



← **THE LONE RANGER**

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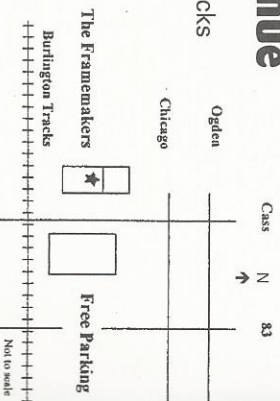
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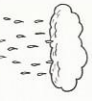
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NOSTALGIA DIGEST

BOOK 39, CHAPTER 3

SUMMER 2013

JULY-AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

Hello, Out There in Radioland!

With this issue, we begin our ninth year of publishing *Nostalgia Digest*. A lot has happened since that September afternoon in 2004 when *Digest* founder and publisher Chuck Schaden invited me to lunch to mention that he was contemplating “semi-retirement” and asked if I’d like to take over the magazine he started in late 1974.

At that time, neither of us knew that in a few years’ time, the *Digest* would be available in stores across the country — or that Chuck’s “semi-retirement” would become a full-fledged actual retirement. So it is that as we start our ninth year of publishing *Nostalgia Digest*, yours truly also begins his fifth year as host and producer of *Those Were the Days*.

It’s a job that’s had no small number of highlights, including several that have taken place in recent months. First, there was the tremendous response to our recent listener survey, in which we asked our *TWTD* audience to vote for their favorite series from the Golden Age of Radio. (The Top 20 shows were listed in the Spring issue of *Nostalgia Digest*; you can also see the Top 25 for a limited time at the “Odds and Ends” section of our website, www.nostalgiadigest.com.)

The response to that listener survey inspired us to celebrate the 43rd anniversary of *TWTD* by “counting down” the top shows on our April 27 broadcast. The celebration continued that evening as we left the studio and made our way over to the Framemakers in Westmont for an “Open House,” where a throng of well-wishers joined yours truly, longtime announcer Ken Alexander, and of course, Chuck Schaden. In between tabulating the results of our listener survey in January and playing our listeners’ top six shows in April, we joined forces with our *TWTD* audience for another celebration — the 90th birthday of the great Bob Elliott. During the first ten weeks of this year, listeners were invited to send cards and notes of congratulations to Mr. Elliott on the occasion of this milestone birthday. The response was tremendous; in fact, when Bob called our office to acknowledge receiving the cards, he expressed both his thanks to everyone who wrote in, and his regret that the volume of cards we’d sent along would make it impossible to respond to them individually!

All of these events remind us that as impressive as it might be that *TWTD* is entering its 44th year on the air, or that this magazine is on the verge of turning 40, that’s got as much to do with you as it does with any of us. It’s your support — of our on-air efforts, of this publication, of our advertisers/underwriters — that makes all of it possible.

Thanks for listening.

—Steve Darnall

A few moments with...

LOUISE ERICKSON

During the Golden Age of Radio, certain actors became renowned for their ability to sound like teenagers — however, unlike a lot of those actors, Louise Erickson actually was a teenager when she took on the roles of two legendary radio adolescents with whom she became closely associated: Judy Foster on A Date With Judy and Marjorie Forrester on The Great Gildersleeve. In a conversation recorded at her New York City home, she recalled when she made her radio debut:



I was eight years old, would you believe it? I was known as Bobbi Louise... and it was on a show called *Dramas of Youth*. It dramatized the lives of famous people and I remember I played Mary, Queen of Scots one time and I had to cry—and I had to really cry. So I set up this little stand with the last sentence of *The Yearling*, and that really got me every time. So I was able to cry for the show. I guess now they call that an emotional memory of some sort.

That's a pretty canny instinct for a young person to have, let alone for a young actress to have.

It was the only thing I could be absolutely sure...would make me cry on the show.

What was the step that led you from being a child to deciding, "Acting's for me, and radio's for me"?

I'm not sure I decided that [laughter] I think my mother decided that. However, she was not a stage mother in

any way; she never came with me to any of the shows, she never butted in... and she never pushed me, really. She just sort of watched, and mentioned certain things; if there were auditions [she asked] "Would you like to go?" So I went, and usually I got the part.

But you clearly found you enjoyed this to some degree?

Yeah. Well, one of the reasons is I was younger than most of the kids in my class—and instead of that being a plus, they called me a baby and ridiculed me because I was smaller than the rest of the kids. So this was a way of getting some positive attention.

I guess I should backtrack and ask you what the career arc was between Dramas of Youth and A Date With Judy.

The thing with *Dramas of Youth*: It was simply we paid this woman two dol-

lars, and she wrote the scripts. It was a company; it was a drama company. Now between then and when I auditioned for *Dr. Christian*—I think it was 1941... I don't think I did anything else. I just was lucky: I went to an audition and got the part... Then it was big time for me.

I want to ask how you got the role on A Date With Judy and how you came to get the role. The show had been on the air—

It was a summer replacement first for Bob Hope, and Ann Gillis—she was very nice—she did Judy, and I played the part of Miltzi, her girlfriend, which I loved playing. The second summer, it was on... it might have been for Bob Hope again; it may have been Eddie Cantor, and my friend Delli—whose name is Joan Loring; she was Delli Ellis to begin with—she did Judy the second time and again, I did Miltzi. Then the third summer, I did Judy and then it got started as a regular show.

Did you ever get any indication why — after two years of playing Miltzi — the producers wanted you to [play Judy]? Did they tell you anything?

Well, the director was very nice to me, and I think it was just a general consensus that I was the one who should play Judy.

If I'm not mistaken, this was one of the first comedy programs to center around a teenage girl?

I don't know whether it was the first one, but...there was this whole thing of bobby-soxers and crushes on idols—specifically Sinatra at that point. Of course, Janet Waldo did Corliss Archer and I was on that too; I played her girlfriend. I loved playing that part! I loved playing Mildred... you know why? Mildred had all the great lines. [laughter] She was the sidekick. She was the one always being sarcastic. Sort of an Eve

Arden kind of role. I had a good time on that show.

I was going to ask if there was some kind of teenage equivalent of the Rat Pack, where all of the Corliss Archers and Henry Aldrichs and Judy Fosters hung out...

No, no...first of all, Henry Aldrich was here in the East. The only other teenage girl [character] I knew of was Corliss Archer. Then there was Marjorie on *The Great Gildersleeve*, but of course she wasn't the lead...and Emmy Lou on [The Adventures of] Ozzie and Harriet—which I played and Janet played, and Janet played more than I did. I don't know how that happened, but that's okay.

Now this was live radio—

Oh, yes. Ohhhhh, yes. [laughter] And for *Gildersleeve* it was interesting. We did two shows: One for the East Coast and one for the West Coast. But they were both live.

When we mentioned "live radio," you made a sound that intimated that not every single thing had gone according to plan.

No, it did, but because it was live, anything can happen. It was the unknown that was scary: "Am I going to fluff a line?" "Am I not going to be able to put the pages in order?"—because there were lots of cuts and lots of changes. If you didn't read them correctly, you were out of luck. Luckily, nothing ever happened. [laughter].

To hear this conversation in its entirety, tune in to Those Were the Days on July 27, as Louise Erickson talks about the cast of A Date With Judy, taking over as Marjorie on The Great Gildersleeve, and playing opposite Jimmy Durante and Frank Sinatra!

Who Was

That Masked Man?

The Lone Ranger, radio's first superhero

BY JAMES DOHREN

Recently I received the same e-mail attachment from three old friends, entitled "They Sold Trigger." It was a report lamenting the closing of a Roy Rogers museum in Branson, Missouri and the sale of important memorabilia from the King of The Cowboys.

My initial reaction was, "Well, shoot, that's too bad." Then, me being me, the report sent me into waves of nostalgia as I thought about the 25-cent double-feature maineases at the Paramount, Isle and Tivoli that my friends and I loved attending so much back home in Aurora, Illinois. That in turn got me to recalling my Roy Rogers gear — which, in turn, set me to thinking of all the other cowboy heroes of my time: Gene and Ken, Bob and Rex, Hoppy and Lash, Cisco and Tom, Johnny...and so on.

When I thought of the Lone Ranger James Dohren is a retired teacher who avidly listens to Those Were The Days in Downers Grove, Illinois.

I stopped. I thought some more. Then it occurred to me that The Lone Ranger was different from all my other horse-borne heroes — aloof, mysterious, complex.

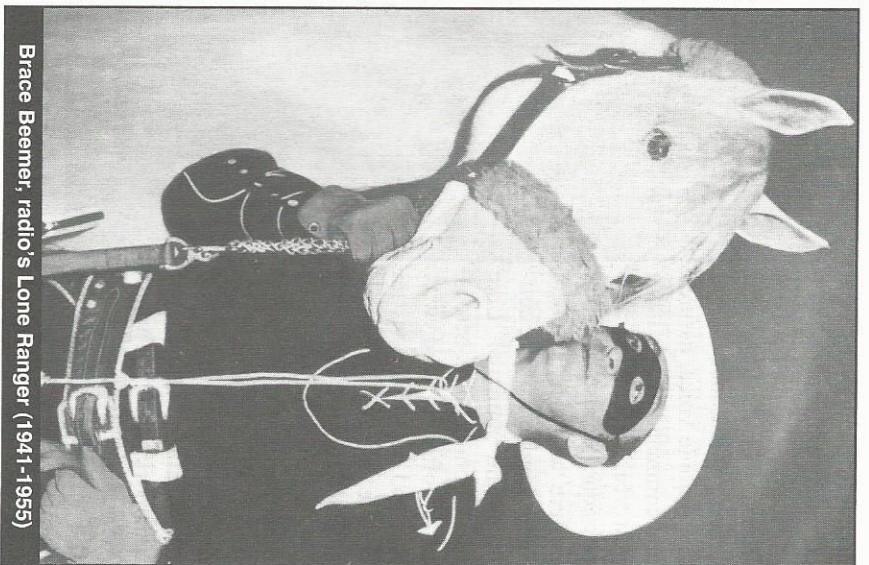
All my other cowboy heroes were simplistic characters created for a simplistic audience. Their films had formulaistic plots. They rode horses a lot and when they weren't chasing bad guys you got the idea they were out herding dogies. There were good guys and bad guys; the good guys being all-good and the bad guys all-bad. To help us out, the good guys often wore white hats and the bad guys black ones. Even in those black-and-white films there were no gray hats. The studios knew whom they were making the films for — adolescent males — and they made no pretense about creating cinema art. The heroes all had simple names and so did their horses. They were sort of good ol' boys on horseback. There were no complicated back stories. The cowboys were just there — rugged, brave, honest, kind, handsome, often persevering, resorting to violence only when sorely provoked. Heck, they didn't even have girlfriends.

The Lone Ranger shared many of those admirable physical and moral characteristics, but he was different in so many ways. He had a back story — as the sole survivor of an ambush of a small troop of Texas Rangers in which his brother was murdered by the fiendish Cavendish Gang. That's not the only way in which he was "lone": He did not work with others, except for his sidekick. Of course, lots of other western heroes had sidekicks, but how many of them had sidekicks who were members of a minority group ("...his faithful Indian companion, Tonto") and did not provide comic relief?

The "loneness" of The Lone Ranger is where I began to think of him as having more in common with another sort of hero of my time, albeit a very different sort — the comic book superheroes of the 1940s and '50s.

As with Batman and Superman — two heroes who emerged shortly after the debut of the masked man — The Lone Ranger's back story is tragic, born of violence. As with nearly every incognito hero of the era (Batman, Superman, Captain Marvel, The Shadow, and Wonder Woman), he has a secret identity. The names of Bruce Wayne, Clark Kent, Billy Batson, Lamont Cranston and Diana Prince are all well-known to comic book fans, but how many Lone Ranger fans know his real name? Only the most loyal, I expect, and even they can't agree.

Comic book heroes wore disguises in their secret identities and easily recognizable uniforms while fighting crime.



Bruce Beemer, radio's Lone Ranger (1941-1955)

As envisioned on television and in films, the Lone Ranger's everyday clothing was his hero uniform — spotless, well-pressed and matching blue pants and shirt, white hat, perfect boots, two magnificent Colt Peacemakers in twin holsters on a tooled leather gun belt... and, of course, his tiny, masquerade party-style mask which covered only half his face.

On the radio at least, his crime-fighting attire suggested that of an ordinary citizen — in stark contrast to the comic book heroes (evidently he leaves his hero uniform back at camp with Tonto). It's worth mentioning that unlike most comic book heroes, the Lone Ranger appears to have no day job. Of course, who needs regular employment when you have

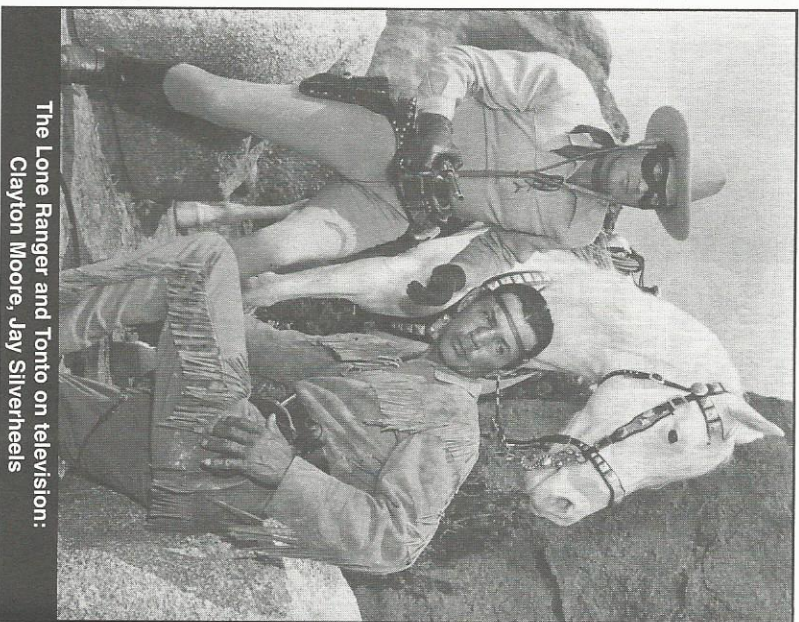
access to your very own secret silver mine?

Like Superman, Batman, the Shadow and others, the Lone Ranger has a noble voice, assured and commanding. He has a powerful and admirable physique. He also has good posture and nice manners and is kind to women, children and animals. Like other comic book heroes, he is often greeted with fear and doubt — a victim of the misguided suspicions of average citizens.

A true comic-book superhero must possess at least two other things. He or she must have an extraordinary mode of transportation. Captain Marvel and Superman can fly; Batman has the Batplane and Batmobile;

Wonder Woman goes the Caped Crusader one better, for her plane is invisible. And the Lone Ranger? He has the magnificent white stallion Silver, a super horse if there ever was one, second only, perhaps, to Pegasus. Superheroes also need gadgets or secret weapons. The Shadow can make himself invisible, Wonder Woman has the Lasso of Truth, Batman has a utility belt full of surprises and Superman just bends steel bars with his bare hands to construct whatever he needs. The Lone Ranger, meanwhile, has his six-guns and those magical silver bullets which always seem to reach their target, but are never, ever fatal.

Morally, the Lone Ranger has much in common with the superheroes. He is an implacable foe of evil — like Batman



The Lone Ranger and Tonto on television: Clayton Moore, Jay Silverheels

without the dark side. Maybe I'm reading too much into this, but while the rest of the movie cowboy heroes are just those good ol' boys, back slapping, joking and often irrepressibly breaking into song, one can't imagine the Lone Ranger doing any of that stuff. His stern moral code is almost religious; in fact, back in the day he even had his own written creed. He's more like a martial arts monk or Superman in his Fortress of Solitude.

How does one account for this separation of the Lone Ranger and the movie cowboys? I think it is almost totally a result of his origin, and I don't mean a Texas Ranger. Comic book superheroes, by definition, were conceived for a medium very different from film and so was the Lone Ranger, who was created as a

radio character way back in 1933. Since we didn't know what he looked like, he could have greater stature in our imagination than any visible human we might see riding a horse or fist-fighting in a film. He was more unknowable, more mysterious and more awesome — and therefore not limited by what we saw or heard on the screen with only eyes and ears. Comic book superheroes were limited by our vision, true, but their artists could draw them in situations "B" westerns could never approach nor even wish to.

The Lone Ranger was the brainchild of George Trendler and Fran Striker at WXYZ in Detroit. There's no coincidence that the same pair created the parallel and related (in more than one way) character of The Green Hornet in 1936. The producers wanted a character which crossed audiences. With *The Lone Ranger* and *The Green Hornet*, they worked hard to create programs that would appeal to both children and adults. By imagining their heroes as mysterious outliers, they allowed males of all ages to imagine them on different levels. Ah, once again, the power of radio.

All of the superheroes tapped into another secret ambition of the ordinary male: the role of righteous vigilante, able to heroically fight injustice as a common citizen. True, The Lone Ranger began as a Texas Ranger, the paragon of western law enforcement agents. After the massacre that killed off his comrades, he becomes a crusading private citizen without a badge, so much more interesting than just another sheriff or marshal.

If we need another point of confirmation, let's consider his longevity and the varied mediums in which he's been portrayed. The character of the Lone Ranger first entered American life on

radio in January of 1933. The character moved to television for a successful run in 1949. There have been several Lone Ranger films and, irony of ironies, Lone Ranger comic books. In filmspeak, he's still with us "in a major new motion picture" (rather prosaically named *The Lone Ranger*), with a cast that includes no less than Johnny Depp (hero of the fabulously successful *Pirates of the Caribbean* film series) as Tonto. I sense that once again the Lone Ranger is alone, as none of his cowboy hero peers has starred in their own film any time in the last 40 years.

When I first looked through "They Sold Trigger," one of my passing thoughts was how fickle my generation was to our childhood idols. My thought train quickly traveled on to realize such a thing was only natural; that's precisely why they're known as "childhood heroes." When we grow up, we are no longer children and we find new heroes, less idealistic and pure, but more fitting to our more mature understanding of life. We have to understand something else about those old matinee idol cowboys to grasp why they rode off into the sunset so quickly. Isn't it because both as actors and characters we saw them as mortal, like ourselves?

The Lone Ranger alone seems to have transcended our changing loyalties. Perhaps because he started out spare and unknown, he enticed us to either abandon him or dream up our own version of the rest of him in our imagination. Once he was secured there, he could remain, lurking in a disguise and ready to ride to the rescue whenever he's needed. ■

Time in to Radio's Golden Age on July 7 to hear an episode of The Lone Ranger.



The Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World of ART HELLYER

BY DAN MCGUIRE

Art Hellyer may well hold the record for having been fired from more stations than any other radio announcer. In his 55 years on the air, he worked at just about every AM station in Chicago and the suburbs, plus a few others scattered around the country. Though he left some voluntarily, his departure often was the result of an unorthodox style that knocked fans out but drove station managers (and

Dan McGuire's book Now, When I Was A Kid... recalls fun times growing up in the 1940s and early 1950s, when he became an Art Hellyer fan. It's available at www.BackWhenBooks.org.

some sponsors) will.

Radio was coming into its own when Art was a boy growing up in Chicago (and later the nearby suburb of Elmhurst). He tuned in faithfully to many kids' adventure series. In the evening, he gathered with his parents and three siblings to hear their favorite musical, dramatic or comedy programs. During summer vacation, he even became hooked on his mother's soap operas. Always awkward when called upon to read in school, he idolized the announcers who spoke so eloquently, and began to fantasize about becoming part of this fascinating new medium.

Art "clumped" through four years at York High School in Elmhurst, never

quite fitting in socially. In December 1942, his graduating class at Loyola headed downtown *en masse* to enlist. An injury that had left Art almost blind in one eye led the Marines to turn Art away. Ditto the Navy and the Army Air Corps. Finally, the Infantry, desperate for bodies, said "Sign here." The eye problem kept him stateside, where he was shunted around various jobs, including a stint playing guitar in a U.S.O. band and learning to chart weather balloons.

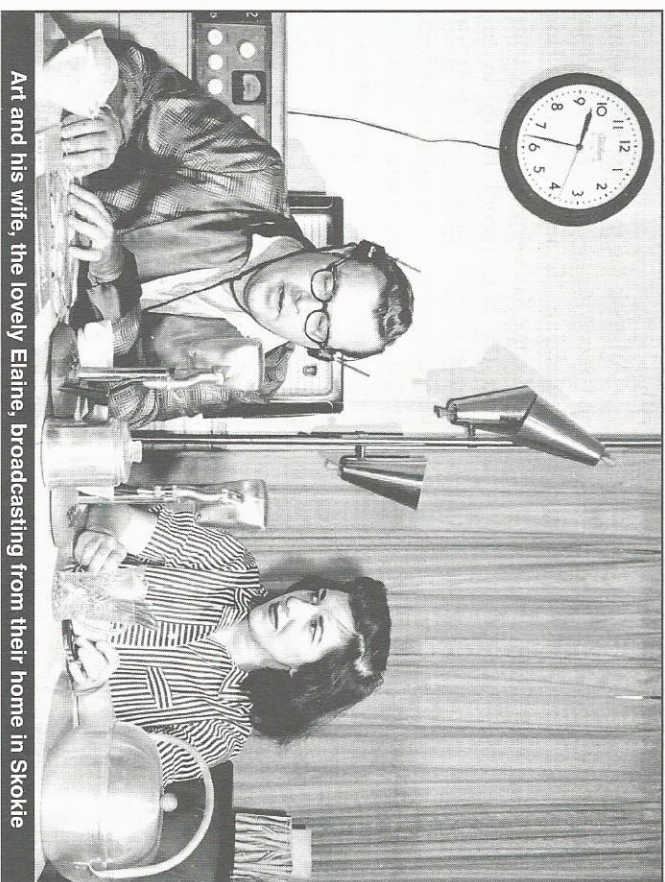
The war put Art's dream of broadcasting on hold, but the GI Bill made it possible. In February 1946, he enrolled at the Radio Institute of Chicago. His instructors included such notables as Paul Barnes, known as "The Man of a Thousand Voices." The school offered two- and four-year degrees, but Art proved a quick study. Another instructor, CBS announcer Bob Cunningham, recommended him to WKNA, a new station in Charleston, West Virginia, that was

due to sign on New Year's Day, 1947. Art got the job.

Art proved his mettle on that first day in West Virginia. With a 15-minute news segment coming up, he discovered the AP and UPI teletypes were not working. Racing downstairs to the coffee shop, he bought a local paper and made it back to the mike just in time for the intro. Then, with no time to scan nor rehearse, he gave listeners 15 minutes of local and national news from stories selected at random.

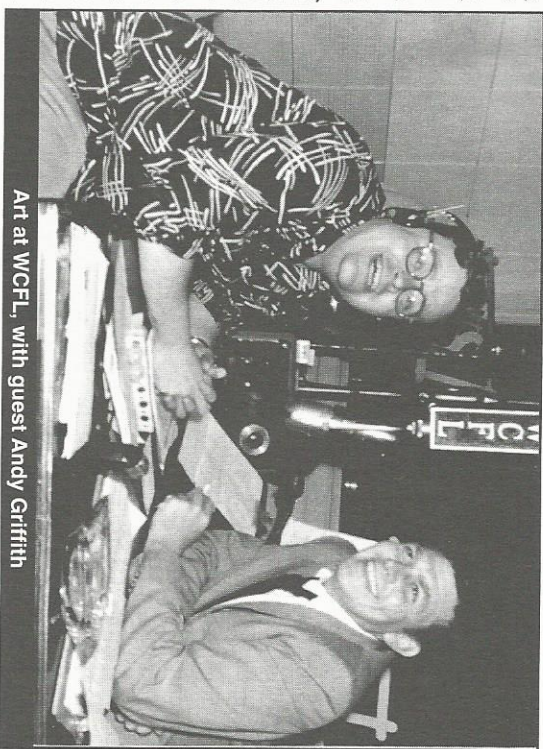
In March, he took three days off to return home and marry Elaine Miller, the girl he'd swooned over since their days together at York High School. Their marital odyssey, which produced four children, took them to Fort Wayne, Indiana and later WMAW/Milwaukee, as Art worked toward the goal of returning to Chicago.

Contrary to what listeners might think, Art says radio announcers back



Art and his wife, the lovely Elaine, broadcasting from their home in Skokie

then were “a dime a dozen” and paid accordingly. When son Larry was born, Art’s WMAW salary of \$32.50 a week barely paid their rent, forcing him to work four hours a night after his shift in the kitchen of a nearby hotel restaurant.



Art at WCFL, with guest Andy Griffith

Yearning for a Chicago gig, Art couldn’t afford to mail fancy resumes. So he sent dozens of postcards to stations in or near the city. Here, Art learned that timing is everything. In early 1950, Mel Bellairs resigned at WCFL to go freelance. The program director had recently emptied his files of accumulated resumes, but in a desk drawer he found a postcard with the hand-printed plea: “HELP! GET ME OUT OF MILWAUKEE RADIO! ART HELLYER.”

Art got a call, and the job. The new job paid more, but Chicago rents were higher, too. As a result, the family moved in with Elaine’s folks in Elmhurst and Art commuted to WCFL. In his off-air time, he was allowed to freelance by recording commercials. Downtown Nash bought 15-minute time slots on every station in town and Art nabbed the role of spokesperson. The job included some live commercials on early television. Each week he would spend five or six hours recording spots, then he would drop them off at the various stations for airplay.

Probably the turning point of Art’s career came in 1952 when General Manager Marty Hogan lamented that their morning ratings were “nothing but goose eggs.” He offered Art carte blanche to take the slot and “just bring us listeners,” adding “I know you can do it, Art.”

Art took the job after demanding—and receiving—the right to continue freelancing. He also insisted that Hogan get Lenny Kratoska, a man many considered the best record turner in town. Kratoska was a valued asset at WBBM, where they were not about to let him be stolen away. But Marty pulled some strings and Kratoska was allowed to come onboard for the early AM program. It was the beginning of good times for Art and his radio audience.

Part of Art’s persona was that he didn’t take commercials too seriously. He would read a spot almost as written, but might refer to Pepto-Bismol as “Pepto-Dismal” or “that yucky Pink Stuff.” He referred to Lincio bleach as “Stinko”. He once followed a Coke commercial by

wondering aloud if listeners knew how good Coke was for cleaning rust off their car’s chrome. Station managers sometimes blew their individual stacks, but listeners loved it and many sponsors reported that their sales zoomed.

Kratoska (Doctor K, as Art dubbed his partner in crime) had an uncanny talent for finding and cueing up tiny snippets of odd recordings. As Art ad-libbed to fill time, a man with a deep foreign voice would say, “Finish, please.” Or Art might muse tongue-in-cheek about the elegant décor of the station’s studios and the voice of Mayor Richard J. Daley would interrupt to announce, “There’s no light in the men’s room!”

All unrehearsed, such antics were as funny to Art as to listeners and he sometimes struggled not to break up on the air. Together, the terrible twosome gave Marty what he asked for. *The Art Hellyer Show* was soon Chicago’s top-rated morning drive program.

Sponsors lined up for the show and WCFL sold (and even oversold) spots, heedless of the total time available. One morning Art told the audience, “We’re drowning in a sea of commercials,” and announced the first “WCFL Commercial Festival.” As Doctor K spun recorded spots on three turntables, Art read one live. The phones lit up with callers who thought it was hilarious. The new program director didn’t think so, but sponsors reported a spurt in sales and didn’t cancel. From that point on, Art and the good doctor held another festival any time the sales staff oversold time slots.

Eventually, one of Art’s pranks proved too much even for Marty and he got the axe. Within a week, he was hired at WAIT, just down the street, and Doctor K tagged along.

Throughout his career, Art insisted

on playing only “good music”—that is, singable, danceable music recorded before rock ‘n’ roll. On one rare professional foray outside Chicago, he signed a 13-week contract, unaware until his first day on the job that he was expected to play “Top 40” tunes and nothing else. After airing one raucous selection from the charts, Art told his audience that this was not his kind of music and he was tossing all these junk forty-fives out the studio window. He then spent the shift playing big bands and other “goodies” from the tapes he had brought with him. The next day, he was again unemployed and headed back to Chicago; luckily, the contract netted him a 13-week paycheck.

Television and other factors ended radio as we once knew it. Art adapted,



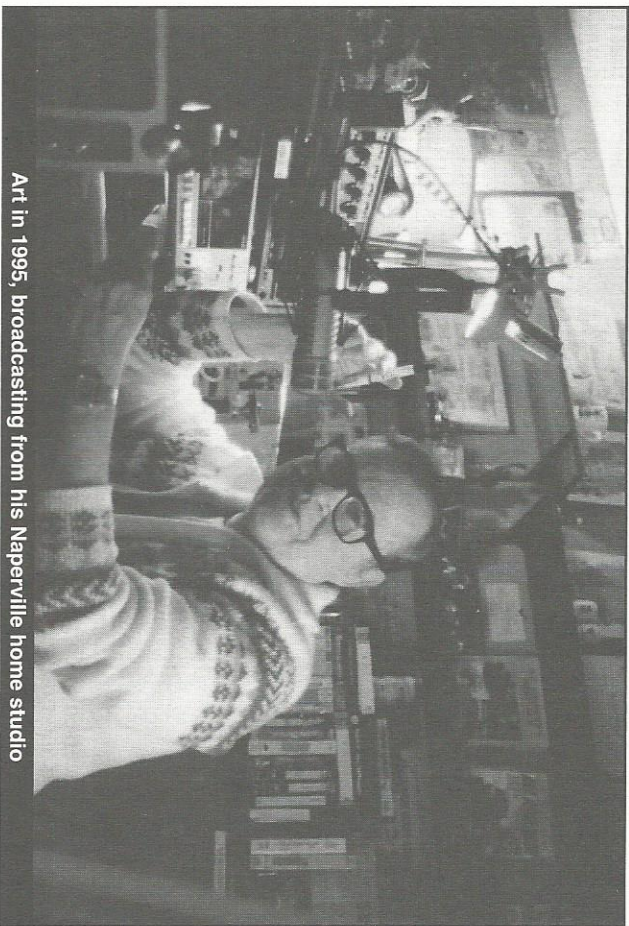
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Art in 1995, broadcasting from his Naperville home studio

while holding fast to his insistence on not playing the “Top 40” music that he considered to be junk. For 15 years he taught at Columbia College in Chicago.

Television voice-over work and recorded radio spots kept him busy and off welfare for many years. For three years in the early 1980s, he worked weekends from 6:00 pm to midnight at WJJD/Chicago; for the fourth time in his career, he was number one in his time slot.

Not long after, he discovered a new medium: satellite radio. It required him to adapt to a new technology; luckily, Joliet station WJOL was not far from his new home in Naperville. Art was thrilled to spend hours playing golden oldies and show tunes, even reading poetry and broadcasting to listeners around the world! He bid listeners adieu for the last time on December 18, 2001.

Always a family man, Art passed up what might have been some golden opportunities to accept jobs in the Big Apple or on the West Coast because his

family had roots here. He regrets it not and allows that, for all the ups and downs, he enjoyed a wonderful 55 years in the medium he loved.

“The lovely Elaine,” as Art always called her, has been gone for awhile now. So Art used his new-found leisure time to produce a memoir, *The Hellyer Say*. It’s a delightful account of his fun and frustrations in radio, mingled with recollections of his boyhood, military service, a long happy marriage, and the many entertainers and other personalities he got to meet along the way. With a lot of asides, flashbacks and fast forwards, it’s a little bit jumbled and jivey — just about what you’d expect from the guy whose what-the-heck wackiness on the air won him a legion of loyal listeners. ■

Time in to Those Were the Days on August 3 as we share our 2012 conversation with Art Hellyer and hear samples from his long and wonderful radio career.

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PAGES

FROM THE

PAST

The story of a scrapbook... and the life that it held

BY CLAIR SCHULZ

There was nothing distinctive about the well-worn blue scrapbook that sat on the shelf of the antique store except that it bulked to over four inches thick with wide gaps between many of the pages, suggesting that the owner had used it for inserting personal souvenirs rather than for pasting photographs and articles clipped from newspapers and magazines.

After perusing the contents and purchasing the book, I discovered that the word "Scraps" on the cover could easily have been replaced by *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay* (the title of the best-seller written by Cornelia Otis Skinner and Emily Kimbrough). Within the pages of this book are glimpses of a spirited young Milwaukee woman named Alyce who came of age in the 1920s.

Alyce apparently had no fondness for saving childhood artifacts, because

Clair Schulz is a writer and nostalgia buff from Muskego, Wisconsin. His newest book is Tuning in The Great Gildensleeve, published by McFarland Press.

the first enclosure is an invitation to her

eighth-grade graduation from St. Anthony School. This is followed immediately by membership cards to ten different clubs to which she belonged at Bay View High School. The candid appraisal of her perceived status as a shrinking violet at the outset emerges on a page of dance programs in which she wrote "Still a Freshie and a flop so it seems (note the program)." (On that program she was only asked to dance twice.)

In the late 1920s, each dance centered on a theme: Football Hop, Let's Play Bridge, or "We" (named after Charles Lindbergh's book about his transatlantic flight). Each of the ten or twelve dances on the card had its own name (e.g., Kick-off, End Run, Off Sides, 13 Hearts, Reddeal, Grand Slam, Contact, Take-Off, Gliding).

Examining the graduation programs and Alyce's report cards, it's apparent that the curriculum at Bay View trained students to go right into the work force after graduation. Each student's education had been in specialized disciplines as if they had been majoring in science, accounting, mathematics, and so forth.

Alyce's final report card shows grades for five practical courses that semester: Typing IV, Office Practice, Shorthand IV, Salesmanship and Advertising, and Business Organization. Today's progressive educators who advocate accelerated advancement for qualified scholars in the secondary schools have nothing on Alyce; she graduated in three-and-a-half years and had taken her Civil Service exam a month before receiving her diploma.

There are seven die-cut place cards from various birthday parties Alyce attended from 1929 to 1931. The flappers and their gangly beaus portrayed on each one demonstrate the influence of Jazz Age cartoonist John Held Jr. on the graphic art of that period.

The first indication that Alyce ventured away from Milwaukee appears in a four-page brochure describing the Indian Pageant, held in Kilbourn, Wisconsin from July 1 to August 31, 1930. The pageant was highlighted by the singing of four full-blooded Sioux Indians who had earlier been asked to perform before President Calvin Coolidge. The following year, the residents of Kilbourn changed the name of their community to Wisconsin Dells.

Admirers of *Vic and Sade* will find two items of particular interest within these pages. The interurban station was mentioned frequently on that program; Alyce retained an interurban ticket for September 1, 1931 from her trip between Milwaukee and Waukesha. Just the name of *Vic and Sade's* Little Tiny Petite Pheasant Feather Tea Shoppe brings smiles when one recalls the amusing audio visits radio made to the small house halfway up the next block. This scrapbook contained the fold-open business card for Mitchell Street's Gypsy Tea

Shoppe, where customers could get "a real fortune read gratis from cards or tea cup." Underneath, Alyce confessed "Where we spent many a night and many a dollar."

Just above this card is the one item in the scrapbook that would draw the most interest from collectors of movie memorabilia: a full packet of wolfbane, given to moviegoers who attended the Alhambra Theatre's showing of *Dracula*. Alyce indicated that she "saw this with Karl," but does not admit whether she followed the instructions on the packet, placing the talisman under her pillow to keep the infamous vampire in his belfry and out of her bedroom.

A reminder that the silent film era had just ended is revealed in a folder issued by Milwaukee's Davidson Theatre trumpeting *The Girl from the Reeperbahn*, a German film (released by Talking Picture Epics, Inc.) that promises to be "All Talking! Dramatic! Singing! Thrilling!" Alyce seemed more impressed with *Trader Horn*, printing "Hitting the Big Time" above the colorful promotional sheet issued by MGM.

The Davidson (a Third Street landmark until it was demolished in 1954) hosted live performances as well. Sandwiched between the movie promotions is a program for *Cherries Are Ripe*, a comedy co-written by Anita Loos (of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* fame) and starring real-life husband and wife Rod La Rocque and Vilma Banky.

The first of numerous trips to Chicago occurred over Labor Day in 1931. A receipt indicates that the rate for room 337 at the Morrison Hotel was \$1.50 a night. (The Morrison was quite a chic spot then, having just been built in 1925. It was razed in 1965.) Theater tickets from the Adelphi at Clark and

Madison attest to her attendance at *High Hat* ("The silk top of comedies") with a "triple-star cast" of Edna Hibbard, James Spottswood, and Richard Taber, names that today might be greeted by the triple owl hoot (Who? Who? Who?).

Evidence that Alyce and her friends had satisfied their collective sweet tooth is supplied by a postal label from Mrs. Snyder's Candy Shop and the query "How many pounds of it did we eat?"

The next year was Alyce's year to try new activities: a special rate ticket to Bauman's Riverview for "my first attempt" at roller skating rests above a golf card from a par 70 course for "my first golf lesson" and a Yellow Cab ticket for 65¢ when she and "the gang went slumming in the Third Ward." Proof that Groucho and his siblings knew more than monkey business is provided in the business card on the corner of that page with only these words on it: "Horsefathers. 4 Marx Bros. Palace, Fri, Aug 26." The Palace was on West Wisconsin Avenue, just two blocks from the Alhambra, which fell to the wrecking ball in 1961. (The Palace was demolished in 1974.)

When Alyce's sister Ann visited New York City in June of 1932, she sent decals showing the Hotel Taft and the new Empire State Building, the kind of souvenirs that travelers formerly affixed to their suitcases. Inside the air mail envelope (postage: three two-cent stamps) is a letter on Hotel Taft stationery in which Ann described her impressions of the Statue of Liberty, Tiffany's, Saks (where her friend Marie "bought a real snooty purse"), and the performance of Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra at the Paramount ("We almost fell asleep. It wasn't very good.")

While Ann did her sisterly duty from a distance, Alyce's mother watched over

her daughter's finances at home by opening a Christmas club account for her at the First Wisconsin National Bank. The receipt stubs in the book indicate payments of \$1.00 made for 50 consecutive weeks ending November 12, 1932. Alyce's comment on the inside back cover of the book: "A gift from my mother and my first bank account." Present-day savers dissatisfied with the miniscule yield from their money market accounts will grind their teeth even harder at the pledge on the cover of the booklet: "3% interest added as a reward for prompt payment."

In 1933, after two decades of progress in Milwaukee, Alyce answered the call of "Come to the Fair" to see what A Century of Progress looked like in Chicago. Postcards suggest she took in the sights of the Sky Ride, Fort Dearborn and The Electrical Group. She brought home the first edition of the Big News newspaper (Headline: "Sinclair Exhibits Weird Dinosaur"), a Firestone Factory brochure, and the Sears, Roebuck folder, which featured a pop-up of the 1930s version of a Sears tower, along with a panoramic view of the World's Fair and the lakefront in the background.

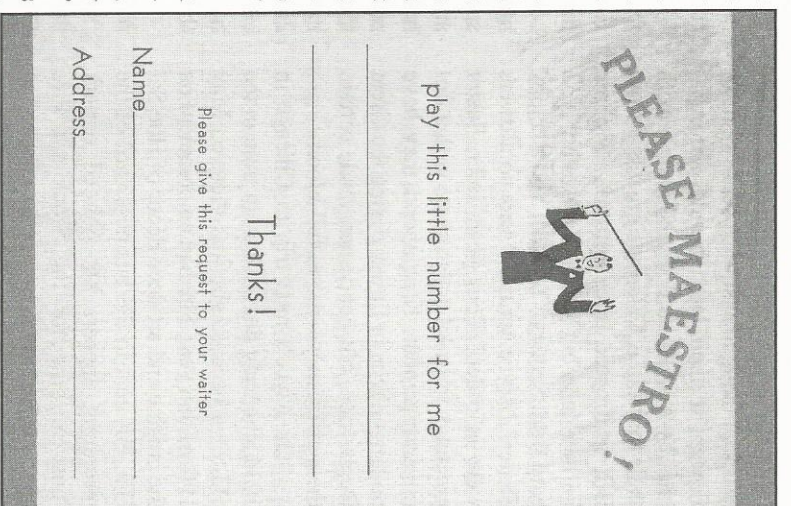
Perhaps the most interesting souvenir Alyce brought back from that trip is *This Week in Chicago* for the week of July 16, 1933. This publication proves there was a hot time to be had in the old town away from the fairgrounds. Cover boy Ted Weems could be heard at the Lincoln Tavern while Wayne King played on at the Aragon, Jan Garber at the Trianon, and Hal Kemp at the Blackhawk. Sophie Tucker was still a red-hot mama at the 225 Club, while Olsen and Johnson were popping some heck at the Erlanger with Ethel Merman in *Take a Chance*. Anyone with 55¢

could pop into the Chicago Theatre at State and Randolph. On stage, there was singer Donald Novis, the zany Ritz Brothers, and four other acts. On screen, you could see watch Barbara Stanwyck and George Brent emote in *Baby Face*.

The racy plot of that pre-Production Code film probably would not have shocked the young Milwaukeean who appeared to be growing up quickly. The "Do Not Disturb" doorknob sign she brought back from the Morrison after this excursion might have raised the eyebrows of the hotel detective because Alyce had penciled "Men Working" on it.

On the next page is a stub from the Gayety Theatre, a hot spot of burlesque entertainment in Minneapolis, above which appear the words "My first offense. Spare my blushes." Cocktail napkins and matchbooks from various bars all over Wisconsin indicate she was not a stay-at-home wallflower. An oversized, green-tinted brochure for Eagle River's Red Oaks Cabins ("Where nature reigns supreme") appears on one page. On the next, Alyce tipped in a postcard for another Eagle River attraction, Club Denoyer, and added the phrase, "Where slot machines reign."

Her mischievous nature is apparent in the exhibit cards she brought back from Waukesha Beach beginning in the summer of 1933. These penny arcade howlers include "Beach Vamp's Permit," "Society of Kissing Bugs," "License to Masquerade as a Blonde," and "Spooning License," all of them signed by such dignitaries as Giveme A. Kiss, O.I. Cant, Alla Flutter, and Oscar Asculator. At parties Alyce must have



been known as "33 Skidoo."

While on the town in October 1933, Alyce managed to get Hal Kemp's signature on the business card of the Stardusters, a ballroom on West St. Paul Avenue in Milwaukee. The close connection between entertainers and their audience is evident in the card from O'Toole's Tic Toc TABARin (presenting Joe Costa and "The Gentlemen of Note"). A tear-off portion of the cards bears the words "Please Maestro! Play this little number for me. Thanks," and a polite entreaty to "Please give this request to your waiter." This grace note shows how "Music, Maestro, Please" represented more than a song title; it was a reflection of the courteous respect that reigned in most ballrooms all over the country.

One mannerly convention of the era was that thoughtful squires sent sweets or flowers to their lady friends, accompanied by a small card signed simply with their first name. Valentine greetings from Bill prompted the notation “Fannie Farmer in a big way.” Below the 1933 card from Stanley “To Wish You a Happy Easter”, Alyce wrote, “And so flowers were in order.” Four years later, Easter greetings from John also came with a floral arrangement. Knighthood may have no longer been in flower during the Great Depression, but gentlemen made certain their girlfriends were in full bloom.

On Alyce’s next trip to Chicago in 1934, she truly did have a hot time in the old town because she was there on May 19th of that year. She had no comment on the cuisine and art deco décor of Hoe Sai Gai, but next to the business card of the restaurant appears her pointed remark “Just in time for the Stockyard Fire and... HEAT!!!!”

In contrast, everything seemed to please her on the trip she took with her father the following year to New York. There was the spray aboard the Maid of the Mist at Niagara Falls, the sightseeing tours of Gotham offered by the Grey Line (“So much to see”), Rockefeller Center and the NBC Studio Tour (“Where the Big Stuff goes on”), stompin’ at the Savoy (“Harlem at its best”), and even a stop at the Cathedral of the Underworld — a rescue center in Chinatown which, according to Alyce, had earned a reputation as being “Famous for murders-dope fiends-derelicts.”

Of all the relics Alyce brought back from that summer vacation, the item of greatest significance to followers of the national pastime is the Official 5¢ Score Card from the August 18, 1935 game between the New York Giants and the

Cincinnati Reds at the Polo Grounds. Not only did father and daughter see three future Hall of Famers (Ernie Lombardi, Mel Ott, and Carl Hubbell) in action, they also witnessed the only home run Hubbell hit that year — one of just four the ace lefthander slugged in his 16-year career. The Giants won 8-4. Still, for modern baseball fans accustomed to spending an entire afternoon or evening at the ballpark — watching managers make frequent trips to the mound and relievers stroll in from the bullpen — these statistics are the real story: the 80 batters who came to the plate delivered 26 hits in a game that lasted *two hours and two minutes*. (To put that in perspective, that’s about 90 minutes shorter than the last game of the 2012 World Series.)

Before leaving the big city, Alyce received a birthday greeting telegram from Ann (who was careful not to exceed the ten-word minimum): MOTHER IS FINE WRITE OFTENER HAVE GOOD TIME HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

In Washington DC, the pair stayed at the Hotel Commodore and spent some time in the galleries of Congress “Listening in on the Senators.” The August 18, 1935 edition of *This Week in the Nation’s Capital* is not brimming with news concerning the local entertainment scene, although two “featured photographs” (*China Seas* and *The 39 Steps*) received favorable reviews.

Looking through this copy of *This Week*, what would undoubtedly surprise those security-minded citizens living in the nation’s capitol today is the list of all the foreign diplomats in Washington, complete with addresses and phone numbers. Another eye-opener is a quotation on hospitality by Washington Irving, placed prominently in an advertisement for the Hotel Chelsea. Imagine a modern

hotel chain disdaining a celebrity endorsement in favor of, say, a quatrain from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

It is also hard to picture a modern hotelier dictating a five-paragraph letter on hotel stationery asking recent guests if their visit lived up to expectations — such as the one sent to Alyce on August 22, 1935 and signed by Alfred Lewis, manager of the Hotel Taft.

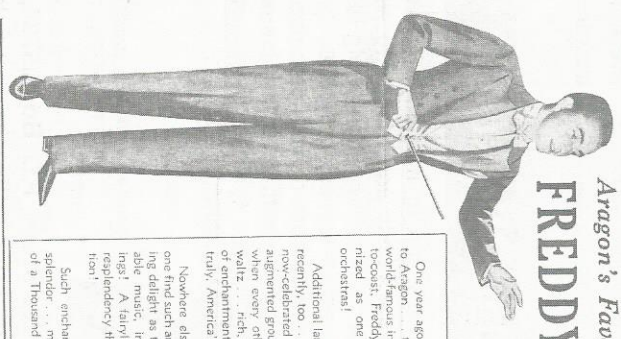
Alyce fell back into the routine of her work as a clerk for the Milwaukee Planning Department, spiced up occasionally by parties held by the City Hall Girls’ Club. A sensible woman, she clearly knew the value of moderation. On the same page as a certificate of membership in the Canary Connoisseur’s Club (presented to her for drinking four

Super-Mixed Singapore Gin Slings on July 4, 1936), there’s a program and ticket stub for the San Carlo Opera Company’s October 29 performance of *Aida* at the Pabst Theater. (There is no listing in the program for any warbling by a gin-inspired canary.)

A few months later, Alyce and friend John took a few whirls around the floor of the Aragon Ballroom. The February 13, 1937 edition of the famous nightspot’s *Dance Topics* shows a sleek, tuxedoed Freddy Martin, baton in hand. It was as though he was directing readers to turn inside, where they would learn that Dick Jurgens was going to be on the bandstand on February 20 and the Washington Birthday Ball on the 22nd would feature both

the Martin crew and Kay Kyser’s band. On her final recorded visit to Chicago, Alyce switched her place of residence to the Hotel Sherman at Clark and Randolph, arriving on August 31, 1938 and noting on the receipt that “the All-Star football game was on when we got here.” (The College All-Stars defeated the Washington Redskins at Soldier Field that year by a score of 28-16.) From nearby South Bend, she brought back an oversized souvenir from The University of Notre Dame in which the word “football” is used just once. On the back page, there are some startling financial figures: tuition fees for 1938-39 — including instruction, lodging, board in the university dining halls, laundry, medical fees, and admission to all athletic events —

Aragon Ballroom
 LARGEST AND MOST MODERN
 DANCE HALL IN CHICAGO
 THE CURRENT EDITION OF
DANCE TOPICS
 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1937



FREDDY MARTIN
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Additional laurels have come Freddy's way only recently, too... following the introduction of his now-celebrated "Valtz Night" orchestra, the augmented group featured each Friday at Aragon, when every other dance is a beautiful dreamy waltz... rich, full melodies that cast their spell of enchantment over dancer and listener alike... truly, America's MOST SUPERB waltz music!

Nowhere else in the nation—or world—can one find such an ideal combination for sheer dancing delight as that offered at Aragon. Incomparable music, in equally-incomparable surroundings! A fairland of unbelievable beauty... a responsibility that is beyond all power of description!

Such enchanting music... such dazzling splendor... make Aragon TRULY the Ballroom of a Thousand Delights!

ranged from \$708 to \$870. Today you'd need that amount of money for two end zone seats at Notre Dame Stadium to watch the Fighting Irish battle USC on a Saturday afternoon.

The final inserts in the book suggest the next stop on that trip was in Benton Harbor, Michigan. There's a brochure describing the House of David and a round-trip miniature railway ticket around the society's grounds. Finding nothing in the last four pages led my overactive imagination to picture Alyce donning a beard, assuming a new identity, and barnstorming her way into some field of dreams — or else climbing aboard some miniature celestial omnibus that took her far, far away.

But prosaic fates await almost all mortals. Alyce continued in her clerical duties for many years, never married, and died in 2001 at the age of 88. The only photograph of herself she chose to include in the scrapbook is a grainy newspaper image from 1935. It features a smiling brunette holding the souvenir program of the Milwaukee midsummer

festival, an indirect ancestor of Summerfest. Next to the photo appears the comment "And I broke into print!"

One hundred years after her birth — and 75 years after her last entry into this scrapbook — she breaks into print again. Why she did not continue adding keepsakes may be answered with the words of poet Robert Herrick: "That age is best, which is the first, when youth and blood are warmer."

The motto of Alyce's graduating class at St. Anthony's was "Attempt not, or accomplish thoroughly." One foresighted member of that class accomplished much by consciously preserving ephemeral mementoes of her youth so that future generations can reach back into the past to get in touch with the popular culture of the Jazz Age and the decade that followed.

Friends and relatives who knew this sprightly lady would probably claim that Alyce doesn't live here anymore. Not so. Alyce remains very much alive in the overstuffed book she crammed full of treasured memories. ■

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RECONVERSION BLUES: HOW NETWORK RADIO RESPONDED TO POST-WAR AMERICA

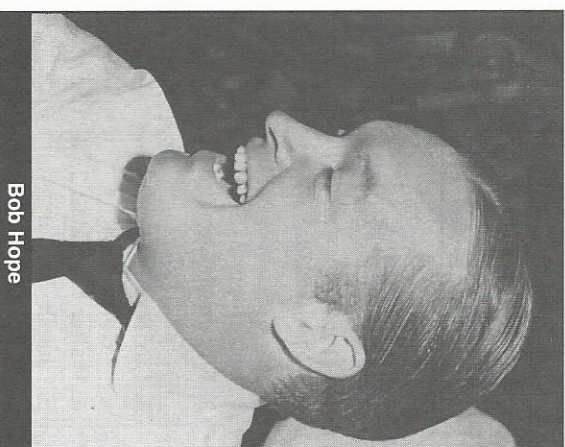
BY TODD NEBEL

Network radio was born in 1926. It had become a multimillion dollar business by 1939, when early television went on display at the New York World's Fair. Television was poised for rapid growth when Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941 and the U.S. consequently joined World War II. The imminent mass production of television sets and programming would have to wait while the U.S. mobilized its manufacturing industry for the war effort instead.

Finally, after three-and-three-quarter arduous years of war, the victorious United States looked forward to its first taste of peacetime in the fall of 1945. Some servicemen anxiously waited to come home while others began arriving stateside with the hope of starting a new and better life. Americans wanted to buy new television sets, cars, and homes, but that would all have to wait until the manufacturing sector caught up to demand.

And as Americans settled in, they found their radio programs and entertainers much the same as they were before the war began.

Todd Nebel is a writer from Cary, Illinois and the webmaster for Chuck Schaden's speakingofradio.com.



Bob Hope

How did Americans — newly confident in their future — respond to network radio that had changed little in a drastically changed world?

Well, in the momentous days and weeks following V-J Day (August 15, 1945), radio listening dropped off drastically. In fact, evening listening was at its lowest level in several years, with an audience level that consisted of only 68.9% of radio-owning homes. As the summer ended, listeners gradually began returning to their radios for familiar shows and entertainers. It helped that the networks were offering a new fall season,

but the ongoing tire shortage and a flood of auto accident-related publicity also kept people at home and around their radios — so much so that by early December, night-time radio listening had risen to 79.2%, a figure slightly higher than the same period one year earlier.

By the end of 1945, listening habits in America had returned to normal; the number of sets in use and average program ratings closely followed those of the previous year. The fifteen highest rated programs were all old favorites, with twelve appearing on the list a year

The Top 15 Evening Programs and Ratings on November 30th 1945. (In parentheses are their ratings from November 30th, 1944):

1. Bob Hope: 27.9 (32.5)
2. Fibber McGee and Molly: 25.3 (32.3)
3. Lux Radio Theatre: 23.6 (25.8)
4. Walter Winchell: 23.4 (19.5)
5. Charlie McCarthy: 22.6 (22.2)
6. Jack Benny: 22.4 (23.6)
7. Mr. District Attorney: 19.8 (24.6)
8. Fred Allen: 19.2 (Not Broadcast in 1944)
9. Abbott and Costello: 18.8 (24.4)
10. Screen Guild Players: 18.5 (23.4)
11. Take It Or Leave It: 18.4 (Not Broadcast in 1944)
12. Kraft Music Hall: 17.5 (22.6)
13. Eddie Cantor: 17.5 (19.3)
14. Jack Haley: 16.2 (22.2)
15. Aldrich Family: 15.6 (18.3)

earlier (see the sidebar below).

When comparing 1945 ratings to the same period in 1944, one thing that stands out is that variety shows were obviously in a slump; in fact, ratings for the top programs were lower overall. Why?

Well, as we mentioned earlier, many of these programs were on at the start of the war. There wasn't much new and exciting for those who had seen the world — and, in some cases, had gone to hell and back fighting for their country. As a result, *Fibber McGee & Molly's* Hooper rating dropped 7.0 points between 1944 and 1945, while Bob Hope dropped 4.6 points and Jack Haley's *Village Store* dropped 4.0 points.

Another reason for the weak ratings was the fact that the initial success of variety shows years earlier had led to a veritable glut of this type of programming by 1945. In some cases, advertisers who were anxious to get into the variety field were giving top billing to radio

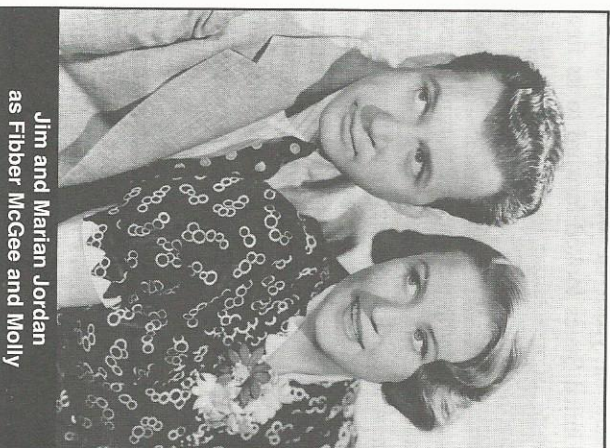
actors who previously had turned in credible performances and attracted followings in supporting roles.

Quiz shows were one form of programming that enjoyed growth in 1945. In May, quiz programs had an average rating of 11.6 compared to the 11.2 average for variety shows. This marked the first time the quiz show genre had proved more popular than variety. A month later, quiz programs increased their lead; by September, the quiz show genre lead the variety format by an average of 1.9 points.

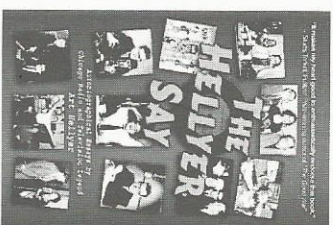
As history would bear out, Americans accepted the fact that the mass production of television — along with an increase in television signals and entertainment — would take at least a few more years. In the short term,

Americans regained their love for the top variety radio programs, whose ratings rebounded in 1946 and 1947. At the same time, the quiz show trend that took hold in 1945 grew at an even greater rate during the late 1940s. Eventually, they would peak by the end of the decade, with shows like *Stop The Music*, *You Bet Your Life*, and *Break The Bank*.

Big network radio may not have changed much during the war, but the war itself gave network radio a reprieve that lasted until the late 1940s when television finally came in strong — and came in for good. ■



Jim and Marian Jordan as Fibber McGee and Molly



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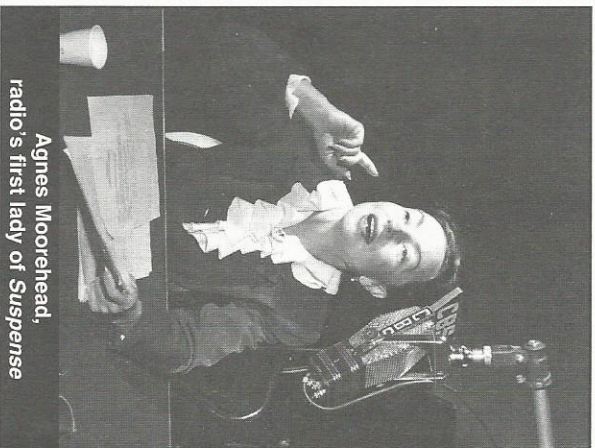
The challenges of bringing *Suspense*
to a new medium

BY WAYNE KLATT

During its early years, radio established itself as the “Theater of the Mind,” using sound effects and voices to create indelible pictures — and few shows fulfilled the potential as well and as long as *Suspense*. During its 20 years on the air, *Suspense* earned the sobriquet “Radio’s Outstanding Theatre of Thrills,” presenting some of New York and Hollywood’s finest actors and technicians in tales intended to keep listeners on the edge of their collective seat. The show’s most famous episodes — including “Sorry, Wrong Number,” “On a Country Road,” and the two-part adaptation of Curt Siodmak’s “Donovan’s Brain” — are considered to be among the finest shows radio ever produced.

Given all that it had accomplished on radio in a comparatively short time, the idea of moving *Suspense* to television must have seemed both entirely natural and utter folly. How could this nascent medium create anything as evocative as

Wayne Klatt is a writer and nostalgia buff from Chicago.



Agnes Moorehead,
radio's first lady of *Suspense*

the radio show? After all, Hollywood had already made a movie based on “Sorry, Wrong Number” that, for all its merits, still couldn’t approach the intensity of Agnes Moorehead’s radio version.

Of course, aesthetic issues were only part of the picture: Radio audiences were shrinking in the late 1940s, as America became fascinated by the novelty of television — any black-and-white image, no matter how technically proficient, was

worth a look as long as it came out of that little box. When Auto-Lite began sponsoring the radio version of *Suspense* in the summer of 1948, the idea of bringing it to television was probably on everyone’s mind.

Nail-biting stories would seem a natural for the new medium, but the presentation itself was fraught with peril. Motion picture cameramen and veteran theater stage hands were unfamiliar with the limits and possibilities of the new art form, and so most of the people involved were young and adaptable. Camera movement had to be limited, and some shots were arranged just to give actors time to get into their next position. Occasionally a few lines of throwaway dialogue were invented for secondary characters at a table or phone booth so the crew could move a full set into place a few feet away. If a show ran long (and some of them did), the actors and cameramen were forced to skip over pages of memorized dialogue.

In any case, Auto-Lite’s television version of *Suspense* debuted on CBS in March 1949, with “Revenge,” a story by the always-reliable thriller writer Cornell Woolrich, whose tale “It Had to Be Murder” was the inspiration for Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rear Window*. The tidy first drama starred Eddie Albert and his wife — who went by the single name of Margo.

Since a coaxial cable allowing television transmission had not yet been laid across the Western mountains, many stations relied on kinescopes, which were made by positioning a movie camera in front of a TV monitor and adjusting it to avoid flicker. The grainy result reduced the sense of immediacy, but this is the only way we have of recapturing the era today. Only 90 kinescopes of the 260 *Suspense* episodes have survived; unfortunately, “Revenge” is not among them.

The early shows adapted some stories that had been presented on the *Suspense* radio series — including



On the set of *Suspense*, rehearsing the 1950 episode “Roman Holiday”

“Suspicion,” “Cabin B-13,” and “Dead Ernest,” the story of a man (played by Tod Andrews) in a cataleptic coma, unable to inform the doctors preparing to embalm him that he is still alive. Other stories were drawn from tried-and-true properties (like “The Monkey’s Paw” and “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”) as writers learned to become more conversant in the new art form.

As with all live productions of the late ‘40s and early ‘50s, everything was done with an eye on efficiency, and more money was devoted to hiring the crew than to creating spectacles. (As Charles Vanda pointed out, the television version of *Suspense* credited 39 different technicians, while the radio version he produced in the early 1940s managed to survive on a mere three.) The producers reused the same props and sets whenever they could, and some props didn’t even last the full 25 minutes. When a man is knocked down in one episode — a spy story misleadingly titled “A Woman in

Love” — you can see him adjusting his falling mustache. In another mishap, an actress in a commercial suddenly began stammering helplessly — evidently, the person holding cue cards moved out of her line of vision.

As was the case with most early television, *Suspense* was broadcast from New York; as a result, the show lacked the access to Hollywood’s top stars that the radio version had long enjoyed. It didn’t help that acting on live television was considerably more arduous than radio; in addition, the movie studios — who were clearly nervous about the threat that television presented to the movie industry — probably did their fair share to discourage their top talents from taking part in this upstart medium. As a result, many *Suspense* episodes showcased stars whose Hollywood shine was fading, including Boris Karloff (who made six appearances), Bela Lugosi (looking spaced-out in Edgar Allan Poe’s “Cask of Amontillado”), Joan Blondell

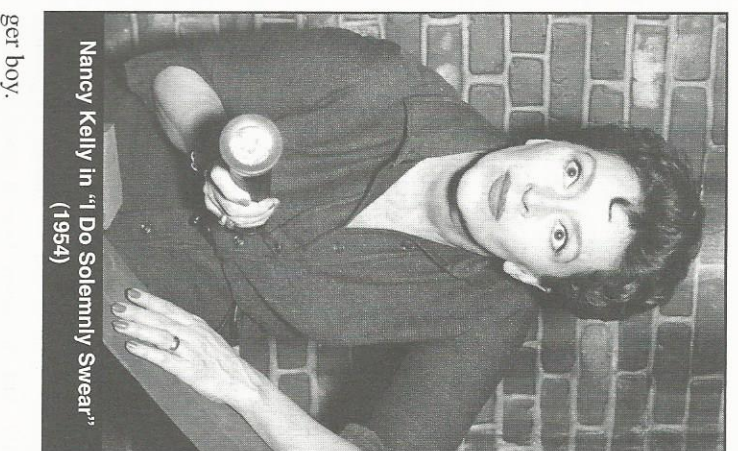
(in “Tango”), and Basil Rathbone (who appeared as Dr. Jekyll and returned to *Suspense* to reprise his best-loved role of Sherlock Holmes).

However, the show also had access to Broadway veterans (including Hume Cronyn, Nancy Kelly, Lili Palmer, and Signe Hasso) and gave starring roles to a new generation of up-and-coming performers, including Wally Cox (*Mr. Peepers*), Cloris Leachman, John Forsythe, Richard Kiley, Eva Gabor, and Leslie Nielsen (back in the days when he was known for playing serious roles). The show also gave small roles to some future Oscar winners: Rod Steiger, Jack Palance, Kim Hunter, Lee Marvin, Grace Kelly, Christopher Plummer and Paul Newman. And, like the radio show, the television version of *Suspense* gave some actors the best roles of their careers, such as baby-faced Barry Nelson’s surprisingly convincing turn as an out-of-control policeman in “Tough Cop.”

During the first three seasons, prolific Robert Stevens directed the TV stories pretty much as if they were happening in a box. He seems to have been frustrated by the medium’s limitations and relied exclusively on the plots to build dread and expectation.

When earnest go-getter Martin Mannis became the show’s producer in 1952, he authorized larger sets and sometimes utilized four or five settings to make the stories more fluid and closer to reality. A forest set built in the studio was so realistic that viewers might have thought the actors were hiding outdoors.

An exciting new period began when Mannis brought in Robert Mulligan to direct most of the later episodes. The former theology student and Marine had wanted to work in TV so badly that he was willing to start at CBS as a messen-

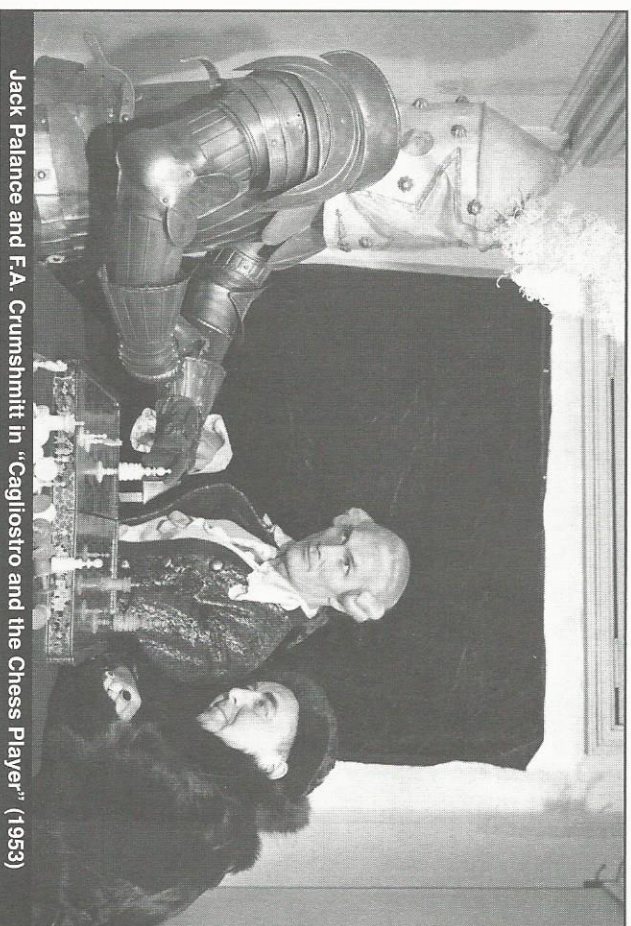


Nancy Kelly in “Do Solemnly Swear” (1954)

CBS/PHOTOFEST

ger boy. Like Mannis, Mulligan wanted to expand the potential of live television, stressing different camera angles while using more close-ups. In one of his more visual episodes (the 1952 Halloween-week offering *All Hallow’s Eve*), a single clock can be heard ticking from the moment an out-of-luck gambler (Franchot Tone) enters an antiques shop to kill and rob the owner. When the murder occurs, two clocks tick in half-seconds, like a rapid heartbeat. The effect is felt subliminally rather than sensed.

Immediately after the attack, one ornamental clock (in close-up) swings at us while another sways from side to side behind it; the contrasting motions increase the tension. The gambler becomes disoriented by two full-length mirrors displaying confusing images. For this effect, Mulligan placed a camera slightly overhead to keep it from being



Jack Palance and F.A. Crumshmitt in “Cagliostro and the Chess Player” (1953)

CBS/PHOTOFEST

reflected in the glass.

After an interruption for the Auto-Lite commercial, the devil (in the form of a dapper gentleman) appears to claim the gambler's soul. However, the devil is left empty-handed when the killer spies a servant girl who witnessed the crime and tells her to fetch the police.

Yet Mulligan's inventiveness could slow the pace of more involved stories and sometimes over-extended the capabilities of the production staff. For 1953's "The Quarry" — the story of a distraught widower (James Daly) followed by two dangerous-looking toughs — the crew recreated a New York subway station out of materials so flimsy you could see the "brick" wall shake.

Established writers were likely to submit scripts to the longer, more prestigious anthologies, like the 60-minute *Studio One* or the 90-minute *Playhouse 90*, but *Suspense* was a good place to start, especially for writers who naturally thought in terms of half-hour stories. One such writer, a radio veteran named Rod Serling, did just that when he wrote the fantastical "Nightmare at Ground Zero," another of the "lost" episodes.

Eventually, filmed dramas (especially Westerns) with continuing characters

were stealing audiences away from the anthology shows. The television incarnation of *Suspense* ended in August 1954 with "Barn Burning," a tale of anger and vengeance in the rural South, adapted from a William Faulkner story by none other than Gore Vidal. That kinescope, too, may never be found.

CBS brought the show back a decade later with Sebastian Cabot serving as a (frankly unnecessary) host to bring a sense of continuity to the filmed tales; however, this version lasted less than a full season. During the show's final weeks on the air, the show rebroadcast episodes of the *Schlitz Playhouse of the Stars* under the *Suspense* name, with Cabot as host.

It's possible that the original television version of *Suspense* would have enjoyed a longer run if it had routinely matched the radio version as an outstanding theater of thrills. Then again, maybe it was proof that what worked on radio wasn't guaranteed to work on television. But it was a good try. ■

To hear Suspense on radio, tune in to Those Were the Days on July 13 and 20 and to Radio's Golden Age on August 25.

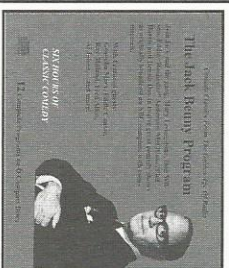
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make sure you've got plenty of

JACK!

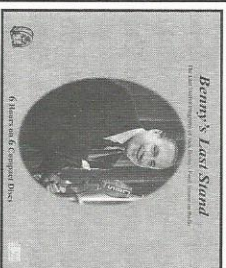
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ZaSu Who?

BY HARVEY WIDELL

First ladies of the American stage proliferate. Almost always, a few remarkable women seem to hold that quicksilver title at the same time.

My own nominee, however, never made anyone's list but mine. In fact, whenever I tell this story, I'm not surprised when the listener says, "ZaSu who?"

I met her in 1954. Fresh out of theater school, I was headed for Nuangola, Pennsylvania (pop. 344), site of the Grove Theater, one of the country's oldest summer stock companies. I was 22, and Royal Stout (yes, that was his name), was going to pay me \$25 a week to build scenery, scrounge for props, and maybe even play some small parts.

Enter ZaSu Pitts.

In those days, the Grove Theater used a star system. Each week, on Tuesday, a stand-in for the star would arrive to rehearse with the resident company. The star, who was touring the country in that part, would arrive the following Monday, run through a dress rehearsal with the company, and open the next night. Twice each week that summer, I

Harvey Widell is a writer from Boynton Beach, Florida, whose writing has appeared in the New York Times, Newsday, and dozens of periodicals in the U.S. and in England.



ZaSu Pitts

dined on creamed chipped beef with stand-ins for Francis Lederer, John Dall, Kay Francis, the dazzling Ilona Massey (who offered respite from the chipped beef by cooking a redolent chicken paprikash for the company), and ZaSu Pitts.

That summer, ZaSu was touring in a forgettable comedy-melodrama called *Miss Private Eye*. By the time the play reached its final scene, ZaSu, as the gunshoe, was being held prisoner by a band of thieves who were about to murder her. For my acting debut, I played a cop who spots her double-parked car and goes looking for her to move it, thereby effecting a rescue and bringing the final

curtain down. I came on in the last minute of the play and had two lines.

Remembering the admonition of Russian director/teacher Konstantin Stanislavsky ("There are no small parts, only small actors"), I set out preparing for my debut as if I'd been cast as King Lear. I filled page after page of yellow foolscap with notes, building a history for my policeman: Who was this man? Did he have a wife? Children? Why had he become a cop? How did he spend his off-duty time?

You get the idea. Two lines or two thousand, this is what I had trained for. This was going to be my life's work, and the audience was going to get a fully developed character.

Opening night! The final minutes of the play approached. On stage, ZaSu was pleading for her life. In the wings, Officer Birnbaum (no cliché Irish cop for me!) listened for his cue. It came and I shuffled on, using the policeman's shuffle I'd worked on for hours:

Officer Birnbaum: "Hey, whose car is that parked out front?"

Private Eye: "It's mine, Officer!"

Birnbaum: "Oh, yeah?"

The pregnant pause. I tried again.

Birnbaum (with feeling): "Oh, yeah?"

The actor's nightmare was being played out... I couldn't remember my next line — my only other line! As if stricken, I reeled toward the safety of the wings. I reached for the proscenium and welcoming darkness, and a talon entered my arm. Wordlessly, but with a clutch that drew blood, this frail lady dragged me back. She and the others ad-libbed a line or two or 20, and mercifully, the cur-

tain came down.

Traditionally, opening nights are party nights, even in Nuangola. But there was to be no opening-night gala for me. The cast and crew were off to the local pub for burgers and beer, but I, sulking and shuffling my well-rehearsed policeman's shuffle, made my way back to the deserted actors' boarding house.

Without removing costume or make-up, I collapsed on my sagging mattress.

Could I ever face any of them again?

The holstered gun digging into my side soon roused me. I unholstered, hung my blue tunic on the back of a chair, and began to cold-cream my face.

Between my well-worn copies of *Building A Character* and *An Actor Prepares*, I spied my pint of blackberry brandy. A steady diet of creamed chipped beef and chili burgers had given most of the company a long run of stomach upsets, and the brandy, we had discovered, offered a temporary cure.

A half-hour and a half-pint of brandy later, I fell asleep on my sea of foolscap.

I don't know how long I'd been asleep. I was awakened by my creaking door being pushed open. In the doorway stood ZaSu. In one hand she held two champagne glasses, in the other a bottle of Mumm's. She came in and sat on the edge of the bed, handed me both glasses, then filled them. She took one from me, touched her glass to mine, and we both sipped. Without a word, she leaned forward, pressed her lips to my cheek, got up, turned off the light, and left.

Move over, ladies. Make room for my first lady! ■

To hear ZaSu Pitts on radio, tune in to *Those Were the Days on August 10* and to *Radio's Golden Age on September 1*.



OLD TIME
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JULY 2013

SATURDAY, JULY 6

ALL-STAR BANDSTAND

IS SWING THE THING? (3-29-36) An hour-long broadcast demonstrating the latest musical craze, featuring over 100 musicians. Heard are Red Norvo and his Swing Sextet, vocalist Mildred Bailey, Benny Goodman and his Orchestra (from the Congress Hotel in Chicago), Meredith Willson and his Orchestra, Adrian Rollini's Tap Room Gang, pianist Frank Froeba, Stuff Smith and his Onyx Club Boys, Kay Thompson and her Rhythm Singers, Ray Noble and his Orchestra, swing harpist Casper Reardon, and guitarists Dick McDonough and Carl Kress. Sustaining, NBC-Blue. (29 min and 29 min)

GREATER NEW YORK FUND

(4-1-40) *Excerpt.* The combined bands of Glenn Miller, Will Bradley and Tommy Dorsey, "all three playing simultaneously, the outstanding arrangement of each individual band." The broadcast emanates from Madison Square Garden in New York City; hosted by master of ceremonies Fred Waring. Announcer is Harry Clark. Sustaining, CBS. (12 min)

TOMMY AND JIMMY DORSEY AND THEIR ORCHESTRAS

(9-26-46) It's the "Fabulous Dorseys" in a broadcast from Casino Gardens in Ocean Park, California, with vocals by Dee Parker, Stuart Foster and Bob Carroll. Tunes include "South America, Take It Away" as played by Jimmy's band, while Tommy's crew performs "Pussy Willow." At the end of the broadcast the two bands com-

bine to play "Brotherly Jump." Vince Williams announces. Sustaining, ABC. (29 min)

EXCURSIONS IN MODERN MUSIC

(7-30-49) A "Battle of the Bands" featuring Charlie Barnet and Woody Herman and their orchestras from the Rendezvous Ballroom in Balboa Beach, California. Stan Kenton appears during the intermission and discusses his future musical plans. Selections include "Bop City" and "Bebop Spoken Here" by the Barnet band, and "Four Brothers" and "Early Autumn" by the Herman Herd. The two bands combine to play "More Moon" ("How High the Moon"). Vocals by Trudy Richards, Buddy Stewart, Ray Wetzel, Terry Gibbs, Shorty Rogers, and Mary Ann McCall. Announcer is Tom Reddy. Sustaining, MBS. (29 min and 15 min)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be our resident big band historian **KARL PEARSON**, who will talk about the big stars of the big band era.

SATURDAY, JULY 13

RED SKELTON:

A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Red Skelton was born on July 18, 1913. Read the article about him on page 56.

AVALON TIME

(6-10-39) From Chicago, with Red Skelton, Red Foley, Jeanette Davis, Edna Stilwell, announcer Del King. Skelton talks about his recent visit to the beach and tries to borrow money so he can take the cast out to dinner. Red Foley sings "On the Sunny

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Side of the Rockies." Avalon Cigarettes, NBC. (28 min)

BIRDS EYE OPEN HOUSE

(12-13-45) Dinah Shore stars, with announcer Harry Von Zell, Robert Emmet Dolan and the Orchestra, and guest Red Skelton, who talks about his two-year stint in the Army. Later, Red plays Clem Kadiddlehopper and Junior, the Mean Little Kid. Dinah sings "Let It Snow," "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows," and "Begin the Beguine." Birds Eye Frozen Foods, NBC. (30 min)

SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS

(4-12-42) "Tight Shoes" starring Red Skelton, Lucille Ball, and George Tobias in a radio version of a Damon Runyon story, about a gambler with big feet. Roger Pryor hosts. Gulf Oil, CBS. (30 min)

SUSPENSE

(11-3-49) "The Search for Isabel" starring Red Skelton as a bank clerk who becomes curious when he receives a series of mysterious calls on his new telephone. Cast includes Cathy Lewis, William Conrad. Auto-Lite, CBS. (28 min)

RED SKELTON SHOW

(6-3-51) The Skelton Scrapbook of Satire presents "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," with Rod O'Connor, Lurene Tuttle, Dick Ryan, David Rose and the Orchestra, trumpeter Rafael Mendez. Red and Rod go to a baseball game and encounter Willy Lump-Lump and Clem Kadiddlehopper as a peanut salesman. The show opens with a few moments of the audience warm-up. Tide, CBS. (30 min)

SATURDAY, JULY 20

STARS OF THE SWIMSUIT ISSUE

SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS (2-2-41) "Destiny Rides Again" starring **Paulette Goddard**, **Henry Fonda**, Lloyd Nolan and Walter Brennan in a radio adaptation of the 1939 film, with host Roger Pryor. The son of a famous lawman is appointed sheriff of a corrupt gambling town. Gulf Oil, CBS. (29 min)

BOB HOPE SHOW

(5-14-54) With announcer Bill Goodwin, singer Margaret Whiting, Les Brown and his Band of Renown, and guest **Grace Kelly**, who talks about her time in Africa and joins Bob for a spoof of her film *Mogambo*. American Dairy Association, NBC. (29 min)

SUSPENSE

(9-24-51) "The McKay College Basketball Scandal" stars **Tony Curtis** in "a story taken from the headlines," about a small-town basketball star who is offered

\$2000 to throw a big game. Cast includes Lou Merrill, Bill Forman, Martha Wentworth, Joseph Kearns, Barbara Eiler, Jack Moyles, Jack Kruschen, Gil Stratton Jr., Leo Cleary, Harlow Wilcox announces. Auto-Lite, CBS. (30 min)

BLONDIE

(10-30-39) **Penny Singleton** and **Arthur Lake** star as Blondie and Dagwood Bumstead, with announcer Bill Goodwin. Blonde signs Dagwood up to take part in a fashion show for men. Camel Cigarettes, CBS. (27 min)

ACADEMY AWARD

(3-30-46) "Jezebel" is the first show of the series, a radio adaptation of the 1938 film. **Bette Davis** re-creates her Oscar-winning performance as a haughty Southern belle who has lost her fiancée and will do anything to get him back. Anne Revere co-stars. House of Squibb, CBS. (29 min)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM

(5-11-47) A Mother's Day broadcast from Chicago, with Mary Livingstone, Phil Harris, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Dennis Day, announcer Norman Barry and guest **Marjorie Reynolds**, who is appearing with Jack at the Chicago Theatre. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (27 min)

SATURDAY, JULY 27

There's more fun in the sun — with these stars and many others — beginning on page 43!

DRAGNET

(12-1-49) Jack Webb stars as Sgt. Joe Friday, with Barton Yarborough as Sgt. Ben Romero. The police investigate a series of robberies committed by a gang of juvenile thieves. Cast includes Jack Kruschen, Herb Butterfield, Peggy Webber, Fatima Cigarettes, NBC. (26 min)

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE

(11-6-46) Harold Peary stars as Giddy, with Walter Tetley as Leroy, Louise Erickson as Marjorie, Lillian Randolph as Birdie, Dick LeGrand as Peavey, Ben Alexander as Ben. Marjorie's girlfriends come over to the house for a slumber party. Kraft Foods, NBC. (30 min)

SPEAKING OF RADIO

(6-21-12) Steve Darnall's conversation with actress Louise Erickson, who talks about her radio career and her roles on such shows as *A Date With Judy* and *The Great Gildersleeve*. Recorded at Ms. Erickson's home in New York City. (28 min) *Read an excerpt from this conversation on page 2.*

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

with host STEVE DARNALL

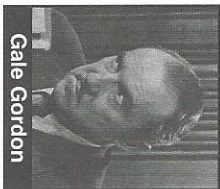
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JULY - AUGUST 2013

A DATE WITH JUDY (5-2-44) Louise Erickson stars as Judy, with Dix Davis as brother Randolph. Judy dreams of Frank Sinatra as a house guest when a USO performing troupe comes to town. Tums, NBC. (25 min)

GRANBY'S GREEN ACRES (7-31-50) "Mr. Granby Lays an Egg," starring Gale Gordon as John Granby, bank teller turned farmer, with Bea Benaderet as wife Martha, Louise Erickson as daughter Janice, and Parley Baer as Eb. John decides to raise chickens for a source of income. With Rye Billsbury, Horace Murphy. Sustaining. CBS. (29 min)



Gale Gordon

ESCAPE (4-11-48) "The Brute" is a radio version of the Joseph Conrad story, about a series of deaths among the crew of a sailing ship. Cast: Dan O'Herilhy, Eric Wolfe, Jeff Corey, Nina Carlton, Wilms Herbert, Parley Baer. Sustaining. CBS. (30 min)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3 ART HELLYER AND THE OTHER MADMEN OF RADIO

ARBOGAST (11-2-51) It's Bob Arbogast and Pete Robinson, with a half-hour of records and comedy. Arbogast takes a bath and presents "Facts For Fun." George Stone announces. Sustaining. WMAQ. (30 min)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (3-27-12) Part one of Steve Darnall's conversation with Art Hellyer, who talks about his lengthy career in radio. Recorded at Mr. Hellyer's home in Naperville, Illinois. (28 min) *Art Hellyer celebrates his 90th birthday on August 7, 2013. Read the article about Art Hellyer on page 8.*

ART HELLYER SHOW (8-1-57) Excerpt from Art's morning show, with comedy bits, records, cut-ins, phone calls, and pleas for strawberry shortcake! With Lenny Kaye. Participating sponsors, WAIT. (21 min)

MATINEE WITH BOB AND RAY (11-10-48) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding from early in their careers, with organist Ken Wilson and pianist Bill Green. The pair present "The Life and Loves of Linda Lovely" and talk about Ken and Bill's new radio show. Participating sponsors, WHDH. (29 min)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (3-27-12) Part two of Steve Darnall's conversation with Art Hellyer. (24 min)

SUPPER CLUB (3-6-61) Art Hellyer hosts a program of music and talk with Carol March, Bob Vegas, Joe Vito and the band. Guest is comedian George Bloom. Songs include "I Won't Dance," "Take the 'A' Train," and "Come Fly With Me." Participating sponsors, WBBM. (24 min)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

ADVENTURES OF PHILIP MARLOWE (3-26-49) "The Green Flame" stars Gerald Mohr as Marlowe, the famous detective created by Raymond Chandler. A Hollywood trade publisher asks Marlowe to investigate when she is sued for libel. Cast: Fay Baker, Lawrence Dobkin, Myra Marsh, Howard McNear, Parley Baer. Sustaining. CBS. (29 min)

CURTAIN TIME (5-24-47) "Wanted: An Old Fashioned Girl" starring Harry Elders and Nanette Sargent. A magazine writer, tired of writing about "career women," sets out to find an old-fashioned girl." Cast includes Hope Summers, Sidney Elstrom, Viola Berwick, George Eisler. Broadcast from Chicago. Mars, NBC. (28 min)

ARCH OBOLER'S PLAYS (6-7-45) "Night"

presents a series of vignettes that all take place after sundown. Narrated by Theodore Von Eltz, with Gloria Blondell, Frank Martin, Therese Lyon, Griff Barnett, Edmond McDonald, Barney James, Rosanne Murray, Everett Allen, Dorothy Scott, Joe Granby, Bruce Elliott. Sustaining. MBS. (31 min)

QUAKER PARTY (10-1-38) The first show of the series, starring Tommy Riggs and Betty Lou, with singer Bea Wain, Larry Clinton and the Orchestra, announcer Dan Seymour, and guest Zasu Pitts, who presents a play about Alaska, "Scrawny of the North." Quaker Cats, NBC. (26 min) *Read the article about Zasu Pitts on page 30.*

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (8-19-48) "Drums Along The Mohawk" starring Jeff Chandler and Lurene Tuttle in a radio version of the novel, about a newlywed couple who set out to live in the Mohawk territory. James Hilton hosts. Cast includes William Conrad, Ed Begley, Myra Marsh, Frank Goss announces. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (29 min)



Lurene Tuttle

MARTIN AND LEWIS SHOW (1-25-52) With announcer Jimmy Wallington, Dick Stabile and the Orchestra, and guest Alexis Smith, who joins the boys for a sketch set in a dentist's office. Dean sings "That Old Feeling" and the duo perform for a soap opera parody, "Just Plain Balderdash." Participating sponsors, NBC. (29 min)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17 MOVIES ON RADIO— NOT WITH THE ORIGINAL STARS!

HOLLYWOOD SOUND STAGE (1-24-52) "The Ox-Bow Incident" starring Edward Arnold and Charlie Ruggles in a radio version of the 1943 movie. A town suspects three strangers in town of being rustlers and murderers. Sustaining. CBS. (29 min)

SCREEN DIRECTORS' PLAYHOUSE (7-26-51) "Stairway to Heaven" starring Robert Cummings and Julia Adams in a radio version of the film that originally starred David Niven and Kim Hunter. A wartime aviator who escapes death must go before a celestial court to argue for his life. Participating sponsors, NBC. (29 min and 30 min)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (1-24-44) "Casablanca" starring Alan Ladd, Hedy Lamarr and John Loder in a radio version of the 1943 film that starred Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman and Paul Henreid. The classic story of a love triangle involving a cynical American and an anti-fascist seeking asylum with his wife. Cecil B. DeMille hosts. Lux Soap, CBS. (20 min & 18 min & 21 min)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be film historian **BOB KOLOSOSKI**, who will talk about these films and their stars...and the stars who replaced them on radio.

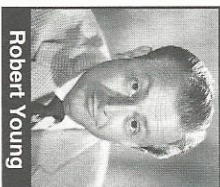
SATURDAY, AUGUST 24

CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON (4-27-49) "Perfect Crime" stars Paul Sutton as Sgt. Preston. An ex-convict who insists on his innocence seeks revenge against the man who put him in jail. Quaker Puffed Wheat and Rice, ABC. (30 min)

OUR MISS BROOKS (1-8-50) Eve Arden stars as Connie Brooks, with Gale Gordon as Principal Conklin, Richard Crenna as Walter Denton, Jeff Chandler as Mr. Boynton, Jane Morgan as Mrs. Davis. Miss Brooks must intervene when Walter Denton writes a scathing editorial about the Board of Education. Colgate-Palmolive, CBS. (28 min)

CRIME CLUB (7-31-47) "The Self-Made Corpse," the story of "a plan for living in which the architect was death." When a bank employee is cheated out of a promotion, he formulates a plan to hire a gang and rob the bank. Cast includes Bill Smith, Arthur Vinton, Irene Hubbard, Joan Compton, Barry Thompson. Sustaining. MBS. (29 min)

GOOD NEWS OF 1939 (6-15-39) Robert Young is master of ceremonies, with Frank Morgan, Connie Boswell, Fanny Brice and Hanley Stafford (as Baby Snooks and Daddy), Meredith Willson and the Orchestra, and guest Carey Wilson, MGM movie commentator, who presents a monologue about "The World's Worst Worrier." Frank Morgan is in New York for the premiere of *The Wizard of Oz*. Maxwell House Coffee, NBC. (31 min and 30 min)



Robert Young

OLD TIME
RADIO



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2013

GANGBUSTERS (6-19-48) "The Case of the Tennessee Trigger Men" with Ted DeCorisia, Susan Douglas, Mercedes McCambridge. The story of two couples who drive around the midwest, committing a series of robberies. Sustaining, CBS. (25 min)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31 SWINGING IN GLENN MILLER'S FOOTSTEPS

GLENN MILLER AND HIS ORCHESTRA (8-15-39) "Dinner dance music" from the Glen Island Casino in New Rochelle, New York,

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Glenn Miller

with vocals by Marion Hutton, Ray Eberle, Tex Beneke and Glenn Miller. Selections include "The Lady's In Love With You," "Twilight Interlude," "We Can Live On Love," and "I Want To Be Happy." Al Robinson announces.

Sustaining, NBC-Red. (15 min)

BOB CHESTER AND HIS ORCHESTRA (9-21-39) Featuring "The new sensation of the nation" in a broadcast from the Mayfair Restaurant in the Hotel Van Cleve in Dayton Ohio. Vocals by Kathleen Lane, Al Stuart and Stu Braden. Selections include "Blue Orchids," "A Man And His Dream," and "What's New?" Announcer is Dick Folle. Sustaining, CBS. (25 min)

MAJOR GLENN MILLER'S AMERICAN BAND OF THE AEF (4-27-45) Chief arranger Sgt. Jerry Gray conducts the American Band of the AEF after Major Miller's disappearance, with vocals by Sgt. Johnny Desmond and the Crew Chiefs. Tunes played include "A String of Pearls," "Rhapsody In Blue," and "The Trolley Song." Warrant Officer Paul Dudley announces. Recorded on April 9, 1945 at the Olympia Theatre in Paris. Broadcast via the Allied Expeditionary Forces Program of the BBC. (29 min)

HERES TO VETERANS #53 (Recorded 7-19-47) A special version of the *Chesterfield Supper Club* featuring Tex Beneke and the Glenn Miller Orchestra. The band plays "In My Merry Oldsmobile," "Long Long Ago," and "In The Mood," along with other selections. Announcer is Eddie Hubbard. Veterans Administration, Syndicated. (14 min)

JERRY GRAY AND HIS BAND OF TODAY (8-20-50) "The Band of Today" is heard on this broadcast from the Hollywood Palladium,

with vocals by Tommy Traynor and Tony Gray. Selections heard include "This Can't Be Love," "Cincinnati Dancing Pig," and "Anvil Chorus." Bill Baldwin announces. Sustaining, CBS (30 min)

NBC BANDSTAND (10-26-56) *Excerpt.* Ralph Flanagan and his Orchestra are the featured "Band of the Week," along with special guest Johnny Desmond and host Bert Parks. Tunes played include "Joshua Fit The Battle Of Jericho," "Prisoner Of Love," and "Surrey With The Fringe On Top." Bill Wendell announces. NBC-TV and Radio simulcast. (18 min)

NBC BANDSTAND (9-20-56) *Excerpt.* Ray McKinley and the Glenn Miller Orchestra are heard in this broadcast from Radio City in New York City, with host Bert Parks. The Miller band plays "Uncle Tom," "I've Got A Gal In Kalamazoo," "On The Street Where You Live" and other selections. Announcer is Bill Wendell. NBC Radio. (23 min)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be our resident big band historian **KARL PEARSON**, who will talk about the music of Glenn Miller and the bandleaders who were influenced by it.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

ADVENTURES OF OZZIE & HARRIET (10-7-45) Ozzie plans to cure Harriet of her tendency to exaggerate. With the King Sisters, Bea Benaderet John Brown, Joel Davis, Louise Erickson. International Silver, CBS. (30 min)

HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL (3-29-59) "A Sense of Justice" starring John Dehner as Paladin, with Ben Wright as Hey Boy. A sheriff asks Paladin to protect an accused killer from being lynched. Cast includes Harry Bartell, Virginia Gregg, Lynn Allen, Barney Phillips, Richard Perkins. Sustaining, CBS. (21 min)

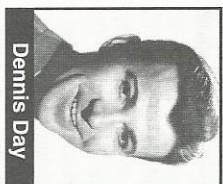
SPEAKING OF RADIO (6-21-12) Steve Darnall's conversation with Joe Franklin, "King of Nostalgia," who talks about his lengthy career as a disc jockey and interviewer on radio and television. (33 min)

EDDIE CANTOR'S SHOW BUSINESS (1950s) Eddie plays disc jockey, introducing records and reminiscing about Sophie Tucker, Ted Lewis, Fanny Brice, Al Jolson, Will Rogers, and Jimmy Durante. AFRRS rebroadcast. (23 min)

NICK CARTER, MASTER DETECTIVE (1-

28-45) "An Eye for an Eye" stars Lon Clark as Nick, with Helen Choate as Patsy. Nick must stop a murderous plot involving a household ruled by fear and an old woman who is convinced she has been divinely appointed to rule the world. Ken Powell announces. Lin-X, MBS. (29 min)

DAY IN THE LIFE OF DENNIS DAY (10-16-48) It's the popular singer starring in his own show, with Bea Benaderet, Barbara Eiler, Dink Trout, Frank Nelson, Herb Vigran, Charles Dart and the Orchestra. After Dennis loses his job, two crooks promise him a commission if he can sell 100 acres of land to his girlfriend's mother. Vern Smith announces. Colgate-Palmolive, NBC. (28 min)



Dennis Day

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 STOP THE PRESSES!

BIG TOWN (10-19-37) Edward G. Robinson stars as Steve Wilson, managing editor of the *Illustrated Press*, with Claire Trevor as Lorelei Kilbourne in the first show of the series. Steve decides to reveal that a noted socialite has a criminal past. Rinso, CBS. (31 min)

ROGERS OF THE GAZETTE (8-26-53) Will Rogers Jr. stars as a newspaper editor in the small town of Ilyria, with Georgia Ellis as Maggie, Parley Baer as Doc, Edgar Barrier as John. A journalism student comes to Ilyria and makes her presence felt at the newspaper. Cast includes Karen Steel, Harry Bartell, Anne Morrison. Sustaining, CBS. (30 min)

CASEY, CRIME PHOTOGRAPHER (4-24-47) "The Gentle Strangler" starring Staats Cotsworth as Casey, with Jan Miner as Anne Williams, and John Gibson as Ethelbert Casey and Anne join the police as they investigate a series of murders committed by a mysterious stranger. Tony Marvin announces. Anchor Hocking Glass, CBS. (30 min)

ABBOTT & COSTELLO SHOW (3-2-44) With Connie Haines, Freddie Rich and the Orchestra, Mel Blanc, Ewia Altman, announcer Ken Niles, and guest Hedda Hopper, who offers to cover the Hollywood beat for Bud and Lou's newspaper. Camel Cigarettes, NBC. (28 min)



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

with host STEVE DARNALL

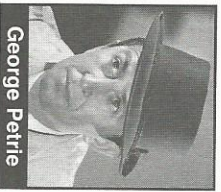
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SEPTEMBER 2013

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

NIGHT BEAT (7-3-50) "Marty" stars Frank Lovejoy as Randy Stone, night beat reporter for the *Chicago Star*. Randy encounters a six-year-old boy, who is clutching a \$100 bill and looking for his mother. Sustaining, NBC. (29 min)



George Petrie

THE BIG STORY (7-21-48) The story of Keeler McCartney, reporter for the *Atlanta-Constitution*, and his efforts to help break up a lottery racket. With George Petrie as McCartney; Bob Sioane narrates. Pall Mall Cigarettes, NBC. (24 min)

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

DICK TRACY (7-23-47) An isolated episode from "The Case of the Untunny Clowns." Dick and Pat Patton go undercover as circus clowns to track down a murderer. Sustaining, ABC. (15 min)

SHERLOCK HOLMES (1-1-4-46) Basil Rathbone stars as Holmes, with Nigel Bruce as Watson, who narrates the story of how Holmes solved a murder while traveling incognito in the Himalayan mountains. Harry Bartell announces. Petri Wines, MBS. (29 min)

BURNS AND ALLEN SHOW (3-24-49) With Bill Goodwin, announcer Tobe Reed, Bea Benaderet, Frank Nelson, and guest Jane Wyman. George and Gracie talk about the upcoming Academy Awards. Maxwell House Coffee, NBC. (28 min)

DIARY OF FATE (3-23-48) "The Paul Reese Entry" tells the story of a sportswriter who overhears a plot to fix a fight and agrees to keep quiet in exchange for a bribe. Cast: Lois Andres, Steve Brody, Herbert Litton, Jerry Hausner, Hal Sawyer. Syndicated. (27 min)

LUM AND ABNER (2-26-35) An isolated episode of the long-running series, with Chester Lauck as Lum and Norris Goff as Abner, who has been voted manager of the Jot 'em Down Store. Horlick's Malted Milk, MBS. (15 min)

DIMENSION X (7-14-50) "The Man in the Moon" starring Luis Van Rooten and Santos Ortega. The Bureau of Missing Persons receives a transmission that appears to be coming from the moon. Cast includes Joe DeSanitis, Larry Haines, Raymond Edward Johnson, Wheaties, NBC. (30 min)

PHILCO RADIO TIME (6-11-47) Bing Crosby stars, with guests Ethel Merman and Alec Templeton, in a show presented in New York

for military audiences. Bing talks about vacation plans and sings "If This Isn't Love" and "It's a Good Day." Later, Bing joins Ethel for a version of "Anything You Can Do." Glenn Riggs announces. Philco, ABC. (30 min)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 RADIO IN THE FALL OF 1945

Read the article about radio in the fall of 1945 on page 21.

LUX RADIO THEATRE (9-3-45) "The Enchanted Cottage" starring Robert Young and Dorothy McGuire in a radio adaptation of the film based on the story by Sir Arthur Wing Pinero. Hunt Stromberg is guest producer. Lux Soap, CBS. (20 min & 20 min & 18 min)

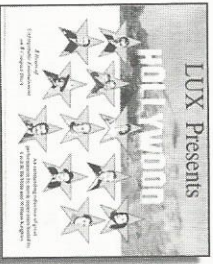
BOB HOPE SHOW (9-11-45) It's the first show of the season, from the Corpus Christi Naval Training Center, with Skinnay Ennis, Frances Langford, Jerry Colonna and guest Robert Montgomery. Bob salutes Hollywood's contribution to the war effort. AFRS rebroadcast. (29 min)

FRED ALLEN SHOW (10-7-45) The first

show of the new season, with Portland Hoffa, Minerva Pious, Kenny Delmar, Parker Fennelley, the DeMarco Sisters, and guests Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. Fred meets the newest residents of Allen's Alley and tells the story of how he got back into radio after taking a year off. The Allen's Alley question: "How is the housing shortage affecting you?" AFRS rebroadcast. (26 min)

THIS IS YOUR FBI (10-26-45) "Serviceman's Fraud," narrated by Reed Hadley. The FBI investigates a fascist organization targeting returning servicemen. Cast includes Harry Bartell, William Johnstone. Equitable Life Assurance Society, ABC. (29 min)

FIBBER MCGEE & MOLLY (10-30-45) Jim and Marian Jordan star as the McGees, broadcasting from the Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto for the Ninth Canadian Victory Loan, with Gale Gordon, Arthur Q. Bryan, Bea Benaderet, announcer Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the Orchestra. McGee has entered his sculpture in the local art competition. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (30 min)



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- ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND Starring Tyrone Power, Dinah Shore & Al Jolson
- RED RIVER Starring John Wayne, Joanne Dru, Walter Brennan & Jeff Chandler
- ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES Starring James Cagney, Pat O'Brien & Gloria Dixon
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SUNDAY, JULY 7

LONE RANGER (7-2-48) Brace Beemer stars as the Lone Ranger, with John Todd as Tonto. A woman and her invalid sister are the key to the Lone Ranger's pursuit of a wanted criminal. Fred Foy announces. Syndicated. *Read the article about The Lone Ranger on page 4.*
COMMAND PERFORMANCE #3 (3-15-42) Kate Smith is mistress of ceremonies, with Henry Youngman, Barry Wood, Ed "Archie" Gardner, Ted Husing, Robert Benchley, AFRS.
ACADEMY AWARD (9-11-46) "Shadow of a Doubt" starring Joseph Cotten and June Vincent in a radio version of the 1943 film, about a young girl who suspects that her uncle harbors a secret. House of Squibb, CBS.

SUNDAY, JULY 14

TOWN HALL TONIGHT (5-25-38) Fred Allen stars, with Portland Hoffa, announcer Andre Baruch. The Mighty Allen Art Players present a "One Long Pan" mystery. Ipana, Sal Hepatica, NBC.
THE WHISTLER (5-19-47) "Hasty Conclusion" starring Charles Halton and Norman Field. An ambitious college professor blackmails the dean of the department over a plagiarized manuscript. Signal Oil, CBS. (29 min)

SUNDAY, JULY 21

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (2-18-48) With Peggy Lee, Candy Candido, Alan Reed, announcer Howard Petrie and guest Victor Moore, who wants to sing a song. Rexall, NBC.
SHERLOCK HOLMES (10-22-45) "The Great Gandolfo" stars Basil Rathbone as Holmes, who must solve the murder of a magician's assistant. Perfi Wines, MBS.
ADVENTURES OF OZZIE & HARRIET (1-23-49) Ozzie Nelson and Harriet Hilliard star, with John Brown, Henry Blair, Tommy Bernard.

Ozzie is eager to show off his skill at card tricks. International Silver, NBC.

SUNDAY, JULY 28

YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR (2-27-56 through 3-2-56) "The Fathom Five Matter" starring Bob Bailey as Johnny, who investigates when a cruiser goes down off the coast of Miami. Sustaining, CBS.
GRIFF WILLIAMS AND HIS ORCHESTRA (3-28-40) From the Continental Room of the Hotel Stevens in Chicago, with vocals by Buddy Moreno, Bob Kirk and Wait King. Sustaining, MBS.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4

KRAFT MUSIC HALL (2-8-45) Bing Crosby stars, with Eugenie Baird, The Chariteters. Guests are whistler Fred Lowrey and singer Vivian Della Chiesa. Kraft, NBC.
MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER (3-16-48) "They Struck It Rich" is the story of two men who plan to rob a bank by using the tunnels of the sewer system. Sustaining, MBS.
BURNS AND ALLEN SHOW (5-15-40) From Omaha, where Gracie expects to receive the nomination for president from the Surprise Party. Hinds Lotion, CBS.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11

GREAT SCENES FROM GREAT PLAYS (10-22-48) "Dark Victory" starring Celeste Holm and Walter Abel, in a radio version of the 1934 play about a carefree socialite whose doctor falls in love with her. Syndicated.
GREAT GILDERSLLEEVE (9-13-50) Willard Waterman stars as Gildy, who is looking for a reason to avoid visiting Marjorie's in-laws. Kraft Foods, NBC.
GUNSMOKE (10-10-52) "Hinka-Doo" stars William Conrad as Marshall Matt Dillon. A

tough-talking woman has taken over the Longhorn Saloon. Sustaining, CBS.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18

CONNIE BOSWELL SHOW (7-12-44) With Buddy Lester, announcer Jack McCarthy. The cast presents "The Life and Loves of Connie Boswell." Sustaining, NBC BLUE.
GREEN HORNET (11-29-45) "Protection, Incorporated" starring Bob Hall. The Hornet investigates a protection racket after a number of fruit stores are bombed. Sustaining, ABC.
RED SKELTON SHOW (1-28-47) The Skelton Scrapbook of Satire centers on "Dancing," Raleigh Cigarettes, NBC. *Read the article about Red Skelton on page 56.*

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25

NIGHTWATCH (3-10-55) An unusual example of "reality radio," as a reporter rides with police, wearing a hidden wire to capture dialogue and sounds. Sustaining, CBS.
FIBBER MCGEE & MOLLY (5-23-39) Jim and Marian Jordan star. Molly receives a cablegram with news concerning the arrival of a stork...through the mail. Johnson's Wax, NBC.
SUSPENSE (1-16-47) "Overture in Three Keys" starring Joan Bennett. A music professor's wife finds herself attracted to her husband's musical protégé. Roma Wines, CBS.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS (10-8-39) Roger Prior hosts, with Connie Boswell, Gary Cooper, Bob Hope, and (as a last-minute substitute for Marlene Dietrich) ZaSu Pitts! Giff Oil, CBS. *Read the article about ZaSu Pitts on page 30.*

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA (9-1-41) "Left Erickson" stars Karl Swenson in the story of the first explorer to colonize the shores of America. DuPont, NBC.
MATINEE WITH BOB & RAY (10-28-48) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding from early in their careers, as they present "Jack Headstrong, All-American American." Participating sponsors, WHDH.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

CISCO KID (2-15-52) "Night Stage" stars Jack Mather as Cisco, Harry Lang as Pancho. Cisco uses a shipment of gold to trap a saloon owner

and known criminal. Syndicated.
OUR MISS BROOKS (11-7-48) Eve Arden stars as Connie Brooks of Madison High School, whose friends and colleagues want her to take up a hobby. Colgate-Palmolive, CBS.
LET GEORGE DO IT (3-14-49) Bob Bailey stars as George Valentine, who is challenged to find what three murder victims have in common. Standard Oil of California, MBS.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (11-19-44) From the U.S. Naval Hospital, Corona, CA, with guest Larry Adler. Jack and Don get into an argument over who said "Don't Give Up the Ship." Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC.
DRAGNET (4-20-50) Jack Webb stars as Sgt. Joe Friday. The police investigate when a woman is critically injured in a hit-and-run accident. Fatima Cigarettes, NBC.

MELODY HOUR (6-6-49) Buddy Clark stars, with Ted Dale and the Orchestra and guest Doris Day, who sings "Again." AFRS rebroadcast.
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

LUX RADIO THEATRE (4-24-39) "Broadway Bill" starring Robert Taylor, Frances Dee, Gail Patrick and Raymond Walburn in a radio version of Frank Capra's 1934 film, about a young man and his race horse. Lux Soap, CBS.

BIRDS EYE OPEN HOUSE (5-10-45) Dinah Shore stars, with Harry Von Zell, Robert Emmet Dolan and the Orchestra, and guest Frank Sinatra, who sings "You'll Never Walk Alone." Birds Eye Frozen Foods, NBC.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

THE SHADOW (2-15-48) "Terror at Wolf's Head Knoll" starring Bret Morrison as Lamont Cranston. After an accident, Margot and Lamont seek shelter in a mysterious mansion. Blue Coal, MBS.
LIFE OF RILEY (7-5-47) William Bendix stars as Chester Riley. Riley and wife Peg have an argument and he fears that she is through with him. Drefl, NBC.

FORT LARAMIE (3-18-56) Raymond Burr stars as Capt. Lee Quince, who hopes to exchange a captured Sioux chief for two women being held by his tribe. Sustaining, CBS.



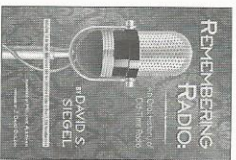
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- Marilyn Monroe

**“It’s not true I had
nothing on. I had
the radio on.”**



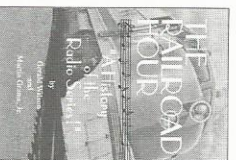
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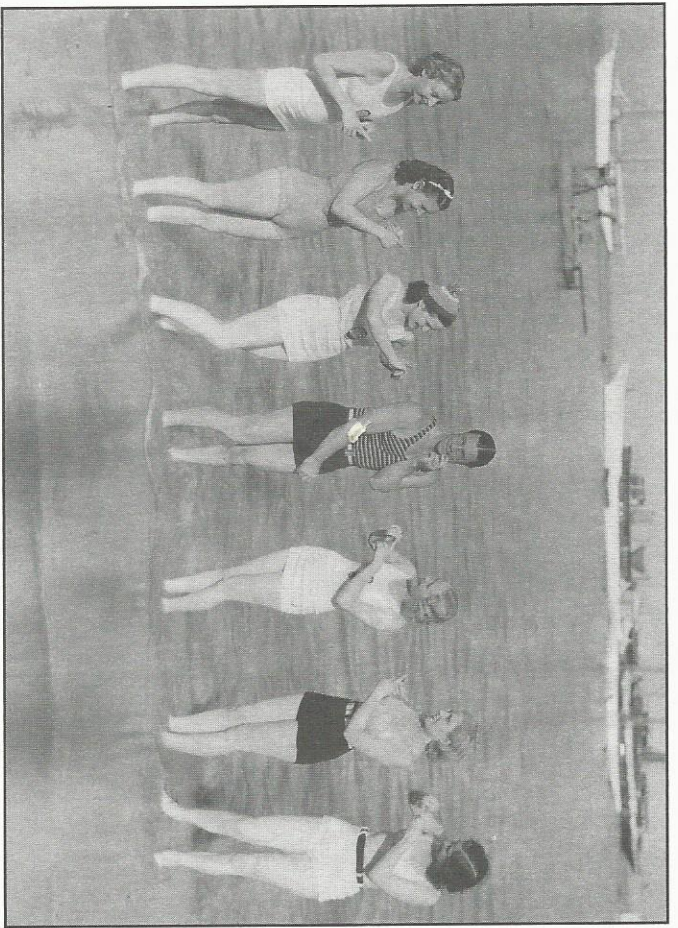
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The photo above was taken to promote Joe E. Brown's 1932 film, *You Said a Mouthful*. (If you look *very* closely, you can see Brown's broad-mouthed likeness on the swimsuits of the beauties who are supposedly scolding him.)

Presumably the photo was taken for purely organic purposes, to alert the world to Brown's performance as an inventor who created a "non-sinkable bathing suit material." Or...maybe the folks at Warner Bros. wanted to catch the attention of would-be moviegoers during the height of the Great Depression by giving them a shot of style and glamour.

More than one person has suggested that Hollywood's embrace of glamour during the dark days of the Great Depression served as a lifeline and even an inspiration to Americans during a time of fear and uncertainty. Will Hays, head of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association, went as far as to suggest that "No medium has contributed

more greatly than the film to the maintenance of the national morale during a period featured by revolution, riot and political turmoil in other countries."

One can debate whether Hollywood accomplished all of that by the time Hays made his 1934 pronouncement, but there's no denying that during the Great Depression — indeed, during any time of social or economic uncertainty — many of us have sought comfort in the glamour associated with the "Golden Age" of Hollywood. Our own lives might be in a state of flux, but somewhere in America, someone was having a wonderful time, surrounded by sun, sea, and bathing beauties — even if, like Joe E. Brown, they weren't the sort one would automatically associate with such glamour. In a way, that made it more enjoyable... and made it seem more attainable. Today, it was Joe E. Brown's day in the sun. Tomorrow, it might be ours. And now, it's yours. Enjoy!



PHOTOFEST

Who better epitomized the glamour of the Golden Age of Hollywood than the original platinum blonde, JEAN HARLOW? Harlow's all-too-brief life and career were marked by some memorable performances, beginning when Howard Hughes cast her in the talking version of his 1930 film, *Hell's Angels*. She managed to outlast the notoriety of such early films as Frank Capra's *Platinum Blonde* and *Red-Headed Woman* (a film whose look at adultery incurred the wrath of the Hays Office) with memorable dramatic and comedic turns in *Red Dust*, *Dinner at Eight*, *China Seas*, and *Libeled Lady*.



PARAMOUNT PICTURES/PHOTOFEST

Despite looking plenty glamorous by the pool, **MARJORIE REYNOLDS** is perhaps most famous for a scene associated with the snow — as Linda Mason in the 1942 film *Holiday Inn*, she was the first woman to whom Bing Crosby ever sang “White Christmas.” Reynolds appeared on stage and screen with the likes of Jack Benny, Charlie Chaplin (in 1947’s *Monsieur Verdoux*), Bud Abbott and Lou Costello (in *The Time of Their Lives*), and Vincent Price (in *His Kind of Woman*). In the 1950s, she performed opposite William Bendix on *The Life of Riley* as Chester Riley’s long-suffering wife Peg. In the years after Reynolds’ 1997 passing, mystery writer John Dandola included Reynolds as a character in two of his recent novels. Tune in to *Those Were the Days* on July 20 to hear Marjorie Reynolds on *The Jack Benny Program*.



The legendary writer Graham Greene once praised **BETTE DAVIS** for what he called her “corrupt and phosphorescent prettiness.” One of the true icons of Hollywood, Davis was perhaps the first actress to achieve lasting fame specifically for her dramatic work — particularly her willingness to play strong and often unsympathetic characters in such films as *Of Human Bondage*, *The Letter*, *The Little Foxes*, *All About Eve* and the 1962 camp classic *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* During a six-decade career, Davis won two Oscars (for 1935’s *Dangerous* and 1938’s *Jezebel*) and was the first actress to receive ten Academy Award nominations. Tune in to *Those Were the Days* on July 20 to hear Bette Davis on a broadcast of *Academy Award*.

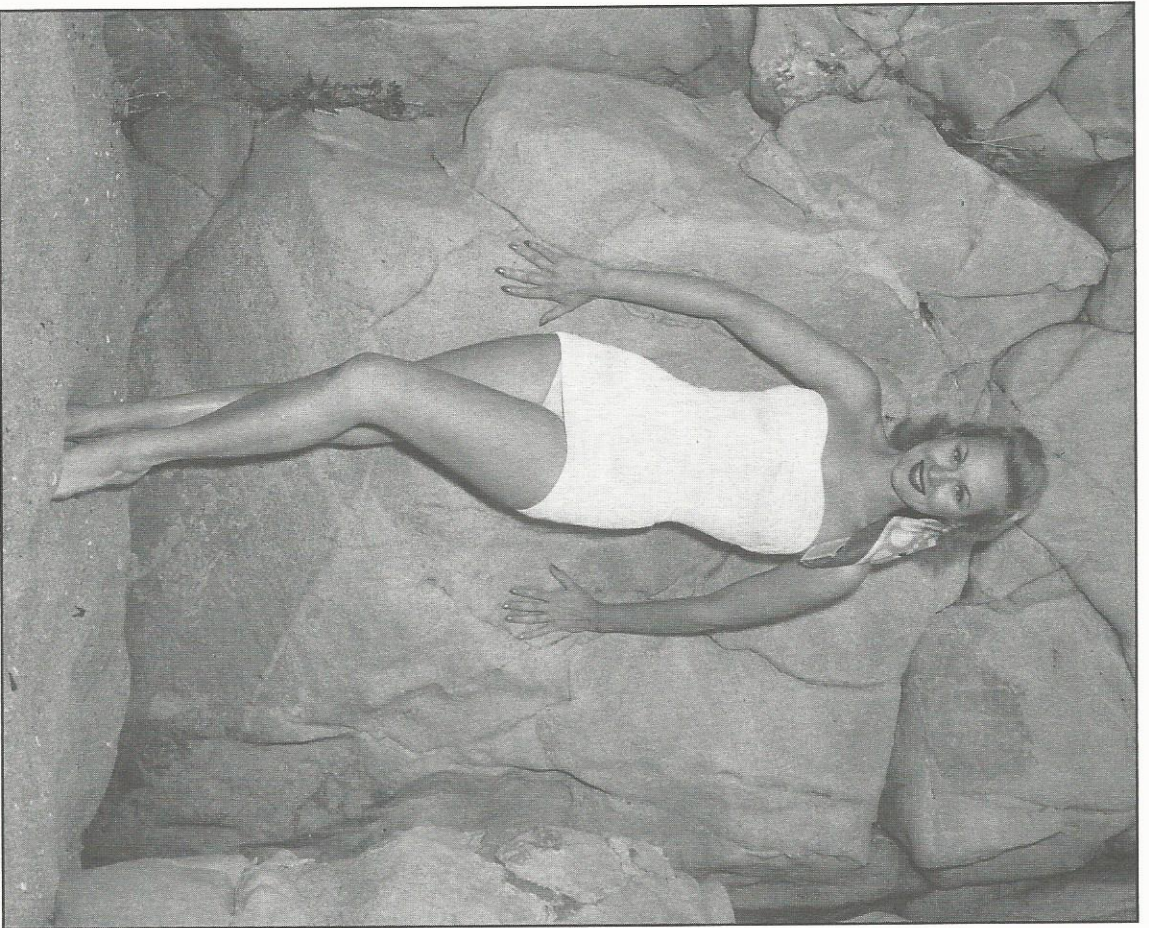


JOAN BENNY COLLECTION

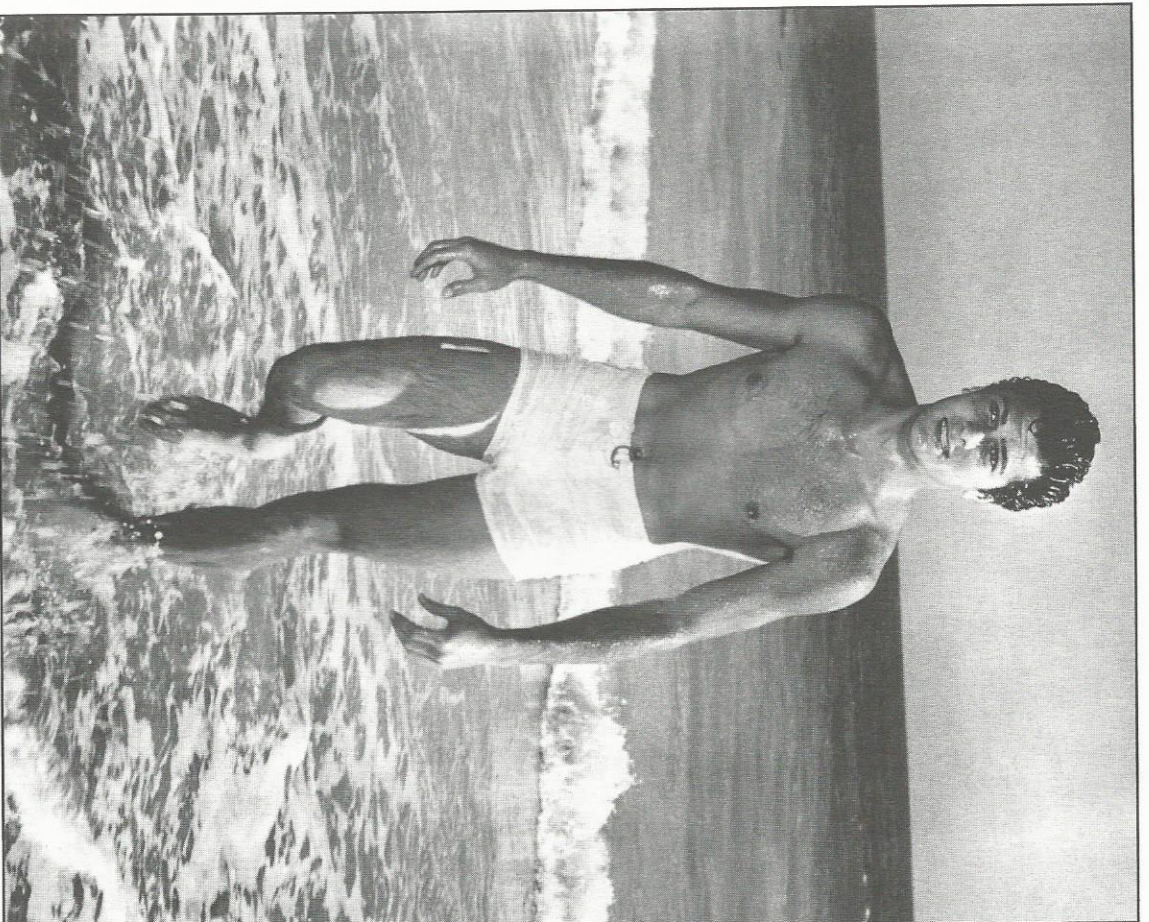
At first glance, the above photo might look like nothing more than a candid snapshot of a man learning to water-ski — however, since this is **JACK BENNY**, there's something inherently entertaining (dare one say comical?) about it. Perhaps the most beloved comedian of the Golden Age of Radio, the man born Benjamin Kubelsky began his career as a violinist before he turned to comedy. His 23-year radio career is rightly hailed as both entertaining and groundbreaking, as he and his writers were among the first on radio to bypass the typical stand-up style of vaudeville humor in favor of character-based situation comedy. Tune in to *Those Were the Days* on July 20 to hear a 1947 *Jack Benny Program*.



Whether working on the sound stage or playing with a beach ball, lovely **ANN MILLER** was an expert at keeping on her toes, which should come as no surprise to anyone who witnessed her remarkable dancing skills (it was once claimed that she could tap 500 times a minute). Born in Texas, Ann was 14 when she lied about her age and signed a contract with RKO Studios, where she appeared, appropriately, as a dancer named Annie in the movie version of *Stage Door*. The following year, she played the would-be ballerina Essie in Frank Capra's version of *You Can't Take It With You*. A move to MGM in the late 1940s led to roles in *On the Town*, *Easter Parade* and *Kiss Me, Kate*. In later years she appeared in Stan Freberg's memorable commercial for Great American Soups and starred for nine years in the hit Broadway musical *Sugar Babies*.



According to a letter written to the Warner Brothers by the Sultan of Morocco, VIRGINIA MAYO is "tangible proof of the existence of God." She was barely in her twenties when she was signed by Samuel Goldwyn and was soon playing romantic leads in Bob Hope's *The Princess and the Pirate* and in four films opposite Danny Kaye (*Wonder Man*, *The Kid From Brooklyn*, *The Secret Lives of Walter Mitty* and *A Song Is Born*). She proved her dramatic skills opposite Dana Andrews in *The Best Years of Our Lives* and as the cold-hearted wife of psychotic Cody Jarrett (James Cagney) in the 1949 classic *White Heat* — which appears to be what she's radiating in this photo.



PHOTOFEST

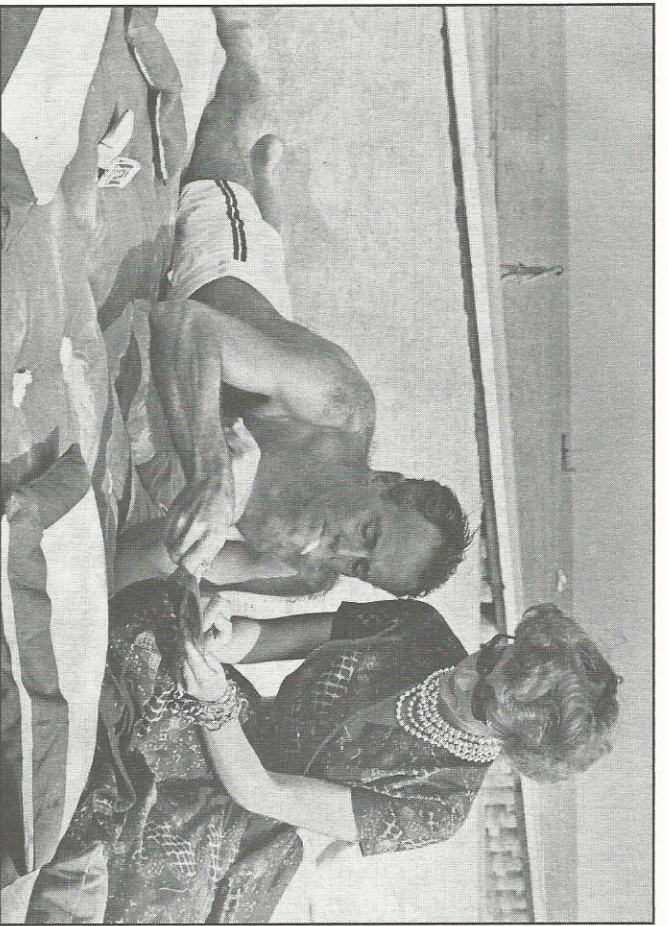
It is possible to like it *too hot*? Maybe so, but this photo suggests that TONY CURTIS found a way to beat the heat. The former Bernard Schwartz starred in over 140 movies during a 60-year career, turning in memorable performances in *Houdini*, *The Sweet Smell of Success*, *The Defiant Ones*, *Operation Petticoat*, *Spartacus*, *The Boston Strangler*, and the film that many people consider the greatest comedy of all time, Billy Wilder's uproarious *Some Like It Hot* (one of Curtis' co-stars, Joe E. Brown, can be seen on page 44 of this issue). Tune in to *Those Were the Days* on July 20 to hear Tony Curtis on an episode of *Suspense*.



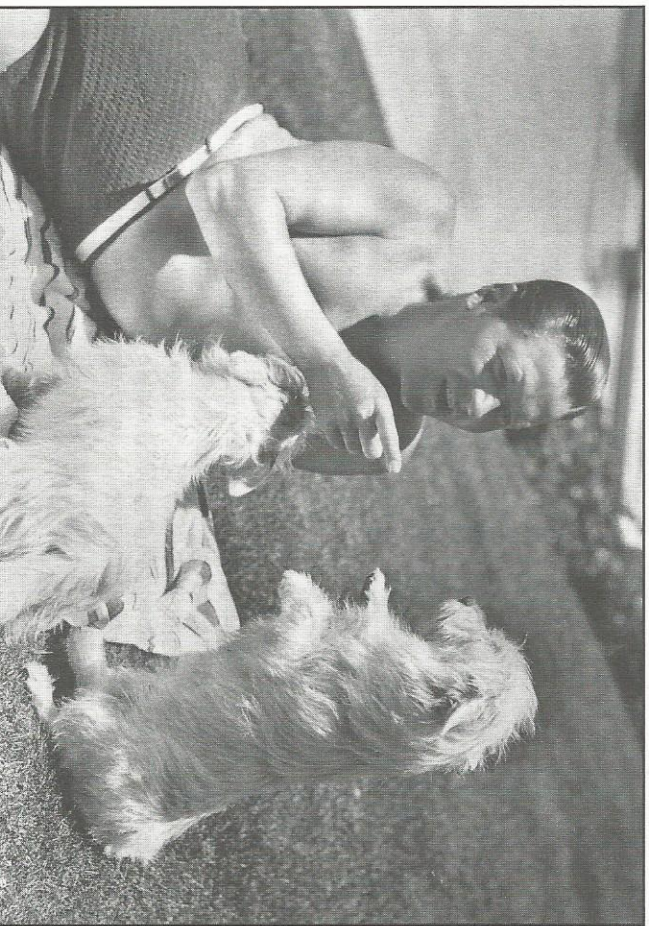
Summer is the time when the Golden Age of Hollywood like the *Bumsteeds* (from left): Baby Alexander and his parents, Blondie and Dagwood — played here by LARRY SIMMS, PENNY SINGLETON, and ARTHUR LAKE. Singleton and Lake played Blondie and Dagwood in a series of 28 movies between 1938 and 1950 and played the same roles on radio for a decade, beginning in 1939. Lake later played Dagwood on television for a 1957 series, while Singleton went on to a career in animation, providing the voice of *another* long-suffering wife: Jane Jetson. Tune in to *Those Were the Days* on July 20 to hear an episode of *Blondie*.



If you're wondering why JULIE LONDON's ensemble involves paints and brush, take a close look at her "sandals." London was a child when she first performed alongside her parents on the radio and was in her teens when she began her movie career with 1944's *Nabonga*. After a marriage to *Dragnet* creator Jack Webb (like London, a fan of jazz music), she rose to fame in the 1950s, employing her sultry (she referred to it as "over-smoked") voice on such hits as "Daddy," "Hot Toddy," and her biggest hit "Cry Me a River," which she performed during a particular memorable scene in the 1956 movie *The Girl Can't Help It*. In the 1970s, London appeared on television as head nurse Dixie McCall on the Webb-produced series *Emergency!*



Two gentlemen in repose: HENRY FONDA and wife AFDERA FRANCHETTI clearly have different ideas of beach attire, while JACK OAKIE gives direction to his West Highlanders. Tune in to *Those Were the Days* on July 20 to hear Fonda (with fellow swimsuit model Paulette Goddard) on a Screen Guild Players program.



PARAMOUNT PICTURES/PHOTOFEST

While this publication routinely highlights the kings and queens of Hollywood, only GRACE KELLY qualifies as actual royalty, having left behind a movie career in 1956 (after the release of *High Society*) to marry Prince Rainier of Monaco. The marriage seemed entirely appropriate for the actress who was cited by director John Ford as demonstrating "breeding, quality and class." Kelly worked frequently in New York during the early years of live television before making her movie debut as Amy Kane in the 1952 classic *High Noon*. She received her first Academy Award nomination for 1953's *Mogambo* and later won the Oscar for her performance in *The Country Girl*. This photo was taken on the French Riviera while Kelly was filming *To Catch a Thief*, the third (and last) of her films with legendary director Alfred Hitchcock. Tune in to *Those Were the Days* on July 20 to hear Grace Kelly on *The Bob Hope Show*.

RED SKELTON: The Hoosier Hits Hollywood

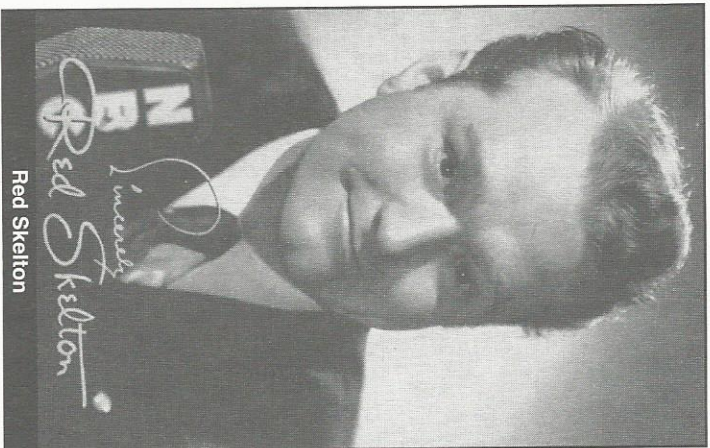
BY BILL OATES

Part two of a two-part article.

Raleigh Cigarettes sponsored *The Red Skelton Show*, which debuted on October 7, 1941. The show was broadcast from NBC's Sunset and Vine studios on Tuesday nights, immediately following *The Bob Hope Show*. The tobacco company coughed up a \$15,000 budget, with \$2,500 per week going to the star: Ozzie Nelson's orchestra provided the music with wife Harriet Hilliard singing. She also assumed parts in the script, playing Clem Kadiddlehopper's girlfriend Daisy June among others. Skelton's writing staff included wife Edna, Jack Douglas, and Benedict Freedman, with Edna co-ordinating the final scripts.

This new show, which would run through June 6, 1944, built on Red's earlier success with *Avalon Time*. Two memorable additions were cast member Wonderful Smith, dubbed "the negro comedy find of the year," and Red's char-

Bill Oates of Kouts, Indiana, is a high school English teacher and author.



Red Skelton

acter Junior, the Mean Widdle Kid. By the summer of 1942, Junior's proud admission of guilt, "I Dood It," became a national catchphrase and was forever enshrined (next to Red's handprints) in the cement at Grauman's Chinese Theater.

Although the Skeltons were making

more money than they could have imagined, much of it still slipped through Red's hands. A soft touch for those down on their luck (a situation with which Red and Edna had some familiarity), Skelton often handed out donations. Drinking and womanizing cost him money and led Edna to file for divorce in December of 1942.

Still vowing respect for each other, the separation was more or less amicable separation, as Edna retained her relationship in his business affairs and received 50% of Red's income and holdings for most of the next ten years. While Red certainly appreciated her management skills, the fact that he was not legally bound to her also meant that he would be eligible for the draft. Uncle Sam did not call for nearly three years — after Red had made hundreds of camp show appearances — but in 1944, he was finally inducted into the army. During those early years of the war, Red made eleven more movies at MGM, including

Ziegfeld Follies (filmed in 1944 but released two years later), where he had a chance to capture his "Guzzlers' Gin" routine on film.

Red picked up more than paychecks at MGM — he also found his second wife there. Having met her on the studio lot, Red made Georgia Davis the second Mrs. Skelton on March 9, 1945. The following day, Red had his tonsils removed. Shortly thereafter, he left with the army for Europe, where the War was winding down.

Unfortunately for Red, both the brass and the enlisted men expected him to perform on call. If he refused, he risked being called a Hollywood snob. When his fellow GIs were relaxing after their day's labors, Red was often called upon to perform his second job: to make them laugh.

In the fall of 1945, Red received his discharge and returned to the states for his new wife and a new radio season. *The Red Skelton Show* returned to the air on



The Red Skelton Show (from left): David Forrester, Anita Ellis, Wonderful Smith, Verna Felton, Red, GeGe Pearson, Rod O'Connor

December 4, 1945. The program was heard in its old timeslot on the same network with the same writing staff and sponsor. David Forrester came on board as the show's music director (by this time, Dizzie and Harriet had become the stars of their own show) and radio veterans Verna Felton, Lurene Tuttle, GeGe Pearson and Patrick McGeehan joined the cast to support Red's ever-growing universe of characters, with Tuttle and Felton playing the long-suffering mother and grandmother (respectively) of the mischievous Junior.

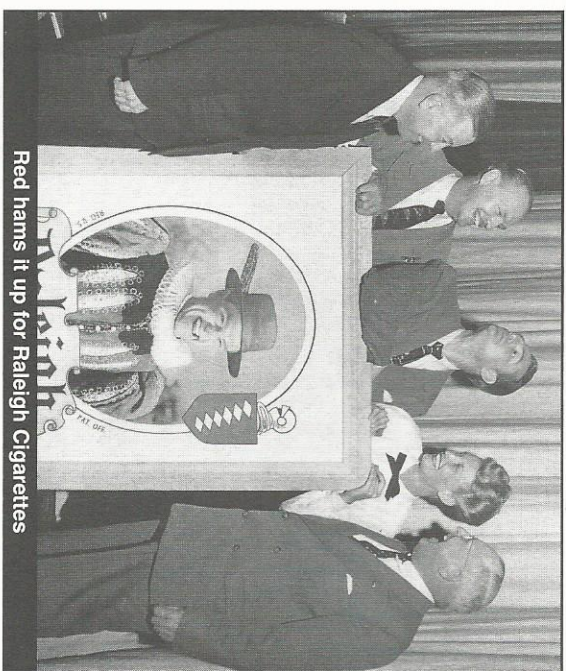
The format remained fairly constant on radio and on many of the television shows. After opening with a monologue, announcer Rod O'Connor would introduce the theme of the Skelton Scrapbook of Satire. One week, it might center on newspapers; another week, it might examine the post-War housing shortage. Each theme was addressed through a series of vignettes featuring characters like Junior, Deadeye the cowboy, Clem Kadiddlehopper, Willy Lump Lump, or J.

Newton Numbskull.

Red also offered an unusual bonus for his studio audiences. Instead of a pre-show warm-up that might leave the audience less inspired during the actual program, Red treated the crowd to an "after-show," one that was often more risqué and more visual than the show radio listeners had just heard. (It wasn't unheard of for Red to delight the crowd with the now-legendary "Guzzler's Gin" routine.) The after-show itself became a draw to audiences and to other comedians.

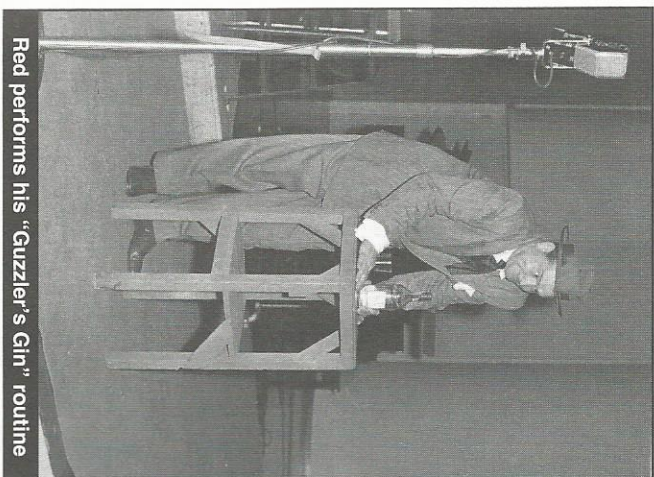
The provision in Red's MGM contract that would allow him to perform on TV was realized when he brought his show to NBC television beginning on September 30, 1951. Although Skelton often had to adapt his physical style of comedy for radio, television allowed him to return to pantomime and even create new characters for the small screen.

Unfortunately, his sponsor, Proctor and Gamble, insisted that Red perform the show live. Red disliked reading from cue cards, and compared to the simplicity of radio, the rigors of live television —



Red hams it up for Faleigh Cigarettes

memorizing a new script every week while also accommodating costume, make-up and set changes in the course of production — were a major source of stress. During the first two years of the television show, Red did double-duty, appearing every week on CBS radio (Red had been part of the radio network's "talent raid," following Jack Benny, Edgar Bergen and the *Amos*



Red performs his "Guzzler's Gin" routine

'n' *Andy Show* from NBC) along with his weekly NBC television appearances.

Despite his busy schedule, the quality remained high enough for his television show to win two Emmys in 1952, for Best Actor and Best Show. At the awards ceremony, the honest and self-effacing Skelton thanked those responsible for the honor but announced that Lucille Ball was the more worthy recipient for *I Love Lucy*.

In the fall of 1952, in order to give Red some respite between scenes, the show took a new approach. To give the viewers a sense of "live," the sponsors allowed a "stop and go" method of filming. Inspired by the three-camera technique created by Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz for *I Love Lucy*, the performance essentially would go on live before three movie cameras that were filming simultaneously; and breaks would be allowed between scenes for changing costumes and makeup.

The result was a calamity. Red was performing for a small audience of primarily invited guests, who had difficulty seeing him because they had to look around bulky motion picture cameras without the aid of monitors (which weren't available for 16 mm film). In addition, it wasn't possible to record enough laughter from the "live" show, so a sound man had to approximate where the laughs came. The following year, CBS picked up Red's television show for \$12,000 per week, and his stress level and drinking increased with his salary. He would go on for an hour "live," but the show continued to disappoint.

There was more going on behind-the-scenes as well: although Red's star continued to rise, wife Georgia grew less tolerant of Edna's constant managerial presence. When Edna and Red parted ways for good in 1952, the impact she'd had throughout her ex-husband's career — which included guiding him to bigger and better deals, keeping his finances afloat and even helping him get a high school degree in 1938 — was soon forgotten.

Losing Edna after the first season may be why Red's TV show lost its grip on the ratings; after finishing the first season as the fourth most-popular show on television, *The Red Skelton Show* did not break the top twenty again until the 1955-56 season — dropping as low as 86th place in the spring of 1955.

One new staff member who may have led to Skelton's return to ratings respectability was head writer Sherwood Schwartz, a veteran writer who had cut his teeth as one of Bob Hope's joke-smiths. Schwartz would remain on the program for eight seasons until he moved on to create *Gilligan's Island* and *The*

Brady Bunch.

Another fortunate addition was a young writer and performer named Johnny Carson. One of Red's favorite local Los Angeles programs, *Carson's Cellar*, operated on a shoestring budget yet created entertaining comedy, much of which would anticipate the humor that Carson employed later when he became host of *The Tonight Show*. Red so enjoyed one reference Johnny made (about a non-appearance by Skelton) that he actually showed up as a guest, which was quite a catch for an up-and-coming comedian.

Red appeared on *Carson's Cellar* several more times; when the show folded, he offered Carson a job as a writer and sketch actor. These were welcome opportunities, but they couldn't match the exposure Johnny got in 1954, after Red sustained an injury during a rehearsal and asked Carson to fill-in.

The mid-to-late 1950s had been rough on the video comedy pioneers, with Sid Caesar, Jackie Gleason and Milton Berle all losing shows and ratings to the onslaught of television westerns. But Red honed his program to make better comedy, and in some cases parodied the very "oaters" that challenged his show's existence.

While his colleagues looked for new enterprises to recapture their earlier appeal, Red's star continued to rise. But the respectable ratings were offset by an unforeseen personal complication: in January 1957, Red's nine-year old son Richard was diagnosed with leukemia. Now Red was fighting two battles: one with the changing tastes of television viewers and the very serious one for the life of his son. Sadly, in 1958, Richard's long battle ended and Red left television for most of the 1957-58 season to address

his private grief.

Despite (or perhaps because of) his personal tragedy, Red Skelton changed his outlook on life and refined his art into what we today celebrate as classic. After his return to television, Red's hour-long programs reflected the best of what the comedian had to offer. His previous sincere final remarks to his audience, hoping that they understood the fun he was having, evolved into his classic salutation "...and may God Bless." Likewise, when Skelton appeared in concert, he would stay after the show until those who wished to meet him were greeted satisfactorily. This author met Red in 1989 and enjoyed a brief post-performance chat at a performance in Merrillville, Indiana. True to the rumors, even though he was exhausted following a 90-minute show, the septuagenarian Red stayed around until anyone who wanted to say a few words had the chance to do so.

Red's television show spent most of the 1960s in the top ten and got as close as No. 2 (second only to *Bonanza*) during the 1966-67 season. It was a socially turbulent decade, but Skelton continued the tradition of comedy-variety shows, while introducing new segments, like "The Silent Spot," devoted to Red's brilliant pantomime skills. (In September of 1967, Red shared the segment with Harpo Marx; in February of 1965, he performed his "Concert in Pantomime" with the great Marcel Marceau.)

One of Skelton's most memorable moments from this decade was on January 14, 1969, when he debuted his explanation of "The Pledge of Allegiance." CBS rewarded their hard-working comedian by dropping him from their line-up in 1970, despite the fact his show was seventh in the ratings. NBC allowed Red back for one sea-

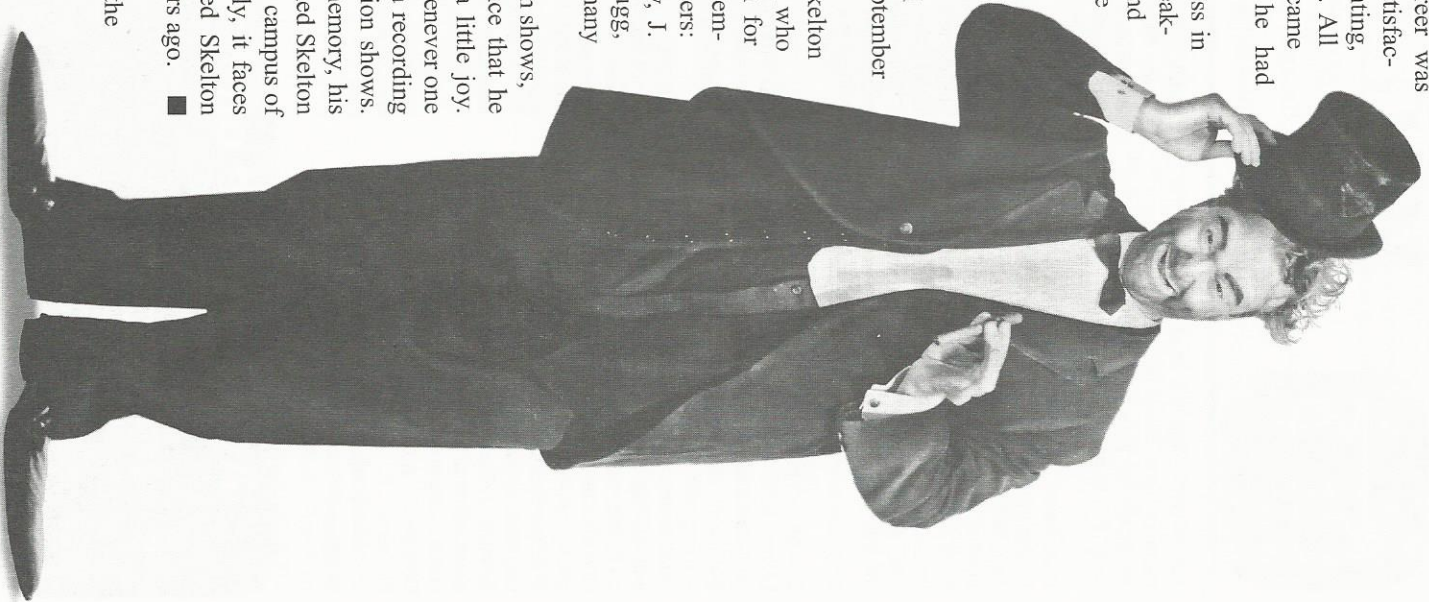
son, but his broadcasting career was coming to an end. Red found satisfaction in live performance, painting, writing and composing music. All in all, this renaissance clown came to appreciate all the trials he had endured to get to the top.

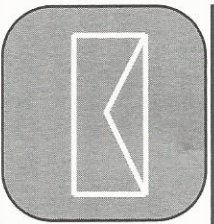
There was certainly sadness in the later years, including a breakup with second wife Georgia and her shocking suicide on the 18th anniversary of their son's death. He married Lothian Toland in 1973 and enjoyed his status as a comedy legend (including his 1994 induction into the Radio Hall of Fame) until his death on September 17, 1997.

His fans remember Red Skelton as the warm-hearted comedian who ruled on radio and television for over 30 years. They also remember his cavalcade of characters: Junior, Deadeye, Clem, Willy, J. Newton, Cauliflower McPug, Freddy the Freeloder, and many others.

At the end of his television shows, Red sincerely told his audience that he hoped he had brought them a little joy. He did — and he still does, whenever one enjoys one of his radio or television shows. As a beautiful tribute to his memory, his hometown is the site of The Red Skelton Performing Arts Center on the campus of Vincennes University. Fittingly, it faces the home that welcomed Red Skelton into this world nearly 100 years ago. ■

Tune in to Those Were the Days on July 13 as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Red Skelton.





MAIL CALL!

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ED. NOTE— Due to a production error, the name of Kathy Wittenberg failed to appear alongside her letter in the Spring 2013 "Mail Call." We regret the omission.

ELK PARK, NORTH CAROLINA— Thanks for the great article on Phil Harris and Alice Faye [Winter 2013 issue]. Naturally, as a North Carolina resident, I loved the article about Andy Griffith as well [Summer 2012 issue]. If at all possible, do something on the *CBS Radio Mystery Theater* that was on in the mid-1970s. Keep up the fine work!

—DALE MCCOURY

E-MAIL— I just read "We Could Be Heroes" [Winter 2013 issue] and I must say those are some excellent candidates for those roles. But I gotta tell you that Tyrone Power HATED working with Fritz Lang during the making of *An American Guerilla in the Philippines*. I wouldn't want to replace Lang, but if we insist on Power, maybe we could try Roland West, who directed *The Bat Whispers* (1930)— a strong influence on Batman! And your choice of Edward Arnold as Perry White was inspired! As for the Penguin, instead of Edward G. Robinson, I'd recommend a different old-time actor. Trying to remember his name... I think he starred opposite Lon Chaney, Jr. in *Of Mice and Men*. Now what's his name...?

Obviously, these stories were relegated to movie serials, but I have a high opinion of

many of those serials (*Flash Gordon*, *Dick Tracy*, *Spy Smasher*), especially those done at Republic. Columbia had the classic characters (Superman, Batman, etc.) but the quality of those productions was much poorer.

I once re-imagined *Raiders of the Lost Ark* being made in 1939. This was my cast: Gary Cooper as Professor Jones, Barbara Stanwyck as Marion Ravenwood, Basil Rathbone as Belloq, Peter Lorre as Toht, and Colin Clive as Dietrich. Perhaps Sydney Greenstreet as Sallah. I would've given the assignment to either Howard Hawks or William Wellman.

—MATTHEW HOFFMAN

(ED. NOTE)— These are great ideas, Matthew, but do you think audiences would accept Burgess Meredith as the Penguin...?

E-MAIL— Thanks so much for the cover story about Red Skelton by Bill Oates [Spring 2013 issue]. I had the pleasure to spend an afternoon with Mr. Oates when he came to my hometown to look at items in the Red Skelton museum collection.

I thought it might be interesting to expand on the Red Skelton-Ed Wynn tale. I have researched the local life of Red Skelton since 1990 but have never found any evidence to put Ed Wynn in Vincennes at any time. However, I did find a similar tale told by Red in a national movie magazine and newspaper column more than a decade before he

started telling the Ed Wynn story. Thanks again to you and Mr. Oates for remembering Red Skelton during the year of his 100th birthday. I can't wait for the next installment.

—DOUG CARROLL

(ED. NOTE)— The author is a board member at the Red Skelton Museum Foundation and Head Trustee of the Red Skelton Needy Children's Christmas Clothing Fund. And as for part two of the article, see page 56!

LISLE, IL— During my childhood and adolescent years — the 1930s and 40s — radio was our major source of entertainment. When *TWTD* arrived in the 1970s, I was delighted and still tune in every week.

My entries in your recent survey [Spring 2013 issue] finished first, fourth, ninth, 11th and who knows where? I can't believe my first place choice of *I Love a Mystery* didn't make your top 20 picks. That Carlton E. Morse epic drew listeners to the radio five times a week like a magnet. Who would dare miss Jack, Doc and Reggie for even one broadcast? Steve, I miss Chuck, but you've done a fine job, too. Love your *Nostalgia Digest*. P.S. Ken, you're great!

—JOHN LASTOFKA

E-MAIL— For years I have been chided, all in good fun, for my dislike of *The Amos 'n' Andy Show*. After reading your 2012 Listener Survey Results, I feel somewhat vindicated. I do not see Amos 'n' Andy listed.

—RON SAYLES

(ED. NOTE)— Thanks again to all of our listeners who participated in the 2012 *Those Were the Days* listener survey. The top 25 series in our survey can be found for a limited time — along with the results of our previous surveys, conducted in 1986 and 1999 — at www.nostalgia digest.com. (When you get there, click on the "Odds and Ends" page.) While we didn't have room to list all of the vote-getters in our Spring 2013 issue — we did list the top 20 shows — we can tell you that Amos 'n' Andy placed in the top 30 (between *The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet* and *The Life of Riley*), while *I Love a Mystery* placed in the Top 40, between *Duffy's Tavern* and *The Halls of Ivy*. In all, more than 160 different shows received votes!

HOMEWOOD, IL— Really enjoying this day of Loretta Young [TWTD, January 5], albeit

unexpectedly. I had no idea Ms. Young had such deep acting powers. Very impressed and greatly entertained!

—VALERIE HAWKINS

E-MAIL— I was listening to Ken reading the January 14, 1940 *Chicago Tribune* [TWTD, January 5], when I heard about the fire at 3454 Wrightwood. It was the home of my cousin's grandfather. I had to call her in Florida immediately. She was born in 1941, but she knew about the fire. Her grandfather owned a shoe repair shop several blocks away. A customer came in to tell him that his house was on fire. He ran all the way home. Cindy was thrilled to hear all about the event. I imagine she may try to find more about that issue of the *Trio*. How exciting it was for me to hear the story, because as a teen a few years later we spent many Christmas Eves at that home.

—BERNADETTE BECKER

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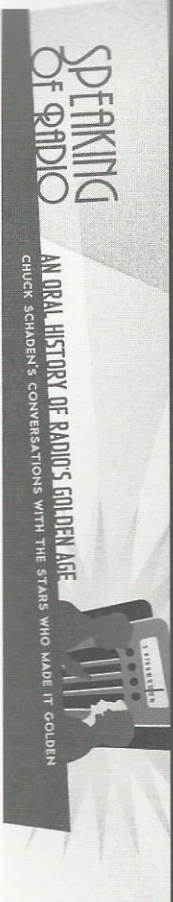
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Les Tremayne



Lurene Tuttle



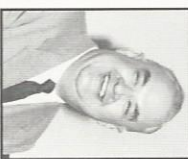
Sheldon Leonard

VISIT this website to hear ALL of Chuck's TWTD programs from 1991-1995 observing the 50th Anniversary of World War II.

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