty year streak of "A Christmas Carol" in which Barrymore was associated, two of those years, 1936 and 1938, Lionel was not directly a part of the broadcasts. His spirit in "A Christmas Carol" was carried by his brother John in 1936 and by Orson Welles in 1938. Unfortunately only six of the twenty broadcasts are known to survive: 1938, 1939, 1944, 1948, 1949 and 1952. The search continues for the missing broadcasts.

Don't worry — He'll be OK as soon as he hears his FAVORITE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

WITH LIONEL BARRYMORE

DEC. 23rd
3:00 P.M. WGN

Brought to you with the SEASON'S GREETINGS by your A. O. SMITH WATER HEATER DEALER

WM. E. BAHN
3608 Southport Ave.
Chicago, Ill.
LAkeview 5-2174



LIONEL BARRYMORE as SCROOGE. (The 1939 radio version of "A Christmas Carol" will be presented on *Those Were The Days* Saturday, Dec. 22, 1990.)

1934 On Tuesday, December 25 at 1:30 p.m. Central Standard time, Lionel Barrymore made his first appearance as Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" as part of CBS' own Christmas Party, sponsored by Nash-Lafayette. This Christmas Party, which would last until 4:15 p.m. that day, had all but two of its ten acts originating from Chicago (Barrymore was from Hollywood while the Don Cossacks Chorus was from New York). Alexander Woollcott was billed as master of ceremonies which also included George Olsen and his music; comedienne Beatrice Lillie; "The Personality Girl" Ethel Shutta; and a cast of 300 in this gala extravaganza. At 1:30 you could have chosen Smack-Out on WMAO (with Marian and Jim Jordan) or Symphony Melodies on WGN if you weren't in the spirit.

1935 "An outstanding feature today is to be Lionel Barrymore's second annual presentation of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", declared the *Chicago Tribune* on Wednesday, December 25. Buster Phelps, the child screen actor would play Tiny Tim in this special CBS, 4 p.m. broadcast on Christmas Day. The broadcast was a half hour in length, sponsored by Campbell Soup, and its only competition was Al Pearce, found on the NBC affiliate, WMAQ.

1936 Because of the death of Mrs. Lionel Barrymore, John Barrymore substituted for his brother as Ebenezer Scrooge in the radio

presentation of "A Christmas Carol," featured on Louella Parsons' Hollywood Hotel radio program. The hour-long show was heard on Friday, December 25 at 8 p.m. on the CBS network, WBBM in Chicago, sponsored by Campbell Soup.

WORLD'S GREATEST RADIO PROGRAM

ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT

—Master of Ceremonies

LIONEL

BARRYMORE — "Scrooge"

—in Dickens' Christmas Carol

GEORGE

OLSEN AND HIS MUSIC

DON COSSACKS

—Famous Russian Singers

BEATRICE LILLIE

—International Comedienne

BELOVED MADAME

SCHUMANN-HEINK

APOLLO CHOIR

300 MIXED VOICES

THE PERSONALITY GIRL

ETHEL SHUTTA

VICTOR YOUNG

—and his concert orchestra

KATHRYN

WITWER — Talented young soprano

ROScoe

TURNER — London-Melbourne Air Race

CAST OF 300

WBBM XMAS DAY

(and associated C. B. S. stations)

1:30 P.M.—4:15 P.M. C.S.T. Dec. 25
(Another entirely new show New Year's!)

NASH-LAFAYETTE

HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO AMERICA

LIONEL BARRYMORE

1937 Again, "A Christmas Carol" is featured on The Hollywood Hotel radio program and this time Lionel Barrymore was back as Ebenezer Scrooge on this Saturday, December 25th broadcast heard at 3 p.m. on CBS, sponsored by Campbell Soup. Also heard on this hour-long program were Tommy Kelly and Jackie Moran presenting a preview of the upcoming film feature, Tom Sawyer.

1938 "A Christmas Carol" is heard once again, minus Lionel Barrymore, during The Campbell Playhouse, Friday, December 23 at 8 p.m. The program ran one hour in length.



SANTA looks over the shoulder of Lionel Barrymore as he prepares his Christmas list!

Orson Welles portrayed Ebenezer Scrooge this holiday season as, without explanation, Lionel Barrymore is absent from the broadcast. Orson Welles apologizes to the listeners that Barrymore could not make this year's broadcast and hopes for his return the next year.

1939 Lionel Barrymore again plays Scrooge in his sixth annual presentation of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" on The Campbell Playhouse radio program, with Orson Welles narrating and directing. The program airs at 9 p.m. and is a full hour long over the CBS network. The program airs on Sunday, December 24, and is sponsored by Campbell Soup.

1940 Again Lionel Barrymore plays Ebenezer Scrooge on The Campbell Playhouse on Friday, December 20 at 8:30 p.m. and again on CBS with Orson Welles directing. The program was only one half hour in length and was sponsored by Campbell Soup.

1941 Except for rare guest appearances, Lionel Barrymore for years had confined his radio work only to the "Christmas Carol" broadcasts but in this year, Lionel visited "The Rudy Vallee Show" occasionally to spar with his brother John who was at the time a regular on the Vallee show. When John became ill in November, Lionel stepped in and took his brother's place on the show. This was, in a sense, payment for the time John appeared on Hollywood Hotel in Lionel's absence several years before. Lionel Barrymore gave his Christmas interpretation of Scrooge at 9 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24 on the Rudy Vallee Hour over WMAQ-NBC, sponsored by Sealtest Brands. Vallee played the part of Bob Cratchit and Dix Davis played Tiny Tim.

1942 Lionel Barrymore returns to the Rudy Vallee Show for the second year as Ebenezer Scrooge in Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", airing at 9 p.m. on NBC-WMAQ, Thursday, December 24. The program was one half hour in length, was sponsored by Sealtest Brands and was followed by "The March of Time."

1943 In 1943, Lionel Barrymore now has his own program, The Mayor of the Town, and, as Mayor, he found time once each year to turn the mythical town of Springdale into the setting for Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." So on Wednesday, December 22 at 8 p.m., "A Christmas Carol" was first presented on his own half-hour program over WBBM-CBS, sponsored by Lever Brothers, followed by the Jack Carson Show.



LIONEL BARRYMORE appeared as Ebenezer Scrooge when radio versions of the Dickens story were featured on Rudy Vallee's programs in 1941 and 1942. Vallee played the part of Bob Cratchit.

1944 Saturday, December 23, Lionel Barrymore appears in his eleventh broadcast as Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol." Within his own program The Mayor of the Town, the holiday episode aired at 6 p.m. for one half hour on WBBM-CBS, sponsored by Noxema.

1945 In its third year on Mayor of the Town, "A Christmas Carol" with Lionel Barrymore appears at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 22nd on WBBM-CBS, sponsored by Noxema, followed by Your Hit Parade at 8 p.m.

1946 Saturday, December 21 at 7:30 p.m. was the time again to hear Lionel Barrymore transform from the Mayor to Scrooge on Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", on CBS, sponsored by Noxema. He was programmed against "Truth or Consequences" on NBC and "I Deal in Crime" on ABC.

1947 In his last year of "Mayor of the Town," Lionel Barrymore portrays Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol" on Wednesday, December 24, at 7 p.m. now on WLS-ABC network, sponsored by Noxema, followed by "Vox Pop" at 7:30 p.m.

1948 Christmas Day, December 25 on Wrigley's Christmas Festival, a two-hour holiday program, featured Bing Crosby with guest host Gene Autry, who introduces "Columbia's Talent Parade" which includes Lionel Barrymore as Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol." Other guests on the program were Hedda Hopper, Danny Kaye, Burns and Allen, Sweeney and March, The Andrew Sisters, Rochester, and The Bob Mitchell Boys Choir. The program aired at 3 p.m. against NBC's 7th Annual Two Hours of Stars sponsored by Elgin Watches which included Don Ameche as the emcee, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, Al Jolson, Lauritz Melchior, Ozzie and Harriett and Danny Thomas.

LIONEL BARRYMORE

1949 Lionel Barrymore's 16th annual appearance as Scrooge in Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" aired over Mutual/WGN at 7 p.m. on Sunday, December 25 for one half hour. This special presentation is sponsored by "Your Capeheart Television Dealer." The program airs against Sam Spade on NBC, Stop the Music on ABC and Charlie McCarthy on CBS.

1950 On Christmas Eve, December 24, Lionel Barrymore is heard in a syndicated program over the Mutual network and locally over WGN at 3 p.m. that Sunday afternoon. This half hour broadcast, Barrymore's 17th as Scrooge, was sponsored locally by Andrew McCann Plumbing and Heating in Chicago. The program is preceded by Hashknife Hartley at 2:30 p.m. and is followed by Martin Kane, Private Detective at 3:30 p.m.

1951 For the 18th year, Lionel Barrymore returns to the role of Ebenezer Scrooge in a syndicated version of "A Christmas Carol" on Sunday, December 23, 1951, at 3 p.m. Again the program was sponsored locally — this time by A.O. Smith Water Heater Dealers in the Chicago area. Mr. Barrymore was heard over WGN locally and was followed at 3:30 p.m. by Wild Bill Hickok.

1952 Lionel Barrymore takes his role of Scrooge along with the Christmas spirit to The Hallmark Playhouse on Sunday, December 21, over CBS stations — WBBM at 8 p.m. here in Chicago. Barrymore is now heard as weekly host on the Hallmark Playhouse. The program is followed by Escape at 8:30 p.m. on CBS.

1953 In his 20th and final appearance as Ebenezer Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol" Lionel Barrymore as host of The Hallmark Hall of Fame appears on Sunday, December 20 at 8 p.m. on WBBM, the CBS network affiliate in Chicago. The program is preceded by My Little Margie at 7:30 p.m. and followed by the Edgar Bergen — Charlie McCarthy Show at 8:30 p.m. over CBS.

1954 Still working as host of The Hallmark Hall of Fame on radio and only a month shy of his twenty-first performance as Ebenezer Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol," Lionel Barrymore dies on November 15, 1954, succumbing to a complication of ailments, including arthritis which crippled him and forced him into a wheelchair in his later years; the immediate cause of death was heart congestion. An American Christmas tradition for millions was now brought to an end. Fortunately, six of the original "Christmas Carol" broadcasts still remain to be enjoyed each year at the holiday season.

Your

Capehart TELEVISION DEALER

INVITES YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

TO A SPECIAL

CHRISTMAS DAY BROADCAST

OF CHARLES DICKENS' BELOVED


"A Christmas Carol"

FEATURING

LIONEL BARRYMORE

— WGN

THIS EVENING FROM 7:00 TO 7:30 P.M.



1949 NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT



NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

Bunny Berigan

By KARL PEARSON

In an era when Louis Armstrong was the King of trumpet players, Bunny Berigan was heir-apparent to the throne. Berigan was an outstanding musician who became known for both his fantastic range and tone. As fellow trumpeter Charlie Spivak, a fine player in his own right, once said, "He sure had such an ungodly range for that time; he was an exceptional talent."

The trumpet is one of the more physically taxing instruments and requires a great deal of technique and control, yet Bunny also played with a great deal of feeling and emotion, as can be heard on his theme, "I Can't Get Started." Berigan was admired by fans and musicians alike. Singer Red McKenzie, who used Bunny on many of his own recording sessions, once was quoted as saying, "If that man wasn't such a gambler, everybody would say he was the greatest who ever blew. But the man's got such nerve, and likes his horn so much, that he'll go ahead and try stuff that nobody else would think of trying."

Bunny had many friends in the musical world. Those that worked in his various groups were inspired by his musical talents and charmed by his relaxed and modest manner. Irving Goodman (brother of Benny Goodman), who played trumpet in Bunny's band, put it this way: "The way he beat off a tempo, and the sound he produced, got under our skins. It was so much fun, some of us were pretty near willing to work for nothing."

Born in 1908 in Hilbert, Wisconsin, Rowland Bernhart Berigan came from a musical family. Many of his relations



BUNNY BERIGAN

played various musical instruments. Within a year after his birth Berigan's family had moved to Fox Lake, Wisconsin where at the ripe old age of six he began receiving violin lessons from his grandfather. Within a few years young Bunny had graduated to the alto horn, which was later replaced by the trumpet. As a teenager, Bunny jobbed around the Fox Lake area with various bands and began to establish a reputation for himself as an outstanding musician.

In 1930 he received an offer to join Hal Kemp's Orchestra. Kemp, who had not yet established a national reputation for himself, was about to begin a European tour and needed a replacement in his brass section. Young Bunny joined the Kemp band and English audiences marvelled at

NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

his musical abilities long before American audiences had ever heard of him.

In the early 1930's Bunny was one of the busiest freelance musicians based in New York City, playing on countless recordings and broadcasts for leaders and singers such as Freddie Rich, the Dorsey Brothers, Freddy Martin, the Boswell Sisters, Victor Young, Mildred Bailey and Benny Goodman. Berigan also played in Paul Whiteman's large aggregation for about a year.

It was during 1935 that Bunny started to attract attention from the fans. During that year he was a member of Benny Goodman's band and appeared on such classic recordings as "King Porter Stomp," "Blue Skies," "Jingle Bells," and "Sometimes I'm Happy." Shortly after leaving Goodman's band he became a member of the CBS staff orchestra, appearing in different settings. One of the many shows he did was the "Saturday Night Swing Club," the first show of its kind devoted to swing music. Bunny reached an even greater audience through his featured appearances on this program and started to toy with the idea of starting a band of his own.

By 1937 Bunny felt that the time was right. He sat in with Tommy Dorsey's band for several weeks in what was to turn out to be a beneficial arrangement for both Dorsey and Berigan. Bunny was able to gain some handleading experience watching Tommy, while Dorsey garnered several hit recordings featuring Bunny's trumpet, including two of Dorsey's biggest hits, "Marie" and "Song of India."

A few week after his departure from Tommy's band Bunny and his Orchestra made their debut at Frank Dailey's Meadowbrook, one of the country's top band spots. The band had not been together for very long and had not yet matured into a first-class outfit and received poor reviews. After some reorganization and rehearsal the band improved and landed

another plum job, this time at New York's Hotel Pennsylvania.

Unfortunately Bunny never reached the degree of success that many other leaders found, and there were several reasons. Part was do to a string of bad luck. One example occurred in 1938, shortly before the start of an engagement on the Roof Garden of Boston's Ritz-Carlton Hotel. A hurricane hit Boston, blowing the bandstand off the roof and permanently closing the Roof Garden. Another cause for Bunny's failure was his own good nature. Although he was a fine musician, Bunny was not necessarily a leader of men. He left the rehearsal of the band up to its arrangers and he was by no means a strict disciplinarian.

Another cause for Bunny's downfall was his growing addiction to alcohol. Bunny's capacity for liquor had grown over the years to reach a point where he began to consume mass and near-lethal quantities of alcohol. Another cause for Berigan's failure was his lack of business sense. By 1939 he was forced to declare bankruptcy, owing his agency and his sidemen vast sums of money.

Once again Tommy Dorsey provided Bunny with a job in his band, helping him out financially and bolstering Bunny's self-image, constantly promoting Bunny's presence in Tommy's band. Berigan remained with Tommy for only a few short months before reorganizing a band of his own. Berigan continued leading a band into 1942, but the years of heavy drinking had caught up with him. In the end the once-robust Bunny was merely a frail shadow of his former self. On June 2, 1942, he died. Many mourned the loss of one of the greats of jazz.

There were many tributes and many stories about Bunny Berigan in the years since his death, but the greatest compliment of them all came from Louis Armstrong. When George Simon asked Louis who his favorite trumpet player was, the "King" replied: "The best of them? That's easy. It was Bunny."

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TAPE 1

Drugstore Lunch

"Do Wah Ditty" I

"Si," "Sy" I

Doctor's Office I

Railroad Station I

Violin Lesson I

Sportsmen LS/MFT

"Do Wah Ditty" II

Beverly Hills Beavers

TAPE 2

Cimmaron Rolls I

Dennis and the Doc

"Si," "Sy" II

Railroad Station II

Violin Lesson II

At The Races

Cimmaron Rolls II

Ronald Colman's Dream

Chief Radio Engineer

Doctor's Office II

Railroad Station III

Benny's Birthday

SEND TO: HALL CLOSET TAPES
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MORTON GROVE, ILLINOIS 60053

DECEMBER

**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
2 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	3 NFL Football NO RADIO CLASSICS	4 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 1 & 2 Halls of Ivy	5 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 3 & 4 Fibber McGee and Molly	6 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	7 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 5, 6 & 7 Jack Benny	8 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
9 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	10 NFL Football NO RADIO CLASSICS	11 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	12 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 8 & 9 Charlie McCarthy	13 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	14 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 10, 11 & 12 Jack Benny	15 OLD TIME RADIO HOLIDAY SPECIAL Including Cinnamon Bear Chapters 13, 14, & 15
16 OLD TIME RADIO HOLIDAY SPECIAL Including Cinnamon Bear Chapters 16, 17 & 18	17 NFL Football NO RADIO CLASSICS	18 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 19 & 20 Jack Benny	19 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	20 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 21 & 22 Jack Benny	21 Cinnamon Bear Chapter 23 & 24 Lum and Abner	22 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
23 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	24 Cinnamon Bear Chapters 25 & 26 Dragnet	25 Six Shooter Burns and Allen	26 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	27 Charlie McCarthy The Shadow	28 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	29 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
<p>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. All of the programs we present on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are syndicated rebroadcasts. We are not able to obtain advance information about storylines of these shows so that we might include more details in our <i>Radio Guide</i>. However, this easy-to-read calendar lists the programs in the order we will broadcast them. Programs on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. This schedule is subject to change without notice.</p>						1 Dragnet Lights Out Jack Benny Third Man

IMPORTANT PROGRAM NOTICE

Just as this issue of the Nostalgia Digest was coming off the press, the Director of News and Programming at WBBM, Newsradio 78 notified us that

**Effective MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1990
OLD TIME RADIO CLASSICS
WILL MOVE TO
A NEW TIME PERIOD
MONDAY THRU FRIDAY
MIDNIGHT TO 1 A.M.**

Our Weekend broadcasts, when not pre-empted by sports programming, will continue to be heard on Saturday and Sunday from 8 to 10 p.m.

DON'T FOLLOW THIS CALENDAR

**TURN PAGE FOR REVISED
DECEMBER-JANUARY CALENDAR**

REVISED CALENDAR FOR
DECEMBER

Old Time Radio Classics – WBBM-AM 78
MONDAY thru FRIDAY MIDNIGHT to 1:00 A.M.
SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Nov. 26 Murder At Midnight Jack Benny	Nov. 27 Fred Allen Jerry Of The Circus	Nov. 28 The Shadow Charlie McCarthy	Nov. 29 Lights Out Sky King	Nov. 30 Gasoline Alley Penny Singleton Show	Dec. 1 The Cinnamon Bear Chapters 1 thru 8
2 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	3 The Big Story Jack Armstrong	4 Halls of Ivy Easy Acres	5 Fibber McGee and Molly Dr. Tim, Detective	6 Charlie McCarthy The Shadow	7 Jack Benny Sherlock Holmes	8 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
9 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	10 The Man Called X Terry and the Pirates	11 The Shadow Third Man	12 Jack Benny Lights Out	13 Cisco Kid Pepper Young's Family	14 Dragnet Jack Benny	15 The Cinnamon Bear Chapters 9 thru 17
16 The Cinnamon Bear Chapters 18 thru 26	17 Michael Shayne, Detective The Bickersons	18 Jack Benny Adventures of Frank Race	19 The Shadow Charlie McCarthy	20 Life of Riley Jack Benny	21 Lum and Abner Great Gildersleeve	22 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
23 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	24 Dragnet Charlie McCarthy	25 Six Shooter Burns and Allen	26 Charlie McCarthy The Shadow	27 Fibber McGee and Molly Third Man	28 Jack Benny Strange Dr. Weird	29 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS

REVISED CALENDAR FOR
JANUARY

Old Time Radio Classics – WBBM-AM 78
MONDAY thru FRIDAY MIDNIGHT to 1:00 A.M.
SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec. 30 NFL Football NO RADIO CLASSICS	Dec. 31 Dragnet Third Man	1 Jack Benny Chandu the Magician	2 Life With Luigi Dr. Tim, Detective	3 The Shadow Joe Palooka	4 Sky King Lights Out	5 Football Playoffs NO RADIO CLASSICS
6 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	7 The Shadow Your Truly, Johnny Dollar	8 Murder By Experts Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar	9 Mystery in the Air Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar	10 Mollé Mystery Theatre Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar	11 Mysterious Traveler Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar	12 Football Playoffs NO RADIO CLASSICS
13 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	14 Bold Venture Front Page Farrell	15 Jack Benny Lights Out	16 Dragnet Third Man	17 Bulldog Drummond Charlie McCarthy	18 The Shadow Guiding Light	19 Jack Benny Gangbusters Abbott & Costello Theatre Royale
20 Football NO RADIO CLASSICS	21 Mark Trail Terry & the Pirates	22 Witch's Tale Jack Benny	23 Charlie McCarthy The Shadow	24 Mollé Mystery Theatre Pepper Young's Family	25 Lights Out Third Man	26 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
27 Super Bowl NO RADIO CLASSICS	28 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	29 Radio City Playhouse Jungle Jim	30 Damon Runyon Theatre Jack Benny	31 Dragnet Charlie McCarthy	Feb. 1 Burns Allen Escape	Feb. 2 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS

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DECEMBER-JANUARY CALENDAR**

		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.											
		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday						
Dec. 30	NFL Football NO RADIO CLASSICS	1	Jack Benny Chandru the Magician	2	Third Man Dragnet	3	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	4	Sky King Lights Out	5	Football Playoffs NO RADIO CLASSICS		
6	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	8	Dragnet Mandrake the Magician	9	Bulltug Drummond Charlie McCarthy	10	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	11	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	12	Football Playoffs NO RADIO CLASSICS		
13	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	14	The Shadow Joe Palooka	15	Lights Out Third Man	16	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	17	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	18	Dragnet Guiding Light	19	Jack Benny Gangbusters Abbott & Costello Theatre Royale
20	Football Championship NO RADIO CLASSICS	21	Mark Trail Terry & the Pirates	22	Witch's Tale Easy Aces	23	Charlie McCarthy The Shadow	24	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	25	Dr. Tim. Detective Lights Out	26	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
27	Super Bowl NO RADIO CLASSICS	28	Mollie Mystery Theatre Pepper Young's Family	29	Radio City Playhouse Jungle Jim	30	Damon Runyon Theatre Jack Armstrong	31	Dragnet Charlie McCarthy	Feb. 1	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	Feb. 2	Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1-5 P.M.

DECEMBER

PLEASE NOTE: The numerals following each program listing for *Those Were The Days* represents timing 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, DECEMBER 1st RADIO TO PLAN YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST BY

LIFE OF RILEY (12-17-44) William Bendix stars as Chester A. Riley, with Paula Winslowe as Peg and John Brown as Digger O'Dell. A week before the holiday, Riley gets a gift marked "Do Not Open Until Christmas." American Meat Institute, NBC. (15:35; 14:25)

ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (12-24-45) "The Night Before Christmas" starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. In a story set on Christmas Eve, 1886 (and suggested by an incident in "The Blue Carbuncle" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle), Holmes takes a case requiring him to keep an eye on gifts brought to a seasonal party. Petri Wines, MBS. (17:15; 10:45)

HENRY MORGAN SHOW (12-24-47) Henry tells a "traditional" Christmas story of kids who go to Washington D.C. to get a law passed making every day Christmas. Cast features Arnold Stang, Charles Irving, Bernie Green and the orchestra. Eversharp, ABC. (15:00; 14:00)

RAILROAD HOUR (12-22-52) Gordon MacRae co-stars with guest Dorothy Kirsten for a musical Christmas party, including a special version of the Nutcracker Suite. Norman Luboff Choir, Carmen Dragon and the orchestra. Marvin Miller announces. Association of American Railroads, NBC. (15:55; 14:30)

THE LONE WOLF (1949) "The Golden Santa" statue is missing and its owner, a pretty young woman, asks Michael Lanyard to help in the search. Walter Coy is Lanyard, the Lone Wolf. Cast includes Jeanne Bates and Herb Vigran. Sustaining, MBS. (15:35; 10:30)

OUR MISS BROOKS (12-24-50) Eve Arden stars as the Madison High School English teacher who wants to spend a quiet Christmas Eve at home. Jeff Chandler is Mr. Boynton, Gale Gordon is Principal Osgood Conklin, Dick Crenna is Walter Denton. Sustaining, CBS. (10:45; 17:50)

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8th RADIO TO ADDRESS CHRISTMAS CARDS BY

(NOTE — While we're addressing Christmas cards this afternoon, we'll also celebrate Frank Sinatra's 75th birthday. The popular entertainer was born on December 12, 1915.)

SONGS BY SINATRA (12-5-45) In New York City for an extended personal appearance engagement, Frank is joined by June Hutton, the Pied Pipers, Axel Stordahl and the orchestra for an early musical look at the holiday season. Frank sings "Let It Snow," "Jingle Bells" and a medley of Christmas carols. Old Gold Cigarettes, CBS. (7:10; 10:50; 8:40)

CBS RADIO WORKSHOP (12-23-56) "All Is Bright" is set on a ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean on Christmas Eve. One of the passengers, a noted conductor, tells the story of "Silent Night." Sustaining, CBS. (14:45; 10:20)

BOB HOPE SHOW (12-24-53) Guest Frank Sinatra joins Bob, Brenda and Cobina, Bill Goodwin, Verna Felton, and Les Brown and his orchestra. In a comedy flashback to 1936, Hope and Sinatra recall a Yuletide incident in their lives as department store clerks. AFRS rebroadcast. (13:25; 9:51)

READER'S DIGEST, RADIO EDITION (12-19-46) "Room For a Stranger" starring Frank Sinatra as a Navy flyer back from overseas whose leave is cancelled on Christmas Eve. The warm-hearted drama is set in Northern Illinois. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (15:00; 14:40)

SONGS BY SINATRA (12-12-45) Frank celebrates his birthday on this last show from New York before returning to his home on the West Coast. Frank sings "It Might As Well Be Spring," "Button Up Your Overcoat," and "Old Man River." June Hutton, the Pied Pipers, Axel Stordahl and the orchestra, announcer Bill Lazar. Old Gold Cigarettes, CBS. (7:55; 10:30; 7:30)

SUSPENSE (12-17-61) "Yuletide Miracle" with Larry Haines, Santos Ortega, Joe DeSantis, Rosemary Rice, Katherine Raht, Bill Lipton. A man on parole from prison is moved by the spirit of Christmas. Sustaining, CBS. (10:10; 13:05)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16th RADIO TO ENJOY THE HOLIDAY SEASON BY

RED SKELTON SHOW (12-19-51) "The Little Christmas Tree" features Red as Junior, the Mean Little Kid, Deadeye, and Clem Kadiddlehopper. Cast features Lurene Tuttle, Pat McGeehan, Rod O'Connor, David Rose and the orchestra. Norge Appliances, CBS. (8:20; 11:00; 10:30)

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH (12-24-45) Charles Dickens' other Christmas story. It looks like a dismal Christmas for poor old toymaker Caleb Plummer and his blind daughter Mary when Mr. Tackleton, Caleb's stern employer, refuses a salary advance and demands that Caleb work a full day on Christmas. Cast features Arthur Sedgewick and Charles Eggleston. Narrated by Everette Clarke, with music by Joseph Gallicio and the NBC Chicago Orchestra. Sustaining, NBC. (11:25; 13:30)

CARNATION CONTENTED HOUR (12-20-48) Popular singer Buddy Clark stars in a program of Christmas music featuring the Ken Darby Singers, Ted Dale and the orchestra and announcer Jimmy Wallington. Carnation Evaporated Milk, NBC. (9:10; 9:57; 11:25)

FAMILY THEATRE (12-21-49) Loretta Young stars in "The Littlest Angel." Charles Tazewell's story of a small boy in Heaven who just never seems to do anything right. Sustaining, MBS. (10:41; 11:08)

TERRY AND THE PIRATES (12-25-46) A fascinating isolated episode from the long-running kids' adventure series. On Christmas Day, a nervous Terry delivers a radio message to his "Uncle Sam." Quaker Puffed Wheat Sparkies, ABC. (15:00)

DUFFY'S TAVERN (12-24-48) A classic Christmas story, an unlikely — but warm-hearted — entry in this series. Ed Gardner stars as Archie, the manager of the tavern "where the elite meet to eat," who is depressed because he isn't going to get a Christmas bonus from Duffy. Bristol Myers, NBC. (8:40; 21:00)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22nd RADIO TO WRAP, BAKE AND DECORATE BY

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (12-22-42) Jim and Marian Jordan star in this milestone McGee broadcast which presents Teeney and the kids singing "Twas the Night Before Christmas" for the very first time on the air. Marian Jordan is Teeney, Isabel Randolph is Mrs. Uppington, with Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC (11:55; 18:00)

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (12-24-44) Harold Peary is Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve and he's not in a holiday mood because he's being sued for breach of promise! But he still has to catch up on some Christmas shopping for the family. Cast includes Lillian Randolph as Birdie, Walter Tetley as LeRoy, Shirley Mitchell as

Leila Ransom, with Earl Ross as Judge Hooker. Kraft Foods, NBC. (15:34; 14:20)

AN OLD TIME RADIO CHRISTMAS CAROL (12-22-90) Premier broadcast of a special *Those Were The Days* production. Ken Alexander stars as all the characters in a gentle fable for the holiday season about a man who believes in Christmas, but not in old time radio! Three spirits try to convince him otherwise. Ken Alexander also wrote the story and the program was produced by Brian Johnson. (17:35)

BING CROSBY SHOW (12-20-50) Bing is joined by wife Dixie Lee Crosby and sons Gary, Phillip, Dennis and Lindsay in a music and fun-filled Christmas show. Bing prepares to play Santa for the kids! Chesterfield Cigarettes, CBS. (7:45; 20:25)

CAMPBELL PLAYHOUSE (12-24-39) "A Christmas Carol" starring Lionel Barrymore as Ebenezer Scrooge, narrated by Orson Welles. A classic radio version of the Charles Dickens' drama. Campbell Soups, CBS. (31:37; 27:47)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29th GREETINGS OF THE SEASON

PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW (12-26-48) Phil can't understand why he didn't get a Christmas gift from his sponsor. Elliott Lewis as Frankie Remley, Walter Tetley as Julius, Gale Gordon as Mr. Scott. Rexall, NBC. (12:50; 11:00; 5:17)

EDDIE CANTOR SHOW (12-27-44) Eddie and announcer Harry Von Zell discuss plans for the New Year's Eve show at the Hollywood Canteen. Bert Gordon, Nora Martin, Leonard Sues. Saf Hepatica, Trushay, NBC. (9:50; 8:45; 11:15)

MELODY RANCH (12-30-50) Host Gene Autry presents his customary round-up of top tunes of the year. Featured are Pat Buttram, the Cass County Boys, Johnny Bond, the Pinafones, Carl Kotner and the orchestra. Tunes include all the big hits of the year 1950. Wrigley's Doublemint Gum, CBS. (14:25; 13:30)

THE WHISTLER (12-26-48) "Delayed Christmas Present" is the Whistler's strange story featuring Joan Banks and Jack Petrucci. Signal Oil Co., CBS. (21:40; 6:25)

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (12-31-44) Harold Peary appears as Water Commissioner Gildersleeve who tries to show Leila Ransom (Shirley Mitchell) a good old-fashioned time on New Year's Eve . . . just like they do in the South. Lillian Randolph is Birdie, Walter Tetley is LeRoy. Kraft Foods, NBC. (12:53; 14:57)

RED SKELTON SHOW (12-26-51) The Skelton Scrapbook of Satire features "The Day After Christmas; Clem Kadiddlehopper; and Junior the Mean Little Kid making New Year's resolutions. Lurene Tuttle, David Rose and the orchestra. Norge Appliances, CBS. (6:45; 12:45; 10:35)

Nostalgia Digest -19-

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1-5 P.M.

JANUARY

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5th
HAPPY NEW YEAR
WITH GOOD OLD RADIO

ALDRICH FAMILY (12-31-48) On the afternoon of the last day of the year, the best laid plans for the New Year celebration are changing. Ezra Stone stars as Henry Aldrich, Jackie Kelk is Homer Brown, with House Jamison and Katherine Raht as Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich. Syndicated. (13:15; 11:45)

SUSPENSE (12-31-61) "The Old Man" features Leon Janney, Lawson Zerbe, Larry Haines, Ralph Camargo, Rita Lloyd. An old man is being forced to retire. Sustaining, CBS. (11:55; 12:20)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (1-2-44) Jack and the gang present their annual New Year's play, "The New Tenant," an "allegorical fantasy" reflecting the wartime situation. Jack is the old year 1943, Phil is Uncle Sam, Mary is Columbia (Uncle Sam's wife with 48 kids!), Don is the Navy, Dennis portrays Hitler and Tojo. A marvelous, funny, patriotic program. Grape Nuts Flakes, NBC. (14:20; 15:10)

THE COUPLE NEXT DOOR (1-1-36) Olan Soule and Elinor Harriot as Tom and Dorothy Wright, making some new year's resolutions. Announcer is Jack

Brinkley. A rare, early broadcast. Holland Furnace Co., WGN. (14:30)

JUDY CANOVA SHOW (12-28-46) Judy has written a western sketch for the annual Brentwood Amateur Show. Cast includes Mel Blanc, Ruby Dandridge, Joe Kearns, the Sportsmen, Charles Dant and the orchestra. Palmolive, Halo, NBC. (12:30; 17:35)

MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER (12-31-46) "New Year's Nightmare" with Maurice Copeland, Stuart Brodie, Louise Fitch. A holiday reveler welcomes in the new year with too much partying. Sustaining, MBS. (15:00; 13:30)

MEL BLANC SHOW (12-31-46) Mel plays all the characters in a play his lodge is presenting for the New Year. Cast features Hans Conried, Mary Jane Croft, Earl Ross, Joe Kearns, the Sportsmen, Victor Miller and the orchestra. Colgate Tooth Powder, CBS. (10:15; 14:05)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12th

SUSPENSE (9-22-52) "Jack Ketch" starring Charles Laughton in a true story about a man whose name was synonymous with death. Cast includes Joe Kearns, Joan Banks, Ben Wright. AutoLite, CBS. (12:55; 16:00)

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (1-10-43) Harold Peary, as Gildersleeve, welcomes Jim and Marian Jordan, as Fibber McGee and Molly, to his home. Gildy tries to keep a secret from Fibber. Walter Tetley, Lillian Randolph. Kraft Foods, NBC. (17:18; 13:09)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (9-9-40) "Manhattan Melodrama" starring William Powell, Don Ameche and Myrna Loy in a radio version of the 1934 film (that was playing at the Biograph Theatre in Chicago the night gangster John Dillinger was shot). Powell and Loy recreate their screen roles while Ameche appears in the part played on the screen by Clark Gable. It's a story of boyhood chums who grow up — one as a gangster, the other as the district attorney. Cecil B. DeMille is producer. Lux Soap, CBS. (25:30; 14:40; 19:55)

BOB HOPE SHOW (2-12-46) Guest Betty Hutton joins Bob and the gang in a broadcast from Santa Barbara State University. Featured are Jerry Colonna, Frances Langford, Skinnay Ennis and the orchestra. AFPS rebroadcast. (13:10; 16:15)

STORY OF DR. KILDARE (12-1-50) Lew Ayers and Lionel Barrymore bring to radio the roles they created on the screen in the popular M-G-M series. In this

episode, Kildare and Gillespie cope with a hospital benefactor who enters the hospital for her annual "rest." Syndicated. (13:05; 12:10)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19th

OUR MISS BROOKS (4-3-49) Walter Denton (Dick Crenna) suspects that Miss Brooks (Eve Arden) has written to a newspaper advice column asking what to do about Mr. Boynton (Jeff Chandler). Gale Gordon is Mr. Conklin. Palmolive Soap, Lustre Creme Shampoo, CBS. (10:53; 17:50)

FORT LARAMIE (6-17-56) Raymond Burr stars as Captain Lee Quince of the U.S. Cavalry with Vic Perrin as Sgt. Goerss. Quince deals with "winter soldiers" who enlist during the winter to have a warm place to live, only to desert in the spring. Sustaining, CBS. (15:40; 13:35)

RUDY VALLEE HOUR (6-17-37) The popular singer-bandleader stars in a major variety program of the 1930s. Providing the entertainment on this broadcast are Fanny Brice and Teddy Bergman (Alan Reed) as Baby Snooks and Daddy; actress Tallulah Bankhead; comedian Joe Laurie, Jr.; announcer Graham McNamee. Royal Gelatin, NBC. (14:45; 15:30; 15:20; 14:40)

THE WHISTLER (8-18-48) "Bright Future" starring Frank Lovejoy and Betty Lou Gerson. When a man rents a room he discovers something that may have belonged to the previous tenant, now dead. Signal Oil, CBS. (11:35; 12:35; 4:02)

MAISIE (1949) Ann Southern stars as Maisie Revere who meets a hobo whose talents include poetry and wrestling. Cast includes Hans Conried, Sheldon Leonard, Marvin Miller, Peter Leeds, Ted de Corsia. Syndicated. (12:10; 14:50)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26th

TOWN HALL TONIGHT (6-21-39) Fred Allen stars in an hour-long comedy show with Harry Von Zell, Peter Van Steeden and the orchestra, and the Mighty Allen Art Players. The News of the Week topic is "summer theatres." Guest is newsreel photographer Jess Kisost. On this next to last show of the season, Fred and the cast discuss summer vacation plans and the gang presents "A Crisis Boards the Showboat" with Fred as Captain Andy with his Showboat "The Boll Weevil." (pana, Sal Hepatica, Minit-Rub, NBC. (15:55; 13:15; 12:55; 14:03)

BLONDIE (1940s) Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton star as Dagwood and Blondie Bumstead, with Hanley Stafford and Elvia Allman as Mr. and Mrs. Dithers. A school chum-war hero returns and becomes a rival for Dagwood. AFPS rebroadcast. (25:31)

ROGUE'S GALLERY (1-17-46) Dick Powell stars as Private Investigator Richard Rogue, with Peter Leeds as his friend Eugor. At the circus, someone has threatened to murder Carlotta the Magnificent, an



DICK POWELL appears as private eyes in two different detective shows on *Those Were The Days*, January 26.

egotistical trapeze artist. Rogue investigates. Fitch Shampoo, MBS. (15:35; 11:45)

RICHARD DIAMOND, PRIVATE DETECTIVE (4-5-50) Dick Powell stars as Diamond, with Virginia Gregg as Helen Asher. Cast includes Arthur Q. Brian and Barton Yarborough. Diamond is after gold in this adventure. Rexall, NBC. (11:25; 15:48)

MURDER AT MIDNIGHT (1946) "Wherever I Go" stars Barry Kroeger as a man who plans the "suicide" murder of his wife. Syndicated. (12:26; 12:53)

NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

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I REMEMBER IT WELL¹⁰⁰⁰

ICICLES, IGLOOS, & ANGELS IN THE SNOW!

By Dan McGuire...



What you did was, you stood with feet together, hands at your sides, and fell straight backward into the snow. You moved your arms up in an arc until they met over your head, then brought them back to your sides. Without using your hands, you thrust yourself to a sitting position and used the momentum to spring to your feet.

If you completed the process without falling back or stumbling into the area just vacated, your efforts were rewarded with an impression in the snow that looked like a Christmas angel. In those years before TV, sculpting snow angels was one way that kids entertained themselves when outside alone on a winter day.

Knocking down icicles also could

occupy an hour or more of idle time. Once winter had a good start, there was likely to be a bumper crop of frozen drippings all around the gutters and overhangs of your house.

Small fry couldn't reach up and pull icicles down as some tall dads might. The job required a broom or mop handle. Even so, many icicles were too short for a good shot at them. Or thick ones would break off at midpoint. It didn't count unless you got the entire stalactite at or near its base.

To accomplish that required a lot of jumping — sometimes with a running start — and wild flailing of your stick until a lucky blow found its mark. If the snow was good packing, you could try lobbing snowballs at out-of-reach stubs. This method, though, required both a strong arm and excellent marksmanship.

To my knowledge, no one ever succeeded in eliminating the icicles from all four sides of his or her house. Usually, both interest and energy were exhausted about halfway around. Or a friend showed up to dispel our boredom, and we departed sucking on two of the thickest icicles.

Early in the season, when street puddles were crusted over but not frozen solid, cracking the ice was great fun. A thin layer of ice could be stomped flatfooted, but you had to take care lest your shoe submerge above the sole and heel. This called for both precision and good balance.

As temperatures fell and puddles froze thicker, it became necessary to use your heel like a hammer. It took more work to punch smaller holes in the surface. This

was not recommended activity once galoshes weather began. Heels were apt to tear, resulting in leaky galoshes, wet feet, colds and distressed mothers.

Once you got started stomping puddles, there was a tendency to become more determined in your efforts to leave no icy surface uncracked. This often led to carelessness and misjudgment.

I once stepped easily through a layer of ice that was thinner than it looked. Beneath it was a deeper puddle that I expected. My shoe, sock and pants cuff were soaked. As my foot turned numb with cold, I fervently longed to warm it on a register at home. Instead, I had to occupy myself outside until I was dry enough that Mom wouldn't notice.

Auto traffic in our neighborhood was light. When our streets became slick with ice or packed snow, we could belly-flop to our hearts' content without worrying our parents.

Belly-flopping involved holding a sled about chest high and getting a running start. On the run, and without letting go, you bent, let the sled drop to the ground and literally fell on top of it. Properly done, your belly (well-padded by your winter garb) took the impact.

Immediately upon touchdown, you elevated your legs so that your feet wouldn't drag. Simultaneously, you had to shift your hands to the two front handles that gave you a measure of control over the sled's direction.

You could burn off plenty of energy just belly-flopping on a straightaway course. Or you might try zig-zagging around obstacles. In a spirit of daredevilism, we sometimes crashed head-on into piled snow. Or we'd get up a head of steam and run up a slope that would send us flying off sideways into a snowbank.

Once I belly-flopped eight blocks over to my pal Eddie's house. Half a block away, I hit the ground on a high-speed run. Ten feet later, I slid over a parking space that someone had salted. The sled ground to a halt but I kept going. I arrived at



Eddie's house with skinned palms, a cut lip and a loose front tooth.

When you were with a buddy, you could take turns pushing each other or compete for speed and/or distance in belly-flops. In groups, we sometimes had races, taking turns as rider and pusher.

"Hey, let's race to the end of the block."

"Naw, Too far. The pushers'll drop dead."

"Okay. How's this? From the Sells' front walk to the Schadens' tree."

"Good! Pick partners and line up. Odd man out can be starter."

A few round-robins of that race course would leave everyone fairly pooped. Rather than admit it, we'd find some excuse to dispute the outcome of one or more races. That would precipitate an impromptu snowball fight.

What with all the switching off of partners during the races, no one was specifically on anyone else's side. So it was pretty much an every-man-for-himself free-for-all, last one standing wins.

Sometimes we had more organized combat, with snowballs made and stockpiled



I REMEMBER IT WELL

for several days. Then the two sides would face off over the backyard fences, with one yard separating us.

We threw our best fast balls from behind trees, bushes and walls of packed snow. We aimed chest-high and usually were lucky to hit an outflung arm or leg. At that distance, if a missile chanced to hit someone's head it did no real damage, although the victim might be stunned for a moment. Often as not, the thrower stood up and peered in surprised concern at his hitce, making him the prime target for the enemy's next half dozen lobs.

In more cooperative efforts, we built perhaps a thousand snowmen over the years. (Occasionally the girls exerted their influence and we created a snowwoman.) In twos and threes, we would work together on one figure. In larger groups, we could produce a whole family.

One year a least a dozen kids on our block decided to construct an igloo in Wayne's back yard. The outer walls, with about a ten-foot diameter, went up easily enough. We rolled and stacked dozens of huge balls such as you'd use to make a snowman. The snow was good packing and we tamped handfuls between sections to make them solid.

Getting a roof to stay on was a challenge. To give it support, we put four partial walls inside with an opening in the center. It looked like a wheel with the hub missing. Thus, we had four rooms that all faced into one another.

The roof still had to be patched on very gingerly. Someone sat inside and held each small segment from below as it was padded and tamped into a snug fit. There were dozens of partial collapses before we got a complete roof in place that was packed solidly enough to last for awhile.

We put the finishing touch to our frozen architecture by adding an Eskimo-style crawl-through entrance. Then we celebrated our success by making all of our parents inspect our handiwork and heap



Illustrations by Brian Johnson

praise on us.

For a few days, the igloo was our prime gathering place. But you couldn't actually do much inside. Crawling in, you had to take care not to raise your head lest you poke a hole in the ceiling. Maximum capacity was two kids per room and one more seated Indian style in the center. But this meant sitting almost motionless because any movement might damage a wall.

With occupancy limited to one kid per room, you could play cards or board games in the center. Except that very little light came through our tunnel entrance.

Several of us asked parents for candles but were told that these might cause our roof to melt. (It made sense to us and didn't prompt the arguments we would have raised for what I suspect was their real concern: that we probably would set ourselves afire.) We had to make do with flashlights that were continually going dim.

Except for telling spooky stories, escaping from the chilly wind, resting between other activities or just hiding out, the igloo soon fell out of favor. One day,

by mutual consent, we had a sort of demolition party.

We bombarded the igloo with snow cannonballs. We crawled inside, stood up and poked our heads through the roof. We ran and threw ourselves into the walls. In about ten minutes, we undid a week's hard labor. We lay laughing in a jumble of bodies, buried by mounds of snow that had been our magnificent edifice.

Ice skating was not part of our winter regimen. No one owned shoe skates. A few kids had skates that strapped onto your street shoes. They got little use because there were no ponds nearby and no park with a flooded skating area.

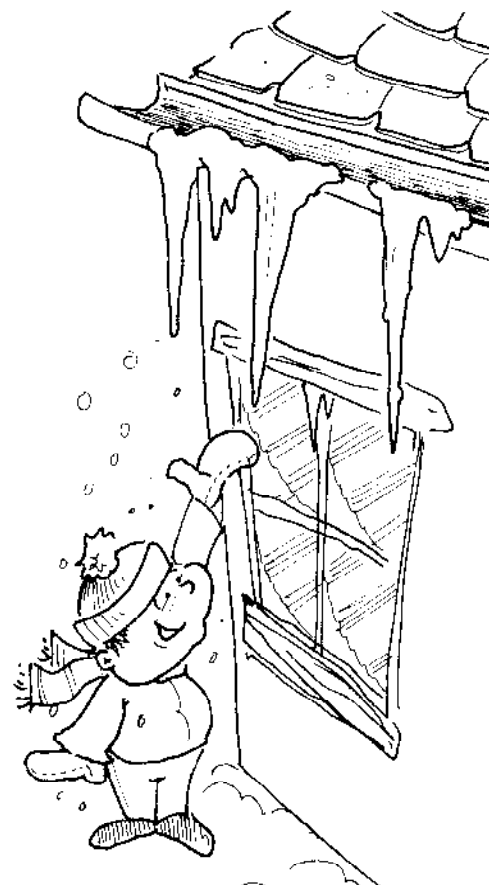
Instead of skating, we engaged in ice-skimming. This could be done on any prairie (vacant lot) site where water had accumulated and then frozen. Usually there were plenty of rough spots, protruding rocks, bushes and other plant life. This gave an added challenge to the sport.

In ice-skimming, you made a running start from outside the frozen area. At the ice's edge, you hurtled forward, assuming a stance of legs slightly apart, semi-rigid, and arms out for balance. The object, of course, was an exhilarating slide across the ice. If you had to raise a foot — or leap into the air — to avoid one of those obstacles, that added to the excitement.

There were a lot of spills taken in ice-skimming. This resulted in plenty of sore rumps, skinned palms and torn knees in pants or snowsuits.

Sometimes the prairie wasn't uniformly frozen and we got our shoes soaked. One more trial for long-suffering mothers trying to stretch already thin budgets. A pratfall in the wrong spot could send us home with the seat of our pants soaked and our bottoms chapped.

One year Jimmy's dad emptied a barrel of junk from their garage and let Jimmy have the barrel. We dismantled it and used the staves for skies. We waxed the undersides and tied them onto our shoes with cords and strips of cloth. For



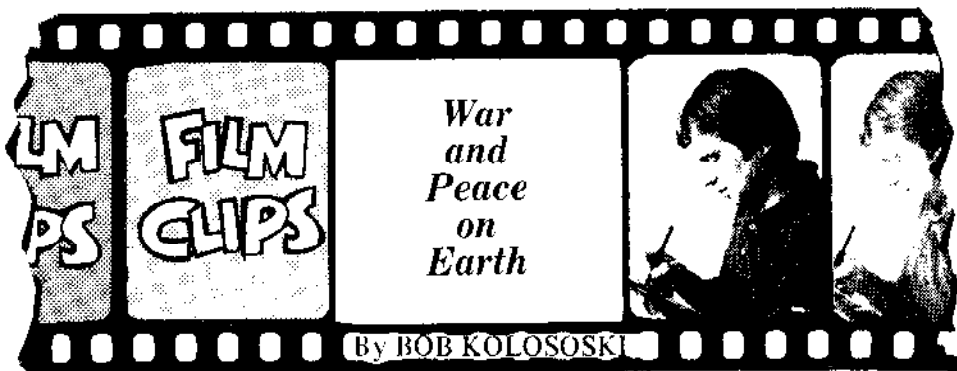
propulsion we resorted again to those broom and mop handles.

Our makeshift skies were primitive. Forward motion was not easy or smooth. But it was as close to that rich person's sport as any of us got before we reached adulthood.

I'm glad that my youngsters grew up in an area with easy access to sled hills, skating ponds and toboggan slides. It's reassuring, too, to observe that the art of making snowmen and snow angels is not forgotten.

I've yet to see a group of kids get together and pool their talents to construct an igloo.

If they ever do, it'll probably be furnished with a Coleman lantern, Nintendo games, a portable phone and a boombox!



Every Christmas season a new crop of movies are released by producers and studios hoping to cash in on some of the holiday money being spent. The mix of films is diverse and their longevity directly related to the taste of the public. Without question most of the films reflect the mood of the times.

This is the season for "Peace on Earth" and most movies with a Christmas theme

try to convey that powerful message in an entertaining way. However, when there is no peace on earth the task of the filmmakers is hard to define. In times of war Hollywood and the public find "Peace on Earth" hard to grasp when loved ones are fighting and dying on foreign shores.

The films released during the Christmas season during World War II were a mixed bag of escapism, patriotism, comedy, action, and often gut-wrenching human emotion. The majority ignored the holiday season but nearly all had the war as a common denominator.

December, 1942 was not a happy time for the Allies and the U.S.A. in particular. We were not losing the war, but we were far from winning. We had lost many Pacific islands to the Japanese and Hitler's hold on Europe was firm. The American people needed something to cheer them up and Hollywood was ready to give the public what it wanted. *Casablanca* was released in late December and became an immediate hit when it was announced that Anglo-American leaders were going to meet in Casablanca for a war strategy conference. Allied troops were fighting desperate battles in North Africa and many moviegoers went to *Casablanca* believing it to be a war film. What they saw was a classic love story played out in a world torn by war.

That same December Abbott and Costello were running amuck in *Who Done It?* a murder mystery with Nazi spies thrown in for the fun of it. Jack Benny



CASABLANCA starring Claude Rains, Paul Henried, Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart.



MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS starring Margaret O'Brien and Judy Garland.

turned in a very funny performance in *George Washington Slept Here* and Lucille Ball brightened up the screen in the army comedy *Seven Day Leave*. Hedy Lamarr made all the red-blooded men in the audience forget about the war and Christmas shopping in *White Cargo*. Errol Flynn punched his way into the hearts of millions of women in *Gentlemen Jim* and Gene Kelly made his MGM screen debut opposite Judy Garland in *For Me and My Gal*. Most of the serious war films were being made in England. *In Which We Serve* was an unsentimental look at the British navy and the hardships faced by the men who served in the British fleet. Noel Coward wrote the screenplay, co-directed and made his film debut in this award-winning film.

The war news in 1943 was not much better and the films of that year treated the war with a little more respect. *Gaudy Canal*

Diary was a not-so-pretty picture of the war in the Pacific and when it was released in December, 1943 our war with Japan was far from over. However, the war in North Africa was decided in favor of the Allies, but not without heavy casualties on both sides. *The Immortal Sergeant* starred Henry Fonda as a Canadian soldier fighting the Afrika Corps in the Libyan desert. It was a bit sentimental but presented the war in unglamorous terms.

We had Russia as an ally in our fight with Nazi Germany and a few Hollywood producers decided to show the American people that, in spite of all our fears about communism, we had to help Russia with her struggle against Hitler's fighting forces. Samuel Goldwyn produced *The North Star* as pure propaganda in hopes of gaining support for our aid to Russia and also, I believe, to take the minds of the American people off our own war efforts.

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FILM CLIPS

Another propaganda piece was *The Cross of Lorraine* with a miscast Gene Kelly as a French soldier captured during the fall of France.

Not everyone wanted grim reality to cloud up their holidays, so Tinsel Town released a few lightweight movies to perk up patrons. *Government Girl* with Olivia deHavilland and Sonny Tufts (Sonny Tufts?) didn't challenge anyone's intelligence, but it was the breezy stuff that comedy was made of and war-weary Americans went to see it. Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland were in *Girl Crazy* and that's all anyone needed to know. It had Gershwin tunes and a director named Busby Berkely but Mickey and Judy were the number one blues-chasers of the war years. And, in time for Christmas, 1943, MGM released *Lassie Come Home*. It was a great family movie then and still is today.

We had something to smile about in 1944. D-Day had come and gone and the Allies were carving a path to Hitler's front door. The Japanese were losing islands in the Pacific and General MacArthur had returned. The movies were a little more upbeat and war workers had money to spend because of countless hours of overtime churning out the materials of war.

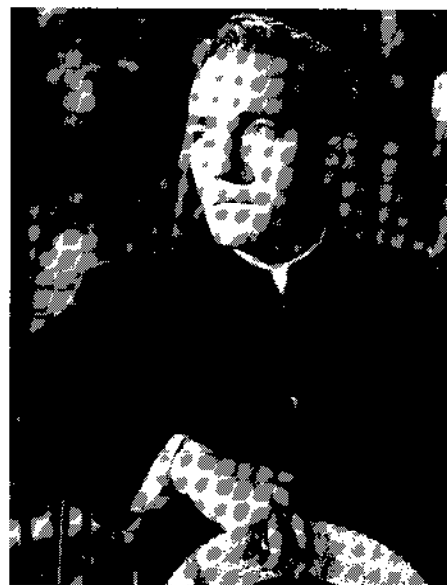
Movie attendance peaked in 1944 and everyone thought it would be a good Christmas. That is until Hitler unleashed his Battle of the Bulge counterattack in late December. The streets of France were ablaze with the heat of battle; the streets of America were lit up with the marquees of neighborhood and small town theaters playing movies made to inspire a nation to victory. *Winged Victory* was unique in that many of the supporting players were actual service men taking a break from the war to make a patriotic film. George Cukor directed with vigor and, all in all, it was an above-average war movie. *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* was another rousing film that bolstered the morale of the movie-going public. *Something For the Boys* was

loosely based on a Cole Porter Broadway show and needed major surgery to give it a wartime theme. It was given verve by Carmen Miranda, Phil Silvers and a very young Perry Como (in his screen debut).

The most popular film of the 1944 holiday season was *Meet Me in St. Louis* with Judy Garland and Margaret O'Brien. This special film allowed war-weary 1944 audiences to escape to the peaceful turn of the century. The movie was designed to make the public forget the war and it succeeded beautifully. It was a joyful celebration of America and a perfect Christmas present from MGM. A very strong runner-up that month was *National Velvet* with Elizabeth Taylor becoming a star in her first starring role. Decembers are usually deep and dark and *Murder My Sweet* was the movie to see on an overcast December day. Dick Powell gave the performance of his career and *film noir* was christened in this perfect filming of Raymond Chandler's novel, "Farewell My Lovely."

The war spilled over into 1945. Winter here faded into spring and Allied troops were across Germany rushing to Berlin. Hitler committed suicide and the war in Europe was over. Summer quickly came to an end and so did the Pacific war when Japan unconditionally surrendered. Fall gave way to winter and the holiday season. America could again observe the Christmas holidays with "Peace on Earth" as their focus.

Meanwhile, back in Hollywood, producers were ready to release their holiday films for 1945. The blockbuster of the season was *The Bells of St. Mary* with Bing Crosby repeating his award-winning Father O'Malley role. Ingrid Bergman starred as a nun who helps the priest raise funds for a new school. The war was over but good war movies were still being released and near the top of the heap was *They Were Expendable* with Robert Montgomery and John Wayne portraying PT boat skippers. It was directed by John Ford and it gave its audience some honest



BING CROSBY as Father O'Malley in "The Bells of St. Mary's."

heroics to cheer for. It was also time to poke a little fun at the war and *What Next Corporal Hargrove* fit the bill. It was a fairly good sequel to *See Here Private Hargrove* and delivered lightweight entertainment to those who sought it. But if it was gritty realism the public wanted, it was *Lost Weekend* that they went to see. MGM was the king of musicals and their December, 1945 entry was *Yolanda and the Thief* with Fred Astaire and Lucille Bremer. It was shot in Technicolor but that couldn't hide the fact that it was a techniturd of a film. Other releases that month include *The Man in Gray*, *The Stork Club*, and *Cornered* — none of which have become an enduring classic.

For some reason World War II Decembers had an abundance of films released with very few going on to be Christmas classics. In retrospect, the war was the main focus and the films made during the war predominately dealt with it.

We can only hope that we will never have to live through that type of conflict and that we will be able to go to a movie in December that deals with "Peace on Earth" and not war.

WE GET

LETTERS

PRINCEVILLE, IL — I greatly enjoy listening to *Old Time Radio* broadcasts on WBBM in Chicago. It is my favorite show on radio. I am eleven years old and am in sixth grade. I go to school at Princeville Grade School.
— **DOUGLAS STOLLER**

EVANSTON, IL — I can't thank you enough for the *Old Time Radio Classics* show on WBBM radio. I moved here a month ago to give myself a few quiet weeks of study time before my entrance exams for graduate study at Northwestern University. "Quiet" is right — with no television, no friends and no knowledge of the area, even four or five hours of study per day left many long, lonely evenings. You provide such a great variety of entertainment — balanced with a few White Sox games and classical music from other local stations — television can't compete. Now that school has started I may have to miss a few shows from time to time, but it's nice to know that any night of the week I can take a break from studying and exercise my imagination while I rest my eyes.
— **MARIAN DURA**

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN — Here's my check for a two-year subscription renewal. I have spread the word about the radio shows so often I feel like Johnny Appleseed of Old Time Radio. The old science fiction shows are my favorite. Keep on broadcasting and I will keep on spreading the word.— **MARTIN B. COLLINS**

ST. JOHN, INDIANA — I need your help, please. Did Mason Adams ever play the role of Pepper Young? If not, who did?
— **SHIRLEE BYRNAS**

(ED. NOTE — Mason Adams appeared in the starring role of Pepper Young's Family on radio from 1945 until the series ended in 1959. He was a very active radio actor, appearing on many shows including Dimension X, X Minus One, the Ford Theatre, etc. On TV he appeared as Managing Editor Charles Hume on the Lou Grant series and you've heard his "voice-over" work on thousands of TV and radio commercials. Remember: "With a name like Smuckers, it has to be good!" Other actors who portrayed Pepper Young on radio, before Adams, were Curtis Arnall and Lawson Zerbe.)

MUNDELEIN, IL — I enjoy listening to you very much. Your voice is so warm and friendly. You sure bring back a lot of good memories. The Shadow was a program my entire family enjoyed. It used to air on Sundays at 4 p.m. I can remember during the winter months, when it got dark early, we wouldn't turn on any lights and it made it spookier to listen in the dark.
— **VIRGINIA WOELICK**

CHICAGO — On your *Old Time Radio Classics* program you have a silly habit of playing the role of a "verbal calendar." Granted, there may be a few listeners who don't know what the current date is (as if it matters), but do you really think there are those out there who are not aware that the year is 1990?
— **J. R. OSWALD**

(ED. NOTE — After trying to track down dates of original radio broadcasts for over 25 years, we just have to date everything we do! We've been on the air for 20 of those years and we have always opened each program with the day's date — including the year — just for reference purposes, if nothing else.)

DANVILLE, IL — I would like to tell you how much of a thrill it is to listen to your program every night on WBBM. I am 28 years old and have first experienced all of the old time radio shows from your program two years ago. As a matter of fact, one of the first shows of yours that I'd listened to was when you interviewed Mel Blanc. I'd always been a fan of his from his work with all of the Warner Brothers cartoons, and after listening to your interview will Mel, I've been tuning in to your program ever since.

Some of my favorite radio shows that I listen to on WBBM are Great Gildersleeve, Jack Benny and Fibber McGee and Molly. Recently I heard your Fibber McGee and Me broadcast from 1974 that you had personally done with Jim Jordan. Needless to say, I was very impressed. I must ask if this broadcast from 1974 is available to the public. This would be a most important and valuable part of my recently new collection of old time radio shows on cassette tape and record albums.

Keep up the marvelous work that you're doing with *Radio Classics*. I am sure that I speak for a lot of people when I say that you've enabled us to see the past from a different and exciting perspective, along with creating a brand new generation of old time radio show fans. Thanks for the memories!
— **BILL SARTAIN**

(ED. NOTE — Thanks for your kind words. A tape of the dialogue excerpts of the 1974 show we did with Jim Jordan is available for \$6.95 at Metro Golden Memories in Chicago. The complete, seven-hour series called "Fibber McGee and the Good Old Days of Radio" can be obtained as custom cassettes from the Hall Closet.)

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA — I'm looking forward to winter when I can hear WBBM more often. In summer, there's more (static) interference. I enjoy the old time radio shows more now than I did as a child.
— **HELEN E. HEATON**

SHOREWOOD, WISCONSIN — Here's a check for a one year subscription to *Nostalgia Digest*. For your info, if you survey: I'm a 32 year old male, work in the electronics field and listen to radio (old time on WBBM, local Public Radio and Madison Public Radio) 15-20 hours a week. Fan of Riders Radio Theatre, Dr. Who, Avengers, vintage "monster" movies, all vintage comedy. Collect radio and video tapes, records from 1940-1990, books on various subjects, firearms, western comic books, and Dark Shadow stuff. Radio

favorites: Inner Sanctum, Lights Out, X Minus One, and The Shadow. Became interested in vintage radio through Riders Radio Theatre, a favorite from television on Nashville Network. Madison PBS has 1½ hours each Sunday night following Riders. I belong to The Three Stooges Fan Club.
— **TIM TIETZ**

CICERO, IL — For a while you were playing some of the Hop Harrigan programs on *Radio Classics*. It was my favorite afternoon adventure program when I was a kid growing up in the 1940s. I would appreciate it if you would play those shows again, at least once in a while, that is, if there are more of them available. At any rate, I am one of your regular listeners, both to *Radio Classics* and *Those Were The Days* and I hope you continue for many years to come.
— **WILLIAM MC NAMARA**

SCHERERVILLE, INDIANA — My wife and I spent an enjoyable evening last night with friends of ours. We went to the Star Theatre in Merrville to see Patti Page and Bob Hope. During the course of our conversations, old Chuck Schaden and the old time radio program came up. We discussed your show and the many memories that your programs stir (and yes, we complained about the evenings when they broadcast the sports instead of old time radio). Kindly put my friend on your list for a one year gift subscription to *Nostalgia Digest*. Send the magazine to Thomas A. Kroczek, Munster, Indiana. And as always, thanks for the memories.
— **TERRY FARRELL**

EVANSTON, IL — Are you aware that about a month ago Channel 11 played a movie, "The Shadow"? (And without the charming Margot!) And how come you never mention Jim and Marian Jordan as students in Kaltenmeyer's Kindergarten? Marian was Giggling Gertie and Jim was the Irish boy. There was also a Jewish boy, an Italian, a Swede, and it seems someone else.
— **MRS. SYLVIA JENKINS**

(ED. NOTE — We have been searching for Kaltenmeyer's Kindergarten shows for as long as we've been collecting vintage radio programs, but have not been successful. For the record, Marian Jordan played Gertie Glump and Jim was Mickey Donovan on this kids' program that originated in Chicago and was heard on the Blue Network of the NBC. Bruce Kamman was Professor August Kaltenmeyer, D.U.N. (Doctor of Utter Nonsense). Johnny Wolf played Izzy Finkelstein; Thor Ericson was Johnny Johnson; Merrill Fugit was Percy Van Schuyler; Sidney Ellstrom played Chauncy the bum; Cecil Roy was Daisy Dean; and Billy White was "Tough Guy" Cornelius Callahan. Sounds like fun. We wish we could have heard it and we'll keep on searching.)

WINFIELD, IL — For a long time I have wanted to tell you about what the Cinnamon Bear story has come to mean in my family's life. Each holiday season comes and goes and I never get it done so today I'm taking the time.

I was born in 1940 and when I was a child the radio was, of course, our main entertainment. I, however, never got to choose the programs we listened to. I do not even know how old I was when we first began to listen to the Cinnamon Bear. I remember it was sponsored by Wieboldt's Department Stores. I guess you could say for me it would not have been Christmas without it. From Thanksgiving on, the magic would build with that chapter a day, the most important fifteen minutes of the day!

As children we do not realize how important and precious something like that becomes in our lives and our memories. Just like today's children, I took it for granted then, even though I wouldn't have ever missed it. I still took it for granted because I didn't know how deep it was inside of me . . . how very precious the memory of that make-believe — that imaginary world of radio — would become. How lucky I was to have been a child at that time.

I don't know when the Cinnamon Bear went off the air. By the time it did, I didn't notice it was gone. Well, I married and had children and my husband, who always listened to the old time radio station, asked me, one day, if I knew anything about a radio program called The Cinnamon Bear. I could not believe my ears! It wasn't possible, was it, after all these years? Now I was able to share that magic with my children and with my husband, who has always been a little jealous as he was too old as a child to be interested. He was born in 1926, so even though he was only eleven years old, he said that as a boy of eleven, he probably would not have listened.

I cannot remember when you began playing the adventure, but I ordered the tapes and I made my children, or should I say *allowed* my children to listen to only one chapter a night beginning around Thanksgiving and ending on Christmas Eve. We had five children between 1962 and 1969 and then a sixth in 1979. It was and is a family tradition.

When my parents retired and moved to Mt. Home, Arkansas we went there for Thanksgiving and each time we drove aboard the ferry boat to cross Lake Norfolk, we began Chapter 1. Then, about four years ago, they did away with the ferry and built a bridge over the lake. I always have the tape in the tape recorder and as soon as those van tires hit the bridge, I hit the "play" button.

Our family has grown up so much that only our youngest, who is eleven, went with us last year, but we still listen to only one chapter a day. When some of the other children went to college, I made copies of the tapes and they shared them at school.

Someday I will have grandchildren and the magic will continue on and on. I have gone through two sets and I'm on my third set of tapes from the Hall Closet!

The past four years I have been passing out to the

neighbors three-by-five cards with time and station to find the Cinnamon Bear.

Thank you so much, from the bottom of my heart, for all the wonder, laughter, joy and magic. Your programs have always been our favorites and I cannot bear to think of your not being there. Thank you for keeping it alive and for giving us so much.

— JOYCE HAVEMANN

(ED. NOTE — You have kept the Cinnamon Bear alive, you and your family who continue to follow Paddy O'Cinnamon's adventures. Thanks very much for sharing your memories.)

SHOREWOOD, WISCONSIN — Are you going to play the third and last Episode of Adventures by Morse? I believe it was scheduled for September 4th. Instead we had reports on the electric explosion coverage. On September 11th President Bush was on. Have I missed the third chapter?
— BERTIE BURGESS

CHICAGO — I was enjoying listening to the story "The Girl on Shipwreck Island" on Adventures By Morse, but the night the third and final chapter was to be on, it was not heard because of the President's speech. I do hope you will broadcast the end of the story as I would like to hear it and no doubt there are many others who would like to hear it also.
— MARION PARKER

(ED. NOTE — You're right. There are plenty of people out there in Radioland who want to hear the last chapter of the three-episode drama, and we plan to reschedule it soon. With an abbreviated *Old Time Radio Classics* schedule on WBBM, because of football and hockey broadcasts, and since it has been some time since the first two episodes have been aired, we've decided to wait until we're fairly sure of having a Saturday or Sunday evening open and then we'll rebroadcast all three episodes in one night. This probably won't happen until February, and you can be sure you'll hear the exciting conclusion by checking our *Radio Classics* calendar in the next issue of the *Nostalgia Digest*. Of all the nights that President Bush could have pre-empted our show, he had to do it on a night when we were wrapping up a continuous adventure. It's enough to make one want to cast a vote for Herbert Hoover!

CHICAGO — Last Saturday's show (September 29) was one that an old radio fan could only dream of. To begin with, it was a beautiful day and I was stuck inside painting. Of course, at one o'clock I tuned in and not only was every show a favorite of mine, but each episode was new to me. Each show was better than the last and the afternoon just flew by. Thanks so much for these memories and the memory of a great afternoon.
— MICHAEL WEBER

SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA — Many thanks for the picture of Steinmetz High in the latest *Nostalgia Digest*. The last time I saw the school was in 1985. How shocked I was to see the broken windows, the vandalism, and the bare and desolate campus. The

picture is the way I remember it; a beautiful, well-kept, and protected beloved home-away-from-home for the thousands of us privileged to go there to be educated.

Coincidentally the 50th anniversary of my class graduation is being celebrated in November at the Sheraton-O'Hare. Our class was the very first to be graduated after four full years at Steinmetz. Those having gone before were drawn from other area high schools, and spent only two or three years there. Our reunion includes the June graduates, and our two classes were the very last to have both January and June graduations. Since then there has been only June graduations.

In January of 1936 when my classmates and I first entered Steinmetz the school was brand, spanking new. Those were the days when dropping trash in the hall got you a whole gang of study halls, and getting caught spitting gum in the drinking fountain got you a personal lecture from Mr. Daniel F. O'Hearn plus a couple days suspension. The campus as seen in the picture was the gift of the students by way of tag days and special programs in the assembly hall costing a nickel admission. We were justly proud of our school then, and we mourn her present condition much more than you could ever know.

I wish I could say I had planned it that way, but during my whole senior year I had only two required courses left on my program. I arranged to take one class before I went to division and lunch after which I took the other class. When our class advisor Mary (Bloody Mary) McTigue found out, she tried to get me to take study hall before and after my abbreviated program, but she relented when she found out that I usually checked into school about 9 a.m. and out around 4 p.m. and worked on the *Star*, our newspaper, most of the day. Most days, that is.

There were days I left school as soon as I could, caught the Austin bus and the Lake Street elevated, and got to the Merchandise Mart in time to catch the Club Matinee radio program at three o'clock. I was a fan of Ransom Sherman of Three Doctors fame who was the M.C. at the time. He had a very subtle sense of humor, and unless you listened very carefully his best stuff would go right over your head. Sherman was not a young man then. Soon he was sharing the program with a sassy young kid from Baltimore two days a week, and when he retired the kid took it over. I liked the kid. He had a pretty good group to work with. His announcer was a tall guy named Durward Kirby. One of his singers was a baritone (not too good) named Curley Bradley, and some of the music-makers were Jose Bettencourt and his Marimba Band (Jose was brother to one of the South American rulers), George Barnes Trio (the best guitar of all time), the Les Paul Trio (the second best guitar of all time), and the Dinning Sisters.

The kid had the rather funny sounding name of "Garrison Morphit" so he asked the radio audience if he should change it, and into what. The response was positive, and the name selected for him was Garry Moore.
— LARRY LAVIERI

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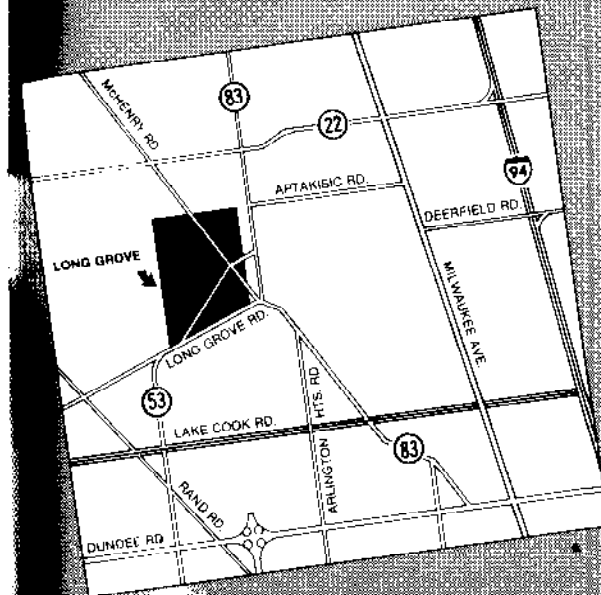


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