

# NOSTALGIA DIGEST <sup>AND</sup> RADIO GUIDE



BERGEN & McCARTHY

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# NOSTALGIA DIGEST

BOOK EIGHTEEN

CHAPTER ONE

DECEMBER, 1991-JANUARY, 1992

## HELLO, OUT THERE IN RADIOLAND!!

### ★ Radio and World War II ★

This year we observe the 50th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor . . . the date the United States became a full participant in World War II.

We'll observe the occasion with a very special *Those Were The Days* broadcast on December 7th. We have selected some extremely dramatic and soul-stirring programs from the Day of Infamy and the next few days as well.

But that's just the beginning of our 50th Anniversary look at World War II. We're going to embark upon a *four-year* old-time radio odyssey during which we will reach into the pages of history to provide an exciting sound picture of radio and the war years . . . on the home front and around the world.

We'll listen to newscasts, commentaries, speeches, propaganda and patriotic programs, broadcasts specifically for military audiences and, of course, scores of regular state-side entertainment shows . . . all of which will give us a clear idea of what radio was like during World War II.

Naturally, not all of our *TWTD* programming during the next four years will deal with the wartime 1940s, but we do intend to follow the significant events of those years.

We hope you'll be entertained and enlightened as we present a side of history that cannot be so dramatically captured in the text books. Don't touch that dial!

• • • • •

And now we say thank you. Thank you very much!

This issue of the *Nostalgia Digest and Radio Guide* marks the beginning of our eighteenth year of publication.

Once again we observe the occasion by expressing our thanks and sincere appreciation to every subscriber on our list. Your support keeps this magazine rolling off the presses and we are grateful.

We also very much appreciate the efforts of those who are columnists and regular contributors to the *Digest*. **Karl Pearson, Bob Kolososki, Dan McGuire, Todd Nebel, Terry Baker** keep us entertained with regular offerings while folks like **Bill Oates, Clair Schulz, Gino Lucchetti** and **Russ Rennaker** check in from time to time with fascinating contributions. **Brian Johnson** does some nifty illustrations while **Margaret Warren** has provided some great photography (and this year she began her new *Museum Pieces* column).

Thanks too, **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.

So now it's time for us to get ready 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.

# The **EDGAR BERGEN** and **CHARLIE McCARTHY** Show

BY TERRY BAKER

Imagine you are a network radio executive back in the mid-1930's. You're looking for a new idea for a comedy show and one of your employees says he's got a sure-fire winner for you. He suggests that you hire a ventriloquist. This gentleman would do his act, talking to his dummies just like they were real persons. The logical first reaction (after threatening to throw this man out of your office) would be that this idea would never work. One can only appreciate a ventriloquist if you actually see him working, something you obviously could not do on radio. Well we all know that such an idea *could* work, and *did* as the Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy Show.

Edgar Bergen was born in Chicago on February 16, 1903. The Bergens were a middle class family. His father came to the United States from Sweden in the 1890's and made a decent living as an architect and dairyman. While Edgar was still young, his father became very ill and decided to retire. The family moved to a small dairy farm in Decatur where Mr. Bergen hoped he could get well. It was here that Edgar got his first taste of show business.

In order to help the family's financial situation, Edgar got himself a job at a local movie theater when he was only 11. He literally started out at the bottom, stoking the basement furnace. Being an ambitious lad, Edgar quickly earned himself a promotion upstairs where he not only ran the film projector, but operated the theater's player piano as well.

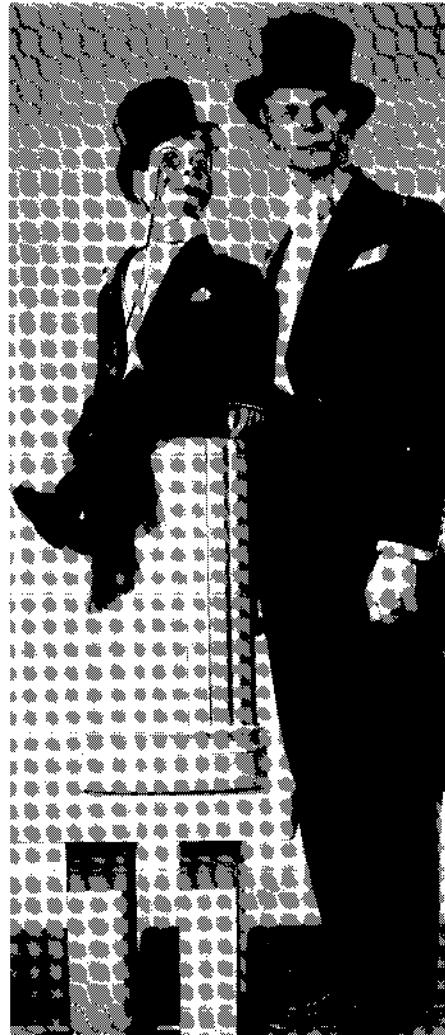
Being a part of the entertainment industry greatly increased Bergen's interest in it. He tried his best to attend the various vaudeville shows that came through town and was amazed by the talents these

performers displayed. Edgar was especially fascinated by ventriloquists and how they could literally throw their voices. So much so that he began practicing the art himself. He started out by imitating animals and other people in the neighborhood. He even went so far as to spend a quarter of his hard earned money on a book about magic and ventriloquism. Few wiser investments have ever been made.

The book gave Bergen the chance to perfect his technique and get the most out of the talent he had been blessed with. The more he practiced the better he got. Bergen would practice whenever he got the opportunity and found great pleasure in playing jokes on both friends and family alike. His favorite prank was to knock on the bottom of a chair, then throw his voice to make people believe that someone was at the door.

Since every ventriloquist needs a dummy, Edgar decided to make one himself. Using papier-mache and a Halloween mask with a movable mouth, Bergen fashioned a small boy that he named Rastus. He even put together his own routine. Edgar knew his act wasn't very good but his mother encouraged his efforts and even invited him to perform at some of her church functions.

His father's health grew worse through the years and he died when Edgar was only fourteen. Soon after, Mrs. Bergen moved the family back to Chicago. Edgar was now in high school and busy with his studies but he did what he could to help out the family financially. Besides taking various odd jobs, Bergen continued to work on his act and got an occasional job performing at local lodge halls.



EDGAR BERGEN & CHARLIE McCARTHY

Bergen attended Lane Tech for two years, then transferred to Lakeview High School. It was at Lakeview, during his senior year, that Edgar decided to create a new dummy for his act. The result was Charlie McCarthy.

Edgar had been tired of his hand-made dummy for some time and was determined that his next one would be professional quality no matter what the cost. But what should it look like? Bergen drew a few sketches but nothing really grabbed his

attention until he noticed a young Irish newsboy named Charlie selling papers around his high school. There was something about this boy's smiling face that Edgar loved and he began making sketches of Charlie in his history book.

Bergen then took his finished drawings to a local carpenter by the name of Theodore Mack. After studying the sketches, Mack quoted Edgar a price of \$35 to carve his figure out of pine. Trouble was, Bergen only had \$17 and it had taken him six months to save that. It took some quick calculation, but Edgar determined that if he stopped going to the movies and trimmed his other expenses he could pay Mack off in about twelve weeks. Mack agreed to the arrangement and started the work.

Edgar was so excited about the prospect of his new partner that he made plans to take a summer job after graduation performing on the Chautauqua Circuit. Chautauqua was a roving vaudeville show that featured young talent. The shows usually took place in tents and were sponsored by churches or local businesses in the small towns in which they played. Bergen thought this would be a wonderful learning experience and would also bring him some much needed cash as he planned to attend Northwestern University in the fall.

He had to graduate first, though, and the prospects were not looking too bright. Bergen had become so preoccupied with his future plans that his grades started to slip. In February, Edgar's history teacher, Miss Angel, informed him that he was flunking her class and unless his grades improved he would not be receiving his diploma.

Even the threat of failure did not help Bergen focus on his studies. He was far more interested in how Mr. Mack was progressing on his project. It was a long three months but the wait proved worthwhile. Mack had done a magnificent job capturing the facial expression that Bergen had seen in that newsboy. Edgar

## BERGEN AND McCARTHY

chose to call his new dummy Charlie McCarthy. Charlie for the boy who inspired it and McCarthy as a tribute to the man that made it.

Charlie made his stage debut a few weeks later at Edgar's spring recital program. Since Bergen knew he was going to flunk anyway, he decided to go out with a bang. He created a routine where Charlie portrayed a fellow student who poked good-natured fun at Miss Angel and the school principal, "Square Deal" Brown. Afterwards Edgar was surprised to learn that Miss Angel enjoyed his performance. She had no idea how talented Bergen was and told him that the world needed laughter a lot more than another history teacher. She offered to tutor him in an effort to bring up his history grade and with her help, Bergen graduated on schedule.

After a pleasant summer with Chautauqua, Edgar started college in the fall of 1922. Charlie went right along with him and it was only through the money raised by his ventriloquist/magic act that Bergen was able to stay in school. He performed on weekends at many of the smaller vaudeville houses throughout the Chicago area, usually earning around five dollars a day. He quickly dropped the magic portion of his act after one theater manager told him that he could only continue working there if he did so. This was fine with Edgar as it meant more stage time for Charlie.

Bergen's initial desire for attending college was to go into medicine but his stage success soon changed those plans. Edgar switched his major to speech and earned his degree by attending class in the summer and performing with vaudeville troupes in the winter. For a decade Bergen toured the old vaudeville circuits. These shows took him across the United States, down through South American and over to Europe. All the while Edgar continued to improve his routine and soon he and Charlie were one of the most popular

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ventriloquism acts on the circuit.

Like all performers of the day, Bergen ran into hard times during the early 1930's. The depression had its grips around America and the increasing popularity of radio and talking pictures caused vaudeville audiences to decline dramatically. Jobs became harder to come by and while Bergen never had trouble finding work before, now he was going three, sometimes four weeks between engagements. As money grew tighter, Edgar realized that if he planned to stay in show business some changes would have to be made.

In early 1935, Edgar made the decision to try his hand at something new — nightclubs. He got a job at Helen Morgan's club in New York where Sophie Tucker was starring. To appeal to the more sophisticated audience in attendance, Bergen thought about using another dummy. He had contacted *Esquire* Magazine and inquired about using their symbol Esky for a dummy. After giving initial approval, the publishers changed their mind, so Edgar simply spruced up Charlie. He donned Charlie in a tuxedo and a monocle and even gave him a slight British accent.

The act was a big success and Bergen took it to all the top clubs throughout the country. Sometimes Bergen found himself appearing in two places on the same night. In Chicago, for example, Edgar would do three shows at the Chez Paree and then move over to the Chicago Theater (where he headlined for the first time) and do two more. He was now mingling with the cream of high society and the contacts Bergen made at these clubs would lead to his next big career break.

In the fall of 1936, Edgar was appearing at the Rainbow Room in Manhattan when he was asked to entertain at a private party for Noel Coward. He accepted the offer and the publicity generated by this performance got the attention of the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. This agency handled the booking of talent for



W.C. FIELDS, DOROTHY LAMOUR, CHARLIE McCARTHY AND EDGAR BERGEN on The Chase and Sanborn Show.

the Rudy Vallee program and they invited Edgar and Charlie to be the guests on the show. Bergen knew that many stars had gotten their start on Vallee's show and he quickly accepted the invitation.

Bergen had tried to get into radio several months earlier, but had been turned down. While playing the Chez Paree in Chicago, Edgar auditioned for station WMAQ and was told by station manager Clarence Menzer that his act just wouldn't work on radio. Menzer (who would later become vice-president of NBC) felt that the radio audience would be confused by a ventriloquist and wouldn't believe that Bergen was doing both voices. Edgar argued that it really wouldn't be ventriloquism on radio. He would simply be

providing the voice of another character in the same manner as Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll did with "Amos 'n' Andy." Bergen's words fell on deaf ears though as he failed to get the job.

Edgar and Charlie made their radio debut on December 17, 1936 and the audience loved them. They became so popular that they were invited back for 13 consecutive weeks. This created a problem as Edgar had to write a new routine for each show. In vaudeville Bergen would take a month or more to write a new act. He then had the luxury of trying it out on a new audience every night, refining it as he went. In radio you were playing to an audience of 30 to 40 million people and to keep them listening you had to have new

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## BERGEN AND McCARTHY

material every week. Fortunately Edgar was a talented writer and was able to come with new ideas for every performance.

Within months of their last appearance with Rudy Vallee, Edgar and Charlie had their own show. Standard Brands (which also owned Vallee's program) hired them to star in their own comedy-variety show and *The Chase & Sanborn Hour* first aired over the NBC Red network on May 9, 1937. Their sponsor spared no expense in ensuring the success of the show. Not only were they given an outstanding time slot (Sunday evenings at seven) but they were surrounded by one of the finest and most expensive supporting casts on radio.

Don Ameche (who had gotten his start on the *First Nighter* program) was brought on to be the master of ceremonies. English orchestra leader Ray Noble directed the music and was also a fine comedian. Opera star Nelson Eddy provided the vocals and Dorothy Lamour helped with the music and comedy sketches. But the biggest star among the regulars and one of the main reasons for the show's early success was legendary comic W.C. Fields.

Fields had little previous radio experience and had turned down other offers to star in his own program. However, a desire to lessen his movie workload because of health concerns and a most generous salary offer from the show's sponsor (\$6,500 a week) convinced Fields to come aboard. He and Bergen respected each other's abilities and worked beautifully together. His comedic timing and brilliant wit were assets to the show and he became the perfect foil for Charlie.

The exchanges between the two became the highlight of each show. Charlie would constantly ridicule Fields about his penchant for alcohol and W. C. responded with threats to turn Charlie into kindling. It was up to Bergen to keep them apart. Fields was a regular for only five months but had a great hand in the initial success of the program. He continued to make

occasional guest appearances for the next six years.

The truly amazing thing about the show was the fact that listeners began thinking of Charlie as a real person, albeit a wooden one. This was a tribute to Edgar who created and executed Charlie's character to a point where it was believable. Bergen portrayed Charlie as a young boy who hated school and got into mischief just like any other child. Bergen served as a father figure to Charlie and it was his job to teach Charlie the proper way to behave.

While Bergen may have had top billing, there was no question that Charlie was the star of the show. Charlie was the reason people tuned in and that was just fine with Edgar. Bergen was a quiet individual offstage and through Charlie he was able to express himself in a manner he otherwise would not. Charlie was cocky, boastful and likely to say just about anything. Audiences never knew what to expect from him. He'd be flirting with a glamorous Hollywood starlet one minute and getting into trouble with his school principal the next.

Within weeks of its debut, the show was the top-ranked program in the nation, a spot it would hold for the next three years. But, the show was nearly cancelled in the middle of the first season because of the infamous "Adam and Eve sketch." Edgar and Charlie were not involved in the incident but their careers were threatened just the same.

Don Ameche and guest star Mae West performed a comedy skit in which they played Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. On paper the sketch seemed harmless and was passed by the NBC censors, but that was before Mae and her sultry voice got involved. Don realized something wasn't right during rehearsals. Mae was holding back, but the sketch still seemed a lot more risqué than it should have been. Don was afraid what would happen when she really let go during the performance and his fears proved justified.



MORTIMER SNERD

Today this routine would not even raise an eyebrow, but some 54 years ago it sent a panic through the radio industry. NBC affiliates were inundated with calls from irate listeners wondering how they could let something this obscene on the air. The FCC launched a full investigation of the matter and demanded a transcript of the show, a copy of the show and a list of all network stations that carried the broadcast. In the U.S. House, Representatives demanded that action be taken against NBC for allowing "this foul and sensuous radio program" into American homes. Both NBC and Chase & Sanborn issued formal apologies and Mae West was banned from all future network radio appearances for a period of 15 years. NBC would not even allow her name to be mentioned on the air. The end result was that the show's ratings went up two points!

Charlie was the hottest thing on radio and made Bergen a very wealthy man. Besides his radio salary (around \$10,000 a week), Edgar earned close to \$100,000 a year in royalties from the sale of Charlie McCarthy merchandise. They also

appeared in nine feature films and some dozen Vitaphone shorts through the years which added to their popularity and to Bergen's pocketbook as well.

In turn, Edgar made sure that Charlie was well taken care of. Charlie's limbs were changed frequently to protect against wear and tear and he traveled in a specially designed trunk. His wardrobe rivaled that of many a Hollywood star. Edgar even mentioned Charlie in his will. Bergen bequeathed ten thousand dollars to the Actor's Fund of America to establish a Charlie McCarthy Fund. This money was to be used to provide ventriloquist entertainment for underprivileged and handicapped children.

There was quite a panic when Charlie was "kidnapped" in March of 1939. A reporter friend decided to play a joke on Bergen and swiped Charlie from his Waldorf-Astoria hotel room. New York police and FBI agents were called in but the reporter returned Charlie the next day and Edgar chose not to press charges.

The radio show was rolling along in 1939 when Edgar added another character to his repertoire. He felt the show needed a contrast to Charlie's know-it-all attitude. He wanted to create a character that was dumb but lovable and of course needed a dummy to reflect such a personality. Bergen did a detailed study on character analysis as related to facial expressions and Mortimer Snerd was a combination of weak features. Bergen would say later that Mortimer was "scientifically stupid."

After the first few seasons it became obvious that the rapport between Bergen and his dummies was the best part of the program. In order to capitalize on this fact the sponsor changed the format of the show. In 1940 it was shortened to 30 minutes. Don Ameche, Nelson Eddy, and Dorothy Lamour were let go (although Don would return later) and replaced by a weekly guest star. Abbott & Costello came aboard as regulars for a season, but the emphasis of the show really shifted to Edgar, Charlie and Mortimer.

## BERGEN AND McCARTHY

There's an old show business adage that you're only as good as your material and this show certainly bore that out. A ventriloquist on radio was certainly a novelty at first but if the show wasn't funny, audiences would have stopped listening. If a radio program hoped to survive it had to be well written and Bergen worked hard to maintain the quality of the show. It took Edgar and his writers the entire week to prepare for each broadcast, but their commitment to excellence showed in the finished product that went out over the air.

The show remained one of the top-rated programs on radio throughout the 1940's, falling out of the top five only once through the 1948 season. The show changed very little during these years. A few reoccurring characters were introduced such as Ersel Twing (played by Pat Patrick) and Professor Edwin Carp (played by Richard Haydn). Edgar also created two new dummies, man-hungry Effie Klinker in 1944 (named after program writer Zeno Klinker) and Podine Puffington several years later. Each was used sparingly though and never reached the popularity of Charlie or Mortimer.

Bergen ended his eleven year relationship with NBC in 1948 along with other network stars like Jack Benny and

Red Skelton. They all signed with CBS because of substantial capital gains tax breaks offered by that network. Edgar took a year off from radio, but returned to the air for Coca-Cola in 1949 (in the same Sunday evening time slot) and regained nearly all of his previous audience. Even as audiences were switching to television, Bergen remained loyal to radio and was one of the last comedy-variety shows on the air when it was cancelled in 1956.

Edgar had no trouble keeping himself busy after his radio career ended. In January of 1956 he started a 14-month run as emcee of the television game show "Do You Trust Your Wife?" on which Charlie and the others made frequent visits. He and his dummies also made countless guest appearances on top TV variety shows. Bergen even did some stage work again, performing his act in Las Vegas and other top theaters around the country.


For those of us who didn't think he could, Edgar even proved he could perform without his dummies. He made several films and also portrayed Grandpa Walton in the made-for-TV movie "The Homecoming" which was the pilot for "The Waltons" television series. Producers asked him to continue the role when the series started in 1972 but Bergen declined, citing his age and his desire to spend more time with his wife and children.

Early in September of 1978, Edgar officially announced his retirement. He died of a heart attack a few weeks later.

Memories of Edgar Bergen and his magnificent talent are still with us today. We continue to listen to his classic radio programs and, thanks to a generous donation from Mrs. Frances Bergen and the Bergen Foundation, the figures of Charlie McCarthy, Mortimer Snerd and Effie Klinker are on permanent display at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago.

And this fall, the U.S. Postal Service issued a commemorative 29-cent postage stamp honoring Bergen & McCarthy.

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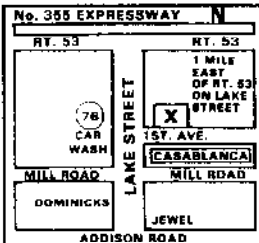
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## Pearl Harbor Week on the Radio

BY TODD NEBEL

*Let's remember Pearl Harbor,  
As we go to meet the foe,  
Let's remember Pearl Harbor,  
As we did the Alamo,  
We will always remember,  
How they died for liberty,  
Let's remember Pearl Harbor,  
And go on to victory!*

On December 7, 1941, the American public realized with cold shock the choice of war over peace. This shock was followed by a roaring anger, then a deeper determination. For a whole generation of Americans, that moment in time would remain indelibly imprinted in their memories for a lifetime. It came like a bolt out of the blue on a peaceful Sunday afternoon. "The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor!" If you are over fifty years of age you might have heard it over loudspeakers while watching a football game, while listening to the radio, while walking home from church or in a breathless call over your telephone. General reaction was one of disbelief, shock, anger and finally humiliation as the American public quickly dashed to their radios to find out more information.

Radio in those days devoted Sunday afternoons largely to public affairs and classical music programs. Such programming was thought probably to please the FCC, so audiences were not large, but they were loyal. At 1:30 p.m., Central Standard Time, NBC-Red was about to broadcast a University of Chicago Roundtable program while NBC-Blue was just

beginning a Chicago Bears-Chicago Cardinals football game. A labor talk sponsored by the CIO had just ended on CBS when an interim program with newsmen John Daly cut in at 1:31 p.m. with, "The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor by air, President Roosevelt has just announced. The attack was also made on naval and military activities on the principal island of Oahu." In his haste, Daly stumbled on the pronunciation of Oahu before repeating this incredible announcement. The other networks delivered similar bulletins while here in Chicago, WGN (the mutual affiliate), which happened to be on the air with a regular newscast when the first flash came, was the first station in Chicago to air the news. The time was 1:26:30. Soon, all Americans had heard the news and had realized what had happened as bulletins adding new details broke into regular programming for the remainder of that afternoon.

In Washington, President Roosevelt met with his advisors as well as congressional leadership, then retired to work on his address to tomorrow's special session of Congress. In a reassuring message to the women of the nation that evening, Eleanor Roosevelt stood in for her husband and spoke over radios in millions of American homes. But as afternoon wore on to evening, military censorship clamped down, leaving radio with limited information to supply an unlimited demand for the news. The radio section of the war department wisely issued its first command

to all radio stations across the nation to omit all casualty lists from being aired. "The broadcast of casualty lists would in effect set up obituary columns of the air, when such times can be used to elevate morale rather than depress." The war department also informed all broadcasters that "information regarding strength, location, designation, and movement of United States troops is secret."

While Americans sat in a state of limbo not knowing when a declaration of war would most assuredly come, the outcome became more clear as evening progressed and America's vital interests fell one by one. More and more analysis and commentary, some of it badly informed, filled the networks programming. Programming schedules were tossed aside, cancelling some shows and delaying others to make room for more news bulletins. Even commercials gave way to news. With the largest audience in history at its disposal, radio fortunately was able to relieve the tension somewhat as some of radios old favorites and entertainment programs were allowed to air. For instance, Orson Welles, whose "War of the Worlds" broadcast only three years earlier frightened many listeners, was ironically broadcasting a reassuring drama of patriotism about the time of the news flash. An ironic incident also occurred on the Dinah Shore song program that evening. She had announced plans the previous week for dedicating her December 7th show to American boys at Wake Island. The tribute took place as scheduled even though the Japanese were in the process of attacking Wake Island that same evening. And finally, the Charlie McCarthy program was by a stroke of luck, staged at an army camp that evening. Regulars on the program, Bud Abbott and Lou Costello were quoted as saying they were disturbed about the soldiers grave faces and wondered whether the men would be too serious to laugh. Fortunately they were not.

But Abbott and Costello were not alone

when they feared that the soldiers as well as Americans in general were in no mood to laugh. In fact, many listeners, when polled during those first few days following Pearl Harbor, and later following Germany's Declaration of War on the United States on December 11, 1941, felt that radio programs were "impertinent." The general feeling was that such entertainment programs were unimportant in such momentous times. However, this reaction was already tapering off after the first full week of excitement over the war had ended and as the radio industry quickly began restoring all of its entertainment programs by week's end. With foresight into the future of war, Bob Hope made the comment on his weekly December 16th program that his troupe "would continue to try to help Americans keep on laughing in the face of war. One of the things that makes us an unbeatable nation is our ability to laugh. We may black out our lights but never our sense of humor."

The blackened lights that Bob Hope was referring to also had its effect on radio during that first week of war. Blackouts on the west coast followed air raid warnings and the possibility of bombardment to major cities in southern California. Because enemy planes could make use of radio broadcasts to "hone" in on targets and because spies might use amateur radio, the FCC ordered all amateurs to get off the air. Many local radio stations were ordered shut down in California, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii for several days to a week until initial fears of an attack had died down.

Pearl Harbor week also saw many west coast radio producers discontinue nighttime rehearsals with the most prominent being Cecil B. DeMille's Lux Radio Theatre. DeMille's reasoning for the cancellation was that the Radio Theatre performers were mainly movie stars who would be unable to reach the theatre because of the blackouts, thus causing them to become stranded or unable to get

## PEARL HARBOR WEEK

back home. But, home was the place to be for radio's Bing Crosby during the blackouts. When the war broke out and the command was issued for lights out, Bing already had equipped one room in his home with opaque windows from which light could not leak out. When the first blackout came, he turned out all the lights except those in the blackout room!

As America eagerly awaited President Roosevelt's speech to the joint session of Congress December 8th, the radio networks were gearing up for this greatest news event of all time. In fact, the networks were already rearranging for additional war news on a regular basis. The Mutual Broadcasting System decided to set aside one minute every hour on the hour to broadcast the latest war news. Regular programs were subsequently shortened to provide for the added time for news. NBC decided to set aside the first two minutes of a half hour program as well as the first two minutes of a full hour program. And CBS followed the practice of overriding regular programs with important news as it was breaking.

In this historic week in American history, the entire country pulled together as one, following its leader Franklin D. Roosevelt into war with full confidence in him and our own convictions. Few people in American public life provoked stronger emotions than Franklin Roosevelt.

This American President had just helped us weather one of the worst crises that our country had faced since the Civil War and again he was there as a father figure as well as Commander in Chief when another crisis was just beginning. Arthur Krock of the New York Times wrote, "The circumstances of the attack on Pearl Harbor were such that national unity was an instant consequence. You could almost hear it click into place in Washington today. Congress, as interpreted by readers and

individual members, made a national front that grew in length and depth as fast as its members heard of the President's announcement."

"Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy, the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. . . ."

He then concluded, "I ask that Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."

It took less than 10 minutes for the President to deliver his historic speech. As he ended and looked up, his hands gripping the edge of the lectern, the solemn air in the great chamber was shattered by thunderous applause and shouts. This President who was the first President to use radio to speak simply and directly to its people, had just spoken to 62 million Americans, the largest radio audience up to that time. Never, at any other time in our history was our country more together as one and radio played a major part in installing those feelings of national unity.

Following a broadcast of Fibber McGee and Molly and a heartwarming rendition of "Our Country Tis of Thee," President Roosevelt spoke to the nation in a Fireside Chat on December 9th saying, "We are now in this war! We are all in it, all the way! Every single man, woman and child is a partner in the most tremendous undertaking of our American history. We must share together, the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories, the changing fortunes of war!"

And FDR triumphantly concluded with, "So, we are going to win the war, and we are going to win the peace that follows!"

And following these reassuring words by FDR, every American felt as confident as he did in the final outcome of the war.



## NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

### *The Big Bands and World War II*

BY KARL PEARSON

On the fateful Sunday afternoon of December 7, 1941, Artie Shaw and his Orchestra were in the midst of a successful Providence, Rhode Island theater engagement. During one of the afternoon stage shows Shaw had introduced a dance team on the bill and walked offstage for a breather. A theater worker backstage had switched on a radio when the station announced the bombing of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii by the Japanese. Shaw was one of the countless millions that afternoon who were shocked by the actions in the Pacific. By the end of that afternoon stage

show Artie had decided to disband and join the United States Navy. To Shaw the music business no longer seemed as important as those events which led the United States into World War II.

On December 8th, the United States government declared war on Japan, followed three days later by a declaration of war on Germany. Many musicians such as Shaw felt a great sense of duty to their country. A great number of musicians and bandleaders were to walk away from highly successful musical careers over the next twelve months. Many felt that it was



MAJOR GLEN MILLER and DINAH SHORE prepare to entertain the troops in 1944.



## NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

their duty to do their part for Uncle Sam, either in active military duty or as musicians entertaining the troops.

The contributions of those musicians who served in an entertainment capacity were extremely important. Entertainment served as a morale booster for the troops, and popular music in particular brought a slice of home to the armed forces. For the sailor in the Pacific or the infantryman recuperating in an English hospital, music brought a bright spark into their lives, a reminder of happier days and of loved ones.

Major Glenn Miller summed up the general feeling of responsibility among musicians. Miller, who had enlisted in the Army at the age of 38 (two years past the draft age limit), had formed a large and impressive unit of the Army Air Forces. By the summer of 1944, Miller and his unit had been stationed in England to entertain troops in the European Theater of Operations. In a letter to *Metronome* magazine writer, George Simon, Miller expressed his feelings:

"We . . . didn't come here to set any fashions in music or to create any new swing styles — we came merely to bring a much needed touch of home to some lads who have been here a couple of years. These lads are doing a hell of a job — they have been starved for real live American music."

Miller then mentioned the endless stream of concerts which the band had been playing for troops stationed in England:

" . . . the most important sound which can come out of such concerts — the sound of thousands of G.I.'s reacting with an ear-splitting, almost hysterical happy yell after each number. That's for us, brother . . ."

By December, 1942, a great number of leaders had enlisted or were drafted into military service. Bob Crosby and Dick Jurgens enlisted in the Marine Corps, while Jimmy Grier and Rudy Vallee joined

the Coast Guard. In addition to Artie Shaw, the Navy also saw Orrin Tucker, Eddy Duchin, Sam Donahue and Claude Thornhill join their ranks. Wayne King, Dean Hudson and Bud Freeman joined the Army.

In a few cases, orchestras and their leaders attempted to enlist as a unit. Clyde McCoy's orchestra was successful, as were Ted Weems and six of his civilian musicians, who were able to join the Merchant Marines. Ray McKinley and his Orchestra failed in their attempt to enlist in the Marines. While awaiting official Marine Corps approval, many of McKinley's men received their draft notices and were inducted into other branches of the armed services. McKinley had to give up the plan and joined Glenn Miller's Army Air Force band.

Many well-known sidemen were also enlisted or drafted into the armed services. Buddy Rich joined the Marines. Tex Beneke joined the Navy and was stationed at the very unlikely naval location of Norman, Oklahoma! Trumpet player Ziggy Elman joined the Army Air Force, while trombonist Pee Wee Hunt joined the Merchant Marines.

While a great number of musicians and leaders enlisted or were drafted, there were some who were unsuccessful in their attempts to join. Frank Sinatra was rejected due to a punctured eardrum, while leaders Benny Goodman and Harry James were classified 4-F due to old back injuries.

In one case a leader was refused due to his outstanding civilian wartime efforts. Jack Teagarden and his orchestra played an endless string of one-nighters for servicemen and war workers. Only one out of every ten engagements which the Teagarden band played was for civilian audiences. Apparently Teagarden didn't feel that this was good enough and tried to enlist in the Navy. Upon entering a naval recruiting office, Teagarden announced, "I'm coming aboard." The recruiting officer, who recognized Jack and already knew of his wartime contri-



CHARLIE SPIVAK and the orchestra (with vocalist Irene Day) at a World War II War Bond Rally in Times Square.

butions, replied, "You're already aboard, so long as you keep playing."

The Teagarden band, like many others, continued to do what they could for the war effort. Many played service camps and military hospitals around the country. Some appeared at War Bond rallies and other civilian functions to raise funds for the war effort. Some leaders carried their involvement even further. Kay Kysner announced that his orchestra would only perform for military personnel for the duration of the war. Gene Krupa, on a return stint with Benny Goodman's band, donated his salary to the USO. Shep Fields and Hal McIntyre took their bands overseas to play for troops in Europe.

Those leaders and musicians who remained in civilian life often found great difficulties in trying to remain on the job. Great sacrifices were being made by the entire country, and there were shortages of many items. Gasoline rationing and the

rubber shortage created travel problems for many bands. Train travel became impossible, as the military had first priority on the railroads.

The greatest problem which all civilian leaders encountered was the shortage of good musicians. The draft had taken many of the best musicians from the ranks of various orchestras. During one engagement, the Will Bradley orchestra lost six men to the draft. Bradley was unable to find six men on such short notice and was forced to disband. Jack Teagarden began employing men over the age of 50 in his brass section.

One of the most astute solutions to the shortage was discovered by Tommy Dorsey. After losing several members of his string section to the draft, Tommy hired an all girl string section!

So, one way or another, the big bands went to war.

**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
<b>1</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>2</b> Burns & Allen Nightbeat	<b>3</b> Proudly We Hail Charlie McCarthy	<b>4</b> Johnny Dollar Coronet Storyteller	<b>5</b> Escape Burns & Allen	<b>6</b> Jack Benny Double Feature	<b>7</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
<b>8</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>9</b> Duffy's Tavern Bill Stern	<b>10</b> Archie Andrews Jack Benny	<b>11</b> The Shadow Burns & Allen	<b>12</b> Mel Blanc Show Abbott & Costello	<b>13</b> Jack Benny Red Skelton	<b>14</b> Remembering The Cinnamon Bear (Selected Episodes)
<b>15</b> Football NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>16</b> Radio City Playhouse Jack Benny	<b>17</b> Mr. President Charlie McCarthy	<b>18</b> Jack Benny Richard Diamond	<b>19</b> <b>20</b> Screen Directors Playhouse: <i>Miracle on 34th Street</i> Parts 1 and 2		<b>21</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
<b>22</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>23</b> Roy Rogers Jack Benny	<b>24</b> Our Miss Brooks Fibber McGee	<b>25</b> Great Gildersleeve Fibber McGee	<b>26</b> The Shadow Jack Benny	<b>27</b> Great Gildersleeve Bob Hope	<b>28</b> Life of Riley X Minus One Nightbeat Fibber McGee
<b>29</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>30</b> Fred Allen Charlie McCarthy	<b>31</b> Red Skelton Fibber McGee	<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> Due to WBBM's commitment to news and sports, <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> may be preempted 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.			

**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
<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> 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.			<b>1</b> Great Gildersleeve Jack Benny	<b>2</b> Jack Benny The Bickersons	<b>3</b> X Minus One Burns & Allen	<b>4</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS
<b>5</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>6</b> Lights Out The Bickersons	<b>7</b> The Shadow Captain Midnight	<b>8</b> Lum & Abner Midnight	<b>9</b> Dangerous Assignment Chandu the Magician	<b>10</b> The Bickersons Red Skelton	<b>11</b> Jack Benny Nightbeat Abbott & Costello X Minus One
<b>12</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>13</b> Vic and Sade Escape	<b>14</b> The Bickersons Lights Out	<b>15</b> Great Gildersleeve Unsolved Mysteries	<b>16</b> The Shadow Charlie Chan	<b>17</b> Mysterious Traveler Ma Perkins	<b>18</b> Abbott & Costello X Minus One Jack Benny Nightbeat
<b>19</b> The Fat Man Phil Harris-Alice Faye The Shadow Vic and Sade	<b>20</b> Damon Runyon Theatre Lum and Abner	<b>21</b> The Bickersons Crime Classics	<b>22</b> Directors Playhouse: <i>Fort Apache</i> Bill Stern	<b>23</b> Lights Out Front Page Farrell	<b>24</b> Big Story Jack Armstrong	<b>25</b> X Minus One Abbott & Costello Nightbeat Jack Benny
<b>26</b> To Be Announced	<b>27</b> Duffy's Tavern Blackstone, Magic Detective	<b>28</b> Easy Aces The Shadow	<b>29</b> Arch Oboler's Plays Family Doctor	<b>30</b> Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	<b>31</b> Fibber McGee Calling All Detectives	

# 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. **ALSO NOTE:** A ★ before a listing indicates the vintage broadcast is of special interest during the 50th anniversary of World War II.



### Radio and World War II SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7th Remember Pearl Harbor



★ **THE WORLD TODAY** (12-7-41) John Daly anchors the network news on the day of the attack against Pearl Harbor. At the time of this broadcast, there has been no "official" word from the White House. Newsmen Albert Warner reports from Washington, D.C.; Robert Trout from London; Ford Wilkins from Manila. Analysis by George Fielding Elliott and Elmer Davis. (Original broadcast from 2:30-3:00 p.m., Eastern Time.) Golden Eagle Gasoline, CBS. (10:10; 12:00; 7:20)

★ **NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC** (12-7-41) John Daly interrupts the concert with the official announcement from the White House. Deems Taylor's usual

intermission commentary is cancelled to present a recap of the events at Pearl Harbor. Reports from Honolulu and Washington and an announcement that all Armed Forces personnel are ordered to report for duty in the morning. This is an excerpt from the Philharmonic broadcast that was originally presented from 3:00-4:30 p.m. Eastern Time. Sustaining, CBS. (17:30)

★ **CBS NEWS SPECIAL** (12-8-41) Complete coverage of the Joint Session of Congress as President Franklin D. Roosevelt asks for a declaration of war against the Empire of Japan. Albert Warner, Eric Sevareid, Elmer Davis and George Fielding Elliott report as FDR delivers his "Day of Infamy" speech. Coverage and analysis broadcast originally began at 12:30 p.m. Eastern time. CBS. (13:50; 13:25; 22:45; 21:10)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (12-9-41) Jim and Marion Jordan star with Bill Thompson, Gale Gordon, Isabel Randolph, Harlow Wilcox, Martha Tilton, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Fibber gets a certificate good for a 40% discount at the local department store. The program opens with the latest war news reported by Robert St. John and ends with a word to stay tuned for a message from the president of the United States and the singing of "My Country 'Tis of Thee." Johnson's Wax, NBC. (12:05; 17:20)

★ **FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT** (12-9-41) The president of the United States in his first wartime Fireside Chat, on all the networks, pre-empting Bob Hope on NBC and Glenn Miller on CBS. FDR describes the events leading to the attack on Pearl Harbor, warns the public to beware of rumors and tells listeners he does not yet know the full extent of the damage at Pearl Harbor. He talks about Axis "sneak attacks without warning" and sets the tone and the challenge for all Americans. Originally broadcast at 10:00 p.m. Eastern time. (24:25)

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14th RADIO TO ADDRESS CHRISTMAS CARDS BY

**RED SKELTON** (12-25-45) Red stars as Clem Kadiddlehopper, the Christmas tree salesman, and as Junior, the Mean Little Kid who visits Santa at the department store. Cast features Gigi Pearson, Verna Felton, Anita Ellis, Arthur Q. Brian, David Rose and the orchestra. Raleigh Cigarettes, NBC. (7:50; 7:45; 12:25)

**COLUMBIA WORKSHOP** (1946) "The Day They Gave Babies Away" is the true story of six orphans who lived many years ago in New England. A heartwarming drama for Christmastime featuring Ben Cooper, David Anderson, Agnes Young. Sustaining, CBS. (14:48; 13:45)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (12-16-41) Fibber brings home a Christmas tree he cut down himself. Jim and Marion Jordan star with Gale Gordon as Mayor LaTrivia, Bill Thompson, Martha Tilton, Isabel Randolph, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Sponsor Johnson's Wax gives up two of its three commercials for war-related announcements in this program with a heavy wartime flavor. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (13:15; 16:35)

**AN OLD TIME RADIO CHRISTMAS CAROL** (12-22-90) Ken Alexander stars as all the characters in a special *Those Were The Days* production. It's 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. (17:35)

**BOSTON BLACKIE** (1940s) Richard Kollmar stars as Blackie who tries to solve a Christmas Eve robbery he has just witnessed. Santa Claus is an unwilling accomplice to the crime. Champagne Velvet Beer, MBC. (13:36; 15:30)

★ **JACK BENNY PROGRAM** (12-14-41) Mary Livingstone and Jack go Christmas shopping in this very early wartime broadcast. Jack heads for the bargain basement. Dennis Day, Don Wilson, Elliot Lewis, Frank Nelson. Latest news developments precedes the broadcast. Jell-O, NBC. (10:35; 16:10)

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21st RADIO TO WRAP, BAKE AND DECORATE BY

**FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (12-23-41) Jim and Marion Jordan are the McGees who receive an unmarked Christmas package containing door chimes. Harold Peary makes a special guest appearance as Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve. With Gale Gordon, Isabel Randolph, Mel Blanc, Harlow Wilcox, Martha Tilton, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (10:15; 11:50; 8:05)

**HAROLD PEARY SHOW** (12-23-50) A heartwarming Christmas program as "Honest Hal" trusts an old bank robber with the job of playing Santa Claus. Sustaining, CBS. (14:40; 13:50)

**SUSPENSE** (12-21-53) " 'Twas the Night Before

Christmas" starring Greer Garson with Anne Whitfield, Howard McNear, Herb Butterfield, Joe Kearns. A housekeeper withholds bad news about the parents of a young child. Auto Lite, CBS. (12:25; 18:35)

**BING CROSBY SHOW** (12-21-49) Actress Ethel Barrymore joins Bing for his annual Christmas show. Bing sings lots of traditional carols and seasonal songs. Ethel encourages him to sing "White Christmas." Ken Carpenter, John Scott Trotter and the orchestra. Chesterfield Cigarettes, CBS. (8:10; 14:30; 7:15)

**CHRISTMAS SEAL CAMPAIGN SHOW** (1948) Guest star Eddie Cantor takes his grandchildren to see Santa, only to discover that Santa has quit his job! Public Service Transcription. (13:35)

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL** (12-23-51) Lionel Barrymore stars as Ebenezer Scrooge in the traditional annual broadcast of Charles Dickens' classic story. This is Barrymore's sixteenth appearance as the miserly old sinner who learns the true meaning of Christmas. Cast includes Mala Powers, Joseph Kearns, Eric Snowden, Gerald Mohr, Betty Lou Gerson, Byron Kane, Shirley Mitchell. Syndicated, A.O. Smith Water Heater Dealers, MBS. (15:10; 13:40)

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28th GREETINGS OF THE SEASON

**ESCAPE** (12-29-50) "The Cave" starring John Dehner, Georgia Ellis, Peggy Webber, Jay Novello, Lou Krugman. A Christmastime story of two ten year old boys who go exploring, find a cave and discover pirates! It's the spirit of the holiday that saves them from disaster. Sustaining, CBS. (12:30; 15:45)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (12-30-41) Fibber works on a surprise project for Molly. Mrs. Uppington invites the McGees to a New Year's Eve party, and LaTrivia needs Fibber for some war bond work. Marion and Jim Jordan star with Isabel Randolph, Gale Gordon, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Many wartime references throughout the broadcast. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (10:55; 11:00; 7:50)

★ **1941 IN REVIEW** (12-28-41) Cedric Foster narrates a radio documentary of the historic moments of the year about to end. Includes actual recordings and dramatizations. Highlights: FDR's Third Term Inaugural; the War in Europe; Churchill's appeal to the U.S. for help; Lindberg's plea for continued isolationism; the sinking of the Bismarck; sinking of American ships by Germany; Japanese peace overtures; the bombing of Pearl Harbor; declaration of war. A first-rate radio production by the Special Features Division of the Mutual Broadcasting System. (30:20; 30:30)

★ **JACK BENNY PROGRAM** (12-28-41) It's Jack's traditional New Year's broadcast, featuring the gang's annual play, "The New Tennant," starring Jack as The Old Man, Mary Livingstone as Columbia, Phil Harris as Uncle Sam, Don Wilson as Texas. An interesting and moving early wartime broadcast, just three weeks after Pearl Harbor. Jello-O, NBC. (14:45; 8:40)

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# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

### JANUARY

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 4th**  
**HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
**WITH GOOD OLD RADIO**

**JIMMY DURANTE SHOW** (12-31-47) Jimmy is in the hospital for "repairs" and in his absence Garry Moore subs with special Guest Red Skelton, plus Peggy Lee, Candy Candido, Roy Bargy and the orchestra. Red appears as Junior, the Mean Little Kid in a New Year's sketch with Verna Felton and, later, in a comic opera with Garry. Rexall, NBC. (7:55; 12:30; 8:15)

**HENRY MORGAN SHOW** (1-1-47) Morgan offers his program's annual report, telling of 915 jokes used last year! Sketch using left-over lines and sound effects; predictions for 1947; spoof of "Your Hit Parade" presenting songs you love to hate! Eversharp, ABC. (9:05; 15:30)

**SUSPENSE** (12-28-58) "32nd of December" starring Frank Lovejoy as a man who is compelled to buy an unusual antique clock. Cast includes Joan Banks and Barney Phillips. Sustaining, CBS. (19:10)

**GREAT GILDERSLEEVE** (1-4-42) Harold Peary stars as Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve with Walter Tetley as Leroy, Lurene Tuttle as Marjorie, Lillian Randolph as Birdie. One of Gildy's New Year's resolutions is to go on a diet! Kraft Foods, NBC. (27:20)

★ **STATE OF THE UNION** (1-6-42) From the Capitol in Washington DC, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivers his eleventh State of the Union address to Congress. In the first wartime address since the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, FDR reviews events that led the U.S. into the war; cites production needs and plans; tells of meetings with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill; asks for congressional support of his defense budget, new income taxes and price controls. FDR is introduced by Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House and the program closes with the National Anthem. Announcer is Don Gardner. NBC. (18:50; 25:05)

**JUDY CANOVA SHOW** (12-28-46) Getting ready for the new year, Judy has written a western sketch for the annual Brentwood amateur show. Cast features Mel Blanc, Ruby Dandridge, Joe Koarns, the Sportsmen Quartet, Charles Dant and the orchestra, announcer Vern Smith. Judy sings "Auld Lang Syne." Palmolive, Halo, NBC. (12:30; 17:35)

-20- Nostalgia Digest

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 11th**

**INNER SANCTUM** (8-22-49) "Mind Over Murder" starring Everett Sloane and Elspeth Eric. A witness to a violent crime does not try to help. AFRS rebroadcast. (24:35)

★ **SCREEN GUILD THEATRE** (12-7-41) Orson Welles stars in "Between Americans" by Norman Corwin, a "dramatic picture of this, our America. A cross-section of the U.S.A." Coincidentally scheduled for Sunday, December 7th, the program took on special significance because of the attack on Pearl Harbor earlier in the day. Roger Pryor hosts, Bud Heistand announces, Oscar Bradley and the orchestra. Originally broadcast from 7:30-8:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Gulf Oil Co., CBS. (27:55)

**GREAT GILDERSLEEVE** (1-11-42) Harold Peary stars as Gildersleeve who runs into difficulties when he and nephew Leroy take a 300 mile trip to Fairview. Kraft Foods, NBC. (29:30)

★ **NEWS OF THE WORLD** (1-6-42) CBS correspondents report the news by international short wave radio. Heard are Eric Sevareid, Charles Collingwood, Winston Burdett, William Dunn, Harry Marvel. Sustaining, CBS.



**NORMAN CORWIN**

★ **SCREEN GUILD THEATRE** (1-8-42) "Sergeant York" starring Gary Cooper, Walter Brennan and Joan Leslie in a radio version of the 1941 film success. A timely story in light of the U.S. entry into World War II. A pacifist, drafted during the first World War, realizes the purpose of fighting and becomes a hero. Gulf Oil Co., CBS. (23:00; 6:05)

**FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (1-13-42) Jim and Marion Jordan star with Isabel Randolph, Gale Gordon, Bill Thompson, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Fibber thinks he has committed a "sleepwalker's crime" and the fingers point to him. First of two consecutive and related programs. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (17:30; 11:28)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 18th**

**NICK CARTER, MASTER DETECTIVE** (6-27-48) "Case of the King's Apology" stars Lon Clark as Nick with Helen Choate as Patsy. Old Dutch Cleanser, MBS. (13:41; 6:32; 5:30)

★ **TEXACO STAR THEATRE** (12-10-41) Fred Allen stars with singer Kenny Baker, Portland Hoffa, announcer Jimmy Wallington, Al Goodman and the orchestra, Alan Reed as Falstaff Openshaw, and guest Louella Parsons. "An hour of mirth and melody" is presented to "keep up the morale of the folks at home" during the early days after Pearl Harbor. Prior to the show, it is announced that the familiar Texaco siren will not sound as usual so as not to alarm a tense nation. The Texaco Workshop Players present a spoof of the "Death Valley Days" radio program entitled, "Death Valley Takes a Holiday." John Daley reports on national and international news at the close of the program. Texaco, CBS. (13:20; 18:25; 11:25; 17:45)

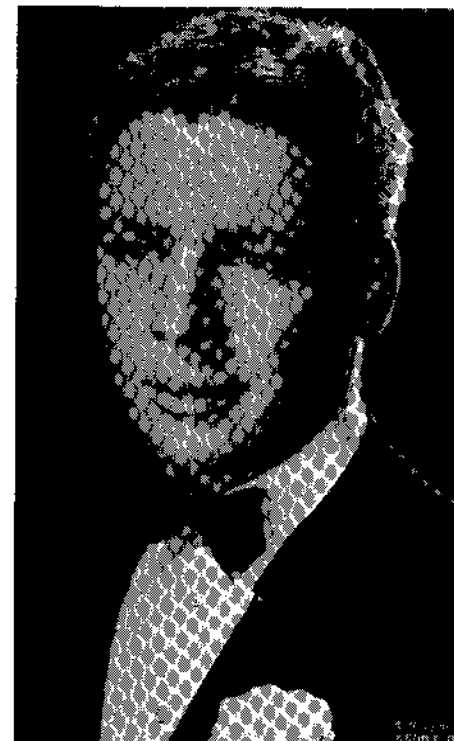
**GREAT GILDERSLEEVE** (1-18-42) Gildy decides to fix up Marjorie's bedroom by getting her a new bed. Hal Peary is Gildersleeve, Walter Tetley is Leroy, with Lillian Randolph as Birdie and Sam Hearn as Schleppeerman. Kraft Foods, NBC. (29:25)

**CRIME CLUB** (7-24-47) "Serenade Macabre" is a story of the circus in which the last performance is death. Sustaining, MBS. (11:24; 17:06)

**FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (1-20-42) Fibber plans to re-enact the crime. Second of two consecutive and related programs. Jim and Marion Jordan, Isabel Randolph, Bill Thompson, Gale Gordon, Harlow Wilcox. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (16:36; 12:18)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 25th**

★ **HOLLYWOOD MARCH OF DIMES OF THE AIR** (1-24-42) Twelve year old Tommy Cook acts as master of ceremonies for a "State of the Nation" report to President Franklin D. Roosevelt prior to the chief executive's 60th birthday (January 30). Appearing on this program of patriotism and entertainment are Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, the Merry Macs, Claudette Colbert, Humphrey Bogart, Dennis Day, Edgar Bergen and



**KENNY BAKER**

Charlie McCarthy, Marlene Dietrich, Tyrone Power, Kay Kyser, James Cagney, Maureen O'Sullivan, Fibber McGee and Molly, Elliott Lewis and Deanna Durbin. Public service broadcast for the March of Dimes, NBC-Blue. (19:30; 14:00; 11:00; 9:10)

**GREAT GILDERSLEEVE** (1-25-42) Gildy decides that Judge Hooker would be happier if he were a married man. Harold Peary as Gildersleeve, Earle Ross as Hooker, with Lillian Randolph, Walter Tetley, Gale Gordon, Paula Winslowe. Kraft Foods, NBC. (29:30)

★ **KRAFT MUSIC HALL** (1-29-42) Bing Crosby stars in a program being broadcast by special shortwave hook-up to the men in the Philippines by request of General Douglas MacArthur. Guests include actress Madeleine Carroll, Igor Gorin, Sammy Sneed, Mary Martin, Victor Borge, Jerry Lester, the Music Maids and Hal, announcer Ken Carpenter, John Scott Trotter and the orchestra. Kraft Foods, NBC-Red. (17:05; 15:35; 15:20; 9:40)

★ **SPOTLIGHT BANDS** (1-31-42) Sammy Kaye and his orchestra, the "Spotlight Champion of Champions" in a remote broadcast from Washington, D.C. Selections include "Elmer's Tune," "Chatanooga Choo Choo," "Let's Have Another Cup of Coffee," and "Remember Pearl Harbor." Fulton Lewis Jr. presents a salute to the American Red Cross. Coca Cola, MBS. (8:35; 9:15; 11:45)

Nostalgia Digest -21-



## The Christmas Brownie



Remembered by Ken Alexander

Mention Christmas to a young child and that child will think of gifts. That's how I was as a young child. Today, though, when I recall the Christmases of my childhood, I don't remember much about the presents I received. There are exceptions, of course. For example, I do recall a pair of high-top boots I got when I was ten or eleven. They were brown and they reached almost to the knee and I wore them with my corduroy knickers that winter. On the right side of the right boot was a pocket for a jackknife. I had badly wanted those boots and I was thrilled to have them, but they are one of only a few gifts I remember.

What I remember now about those Christmases are the magic little occurrences that took place in the weeks before Christmas.

On a Saturday morning a week or so before the holiday, my dad would go to the storeroom in the basement of the apartment building where we lived and bring up the Christmas-tree lights. Then, with me squatting beside him, my dad would lay each string of lights on the dining-room rug and plug it in to test the bulbs. (The tree wouldn't be put up until Christmas Eve, but my dad always tested the lights in advance so as not to keep Santa Claus waiting.) What a splendid sight it was to see those colored lights glowing on the floor!

One Christmastime my parents took me downtown on the streetcar to see the displays in the department-store windows on State Street. That's still a magical experience for kids; it was moreso then, though, for there were not only Field's and Carson's, but also the Boston Store, the Fair, and Mandel Brothers, all mammoth department stores and all within three blocks of each other.

That was in the mid-1930s. I was born two months before the stock-market crash

of 1929, and so my childhood coincided with the Great Depression. Like many American families, ours was operating on a shoestring; there was precious little money to be spent at Christmas — it was not easy to pay the rent and the grocery bill during the year — but my parents managed to make the Christmas season a very special time. The Christmas spirit, after all, doesn't cost anything.

One day when my mother returned home from the grocery shopping, she brought a twig from an evergreen; she had picked it up from the sidewalk in front of the Christmas-tree lot. She hung the twig on the dining-room wall. It lent a festive touch to the room visually, and its aroma was redolent of my parents' own childhood.

One Christmas my gift to my mother was a wastebasket for our kitchen, something I knew she really wanted and needed. It cost fifty cents — I don't know how I got fifty cents — at Neisner's five-and-ten-cent store at Madison and Karlov. My mother's happiness at receiving that gift gave me more pleasure that year than any of the gifts I received.

Santa Claus employs, at his workshop at the North Pole, an army of elves who spend the year making the toys and clothes and baked goods and candy and everything else that Santa delivers on Christmas Eve. We called Santa's elves brownies, and during the couple of weeks before Christmas, if I had been a good boy, a brownie would leave a reward for me on an inside windowsill. Every two or three days he would come — if I had been good. I would find one or two pieces of Christmas candy, or perhaps a walnut, on the windowsill. Then I would run to my mother. "Mommie, the brownie!" I would shout, "The brownie was here!"

No one ever saw a brownie, but the evidence of his visit was there, on the windowsill.

There came a time when I was old enough to question the existence of Santa Claus, but still young enough to believe. Some of the older boys at Tilton School had told me that there was no Santa Claus, and I realized that the Kris Kringle legend was pretty fantastic; and yet, all the adults I knew spoke as though *they* believed in Santa Claus. I simply didn't know what to believe.

One evening, my dad beckoned to me to come into the hallway and peek into the bedroom. The hallway and the bedroom were dark. There was a window on the far side of the room and a streetlight was burning outside. There, in the window, in silhouette, stood a brownie. He was about fourteen inches tall and skinny, with arms akimbo. He wore a stocking cap and his shoes curled up at the toes. The elf didn't move as my dad and I silently watched him. After a few seconds, we backed out of the doorway.

A short time later we returned. The brownie was gone, but on turning on the light, we found a piece of Christmas candy on the windowsill.

Who said there was no Santa Claus? I had actually seen a brownie. That was proof enough for me.

Christmas came and went, and the following spring my father gently told me that Santa Claus was a myth. I had half suspected as much, but then the sighting of the brownie had restored my faith. I questioned my dad about the elf — both he and I had seen him. The brownie, my dad explained, had been cut out of cardboard by my Uncle Jerry, who had a talent for making all sorts of things.

I had six uncles. They're all gone now. My Uncle Jerry was the last to go; he died this past summer. I remember each of my uncles for a particular personal trait or for something he said or did when I was a boy. I think of my Uncle Jerry as the one who sustained my belief in Santa Claus just a little longer.



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Sunny Florida is about to be invaded by thousands of adults and their school-aged children. The timing is crucial for the success of the invasion. It must take place between December 26th and January 1st. That is when the academically tutored youth of America enjoy the brief rest from their studies known as Christmas vacation. They will board planes and trains and pack into station wagons and steer a course for Orlando and Disney World. The citizens of Northern Florida are not unprepared for the masses. Clean hotel rooms await and zillions of souvenirs are arriving daily from foreign ports. There will be dancing in the streets, fireworks every night and the piper to pay when the bills arrive late in January.

Once the northerners arrive and settle in to their chosen temporary habitats, major decisions have to be made. Disney World has enough attractions and thousands of acres of fun to keep the average family on their feet for several weeks. However, most of the visitors just have a few days and the selections of what to do rival the D-day invasion in planning complexity. And just to complicate matters, the immediate area around the World contains water parks, shopping malls and restaurants, so that if any money is left in the family budget it can be spread evenly over the Florida landscape and not concentrated in any one theme park.

Disney World is awesome and defies description. However, it has one heavy duty competitor in the region. Universal

Studios have recreated a Hollywood studio in the middle of some ex-swamp land and created an elaborate tour of the premises hoping no one will notice that the studio is not in Southern California and therefore not a real Hollywood studio. Not to be outdone, Disney and MGM have created a "studio" in Disney World and offer "studio tours."

This past summer my family and I went to Orlando in search of the real studio tour. Our impressions may be shocking and parental guidance in reading this article is advised. There are no winners or losers in our assessment of the tours because each tour had its high points and low points and on the whole we enjoyed both. However, for the true-blue movie fan both these tours are like colorized versions of old vintage movies. These are brand new facilities, 3,000 miles from Hollywood and are glitzy imitations of the real thing. They have no history and though they do a good job of recreating the studios, stars as Bogart, Gable, Davis, Crawford, or Tracy never stepped inside them. There are no bungalows where Marion Davies used to rest between scenes or the commissary where Louis B. Mayer ordered chicken soup. These studios are "nice tries," but they're not the genuine article. My wife and I took the Universal tour in California in 1973 and at that time it was nothing more than a tram ride through a couple of sound stages and around the vast backlot, but I saw authentic props from some classic films and the real phony house



"SCHWAB'S PHARMACY" at Universal Studios in Florida, where Bob Kolososki took his family for ice cream. His wife Mary and daughters Kerry and Kate enjoy double dip cones while Bob sits on a stool at the lunch counter inside, waiting to be "discovered."

occupied by Beaver Cleaver. It wasn't a tour with high-tech special effects and stunt men falling off buildings, but that's not what I went to see. I wanted to see the original Bates motel and the street used as a Roman thoroughfare in "Sparticus." I saw all that and more and left a happy movie fan. These two new tours are geared more towards teenagers and their siblings. So keeping in mind that the Florida tours are not to be taken seriously by the serious movie fan, a good time can be had.

My family voted to go to the Disney/MGM tour first and then Universal the next day. Both days were extremely hot and waiting in lines to enter a ride or tour became a real test of endurance. Since we drove down to Orlando the trip back gave us plenty of time to reflect on our vacation and the studio tours in particular. In general, we all felt that the Disney/MGM studio was more inviting and that it was much more organized than Universal. The people at Disney/MGM were well-seasoned pros in customer relations and had a definite edge over their Universal counterparts.

The food at both studios was expensive

but good, and my wife, who is very critical of restaurant food, actually liked the hamburgers at Mel's in the Universal studio. Gift shops at both studios are well-stocked with unique items. We spent the most money at the "Indiana Jones Epic Stunt Spectacular." We enjoyed the attractions at both studios, but the fact that the Disney/MGM attractions were all on time and the employees were able to move people in and out in a timely manner made their shows and rides a bit more enjoyable. The price of a one-day pass to either studio is about the same, but we were able to buy a discount pass to Universal in a shopping mall, whereas the Disney/MGM price is set unless you stay at a Disney hotel or resort (which I highly recommend).

Since each studio tour takes a full day and there is so much available, I will only touch on the highlights. The first sight you see as you enter Disney/MGM is a block-long recreation of Hollywood Boulevard with a series of shops to rival Rodeo Drive. My oldest daughter and I spent a considerable amount of time at Sid Caluenga's One-of-a-Kind bungalow. Old movie posters and lobby cards are

## FILM CLIPS

everywhere, as well as a terrific collection of autographs by stars from the thirties to right now. The Boulevard ends in a large square bordered by a faithful replica of the famous Chinese theatre in Hollywood. This structure housed the attraction my family voted near the top in either studio. "The Great Movie Ride" is a nostalgic romp through some of the great movies of all time. The show-stopper was a ride down the yellow brick road and through Munchkin land right out of the "Wizard of Oz." Universal came close to topping this with the "Kongfrontation" ride. The entire entrance to the tram is set up like a New York subway and the two encounters with King Kong are truly thrilling. The big flop for us at Universal was the "Ghostbuster" show. Partly because we had to wait nearly an hour to see it (it started 45 minutes late) and partly because it was poorly acted and lacked any spark. The "Indiana Jones Epic Stunt Spectacular" at Disney/MGM, however was a blast. It started with a small explosion and literally ended with a bang. It was a lot of fun.

Universal's backlots are more impressive and more extensive than Disney/MGM. The backlots at Universal include a New York streetscape with a Bronx section complete with Louie's restaurant from the "Godfather" movie. Disney/MGM's New York street is about one half block long with some trick backdrops to give the illusion of being much longer. Both studios are really a series of Hollywood recreations and backlots with stucco and plaster being the main building materials.

The most interesting things about both studios were the little eateries sandwiched into backlots and stuck on to soundstages. Mel's Diner has already been mentioned, but at Universal, there was a cool little ice cream parlor tucked behind a pretty good facade imitating Schwab's Drugstore. We

paused there mid-afternoon to sample the ice cream and soak in the atmosphere of what could pass for a thirties Hollywood hangout.

Not to be outdone, Disney/MGM has Dinosaur Gertie's Ice Cream of Extinction. The plaster dinosaur is cute and the ice cream scrumptious. Also at Disney/MGM is the Tune In Lounge where every dining space is a room right out of a fifties sitcom (they copied my aunt's living room to a T). If going behind the scenes appeals to you, then the Backstage Studio Tour at Disney/MGM is a must. The walking tour section filters through different departments involved in the production of the New Mickey Mouse Club and other projects in progress. Universal has a similar tour through the Nickelodeon studios located on their complex. The behind-the-scenes tour we all loved was "The Magic of Disney Animation." The unlikely team of Walter Cronkite and Robin Williams host a fascinating look at all aspects of animation. We were able to watch animators and artists work on real projects and finally a super film highlighting great clips of classic Disney animation. There is a gift shop at the end of the tour where you can buy authentic "cels" from many Disney animated films.

"Back to the Future," Star Tours, Superstar Television, "E.T.," "Here Come the Muppets," and The Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock are a few of the other attractions on the tours at Universal and Disney/MGM.

There is no denying that both studio tours are fun and will have something for everyone, but as a true-blue movie fan, I still missed the magic that only can be conjured up by a 20th Century Fox, Warner Bros., or a Paramount. If the walls of those real studios could talk, what wild and fascinating stories they would reveal about a time when movies were movies.

The walls at the studios in Florida haven't soaked in much more than a healthy dose of Florida sunshine. But they do surround a good time!

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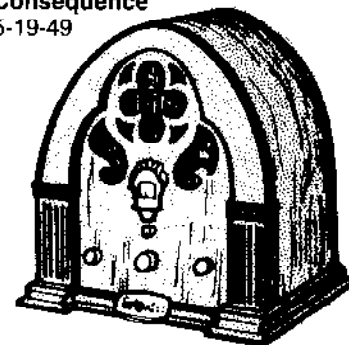
- |   |   |    |  |
|---|---|----|--|
| 1 | EVE ARDEN<br>The Well-Dressed Corpse<br>1-18-51     | 7  | BOB HOPE.<br>Death Has A Shadow<br>5-5-49          |
| 2 | LUCILLE BALL<br>The Ten Grand<br>6-22-44            | 8  | DANNY KAYE<br>I Never Met The Dead Man<br>1-5-50   |
| 3 | BETTE DAVIS<br>Goodnight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

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Museum of Broadcast Communications

# **museum pieces**

Reported by Margaret Warren

Museum Chairman **Arthur C. Nielsen, Jr.** used his time in the spotlight at our recent annual black-tie gala, this year honoring him, to announce two pieces of highly-rated news for members and friends of the Museum of Broadcast Communications.

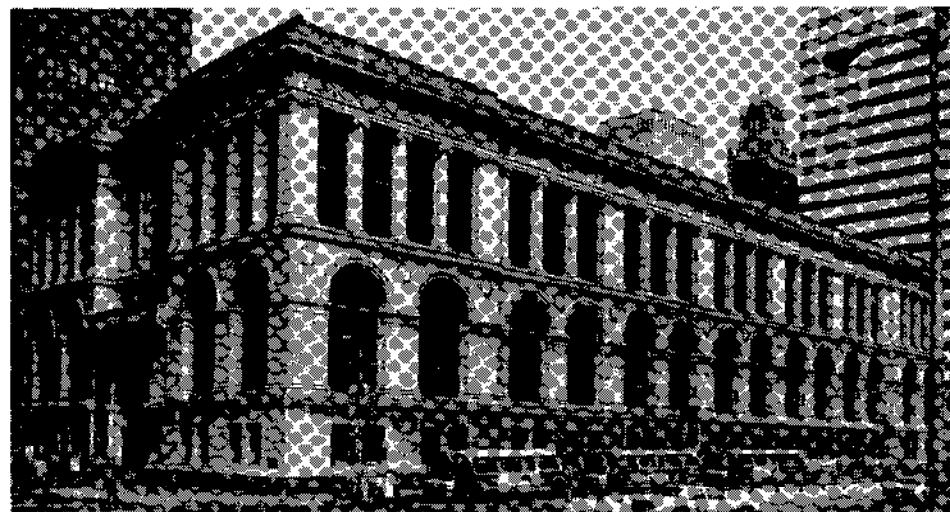
First, we're moving! Not right now, so continue to come on down to 800 South Wells. But next spring we'll pack up our tapes and reels and monitors and exhibits and head over to our new permanent location in the Chicago Cultural Center on Michigan Avenue at Washington. The move will be another significant turning point for the Museum. Stay tuned for further details.

Second, he announced the formation of a new Museum area — a **Radio Hall of Fame**. Plans are still in the formative stage, but the Radio Hall of Fame will be nationwide in scope and will pay tribute to the people who created radio, developed

it, and made it the major communications medium it became and continues to be. We'll have a working studio, displays and artifacts that will educate and entertain contemporary listeners as well as those going back to the Golden Age.

A very special event will kickoff the Radio Hall of Fame plan the evening of Wednesday, January 8th. We'll have **Ken Burns** on hand to introduce an advance preview of his PBS television special, **EMPIRE OF THE AIR**. Burns is best known for his highly acclaimed documentary on the Civil War last year for PBS. Here he looks at radio and the legendary men who built it. Phone the Museum for details and tickets for this outstanding reception and preview.

Thirty years ago, **Clark Weber** came to town and became one of Chicago's top rock jocks and later one of our best talk hosts. Whether you've listened to him for 30 years or 30 days, plan to join us at the



**CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER** will be the new home of the Museum of Broadcast Communications in 1992.



**LONGTIME FRIENDS** Jim Conway, Lee Phillip and Wally Phillips get together during the Museum's reception in August for Lee and her family who were in town for our salute to their "family business," the top-rated TV soap, "The Young and the Restless."

Museum on Saturday, December 14 as WJJD's early morning man visits with fans and talks about his broadcasting career. Remember to bring along your cameras and autograph books. Phone for reservations.

This is the time of year to plan your holiday gift list. Consider a **gift membership** to the Museum of Broadcast Communications. Think about how many of your friends and family would like advance notice and the opportunity to see, visit with, photograph and collect autographs of broadcasting celebrities like Steve Allen and Jayne Meadows, Lee Phillip, Carol Marin, Tom Synder, Bill Kurtis, Betty White, Bozo the Clown, Robert Conrad, Don McNeill and John Callaway — just a few of the national and local personalities who have been with us. Our archives are a must for students and for fans who just want to enjoy again, or

for the first time, a special radio or television program. A \$30 membership puts them on the list to receive advance notice, free admission and lot's more. Call Stacey at the Museum for the full story.



**CLARK WEBER**

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# WE GET

# LETTERS

**LA GRANGE PARK, IL** — I was so disappointed when your weekday time slot was pushed up to midnight. Since I've never been a "night owl" at any time of my life, I miss your weekday programs. It's a consolation to know I'm still able to enjoy the 8 to 10 p.m. programs on weekends. Listening to the delightful antics featuring Jack Benny, Edgar Bergen, Fred Allen and many other enjoyable programs brings much joy and happy memories. I find it uncanny that these programs, aired so many years ago, are so refreshing and appealing to us. Radio has always been a source of great interest to me and surpasses many TV programs in my estimation. Imagination has always played such an important part in our lives as a radio audience and it was such wholesome entertainment for entire families.

During my youth I considered making radio my career as an announcer or actress. This interest gradually involved my taking courses at Columbia College of Speech, Radio and Drama. Those who were employed as teachers were very fine professional people and made our courses so interesting. At one time after appearing on an amateur program at a small Hammond, Indiana station. I was offered an opportunity to gain some experience announcing on a Fashion News Program.

At that particular time circumstances developed which prevented my ability to accept this opportunity. It was also at this time that the Lord stepped in and had other plans for me. Several years later I entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in La Grange, Illinois. That was over 46 years ago. I taught in the primary grades for many years and loved my work as a teacher and am now semi-retired doing work in various areas. My Saturday and Sunday evenings

are reserved for *Radio Classics*. Whether they feature comedy, mystery or a special production of a famous play or movie, I'm assured of a pleasant evening. Keep up the great work of reviving the many delightful phases of radio entertainment. I'm certain God will bless you for the joy you bring to so many persons.

— **SISTER MARY JOSEPHINE, C.S.J.**

**CHICAGO** — I wish to express my appreciation for your work in radio. It was perhaps 15 or 20 years ago I was introduced to your world of memorable broadcasting, through a friend. It piqued my curiosity. I could not remember the Cinnamon Bear, but a swirl of memories came like a flood of that bygone era. I could picture Wieboldt's at Christmastime. Its northwest corner window (at Lincoln and School streets) with its dancing elves — or was it bears — caught in its frigid display! Between episodes of the Cinnamon Bear were placed other seasonal favorites and I got to wondering if you would ever air Barrymore's Christmas Carol. In our home Christmas would not be Christmas without Barrymore, and eventually you played it, but I found it rather disappointing. Anyway, by the end of that initial season, I was intrigued by the promise of further excursions into the realm of forgotten radio. Throughout the years I have followed you from WNIB to WBBM: Saturday, Sunday and weekdays.

— **CHARLES STANGE**

**ARGO, IL** — I teach seventh grade, and when I need time to work on something, such as report cards, etc., I play tapes for the classes. The "kids" love Fibber and Gildersleeve. They also laugh at "Henry! Henry Aldrich!"

— **OLGA GILDERSLEEVE**

(ED. NOTE — Any relation to Throckmorton P.?)

**ADDISON, IL** — I am a listener and fan dating back to your show on WLTD in Evanston. I recently started to tape and collect shows and the schedules the *Digest* provides are great. What are chances of getting more detailed listings for the WBBM shows? My sincere thanks to you for these many years of entertainment and best wishes for many years to come.

— **LARRY PETERS**

(ED NOTE — As we state in our Calendar, we are not able to obtain advance information on the WBBM shows which are syndicated rebroadcasts.)

**CHICAGO** — Enclosed is \$12 for another year of *Nostalgia Digest*. I am 71 years old and still enjoy old time radio classics. It is as good to listen to them again as it was 20 years ago. Keep it up because I would be lost without your broadcast. — **ARTHUR HARTMAN**

**CHICAGO** — Here's my subscription renewal for two more years. Thank you for your excellent programming! The Frank Capra Film Festival was so enjoyable and it's always interesting to hear Bob Kolososki's "behind the scenes" stories. And since Gildy is one of my favorites, I really enjoyed August!

— **MARY KAY VALENTI**

**MARKHAM, IL** — As an adolescent of the late fifties and early sixties, I was just getting interested in daytime radio soaps when they zapped them off the air. I was devastated when they cancelled *The Romance of Helen Trent*! As a young Black girl, I didn't identify with a lot of the programs, including *Amos 'n' Andy*, although I enjoyed many of them very much. But romance is something that's universal. And although the *Romance of Helen Trent* might have been a bit corny and over-dramatized at times, it was my show and I loved it. Unfortunately, I missed most of the episodes when you broadcast it on July 27, 1991, because I had to work that day. But I sneaked out to my car and was lucky enough to catch the last seven minutes or so of the show. And although I hadn't heard the voices of Gil Whitney and Helen Trent for over thirty years, they were immediately identifiable and it was like revisiting old friends. Thanks for the memories.

— **MARCIA DANIELS**

**HOFFMAN ESTATES, IL** — Just a note to say how much I've enjoyed the August broadcasts of the Great Gildersleeve. Yes, he is still great after all these years. I especially enjoyed being able to record the programs without interruption for commercial breaks. Usually as I sit at my easel painting I have to keep an eye on my work, and the other on the clock so I can shut the recorder off when it's time for a break. I've been doing that for years and never realized how pleasant it would be not to have to do that. So you have a vote of well done, and my thanks for a most enjoyable month of recording and listening to Gildersleeve. My wife and I often talk about moving away from the Chicago area but *Those Were The Days* is one of the things that holds us here.

— **ED COOK**

**CRYSTAL LAKE, IL** — It's my hope that this is only one of thousands of letters you get telling how great your programming format for August, 1991 was. I'm referring to you playing the good old shows without interruption. Even though you give the timing of segments, restarting a tape is the difficult part. Some recorders are slow to start up, and sometimes the operator may miss the restart of the program. I'm sure every one of your loyal listeners and tape worms will agree that we would be willing to hear more

commercials between 30-minute programs, instead of two or three interruptions. Over the years you really improved your broadcasting style. You are a real professional. Most of the old time radio hosts have lost their shows because radio stations have been sold or changed formats. All of these things have happened to you, but like a cat you always land on your feet. Keep it up.

— **FRANK A. MCGURN, JR.**

(ED. NOTE — We wish we could always program the vintage shows without interruption, but it just isn't possible. However, we do hope to include more uninterrupted shows in the future. Thanks for your kind words, and thanks for listening.)

**ELMHURST, IL** — I commend you for keeping the Golden Age of Radio alive for those of us too young to remember this entertainment period.

— **RICK LOPEZ**

**BATAVIA, IL** — I would like to contact anyone who may have recorded the HIT PARADE recreation broadcasts (with Andre Baruch and Bea Wain) over WJJD in the early 1980s and also the SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY programs with Bill Hickock aired over WJKL in the late 1980s. I have many of these programs on tape and would like to trade for ones that I was not able to record. Also, being a WW II fan and with the 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor approaching, I hope you plan to devote some time to it. A whole month would not be too much for me.

— **VERN SCHROEDER**

(ED. NOTE — If any of our readers can help with the WJJD and WJKL programs, contact the *Digest* and we'll pass their names along to you. And, for our WW II programming, check our comments on page 1 and the *TWTD* listings in this issue.)

**KENNER, LOUISIANA** — Sure miss the old neighborhood. Rode the Montrose bus quite often from my area at Pulaski and Montrose to Austin Boulevard many times. Walked down to Irving Park and purchased quite a number of goodies from Metro Golden Memories. Kenner is the gateway to New Orleans. I miss Chicago but not the cold. I have quite a few records and tapes and books I bought at your store. A friend keeps me informed and sends me your *Digest*.

— **J. R. PAGE**

**VILLA PARK, IL** — I'm not going to pick out favorites because sooner or later you'll have them on. That's the charm of your radio shows. There are so many of them and you do a great job choosing them. I have every issue of *Nostalgia Digest* which I keep just so I can go back and re-read articles. Congratulations to you and Mrs. Schaden on your 35th Anniversary.

— **MARY VOLKMAN**

(ED. NOTE — And thanks to you, and everyone else who sent cards and notes on our wedding anniversary. We're fortunate to have so many nice radio friends.)

*Nostalgia Digest* -31-

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## WE GET LETTERS

**NORTHLAKE, IL** — I've enjoyed the *Digest* over the years, especially Dan McGuire's column. I can't tell you how often it seems we've shared the same childhood memories. I'm glad to see you have scheduled more Suspense programs for October and November. Not as many as I'd like, but I'll enjoy these. Wish you could find a station that would carry your show nightly at eight or nine o'clock. I just can't stay with you for the midnight hour. Thank you for so many pleasant hours of radio. I marvel at your energy! — **A.C. HENDERSON**

**LXINGTON, KENTUCKY** — I pick your show up on a fairly regular basis, barring storms. It does come in much clearer at midnight (1 a.m. my time) than the weekend show. I enjoy the old comedies more than dramas, particular Jack Benny. I wasn't born when most of the shows played, but I think that they still hold up. — **ROB GRIFFITH**

**DUNCAN, SOUTH CAROLINA** — I was visiting Chicago on August 3 when you aired the interview with Harold Peary, which I enjoyed immensely on my ride from the Museum of Broadcast Communications to Metro Golden Memories. I am too young to recall radio's glory days, but because of my dedication to researching careers of character actors, I have enjoyed the recordings of those great old radio shows. Wish I lived in Chicago, just to enjoy your broadcasts! — **FREDERICK TUCKER**

**ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI** — I've been able to share some of the radio shows with folks here at the Lutheran Convalescent Home. They remember them! One fellow, Albert, tells me Charlie McCarthy jokes ("My girl was a vision and your girl, Bergen, was really a sight!"). Love your *Digest*. — **STEVE TAYLOR**

**CRYSTAL LAKE, IL** — This letter is in praise of your *Those Were The Days* show, which doesn't seem to get much credit from the fans. It seems almost every single letter is in praise of *Radio Classics*, which is a great show, but it's not four hours and there's not as much time for you to talk or reminisce. Keep up the good work with *TWTD*. — **NOLAN MINOR**

**GARY, INDIANA** — Thank you for your wonderful radio shows and the great articles in your *Digest*. Also, thanks for my two birthday presents. The first being the month of Great Gildersleeves and second was finding out that the program started on my birthday, 24 years earlier! I enjoy and appreciate your shows and articles. — **JAMES C. STEWART**

**PARK RIDGE, IL** — My wife and I are faithful listeners to your radio programs, both on WNIB and WBBM. We recently went to a place in Ohio that we thought you

might like to know about. It's a restaurant called Shady Nook, located outside of Oxford, Ohio on US Route 27. The food is excellent and the service friendly, but the real reason people go is to see and hear their favorite cldies played on the "Moon River Organ," a Mighty Wurlitzer from radio station WLW in Cincinnati. It is apparently one of only two Mighty Wurlitzers left in the country, and is really something to see and hear. Organists from all over the country come to Shady Nook to play this organ.

The reason it's called the "Moon River Organ" is that it was the feature instrument on a show broadcast on WLW at midnight every night years ago which always began with a reading of a very syrupy poem entitled "Moon River" (not the Moon River of the song). The program then continued with romantic songs and poetry reading, and I have it on good authority that the show was well loved by the students of Miami University, located in Oxford. Those who didn't listen to it while cramming for exams were to be found listening to it while parked with their sweetheart on Lovers' Lane. (Our host maintained that he was one of the ones studying at the time, but his wife says otherwise!)

Shady Nook is a real treat, even for those of us who came on the scene 30 years too late to hear the Mighty Wurlitzer the first time around.

— **RODGER L. PATIENCE**

**(ED. NOTE** — Sound great! We'll have to make a trip to the Shady Nook, 879 Millville-Oxford Road, Millville, Ohio 45013. That's six miles south of Oxford, six miles west of Hamilton on US 27. The phone is (513) 863-4343.)

**LISLE, IL** — Please decrease the amount of interviews on the Saturday programs. We listen for the radio programs, not "talk." — **J. PARKER**

**GLENDALE, WISCONSIN** — Was the voice of "Kang" during an episode of *Voyage of the Scarlet Queen* the same as one of the "Shadow" voices? Was the voice of the mother on *Right to Happiness* the same voice of Fanny Barbour? — **S. R. KORTEBEIN**

**(ED. NOTE** — Bill Johnstone was one of radio's Shadows, and it is possible he had a role on that *Scarlet Queen* adventure. It is doubtful that Minetta Ellen, who played Fanny Barbour on *One Man's Family*, would have had a role on the *Right to Happiness*.)

**MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN** — How about an informal get together — donuts and coffee — of old time radio listeners, just to meet some of the the other listeners. Nothing special, only to meet each other. — **JOE BALEY**

**(ED. NOTE** — It's a possibility. And the Museum could be the place. Anyone else interested? Drop us a note.)

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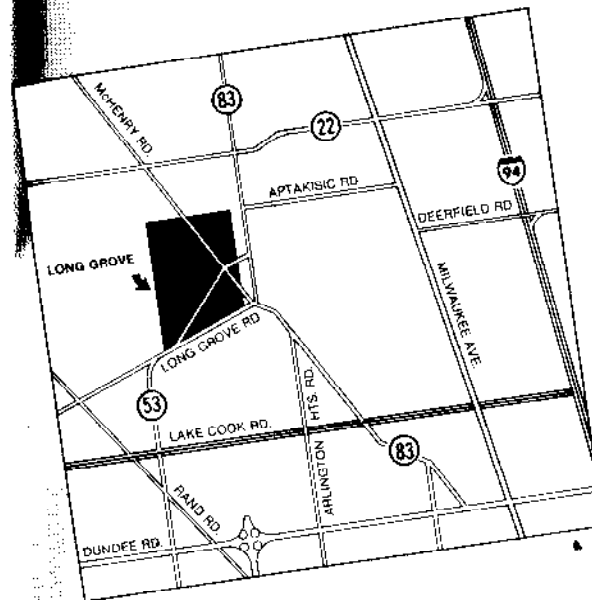
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**Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt**

addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress on December 8, 1941, asking for a declaration of war against the Empire of Japan, following the "dastardly attack" on Pearl Harbor December 7th. FDR's complete address, plus all the congressional proceedings will be heard as *Those Were The Days* begins a four-year look at Radio and World War II. Details on Pages 1 and 18.

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