

# NOSTALGIA DIGEST

AND  
RADIO  
GUIDE



FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY



# NOSTALGIA DIGEST ©

## HELLO, OUT THERE IN Radioland!!

BOOK TWELVE      CHAPTER FIVE  
AUGUST - SEPTEMBER, 1986

There's lots of good entertainment in store for you during August and September when you tune in to *Radio Classics* and *Those Were The Days*.

You'll get a good idea of the creative output of station WXYZ, Detroit when you listen to our rebroadcasts of the Lone Ranger, Challenge of the Yukon and Green Hornet on WBBM-AM. All three shows came from the same station during the 1930s, 40s and 50s and you'll recognize many of the same actors in different roles.

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We're spotlighting Bing Crosby on WNIB during August with a delicious sampling of Kraft Music Hall shows from 1944. And in September, we'll take care of some unfinished business when we conclude the "Pinky's Problems" sequence of One Man's Family programs and offer a three-part Carlton E. Morse adventure.

Fans of Lurene Tuttle will want to tune in our tribute to the accomplished radio actress. She died in May of this year and we'll pay our respects with an afternoon of broadcasts which display her many talents.

And speaking of tributes, it has been our policy — since we began in 1970 — to honor a major performer with a special *Those Were The Days* salute. When this happens we pre-empt our regularly scheduled material (as we did with our recent tributes to Benny Goodman and Kate Smith) and hold it for a later date. Occasionally, a listener will call or write expressing disappointment that we did not stick to our announced schedule. We regret this, but our best judgement tells us to honor the deceased performer as soon as possible. And, we never totally ignore the originally scheduled material. It is always scheduled again, usually in the next two-month period of shows.

A tribute show is always a bittersweet occasion for us. We're sad to learn of the passing of a favorite performer, but we feel we can do no less than to honor their memory by presenting a broadcast display of their radio legacy.

Thanks for listening.

*Chuck Schaden*

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# Meet the McGees

*Do you want to know what Fibber and Molly are like off the air? Here they are—Jim and Marian Jordan, who made such a success of their World War I marriage*

**I**F you are a typical American, on some Tuesday night during the last eight or ten years you tuned in on an NBC radio show known as "Fibber McGee and Molly," you listened and laughed and enjoyed yourself, and you have been tuning in more or less regularly ever since.

So much is a matter of statistics. There is a pocket-sized cardboard chart known as the Hooper rating (and sometimes called the radio man's "bible"), which measures the relative popularity of radio shows from week to week. In

the last few years the *McGees* have been playing see-saw with Bob Hope for the highest spot.

Equally clear, even if it isn't a matter of statistics, is the reason why you listen and why you laugh. We all love to hear ourselves talk, and the *McGees* talk even as you and I. *Fibber* strives as valiantly as any American husband to be wise, masterful and important. *Molly*, loyal and patient, still manages to deflate his ego as neatly as any American wife. The unseen audience snickers at hearing its own foibles in make-believe.

The *McGees* know how to do it. In the Bureau of Vital Statistics and the United States Census, they are merely a married couple named Jim and Marian Jordan, respectively forty-nine and forty-eight years old, with two married children and one grandchild. They live in a small town, are solid members of the community, landowners and taxpayers, and Jim Jordan can talk himself out of a parking ticket far better in his home town than can *Fibber McGee* on the air.

Today the Jordans are at the top, but this exalted position is a relatively recent development in a twenty-eight-year life together which has been just as hectic and eventful (though not always so comical) as that of the *McGees* whom they now portray. Starting with a war marriage much like the marriages of millions of young Americans in the last four years, the Jordans on the way up went through about as much as any young couple of 1946 would want to face.

When you meet the Jordans, you see precisely the same people you would have met in the years when they were struggling upward but hadn't yet arrived. Jim Jordan is a man of medium



JIM AND MARION JORDAN RELAX AT THE PIANO

height and build, with graying hair which has receded somewhat at the temples. Marian Jordan has blue eyes and brown hair, and is very pretty; she could (but doesn't) complain that her photographs never do her justice. Both Jordans are quiet dressers and wholly inconspicuous in a crowd, so that they manage to attend theaters and restaurants without creating the stir which would result if they were recognized. This is quite a delightful matter to the Jordans, who are small-town products and publicity-shy.

Even more does conversation with the Jordans reveal the how and why of their eventual arrival at the top. A chat with them brings out a wealth of humorous situations in which they have found themselves in twenty-eight years of mar-

ried life. There's a difference in the telling; Marian sparkles, while Jim is a more typical comedian and introduces an anecdote without even a twinkle in his gray eyes. The humor may be of a joyous nature when the incident had a happy ending, and a bit wry if it was temporarily annoying, but every experience seems funny later, and that's the test.

Just as an example, take one of the Jordans' moving days, twenty years ago.

Jim and Marian were already on the radio, which was then in its infancy. They occupied a first-floor apartment in a three-story house; they had daughter Kathryn, five, and son Jim, Junior, two, and furniture and a grand piano (not paid for); they had a weekly broadcast and a sponsor, and they made ten dollars a week.

CHUCK SCHADENS  
**NOSTALGIA DIGEST**  
AND  
**RADIO GUIDE**

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER, 1946



FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY

## MEET THE McGEES

"We were six months behind in the rent," Jim recalls, "and then one day the landlord came to see us."

"He told us he had a tenant who wanted to take the entire first floor," says Marian, "and you know what we thought was coming. And then he asked us, very apologetically, if we'd mind moving to the third floor."

The Jordans couldn't afford to hire moving-men, so all their friends rallied 'round. It was easy to move most of the furniture, but the grand piano was another matter.

"Altogether, there were eleven men," Marian recounts, "and they all got under that piano. They staggered up to the first landing, and there they stuck. The piano couldn't be budged, one way or the other."

"So my brother went around the corner and found two professional moving-men, having lunch. They came in, just the two of them, and took the piano up to the third floor without any trouble at all."

It couldn't have seemed very funny to the toiling Jordans at the time, but you can bet people chuckled when they heard something like it over the airwaves years later: for of such stuff is the "Fibber McGee and Molly" program



WRITER DON QUINN

built. All of which brings up a third reason for the success of *Fibber and Molly*.

The name of this reason is Don Quinn. He is a jolly 200-pound ex-cartoonist who has been writing the Jordans' scripts since 1931, including the first McGee show in 1935 and every one of them since. Jim and Marion and Don are a three-way partnership and an enduring one, having lasted out the years when the Quinn-Jordan comedy formula was by no means proved.

This formula is one that does not depend on gags for its laughs. The success of every broadcast is based solidly on the belief that if the situation is intrinsically humorous, the result will be a good time for everyone. No one's feelings get hurt when *Fibber and Molly* are on the air; there are gibes, but always good-natured ones.

Equally important are the catch-phrases which Quinn sprinkles throughout his scripts—not so often as to seem repetitious, but often enough to become remembered. Such things as "Heavenly days!" and "Tain't funny, McGee," and "Here we go again." And, especially, the fabulous McGee domicile at 79 Wistful Vista. "You know what that means?" inquires Marian. "It means the outlook isn't so good." As for the number, "Don just happened to hit those keys on his typewriter." Since that early broadcast on which *Fibber and Molly* won their house in a raffle, 79 Wistful Vista has become better known to most Americans than any other street address in the world, including 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue (the White House) and 10 Downing Street (the British Prime Minister's residence) put together.

Not only the Quinn-Jordan partnership but the entire working of their show is legendary in the radio world by virtue of its utter absence of friction. An overwrought atmosphere is traditional in radio conferences and rehearsals. Ulcers caused by nervous strain are notoriously an occupational disease of the industry. As many as thirty-two people have been known to mix it in discussing a script amid loud arguments. Within this frantic world the Jordans and their company move serenely, never more than five or six people at their meetings, always a calm atmosphere, never an angry word.



MARION AND JIM SHARE A FEW QUIET MOMENTS ON THEIR PATIO

("You and I argue," Marian points out. "Yes, but we don't shout," Jim rejoins.)

The smooth, unhurried workings of the McGee troupe is all the more remarkable when one considers that every show is prepared almost at the last minute. They often have an idea or two in reserve, but never a script. Yet they have on occasion tossed out an entire script the day before their broadcast, whereupon Don Quinn sat down and wrote another one, and nobody acted scared.

Every Tuesday's broadcast begins around the middle of the previous week. The inner circle consists of the Jordans, Quinn, Phil Leslie (his assistant), Frank Pittman (representing the advertising agency), and in recent months Andy White, another assistant to Quinn. Ideas are likely to occur to any member of the group, and are passed around by telephone and adopted or rejected as food for further discussion. Leslie's job is to write a two-page memorandum on two or

three such ideas before the group first meets on Friday or Saturday.

At this first meeting the ideas are kicked around and one is selected for the next broadcast. There is always another meeting at the Jordans' house on Sunday, at which time Quinn may and may not have written a script for the first "bit" (each broadcast is divided into three bits). If he has, it is read; Jim and Marion read their own parts, and Don reads all the others with great expression and as nearly as possible in the voices of the actors who will finally play them. The rest of the show having been planned in the course of this session, Don goes home to write it.

"He can write the whole script in an evening," remarks Jim Jordan, marveling; but sometimes the word "evening" is an elastic term and stretches into the following morning. The fact remains that when the Jordans, their supporting cast, Billy Mills and the orchestra and all the

## MEET THE MCGEES

others show up at Hollywood's Radio City on Monday morning. Don Quinn and the script are there, too. Further changes are made both in Monday's workout and in the dress rehearsal on Tuesday morning, but by two o'clock Tuesday afternoon the script is final and there is no more to do until they go on the air that night. Tuesday afternoon is usually spent sitting around and thinking of new ideas for future shows.

**I**n rehearsal, Jim Jordan appears nervous; this is perhaps due to his inability to remain still for long, so that he walks around between his cues. Actually, he has a most philosophical attitude toward the show and his job. "When it's all over, you'd always think of things you could have improved, anyway," he says. "So I always say to myself, if it isn't perfect this week, maybe it will be next week." The fact that Marian and Don join in this philosophy is evidenced by the

extraordinary stability of the Fibber-and-Molly show. They have the same sponsor (Johnson's Wax), the same advertising agency (Needham, Louis and Brorby), the same announcer (Harlow Wilcox) with whom they started eleven years ago.

The calmness of the Jordans in their profession may stem from their philosophical approach to life in general and to their marriage in particular. In this approach there may be a lesson for some worried young Americans today. For Marian Jordan once found herself in the same boat as the much-pitied "war bride" of today, married one day, parted by war the next. Back in 1918, the Jordans had scarcely five days of married life before Jim was off to the western front of World War I, and demobilization did not reunite them for a year after that.

At this point it must be recorded that seventeen-year-old Jim Jordan first met sixteen-year-old Marian Driscoll at choir practice in their home town of Peoria, Illinois. This item of Jordan family history will cause Jim Jordan to wince, if he reads this. "I happened to mention that to somebody twelve years ago," Jim says regretfully, "and it's been in everything that's been written about Marian and me ever since. It's true enough, but it begins

to sound awfully corny when you've been hearing it for twelve years."

Jim Jordan grew up and became a clerk in a drug house; Marian was a piano teacher with twenty-three pupils. They wanted to get married, but there was the war. However, Jim had tried to enlist and had been refused, and his next-door neighbor was a member of the draft board and assured him that the war would be over so soon that he was in no danger of being drafted. So the Jordans were married on August 31, 1918, and went off on a honeymoon.

"We got our big wedding present on September fifth," Marian relates. "It said, 'Greetings.'" Jim's neighbor had been right about one thing: The war was soon over, but so was Jim overseas.

Marian's recipe for enduring her solitary life was simple: Keep busy. Her piano pupils increased in number to fifty-five. She increased her church work, because that was where she had met Jim.

**T**he months passed, and a troop transport landed Jim in Newport News, Virginia. "The first thing I did was buy a big can of apricots," says Jim. "I went behind a billboard and ate them all." The next thing he did was return unexpectedly to Peoria, where he sneaked in on Marian in the kitchen and kissed her so hard it made her lip bleed. And since then the Jordans have had twenty-seven years of married happiness.

"They've gone overboard on this problem of the returning soldier," Jim opines. "Sure they'll have problems. All married people have problems."

"It's just a matter of patience," Marian adds, "and you need that, anyway. The boy has changed, but so has the girl. Changes won't matter if they love each other."

To top off their long separation, Jim and Marian found themselves in a position which disturbs some people, but didn't bother them.

"We lived with Jim's mother," says Marian. "She was a remarkable woman and helped us a lot. Jim and I would have our quarrels, but she would always call me aside and say, 'Keep calm. It'll work out.' And it always did."

Nevertheless, the Jordans were a happy couple when they first moved into

a house all their own. It was a very modest one, and even so they couldn't afford it. During their first two years, Jim had a series of ten or twelve jobs—postman, door-to-door salesman, clerk in a grocery store, everything but an actor. Marian explains it: "I thought at the time it was just a run of hard luck, but now I know better. Jim was trying to stay out of show business, when that was where he belonged all the time." Jim finally succumbed, and he and Marian went into vaudeville. For several years after that, when their efforts to make a living from radio reduced the bank account, their recourse would be to take a vaudeville tour, get themselves back on their feet, pay all their back debts and then to radio again. It was a precarious routine for a long time, but it finally clicked.

It may have been the vaudeville experience that turned Jim and Marian Jordan into the home-loving couple they are today. Vaudevillians were troupers; they traveled. "In those days there was no such thing as being in show business and living at home," according to Jim. "The only exception was a big star who could live in New York. We weren't ready for that." So, once having a home, the Jordans clung to it. When they first made their big radio success, they refused to part with the modest house in Chicago where they had lived through thinner times. "We have the same friends as always," they said. "We can live in the same place."

Today Jim and Marian live in Encino, California, a small town (you may not find it on your map) about a dozen miles from Hollywood. Don Quinn lives two or three blocks away. The Jordans have made themselves a part of their community, and Jim served two terms as president of the Encino Chamber of Commerce.

Being home-lovers, the Jordans are two rare stay-at-homes. They like it, and besides, they have their hobbies. Jim likes to read and to collect books and, especially, to do cabinet-making in his basement shop. He makes furniture that looks wholly professional. (He also made a barbecue wagon three feet wide, and then found that he couldn't get it over a bridge two feet wide that led to the outdoor kitchen. Maybe that wasn't a natural for a *Fibber McGee* script!)

Marian likes to sew, and knows her way around a kitchen; she insists that

you can predict the success of a marriage from looking at the kitchen. This opinion was revealed when Marian was boasting about her daughter Kathryn, now Mrs. Adrian Goodman, whose daughter Diane made the Jordans grandparents last year. (The Goodmans' house is in Encino, too.)

"She has everything she needs for a first-class kitchen," Marian boasts. "You can always tell from that. If a wife is bound to make a home, she'll fix up her kitchen first."

"Jim and I wanted to hire a couple not long ago, and we saw one that seemed all right, but they had no start at all toward a home. I said, 'Jim, we'd better not hire them. I'm afraid their marriage won't last.'"

Jim, Junior, is married now, too. Following in the parental footsteps, he is a radio and motion-picture actor, and he and his wife live in a Los Angeles apartment. So (real-estate note) the Jordans' Encino house is for sale. Three bedrooms have become too many.

**M**eanwhile, the Jordans won't lack for a place to rest their heads. Several years ago they bought a 1,000-acre ranch about 140 miles from Encino, and they have added to it parcel by parcel until it now has 4,000 acres, all well stocked with Black Angus cattle. Jim made a serious study of his new job and is reputed to be a first-class cattle rancher, which makes him prouder than compliments on his radio show. He is also proud of a prize steer he had in a livestock show three years ago, and a prize heifer he had last year.

The ranch is already the Jordans' "week-end" haven (their week-end begins Wednesday morning, when they drive down, and ends Saturday morning, when they drive back to Encino for the first conference on their next show).

In these off-periods Jim and Marian try not to talk shop, though a good idea will be spoken out whenever it occurs to one of them. In discussing ideas or dialogues, however, they are one-hundred-per-cent impersonal. You won't hear "You say this and then I say that," or even "*Fibber* says this and then *Molly* says that." It's "the man says," and "the woman says." *Fibber McGee* and *Molly* are just characters in an act. Jim and Marian Jordan are real people.

# The Home Front

## The Rubber Shortage and Gasoline Rationing

By Todd Nebel



On the American homefront of 1942, stories of death, hunger and world atrocities were close at hand. Our lives at home changed when we heard the news about the pretty girl down the street who became a widow at 21. And the boy next door who was last year's star quarterback in high school but now was listed as "killed in action." Our pastors promised reassurance in their sermons to help us keep faith in an upside-down world. "For whosoever believeth in me . . ." "My father's house has many mansions . . ." "I go to prepare a place for you."

Despite the fact that the war was going badly for the allies in 1942, Americans on the homefront still found time for a little fun and relaxation. New-found prosperity, because of war related jobs, brought an end to twelve years of depression and finally the opportunity to have more than before. In 1942, Americans were buying a record amount of books and records, drinking a record-shattering amount of alcohol, setting new attendance records at movie theaters and baseball parks. But the thing they really liked best of all was to drive their cars. Every weekend, roads were jammed as war workers went for rides to beaches, parks, woodlands, mountains or just a spin through the countryside. New cars would not be produced until after the war, but Americans put faith in their old cars to see them through.

In 1942, as the American public dab-

bled their feet in war and consumption was increasing, a series of serious shortages loomed over the horizon. By the spring of 1942, gasoline rationing was in effect on the East Coast, due to the large number of tankers sunk by German subs in the Atlantic, but elsewhere, rationing had not been needed. The nation's warplanners also hoped to reduce the use of rubber by persuading Americans to practice voluntary restraint, and by using radio and the press to get the message across.

Even President Roosevelt took to the radio airwaves to give added support to the rubber cause. In a Fireside chat, the President asked Americans to look in their cellars, attics and closets for old rubber products and turn them over to the government. He explained that 97 percent of the nation's usual source of rubber was cut off by the Japanese and the current national stockpile was dwindling due to needs of the war.

The unknown factor was rubber scrap and Roosevelt appealed for as much of it as possible. Designating a two-week period for a rubber scrap drive, the President asked Americans to take their scrap to their local garages or filling stations. The gas station owner would then pay one-cent a pound for it and would be reimbursed himself by a grateful Uncle Sam.

But, having gone through it all before, Americans were lack-luster for this latest drive. The American people, just months before, had given up their

tinware and aluminum only to see it sit in government stockpiles and turn to rust.

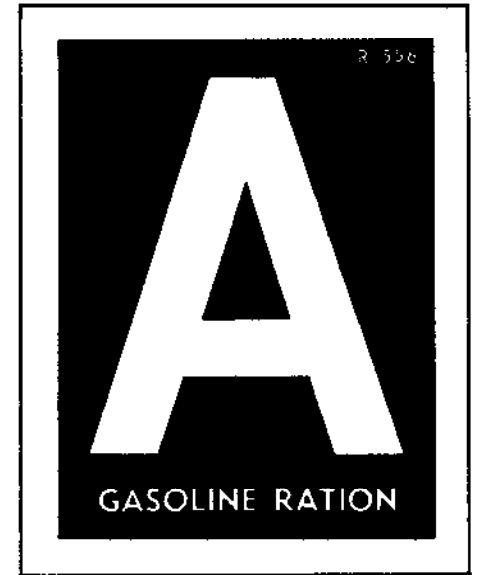
When Harold Ickes, Roosevelt's cabinet secretary, announced that the rubber drive had been a failure, he accused the American public of hoarding rubber. The truth, however, was that Americans were not hoarding, they simply were indifferent to the scrap drive. Americans had not bothered to check their attics, cellars and garages for the stuff. Knowing that something needed to be done, Roosevelt put together a distinguished committee to examine the rubber crisis. The committee was headed by well-respected financier, Bernard M. Baruch, Harvard President James B. Conant and MIT President Karl T. Compton.

In a little over a month, the committee came back and handed in its report. It said forcefully, "We find the existing situation to be so dangerous that unless corrective measures are taken immediately, this country will face both military and civilian collapse." The committee had three "urgent and specific proposals."

1. National gas rationing to force a reduction in tire use.
2. A national highway speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour.
3. Intensification of the synthetic rubber program.

In a brief period of time, national gas rationing and a mandatory speed limit of thirty-five took effect, however, the synthetic rubber program was still years away from extensive use. For gas rationing, machinery was already in effect on the East Coast, so all that was required was an expansion of the process. Soon, every driver of every car in the United States received a windshield sticker A, B, C or E, which denoted the type of ration stamps they would use.

The "A" windshield sticker was for



cars used for pleasure driving only and entitled the driver of that car to one stamp good for three gallons of gas per week. The "B" sticker was for vehicles used to commute to work but not used while on the job. The holder of a "B" sticker had to compute exactly the distance in mileage from job to home and stamps were awarded accordingly. The holder of a "B" sticker was also given an "A" sticker for a bit of pleasure driving as well.

The "C" sticker specified a car used in the line of work (salesmen, deliveries, etc.). The "C" sticker owner could in all probability get as many stamps as he wanted but he would have to explain his situation to a bureaucrat on the ration board. The "E" stickers were for "emergency vehicles" and were given to police, firemen, clergymen, press photographers and assorted politicians. The "E" stickers owners had to use stamps, but in reality, they could get as much gas as they wanted.

Rubber drives continued through the war with some success, but it's hard to say how much an effect gas rationing had on the conservation of rubber. Gas rationing did force a noticeable decline

## THE HOME FRONT

in cars on the streets for the remainder of the war. In large cities, one could drive down unpopulated streets with barely a stop for traffic. Deliveries were minimized by department stores and the slogan was, "Don't delay! Buy it today! Carry it away!" Milk deliveries in the East were cut to every other day, while newspaper deliveries were held to one daily delivery to each newsstand. In the state of New York, gasoline tax revenues for 1943 were cut in half from their 1942 totals. Also, the auto death rate for the 1942 Labor Day weekend was 169 as compared to 423 deaths for the same time a year earlier. It was also estimated that throughout the war, highways were being used at only 20 percent of their capacity.

Gas rationing, despite saving lives, lowering tax revenues and causing delivery inconveniences, also gave rise to a black market for gasoline stamps. Some estimates of illegally purchased gasoline range from as low as one million gallons of gas a week to as high as 2.5 million gallons a day. An esti-

mate by the Office of Price Administration (OPA) said that five percent of all the gasoline purchased in the nation was bought with counterfeit coupons and fifteen percent of all "C" ration coupons were said to be fakes. The OPA said the amounts were even higher in the major cities where in New York City it was 30 per cent, in Baltimore 45 per cent, in Newark it was 40 per cent and in Chicago it was 35 per cent. Nevertheless, the large majority of American drivers were conscientious and honest but few were completely innocent of a little harmless deception, like giving extra coupons to friends (detached coupons were supposed to be invalid).

The rubber shortage and the gasoline rationing which followed were the beginning of the most concerted attack on wartime inflation and scarcity the nation ever knew—and by and large it worked. As the war dragged on, nearly every item Americans ate, wore, used, or lived in was rationed or regulated. Still, taking the good with the bad, we were better off and better fed than any other country in the world.

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I REMEMBER IT WILL...

happy birthday  
memories!

by Dan McGuire

Strictly speaking, it's a federal offense to put anything but genuine mail items into anyone's mailbox. If the U.S. Post Office had enforced that rule, most of my friends and I would have spent time at Leavenworth for stuffing unstamped birthday party invitations into mail slots and boxes.

In a two-block radius of my boyhood home there were at least 50 kids who played together on a fairly regular basis. Scarcely a month went by without each of us being invited to someone's birthday party.

Selecting the invitees could be a traumatic experience. Despite all pleas, moms usually limited the guest list to between 8 and 12. (After all, Mom was going to be chief planner, hostess, coordinator, etc.) Hard choices about which friends to omit were like juvenile training for that far-off challenge of trimming a wedding guest list.

Given their limited size, the parties also were remarkable for their consistently co-ed make-up. Thank Mom for that, too. It was no use protesting, "Aw, Ma, I don't want any *girls* (or *boys*) comin' to my party!"

Once the list was drawn, invitations were prepared. Some moms encouraged their offspring to be creative with colored craft paper, streamer tissue, scissors, crayons, paste, whatever. Usually, the invitations were cute store bought cards, about 4 x 6 inches with plain white envelopes. Mom carefully

filled in time and date on the cards and you got to mark the envelopes. First names only were sufficient unless you invited two Jimmies or Carols.

Addresses weren't necessary because you would deliver the invitations yourself. First class postage was three cents, and for 36 cents Mom could buy a loaf of bread and a quart of milk. Besides, kids had a surplus of idle time. Playing mailman would keep you out of mischief for half an afternoon.

Some kids rang doorbells and personally handed the cards to Johnny or Mary. I thought that was a give-away that it was an invitation. It spoiled the fun of receiving mail, albeit illegally delivered mail.

Invitations from my best friends were always welcome. Others I received with mixed feelings. Most birthday parties were held on a Saturday afternoon—hallowed time for preteen boys. The parties usually were fun, but they meant skipping a Saturday matinee, a swim at the "Y" pool, etc. With so many parties throughout the year, the trade-off had questionable merit.

Two exceptions were Paul's and Joan's parties. Paul was an almost-best friend and Joan was his acceptably tomboyish sister. What's more, their father subscribed to *Esquire* magazine. The most recent issues would always be in a magazine stand next to his easy

## I REMEMBER IT WELL

chair. At some point during the party, while the girls were occupied elsewhere, the boys would gleefully thumb through portraits of scantily clad women, comparing favorites, and smirking over cartoons that we didn't understand but instinctively knew must be risqué.

Even for best friends, choosing a present could be a problem. Mom would say, "I'll give you a dollar, but see if you can find something for about fifty cents." That eliminated most of the more elaborate toys and games. The absence of a nearby dime store didn't help. Most of our purchases came from a mini-toy section in the local hardware or drug store.

Model kits, especially airplanes were popular gifts. Not the pre-formed plastic variety sold today, but balsa wood models that had to be cut out and painted. They were in the right price range and looked really neat in the illustration on the box. Us boys exchanged, probably, hundreds of them, but few of us ever finished assembling one.

Better liked, I suspect, were planes that actually flew. A glider model required little more assembly than sliding wings and tail pieces through slots in the fuselage. This model was tossed into the wind and would loop or dive for up to fifteen seconds. A propeller model was powered by a rubber band that you twisted. It had wheels and could take off from a smooth surface and fly for 30 seconds or more—if you spent five minutes winding the rubber band to its breaking point.

Other gifts included bags of marbles, lead soldiers or cowboys, kites (hard to wrap), decals (either wet-n-stick or iron-on) or "tattoos" of comic heroes and miniature pinball games.



Birthday parties usually began with a lot of clowning and milling around in the living room while Mom counted heads to see if everyone had arrived. Then a series of games began. One involved kneeling on a chair and dropping clothes pins into a bottle. You were supposed to hold the pin right by your nose and aim, but some kids always tried to reach down and get closer. Loud protests of "No fair!" were guaranteed.

A junior version of Spin the Bottle called for players to perform silly stunts. "Pick a partner and wheelbarrel through the house." Or: "Imitate a singer with the hiccups." Chuck and I excelled at this nonsense and always picked each other for partners.

Ring Toss was an indoor version of Horseshoes, usually played in teams, which generated lots of competitive excitement. If Mom played piano or the family had a phonograph, she might lead a game of Musical Chairs. The winners of each game received prizes such as rubber balls, bubble blowing kits or dot-to-dot books.

Game time wound up with the all-time favorite, Pin the Tail on the Donkey. Catcalls and howls of laugh-

ter greeted blindfolded players who pinned the detached appendage to sofas, lampshades or, with comparative accuracy, somewhere near the donkey's ear. Expressions of disbelief were common when contestants were shown the results of their search.

Finally, the games concluded, the birthday boy or girl got to open all those enticing looking packages. Then our hostess steered us to the gaily decorated dining room table. Next to our plates were party favors—frilly paper cups of assorted candies, boxes of Cracker Jack and snapper tubes with prizes inside.

Before going to the kitchen for the cake and ice cream, Mom started us on a game of Telephone Gossip by whispering in someone's ear. That person giggled and "passed it on" to the next person. The last boy or girl to hear the gossip would relate it aloud. Then the first person told how the story had been heard originally. The two versions usually were miles apart, causing shrieks of laughter.

With the cake on the table and candles lit, we sang "Happy Birthday" to the guest of honor. He or she then made a wish, blew out the candles and had to wait a year for each candle left burning.

Eating was my least favorite part of

the party. Because it was a festive occasion, most mothers—even the super cake bakers—served bakery cakes decorated with little figures and candy flowers. Instead of the simple chocolate I craved, they were 80 per cent cream and frosting and usually filled with yukkie stuff like strawberries. To satisfy the varied tastes of youngsters, Neopolitan was the favored ice cream. I seldom found anyone willing to trade their chocolate for my strawberry. So I compensated by saving the chocolate for last.

Some parties continued informally for awhile with games in the back yard or basement. Mostly, we just sort of dispersed homeward, with awkward thank-you's to the weary mother-in-charge. Twenty minutes later, when quizzed by our own moms, we'd have trouble remembering who all was there, what presents were received and what games we played.

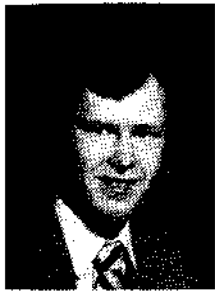
Those parties are history in more ways than one. In the 60's many parties consisted of trips to a ball game, the zoo or adventure parks. During the 70's, at-home parties were in again, but instead of games to entertain the kids, there were hired clowns, ventriloquists or puppeteers. Now I understand there is a new trend to prepackaged birthday video tapes. Next, I suppose, the guests will simply send their gifts and the entertainment will be networked to their home TVs.

Personally, if I could be eight or nine again for one more birthday, I'd waive all that sophisticated stuff in favor of an old fashioned party. I wouldn't try to trade my strawberry ice cream for chocolate. I'd eat the gooey cake with relish. I'd even spend 36 cents to mail the invitations.

*Editor's Note: Although still very young at heart, Dan McGuire no longer uses candles on his birthday cake—in compliance with fire safety regulations.*







# NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

IN A MILLER MOOD

By KARL PEARSON

While sitting at a table at the Hotel New Yorker one night during the early 1950's, bandleader Teddy Powell told Metronome magazine critic George Simon his feelings on the current revival of the Glenn Miller sound by other bands. He questioned the idea of cashing in on the creativity of a dead man. And he told Simon, "If Glenn Miller were alive today, he'd be turning over in his grave!"

The Miller sound was still popular, no doubt; the records made by Glenn's band almost ten years before were still selling well. And there were several bands cashing in on the idea. And why not? The Miller sound became an instant identification with an earlier, perhaps less troubled period. To those too young to remember it, the "ooh-wah" brass and clarinet-led reeds were a unique sound during that era when the vocalists, not the bands, ruled the scene. Current songs, as well as old Miller standards, were played in the Miller style by bandleaders such as Jerry Gray, Ralph Flanagan, and the official Glenn Miller Orchestra.

But the idea of copying Glenn's unique style was not new. The first person to make the attempt (and very few ever obtained the full effect) was Detroit bandleader Bob Chester, with backing from Tommy Dorsey. Why Tommy, Glenn's old pal? The man who gave Glenn a job playing trombone with his band on radio dates after

Miller's first folded? It seems that Tommy loaned Glenn a great sum of money when he formed his second band, hoping to get a percentage of the new Miller band in return, but Glenn, ever the smart businessman, payed back the loan. Tommy was not pleased and tried to get even by backing Chester in forming a copy of Glenn's style by setting him up on location jobs where Glenn started out; helped Bob get Kathleen Lane, one of Miller's original vocalists, and had Chester signed with Bluebird Records, in direct competition with Glenn! However, after a couple of years, Chester branched out in a different direction and dropped the Miller approach.

After returning from service in 1946, Art Mooney began using the Miller style in his own band. Ironically, Mooney would become nationally known when he **dropped** the Miller style and recorded "I'm Looking Over A Four Leaf Clover", complete with singers and banjos!

In 1946, Tex Beneke took charge of the official Glenn Miller Orchestra and carried on the Miller tradition. And Tex wanted to do just that: **carry on** where Glenn left off by featuring new and exciting sounds. But he met opposition from the Miller Estate and those who managed the band. So, at the end of 1950, Tex and the Miller Estate parted company.

By this time, however, a new name had come on the scene. Pianist-arranger Ralph Flanagan had made an album of Miller-styled tunes titled "A Salute To Glenn Miller" for Cosmo records. When Cosmo head Herb Hendler ended up at RCA Victor, Glenn's old label, he brought Flanagan with. A reportedly true but unconfirmed story had several top RCA executives believing that Ralph Flanagan was more than qualified to be heir to the Miller style; after all, wasn't he one of Glenn's arrangers? Actually not; the top brass confused him with Bill Finegan, who had arranged for Glenn! Irony number one: Finegan received a call from Flanagan, asking him certain things about the Miller voicings. Apparently Ralph put those ideas to good use, as his band became one of the most popular of the early 1950's. Irony number two: one of Flanagan's biggest selling records, "Hot Toddy," wasn't scored in the Miller style, but featured Flanagan's "one-note" style of piano playing.

Encouraged by Flanagan's success, Ray Anthony, who **had** played with Glenn (having played trumpet for a few months), dropped his jazz approach and began featuring the Glenn Miller style. He, too, became a favorite, copying the Miller style, even landing Chesterfield Cigarettes, Glenn's old sponsor!

But perhaps the person who did the best job in reviving the Miller sound was Jerry Gray, Glenn's arranger for six years. If there was anyone who knew how to play a Miller tune, it was Jerry, who was one of the leading figures in continuing Glenn's great AEF orchestra after Miller's disappearance. In addition to knowing how to score in the Miller style, Jerry was able to secure the services of several of Glenn's original key men, including

Willie Schwartz, who knew better than anyone how to play the lead clarinet, as he was the one who played that part in Miller's civilian band.

There have been many attempts to play the Miller style since the 1950's. Perhaps one of the best has been the official Glenn Miller band, led down through the years by Bencke, Ray McKinley (who did an outstanding job), Buddy DeFranco, Peanuts Hucko, Buddy Morrow, Jimmy Henderson, Larry O'Brien and its current leader, Dick Gerhardt. This band has the greatest advantage over all the others: the original Miller library.

Two of the most recent attempts have been in England, where trumpeter Syd Lawrence gathered a group of musicians in 1967 to play some of the old Miller charts, "just for kicks." What began just for fun became a full-time project for Syd, for soon thereafter he led a Miller-styled band of his own, and one of the best. He still leads it today, but does not entirely play Miller numbers, balancing it with other big band hits.

The last, and most ambitious of the two Miller-styled English bands was the Million Airs group of the mid-1970's which was a complete recreation of Glenn's AEF Orchestra. Here was a group of 30-plus musicians playing something the other Miller bands had never done. Unfortunately, this group broke up after a few years.

Obviously the Glenn Miller sound was, and is, something different. It has been and still is popular. It evokes memories of an era long gone. No wonder the official Glenn Miller Orchestra uses as its slogan, "The Miller Sound Lives Forever."

# AUGUST

## RADIO CLASSICS – WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>PLEASE NOTE</b> — All of the programs we present on <i>Radio Classics</i> are syndicated rebroadcasts. We regret that we are not able to obtain advance information about the storylines of these shows so that we might include more details in our <i>Radio Guide</i>. However, each show we present is slightly less than 30 minutes in length and this new easy-to-read schedule lists the programs in the order we will broadcast them on WBBM-AM. The first show listed will play at approximately 8 p.m. and the second will be presented at about 8:30 p.m. Programs on <i>Radio Classics</i> are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. Thanks for listening.</p>				<p><b>1</b> Jack Benny Have Gun, Will Travel</p>
<p><b>4</b> Dragnet Lone Ranger</p>	<p><b>5</b> Challenge of the Yukon Burns and Allen</p>	<p><b>6</b> This is Your FBI Gunsmoke</p>	<p><b>7</b> Have Gun, Will Travel Green Hornet</p>	<p><b>8</b> Jack Benny Black Museum</p>
<p><b>11</b> Gunsmoke This is Your FBI</p>	<p><b>12</b> Black Museum Lone Ranger</p>	<p><b>13</b> Burns and Allen Have Gun, Will Travel</p>	<p><b>14</b> Green Hornet Challenge of the Yukon</p>	<p><b>15</b> Jack Benny Dragnet</p>
<p><b>18</b> Challenge of the Yukon Green Hornet</p>	<p><b>19</b> Dragnet Have Gun, Will Travel</p>	<p><b>20</b> Lone Ranger This is Your FBI</p>	<p><b>21</b> Sherlock Holmes Gunsmoke</p>	<p><b>22</b> Burns and Allen Black Museum</p>
<p><b>25</b> Challenge of the Yukon Jack Benny</p>	<p><b>26</b> Gunsmoke Gangbusters</p>	<p><b>27</b> Have Gun, Will Travel Dragnet</p>	<p><b>28</b> This is Your FBI Lone Ranger</p>	<p><b>29</b> Gunsmoke Burns and Allen</p>

# SEPTEMBER

## RADIO CLASSICS – WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>1</b> Have Gun, Will Travel Black Museum</p>	<p><b>2</b> Jack Benny Challenge of the Yukon</p>	<p><b>3</b> Lone Ranger Green Hornet</p>	<p><b>4</b> Dragnet Gunsmoke</p>	<p><b>5</b> Burns and Allen This is Your FBI</p>
<p><b>8</b> Dragnet Burns and Allen</p>	<p><b>9</b> Black Museum Have Gun, Will Travel</p>	<p><b>10</b> Challenge of the Yukon Lone Ranger</p>	<p><b>11</b> Green Hornet Sherlock Holmes</p>	<p><b>12</b> This is Your FBI Jack Benny</p>
<p><b>15</b> Sherlock Holmes Dragnet</p>	<p><b>16</b> Lone Ranger This is Your FBI</p>	<p><b>17</b> Have Gun, Will Travel Black Museum</p>	<p><b>18</b> Jack Benny Challenge of the Yukon</p>	<p><b>19</b> Burns and Allen Green Hornet</p>
<p><b>22</b> Black Museum Burns and Allen</p>	<p><b>23</b> Green Hornet Jack Benny</p>	<p><b>24</b> This is Your FBI Sherlock Holmes</p>	<p><b>25</b> Dragnet Have Gun, Will Travel</p>	<p><b>26</b> Challenge of the Yukon Lone Ranger</p>
<p><b>29</b> Have Gun, Will Travel Dragnet</p>	<p><b>30</b> Jack Benny Challenge of the Yukon</p>			

# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

## AUGUST

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

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 2nd

**KRAFT MUSIC HALL (6-15-44)** Bing Crosby stars with guest Bob Hope and regulars Marilyn Maxwell, the Music Maids and Men, John Scott Trotter and the orchestra. Bing and Bob discuss Hope's new book, "I Never Left Home." Kraft Foods, NBC. (6:30; 8:00; 14:45)

**SUSPENSE (2-7-48)** "Donovan's Brain" starring John McIntyre as a scientist who attempts to prove that a human brain can survive outside the body and, eventually, inside another body. Robert Montgomery hosts this hour-long drama. Sustaining, CBS. (17:57; 14:08; 16:40; 11:32)

**JUDY CANOVA SHOW (1-3-48)** Judy hopes to take advantage of the new Leap Year 1948 to land a man! Mel Blanc, Ruby Dandridge, Joe Kearns, Gerald Mohr, the Sportsmen, Charles Dant and the orchestra. First of three consecutive, related programs. Colgate, Super Suds, Halo Shampoo, NBC. (10:40; 14:05; 4:25)

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**STARS OVER HOLLYWOOD (3-1-52)** "When The Police Arrive" starring Joan Crawford with Ted Osborne. Following the murder of a rich relative, a couple discuss their future plans. Directed by Hans Conried. Carnation Evaporated Milk, CBS. (18:05; 11:15)

**DINAH SHORE'S OPEN HOUSE (1-24-46)** Guest star Frank Sinatra joins Dinah for a sketch showing what married life will be like in fifty years (1996)! Harry Von Zell, Frank Nelson. AFRS rebroadcast. (14:37; 15:28)

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 9th

**JUDY CANOVA SHOW (1-10-48)** After Judy's boyfriend turns down her Leap Year proposal, Judy visits her psychiatrist. Second of three consecutive, related programs. Halo Shampoo, Super Suds, NBC. (15:30; 13:25)

**THE PHANTOM PIRATE (1950)** This is an audition or pilot show for a series that never made it to the networks. The Phantom Pirate is the skipper of The Avenger, a ship that sails the seven seas "striking terror in the hearts of wrongdoers." Audition, NBC. (14:26; 15:10)

**COMMAND PERFORMANCE (1940s)** Betty Grable stars with Danny Kaye, Gregory Ratoff, Carmen Miranda, Ken Niles. AFRS. (9:36; 11:45; 6:45)

**MYRT AND MARGE (1940s)** An isolated episode from the long-running daytime series starring Myrtle Vail as Myrt Spear and Donna Damerel as Marge Minter. Andre Baruch announces. CBS. (12:20)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE (11-10-52)** "Grounds for Marriage" starring Van Johnson and Katherine Grayson in their original screen roles from the 1950 film. It's comedy, romance and music with Katherine as an opera star and Van as her ex-husband-physician. AFRS rebroadcast. (20:15; 12:30; 17:00)

**KRAFT MUSIC HALL (7-20-44)** Bing Crosby welcomes guest Sonny Tufts (Sonny Tufts?) who plays a sailor asking Bing, who plays a father, for permission to marry his daughter. Kraft Foods, NBC. (9:05; 9:35; 10:30)



**BING CROSBY** appears in a series of 1944 Kraft Music Hall broadcasts during August on Those Were The Days.

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 16th

**SUSPENSE (2-14-48)** "The Lodger" starring Robert Montgomery with Jeanette Nolan and Peggy Weber. The classic tale of 19th Century London and the series of successive murders of young, attractive women. Sustaining, CBS. (14:21; 12:48; 16:27; 14:12)

**WILLSON-NESBITT SHOW (8-4-42)** Meredith Willson and John Nesbitt star in this summer replacement show for Fibber McGee and Molly. Willson offers a salute to the music of Irving Berlin and Nesbitt's Passing Parade story is about Benedict Arnold. Connie Haines, Bob Carroll, Harlow Wilcox. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (8:54; 19:50)

**KRAFT MUSIC HALL (11-9-44)** Bing Crosby and guest Ethel Smith with Marilyn Maxwell, the Charioteers, John Scott Trotter and the orchestra, Ukie, Kraft Choir. Kraft Foods, NBC. (14:04; 15:24)

**THE SEA HOUND (6-17-48)** Barry Thompson stars as Captain Silver who is asked by an old friend to help locate an ancient Inca emerald. Sustaining, ABC. (15:05; 14:35)

**JUDY CANOVA SHOW (1-17-48)** Guest Eddie Cantor is running for President and he promises Judy

a career in pictures if she can get him all the votes in Cactus Junction. Third of three consecutive, related programs. Halo Shampoo, Super Suds, NBC. (14:05; 14:30)

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 23rd THE BIG BANDS

**JAN SAVITT AND HIS TOP HATTERS (12-2-38)** Remote broadcast from the Arcadia Restaurant, Philadelphia with vocals by Carlotta Dale, Bon Bon, the Three Toppers. Sustaining, NBC. (10:15; 11:35; 7:50)

**ARTIE SHAW AND HIS ORCHESTRA (Dec., 1940)** Remote broadcast from the Hollywood Palladium on the closing night of Shaw's engagement there. Vocals by Anita Boyer. Sustaining, NBC. (14:25; 12:00)

**GLENN MILLER AND HIS ORCHESTRA (11-3-41)** Remote broadcast from the Cafe Rouge of the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City. Vocals by Marion Hutton, Tex Beneke, Ray Eberle, and the Modernaires. Sustaining, NBC Shortwave. (10:45; 9:20; 10:20)

**JUBILEE (9-27-45)** Host Ernie "Bubbles" Whitman presents Count Basie and his orchestra, Mel Torme and the Mel-Tones, Sam Donahue and his Navy band, and Bob Crosby. AFRS. (10:10; 8:50; 10:25)

**SHEAFFER PARADE (7-25-48)** Eddy Howard and his orchestra in a studio broadcast from Chicago. Music includes Ricketty Rickshaw Man, What is This Thing Called Love?, Caravan, A Tree in the Meadow, Cherokee, Little Brown Jug. Sheaffer Pens, NBC. (11:00; 7:50; 10:45)

**OUR SPECIAL GUEST** will be big band historian, *Nostalgia Digest* columnist **KARL PEARSON** who will be on hand to discuss the big band era and the music it produced.

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 30th

**LIFE OF RILEY (4-12-47)** William Bendix stars as Chester A. Riley with Paula Winslowe, John Brown. Peg's old boyfriend arrives. Dreft, NBC. (15:24; 14:16)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE (11-17-47)** "Nobody Lives Forever" starring Ronald Reagan and Jane Wyman in a radio version of the 1946 film. A con-man fleeces a rich widow. Cast includes William Conrad and Ira Grossel (Jeff Chandler). Lux Soap, CBS. (16:50; 18:20; 21:20)

**G.I. JOURNAL (1940s)** William Bendix is "Editor-In-Chief" of this edition of the Journal with lots of help from Arthur Treacher, Lena Romay, Jinx Falkenberg, Mel Blanc, Jimmy Grier and his orchestra. AFRS. (8:15; 7:20; 14:15)

**KRAFT MUSIC HALL (12-28-44)** Bing Crosby welcomes Beatrice Kay and the Les Paul Trio. NBC (9:10; 7:25; 14:05)

**THE SAINT (7-31-49)** Vincent Price stars as the "Robin Hood of Modern Crime," Simon Templar. A woman fears for her life after inheriting a worthless old silver mine. Sustaining, MBS. (13:41; 10:25)

# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

## SEPTEMBER

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th  
A CARLTON E. MORSE WRAP-UP

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (11-14-50) Book 80, Chapter 12, "Pinky's Date with Eunice" is the first of the final six chapters of this sequence of programs which we began during our "Radio Theatre" series on WAIT and which ended abruptly when we moved our Monday thru Friday evening show to WBBM-AM. The program was written and created by Carlton E. Morse. Miles Labs, NBC. (14:00)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (11-15-50) Book 80, Chapter 13. "Pinky Discloses His Wedding Plans." Miles Labs, NBC. (13:45)

**ADVENTURES BY MORSE** (1944) "It's Dismal to Die" by Carlton E. Morse. Chapter 1 of a three-part adventure. "If you like adventure, come with me..." Captain Friday and his sidekick Skip Turner go to the aid of a damsel in distress in a South Carolina swamp. Syndicated. (13:00; 12:45)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (11-16-50) Book 80, Chapter 14. "Pinky Envisions a Rosy Future." Miles Labs, NBC. (13:50)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (11-17-50) Book 80, Chapter 15. "Eunice's Father Interviews Pinky." Miles Labs, NBC. (13:40)

**ADVENTURES BY MORSE** (1944) "It's Dismal to Die." Chapter 2. A young woman and her husband have been kidnapped and are being held captive in the swamp. Syndicated. (12:40; 12:35)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (11-20-50) Book 80, Chapter



**CARLTON E. MORSE** created *One Man's Family* and *I Love A Mystery* (which developed into *Adventures by Morse*). His work will be spotlighted on *Those Were the Days* on September 6th.

16. "Pinky Makes His Decision." Miles Labs, NBC. (14:00)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (11-21-50) Book 80, Chapter 17. The logical end of the "Pinky" sequence of episodes. Miles Labs, NBC. (14:00)

**ADVENTURES BY MORSE** (1944) "It's Dismal to Die." Chapter 3. The final segment of this three-part drama by Carlton E. Morse. Syndicated. (12:10; 13:00)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th  
DOCTORS ON THE AIR

**STORY OF DR. KILDARE** (7-6-50) Lew Ayers stars as Dr. James Kildare and Lionel Barrymore stars as Dr. Leonard Gillespie. The two physicians plan a hunting trip. Syndicate. (16:05; 9:00)

**HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE** (7-22-48) "The Citadel", based on the A. J. Cronin novel about a struggling young doctor in the coal mining town of South Wales. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (16:55; 11:55)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE** (1-25-54) "People Will Talk" starring Cary Grant and Jeanne Crain recreating their original screen roles from the 1951 movie. Comedy drama about a philosophic doctor who falls in love with his patient. Producer is Irving Cummings. AFRS rebroadcast. (21:55; 11:50; 15:00)

**FIRST NIGHTER** (3-10-49) "No Greater Need" starring Barbara Luddy and Olan Soule. An American doctor travels to Italy with a wonder drug to cure the sick. Cast includes Alan Reed Sr. and Alan Reed Jr. Campana Products, CBS. (9:44; 8:19; 9:55)

**HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE** (10-14-48) "Arrowsmith" starring John Lund in the Sinclair Lewis story about an eager young recruit to the medical profession. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (17:50; 11:50)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th  
TRIBUTE TO LURENE TUTTLE

**SUSPENSE** (7-6-54) "The Tip" starring Lurene Tuttle as a woman who tries to prevent a killer from murdering her husband. Cast includes Herb Butterfield. Sustaining, CBS. (15:00; 13:15)

**LURENE TUTTLE** who died May 28, 1986 at the age of 79, reminisces with Chuck Schaden about her career in a conversation recorded August 26, 1975 in her home in West Hollywood, California. First of three segments. (16:20)

**RED SKELTON SHOW** (3-18-51) The Skelton Scrapbook of Satire features Deadeye as The Sad Texan and Junior, the Mean Little Kid. Lurene Tuttle appears as Junior's mother. David Rose and the orchestra, Pat McGeehan, Dick Ryan, Rod O'Connor. Tide, CBS. (9:25; 12:15; 7:10)

**LURENE TUTTLE INTERVIEW** (8-26-75) Part two of the conversation. (14:00)

**GREAT GILDERSLEEVE** (9-21-41) Marjorie's school friend, a Southern Belle, comes to visit and monopolizes Marjorie's boyfriend. Harold Peary is Gildy, Lurene Tuttle is Marjorie, Lillian Randolph is Birdie, Walter Tetley is LeRoy, Shirley Mitchell is Dorabelle, Frank Nelson is Ted. Kraft Foods, NBC. (19:20; 10:50)

**LURENE TUTTLE INTERVIEW** (8-26-75) Part three. (11:30)

**ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE** (8-8-48) "The Bluebeard Caper" stars Howard Duff as Sam, Lurene Tuttle as Effie. The brother of a beautiful redhead hires Sam to save his sister from her boyfriend who has lost three wives under unusual circumstances. Wildroot Creme Oil, CBS. (13:35; 15:40)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27th

**AMOS 'N' ANDY** (6-1-45) Freeman Gosder and Charles Correll star with Hattie McDaniel and the Mystic Knights of the Sea Quartet. Andy and the



**LURENE TUTTLE** will be in the spotlight on *Those Were the Days*, September 20th.

Kingfish start a male escort service. Last show of the 1944-45 season. Rinso, NBC. (18:40; 11:42)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE** (4-26-54) "Detective Story" starring Kirk Douglas and Eleanor Parker, recreating their original screen roles in this radio version of the 1951 motion picture about life at New York's 23rd police precinct. Douglas is a hard-hitting detective, Parker his ignored wife. Cast includes William Conrad and Herb Vigran. Lux Soap, CBS. (14:30; 14:00; 16:55)

**SONGS BY SINATRA** (2-27-46) Frank Sinatra welcomes guest Jimmy Durante who gives "The Voice" a singing lesson. Pied Pipers, Axel Stordahl and the orchestra. AFRS rebroadcast. (11:25; 18:05)

**ROCKY FORTUNE** (1953) Frank Sinatra stars as "the fancy free and footloose young gentleman" who is mistaken as a prize fighter and is forced to participate in a rigged boxing match. AFRS rebroadcast. (11:33; 11:43)

**X MINUS ONE** (3-28-56) "A Pail of Air." On a frozen Earth, the young are sent out to scoop up a pail of air so it can be heated indoors to provide "breathing air." Sustaining, NBC. (15:44; 13:08)

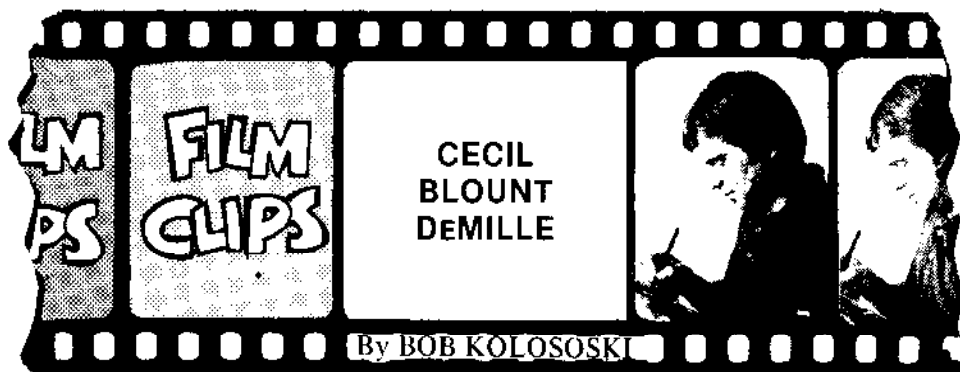
Nostalgia Digest -21-

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In the history of cinema there are only a handful of directors whose name on the credits outweigh that of the stars. Today movie-goers flock to movies directed by Steven Spielberg. In the 30's and 40's directors such as Frank Capra or Alfred Hitchcock had their names above the title. However, the director who really started all that and, in fact, practically discovered Hollywood was Cecil B. DeMille. Even today (twenty-seven years after his death) DeMille movies such as "The Ten Commandments" or "The Greatest Show On Earth" are media events on television. He was Hollywood's grand showman and he was never accused of doing anything in a small way.

His introduction to the theatre came at an early age due to the fact that his widowed mother, Mathilda Beatrice DeMille had formed a theatrical agency which flourished for a twenty year span. She directed and wrote several plays as did Cecil's brother William who enjoyed a period of success writing Broadway plays.

At the time of the Spanish-American War young Cecil was attending a military college in Pennsylvania. The chance to be in a "real" war thrilled him and he ran away to join Teddy Roosevelt's "Rough Riders." DeMille, however, was too young and was sent back to finish his education.

The excitement of the theatre was in his blood and in 1900 he made his stage

debut in the play "Hearts are Trump". In 1902, while touring with a play, he met Constance Adams, the daughter of a Boston Judge, and they were married. His brother William was enjoying a successful career as a playwright and Cecil joined him in collaborating on four plays. Cecil was now the general manager of his mother's theatrical company and had met many prominent people of the theatre. One of his closest friends was Jesse L. Lasky, a vaudeville musician. They collaborated on several operettas including one called "California". The two friends had seen a motion picture called "The Great Train Robbery" in 1913 and decided that this was a fresh, novel approach to storytelling.

They formed the Jesse L. Lasky Feature Player Company and as partners enlisted a very successful glove salesman named Samuel Goldfish, (who would change his name to Goldwyn) and a young attorney, Arthur Young. They bought the rights to Edwin Milton Royle's play "The Squaw Man" and signed stage actor Dustin Farnum as their star. The decision was made to shoot the movie in Arizona. In New York, DeMille, Farnum, director Oscar Apfel and three others boarded a train for Flagstaff, but when they arrived they were disappointed by the landscape and they all boarded the train again to continue on to the end of the line, Los Angeles,

California. Although there were a few others making movies there, D. W. Griffith included, Los Angeles was not much more than a sleeping trading post in the middle of endless citrus groves.

DeMille and company found the spot ideal for their picture, but it was something of a rough and tumble community for the newly arrived Easterners. DeMille often rode to the studio (a converted barn) on horseback and took to wearing a silver-plated, pearl-handle pistol for the snakes and rival movie men.

There was a movie camera patent war blazing in the industry and it wasn't uncommon for rival studios to raid their competitor's sets, destroying all camera equipment. DeMille thrived in this atmosphere and was determined to establish Lasky's company in California. DeMille and Los Angeles expanded quickly as did Lasky's which eventually became Paramount studios. Inspired by the wilderness around him DeMille wrote, produced, and directed a series of outdoor adventure stories and westerns. Each was successful and C.B. (as his friends called him) began to direct comedies and dramas. Each was a little better than the last and added revenue to his production company.

Inspired by D. W. Griffith's "Intolerance", DeMille produced and directed "The Ten Commandments" in 1923. The film was grand entertainment and established C. B. as a master director. The film was in two parts—the first, in Technicolor, told the story of Moses and the flight of the Jews from Egypt. The second part was in black and white and told the "Modern" story of a girl who loses her innocence and must redeem herself. The scene was set for future DeMille productions who had become quite skilled at directing large crowds and epic action scenes. He also discovered the bathtub as a cinema prop and directed dozens of films with bathtubs enhanced by the presence of



CECIL B. DE MILLE

beautiful stars such as Kay Johnson, and Julia Faye. The most famous DeMille bathtub scene was in the 1932 film, "The Sign of the Cross" with Claudette Colbert bathing in a huge pool of milk.

The 1930's were a busy time for DeMille who produced and directed such epic films as "Cleopatra" (1934), "The Crusades" (1935), "The Plainsman" (1937), and "The Buccaneer" (1938).

In 1936 he became the host of and director for the Lux Radio Theatre. Under his command this superb radio show attracted some of the biggest stars in Hollywood and often had a listening audience of forty million people. He remained as host and director until 1944 when he refused to pay a one dollar "fee" to the American Federation of Radio Artists. The AFRA was

## FILM CLIPS

to use the money to oppose a proposition in the California legislature to open radio work to anyone whether he or she was in the union or not. C. B. DeMille's refusal to pay the dollar meant suspension and cost him a yearly income of one hundred thousand dollars.

Undaunted, DeMille continued doing what he did best—making movies. In 1949 he produced and directed one of his most successful films "Samson and Delilah". Although it was panned by the critics, the biblical story of the legendary strongman made humble by the scheming Delilah was box office gold for DeMille and presented him with the problem of how to top himself. He found the answer in his next film "The Greatest Show on Earth." This circus opus had an all-star cast including James Stewart, Charleton

Heston and Betty Hutton. It also had a cast of thousands to fill the screen along with thrills and a spectacular train crash courtesy of the Paramount special effects department. It put DeMille on top of the Hollywood scene—where he felt he should be—and prompted him to begin preparing for his new version of "The Ten Commandments." Released in 1956 this 221 minute telling of the Hebrews' escape from Egypt was so overwhelming in scope that the critics were in awe. It was without a doubt DeMille's greatest project and put so much of a strain on him he collapsed several times on the set. After the picture's release he began to put together another project—the story of the founding of the American Boy Scouts. However, ill health plagued him and he died in 1959 at the age of 77. His films were usually "larger than life" and his filmatic visions made him a legend in his time.

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# Merchandising New 1940 Radio Models

REPRINT  
From  
RADIO TODAY  
July, 1939

**New lines offer  
new selling opportunities  
and greater profit possibilities**

Radio lines for 1940 have been announced, and soon most dealers will be displaying and selling these new sets.

Several trends in the new models are pronounced, and will have an important bearing on how sales of the new models may be promoted. Smart dealers will capitalize on these design advantages.

In the main, console cabinet styling has been simplified, lines are cleaner, and the clash with tasteful furniture has been greatly reduced.

Automatic tuning has been refined and improved, and is almost universal. This will help clinch many a sale, particularly in the replacement of the older models.

Provision for the reproduction of television sound is common, and will go a long way in breaking down the "let's wait for television" attitude which so many prospects expressed during the last two seasons.

### HOME DEMONSTRATIONS EASY NOW

Most manufacturers have adopted the loop antenna, under a variety of trade names, for consoles, compacts and portables.

With installation costs thus reduced to a minimum, dealers may now freely promote home demonstrations, where the prospect cannot fail to see the better appearance, hear the better tone, and enjoy the easier tuning of the new sets in comparison with her own old console.



Combinations such as the Westinghouse model above are becoming large sales factors. The GE. console below shows how 1940 models eliminate clash with furniture.

## MERCHANDISING 1940 RADIO

With the fear of obsolescence resulting from television removed, and with the greater values apparent, dealers who promote home comparisons by direct mail, phone and personal calls, should enjoy their best console sales in several years.

### COMBINATIONS MORE POPULAR

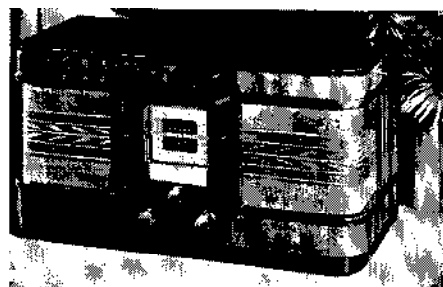
Another very pronounced trend is to the radio-phonograph "combination" which is now being produced by every major manufacturer. These sets range from the little portable to the large automatic record-changer playing 10 or 12 inch records interchangeably.

With combination prices down to the former straight-radio console level, the potential sales of combinations and records is greater than ever before. Combinations should be promoted by displays, store and home demonstrations and featured in direct mail advertising. Combinations are riding a new wave of popularity. Alert dealers will take on records, to build store traffic, help sell combinations and record players, and cash in on the public desire for "the music they want—when they want it."

Record players, too, can be successfully promoted to the owners of late-



Crosley Model 819M



General Electric Model 632

model radios, in the same manner as combinations.

Other factors in merchandising 1940 radios, are the models which fall between the typical consoles and table models.

Some of these are the familiar "chair-side" type, with and without record players.

This style makes no pretense to being anything other than what it is, but because of the convenience of operation, its public favor is increasing.

Others in this category, hide their identity as radios, in cabinets which are reproduced from classic furniture pieces. Such furniture cabinets harmonize perfectly in homes furnished in the same style period.

Women of discriminating taste, more style-conscious now than ever before, appreciate this type of cabinetry. Since the whole appeal of such radio lies in the adherence of the cabinet to traditional lines, woods, finishes and styles, such radios must be sold with keen regard for those factors.

### WOMEN'S MAGAZINES HELP SELL RADIO

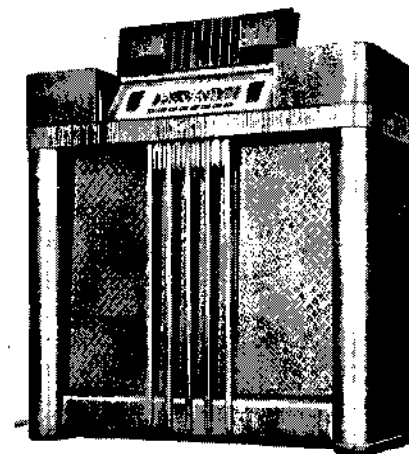
Women's magazines, such as *McCall's*, *House and Garden*, *Woman's Home Companion*, are increasing the appreciation of women for this type of radio, and furnish alert dealers with a timely means of tying in their own displays and direct-mail on furniture radio cabinets with these educational editorial articles.

Compacts and table models have been improved in appearance and performance, and so well satisfy the desires of the majority that they will account for about the same proportion of total sales as last year. Dealers must be reconciled to little change in this general condition for a long time to come. Their own scale of operation, methods, policies, promotions, must be streamlined and simplified, geared to profitable operation on the smaller-package, "no-installation" price level.

Proof of the unlimited market for portable receivers comes in news from station WTMJ, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Every salesman carries an RCA "Pick-Me-Up" as an essential part of his equipment and an aid in showing busy executives the type of program available. Since prospects may listen to the program in their own offices auditioning costs are cut and a greater number of potential customers are reached in less time. A market of this kind is also an advertiser, for, reports Harry Eldred, WTMJ's director of continuity, "Salesmen are finding lively interest on the part of the men interviewed in purchasing such a portable as an office radio to hear news broadcasts and other programs of interest to them."



Admiral Model 381-7H



Philco Model 216-RX

### SELLING MORE NECESSARY THAN EVER

Certainly all dealers must recognize that the day of people rushing to their stores to buy radio is gone. The new lines have enough "buy appeal" to warrant enthusiastic sales promotion, and given this, we should enjoy the best radio year since 1929.

With the bottom passed in low price, and the trend slowly upward, dealers who scale their operation to the new order, should find this their most profitable year too.

The outlook for the coming year is good.

The great damage, and the great threat, of television is *past*.

The time has come for enthusiastic sales promotion in radio, and results to individual dealers will closely parallel their own efforts in showing their prospects why they should own 1940 radios.

All dealers should "sell radio,"—program excellence and variety, symphonic and swing music, comedy drama, news, sports—as the primary basis for selling newer and better sets, and the real need for several sets in each home.

Consistent sales promotion of this type will pay big dividends.

**SKOKIE** — I listen to you every Saturday and I was wondering, as a request to my grandfather, if in the future sometime you could play a Myrt and Marge radio show, if you have any. Also, I was wondering if you could tell what years a radio series called The Creeking Door ran. Thanks.

— **ROBERT SCHULTZ**

**(ED. NOTE** — We'll be glad to serve up a Myrt and Marge show for your grandfather. Check our listings for *TWTD* for August 9th. The Creeking Door was a South African radio presentation from the 1960s. It was their version of our Inner Sanctum.)

**GLENVIEW** — I probably was the only one in Chicagoland listening to *Radio Classics* on my Walkman while watching the NBC 60th Anniversary special on TV Monday, May 12th. Dragnet was on your program and, at the same time, Dragnet was given TV coverage on the TV special. It was such a very unusual coincidence, I just had to write and tell you. Today the June-July *Nostalgia Digest* came. I remember Major Bowes Amateur Hour and want to add this: Major Bowes had said to a contestant in his serious, gracious way, "... and you have nine children! And now, what are you going to sing?" The singer replied, "Oh God, you made the night too long." This remark broke up the audience and I can't remember if the poor singer ever got to sing! It was fun walking down the block on a warm Sunday evening and never missing any of this program or the other popular programs on radio.

**RUTH BLOCK**

**GREENVILLE, N.Y.** — I have a complaint. In your Add-A-Caption you state, "any reader of the *Nostalgia Digest*" is eligible to submit an entry. Entries must be received by *Nostalgia Digest* no later than April 15, 1986. ... I didn't receive my *Nostalgia Digest* until the 16th of April! Last issue was the same thing. I think I got it the day after your deadline. Either extend your expiration date or ship out your magazine sooner!! Other than that you have a fine magazine. I have subscribed for the last three years. — **LEONARD R. CIUFO**

**(ED. NOTE** — The *Digest* is usually mailed by the 20th of the month before the date of publication. For example, the June-July issue was mailed on the 13th of May and this August-September issue was scheduled to be taken to the post office on July 17. The vast majority of our readers receive their copy before the end of the month. We do have a growing list of out-of-state subscribers but we have not had many comments regarding late-arriving *Digests*. Your copy goes with other out-of-state *Digests* from Morton Grove to Chicago to New York City, then to Greenville. Each trip takes some time and since the *Digests* are mailed using a bulk rate, they don't always get first class treatment by the Post Office. Sorry about that.)

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## WE GET

**SKOKIE** — Congratulations on your 16th Anniversary from one of your "baby boom" listeners. Thanks to *Those Were The Days*, I have cultural reference points dating back over a decade before I was born. Is it possible to feel nostalgic for something you don't actually remember? (My dictionary is unclear on this point.) I also have pleasant personal memories of engineering for you at WXFM in the mid-70s. Your smiling face at 7 a.m. always gave me a lift after a long over-night shift. (I have left broadcasting; now I'm a computer programmer.)

— **STEVEN STINE**

**(ED. NOTE** — Nice to hear from you, Steve. And, yes, it is possible to be nostalgic for something you don't remember. Don't ask me how it's possible, but it is! Thanks for listening!)

**BROADVIEW, IL** — Of late I'm having some problem listening to the entire Saturday show because my 15/16 speed tape recorder is out of order and there are no techs around here who have access to Uher equipment. There is a distributor out in California and I am seeking an address for further info. These are unusually fine machines, but very difficult to have repaired. I used to tape your entire afternoon (one four inch reel will go for six hours with thin tape). Now it's catch as catch can. The only trying part is your "humor!" (You know I'm not serious.) Was watching an old movie the other night and within a fifteen minute span the dialog includes at least two or three times the buzz words of the era: "gay" referring to a pleasant time (heterosexual, that is) and "swell." My wife laughed at the "swell" word, but I got a charge from "gay." Anyway, keep up the good work and hope you never run out of material.

— **WILLIAM E. FREDERICK, M.D.**

**CHICAGO** — My husband and I are retiring out west. If there is anything I'll miss in Chicago, it will be your *Those Were The Days* and *Radio Classics*. I have taped as many programs as possible. Do you know one way I use the tapes? When we travel I bring along our portable cassette recorder and play them in the car (while munching on junk food). I wish you and yours the best of everything. — **ELEANORE R. CIECHOMSKI**

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** — For many years I have listened to your Saturday show and enjoyed it very much. While you were on WCFL during the week I was also able to listen. However, when you left WCFL I couldn't pick up your signal in the evening. I am very happy to see that you are now on WBBM, which I can receive very clearly. My oldest two sons, Brendan, age 9 and Ryan, age 6, are allowed to stay up and listen to your Friday night programs

## LETTERS

since they do not have school the next day. They are quickly becoming fans of your program. I am sure that there are other families that allow their children to listen to the program on Friday evenings. Have you ever considered making Friday night programming geared for children? Programs such as Green Hornet, Challenge of the Yukon and the Lone Ranger would interest the younger set so that later they would continue to listen and, as they grow older, learn to appreciate the programs for the "older" listeners. I have recently subscribed to the *Nostalgia Digest* and find that it adds to my listening enjoyment. Now I know what is coming each day and can arrange my schedule so that I will not inadvertently miss a program.

— **RICK HARTNETT**

**(ED. NOTE** — Well, now that summer is here, your two boys should be able to stay up late every night! But in the fall... well, who knows? Don't touch that dial!)

**MIDLOTHIAN, IL** — I just love the vintage programs on your *Radio Classics* hour and on *Those Were The Days*, but with some of the weekday shows you run a lot of reruns and I was wondering if you were getting any more new shows? If you are, I was hoping you could get them from the thirties and the forties. And if you could, put all the trivia about the show at the end so I can catch it on the tape. I am 13 years old and I really enjoy listening. As for the man who wrote and asked you to change the time, if you do I won't be able to listen because I have to be in bed by nine. I visited your store for the first time and I thought it was great. To help you keep up the good work I enclose my two year subscription. — **ED LAKE**

**HIGHLAND PARK, IL** — I am renewing my subscription for your fine publication for another year. I have been a regular listener to your programs since 1973. I enjoy your presentation especially; you make me feel as if a group of us are with you listening to your radio in your living room while you reminisce about the performers. Even the commercials you do are fun. You're always enthusiastic about your sponsors and their products or services and every now and again you mention something personal about these people. Unfortunately your WBBM program loses a lot of your personality and it's not as good as *Those Were The Days*, which you do live. Maybe it would help if you recorded the show in front of a small studio audience? Also, I miss the commercials on the shows themselves; perhaps you could talk WBBM into letting you have 15 more minutes.

— **ADAM H. KERMAN**

**WOODRIDGE, IL** — Your shows on Saturday are done so professionally with allowances between your interruptions so us tape bugs could start and stop our equipment. I have found myself taping your Saturday show in its entirety and editing later. This allows me to be with my family on Saturdays and fills my weekday evenings listening to your show and editing the shows since television has nothing to offer. When you went to WCFL I nearly went broke buying 1200 foot tapes. It was great! Then when you went to AM 82 I lost interest because of the reception and I only lived in Addison at that time. When you announced you were moving to WBBM I went wild getting ready. I am disappointed! We, the listeners, have to endure 15 to 20 minutes of commercials to hear 40 to 45 minutes of incomplete shows. Chuck, we love ya. You have brought us a lot of memories. Your total involvement with old time radio has meant a lot to us audiophiles, new and old. Don't sacrifice your integrity for a lot of commercials... and you will increase your listening audience.

— **RICHARD CORDER**

**(ED. NOTE** — We're sorry you are disappointed with *Radio Classics*. The programs we are presenting weeknights on WBBM are syndicated rebroadcasts of vintage shows. These syndicated rebroadcasts are available to hundreds of radio stations across the country and have been obtained by WBBM-AM. They are not from our personal collection. The *Radio Classics* shows, as they come to WBBM-AM, are complete stories, but do not contain any original commercials, network identification or other "topical" material. Sometimes the openings and closings are cut or edited. This has been done by the syndicators. When WBBM decided to present this series of *Radio Classics*, they invited us to host and arrange the program. We were happy to do this because it gave us the opportunity to continue with a weeknight series of old time radio, even though the broadcast material would not be from our own collection.

(Each 60-minute WBBM *Radio Classics* program contains no more than 10 minutes of commercials, which is actually less than standard for broadcasting today. Some of the old shows are short (20-21 minutes) and some are long (25-26 minutes) and we often have difficulty sandwiching two shows in one 50-minute period, so you may feel we are short-changing you. It's not our intention to do that, just to present the shows we have in the time we have.

(Incidentally, the ratings indicate that we've never had a larger audience for old time radio than we have now on WBBM. It is our hope that we will be able to expand our time and the material in the not too distant future. And we hope you'll stay with us, too.)

*Nostalgia Digest* -29-



## WE GET LETTERS

**SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA** — I got the June-July issue of *Nostalgia Digest* yesterday. Naturally, the Big Band Brain Teasers caught my interest first. Also naturally, I was 100 percent with my answers although there were two in the leaders and tag lines I wasn't altogether sure of and I got those by process of elimination. It has only been relatively recently that Orrin Tucker left Hollywood's Myron's Ballroom and retired from the band business. I'm told one of the things Tucker used to do was play snatches of theme songs and challenge the patrons to identify them.

Some big bands had more than one theme, but there was usually one that was known better than others. Some leaders changed their themes over the years just because they wanted to, but sometimes there were other reasons. For instance, during the ASCAP-BMI dispute in 1941 the themes that fell into the areas of the dispute were forbidden to the bands that made the songs their own. The bands that had themes that were in the public domain had no problems, but others had to select new themes to be used for the duration of the dispute or, perhaps, permanently.

It is a fact that the theme song Glenn Miller used during the dispute was actually his theme song for a longer period of time than was *Moonlight Serenade*, yet who else but theme song collectors remembers *Slumber Song*?

Another reason band leaders changed their theme was because they had left one record company and signed with another. The old theme had usually been a big hit record with the old company, so the new theme was recorded with the new company just in order to establish territory. Tommy Dorsey beat this setup in his own way. Of course the whole world was familiar with the Victor recording of *Getting Sentimental Over You*, so what he did when he signed with Decca after the war was to record it as it was actually used over the air in an abbreviated form with voices. The Decca version is hardly known at all today, but it was widely used by disc jockeys who had Tommy Dorsey programs to MC for the housewives during the afternoon.

Theme song collectors more or less agree that Vincent Lopez was the first band leader to use a theme song over the air. That theme song was, of course, *No!a*. The history of the theme song itself is a little more clouded, but this is the story that is most often accepted.

Commercial radio did not come into being until 1923. Before then radio was in the hands of the experimental stations whose programs broadcast were unscheduled because those who appeared were invited to be there at no specified time. If the opera was in town one might be privileged to hear Caruso, Galli-Curci, or Melba sing the arias they

were most famous for. But the opera was rarely in town so those who were most likely to appear were vaudevillians who were booked into the local theaters. Most vaudevillians had an act they had perfected and never, ever changed thereafter. (The act I saw in the 1940's at the Chicago Theater was the very same act my father saw Eddy Peabody perform at Great Lakes Naval Training Station during World War One.)

When the vaudevillian appeared on the radio he did part, or all, of his act. His opening number on the radio was the very same he used at the theater a few hours later, and it was the very same he used every time he appeared either on the radio or at a theater.

When commercial radio became established it was the less successful among the vaudevillians who switched to the new medium of radio to sing their way into your heart and reap the rewards of record contracts. Anyone remember Billy Jones and Ernie Hare, or The Three Doctors, or Gene Austin, or Wendell Hall, or Nick Lucas, or Arthur Tracy? All their theme songs were the opening numbers they had used on the vaudeville stage. With the growth of commercial radio came the need for theme songs, and when radio began to use big bands on programs and establish the big band remotes there came the need for big band theme songs. When the Big Band Era ended almost every little local band had its own theme whether they needed one or not.

It is a fact that the very last Big Band Era big band hit record was Jimmy Dorsey's *So Rare* issued on both 78 and 45 rpm records by Fraternity Records in 1956. Jimmy and the Big Band Era passed away on June 12, 1957.

The article about the WWII home front brought back a memory. During my sophomore year at Steinmetz I went to work for my uncle in his drug store at Belmont and Long as fountain boy, delivery boy, and dusting specialist. My salary for five four-hour evenings every week was 25 cents an hour. On December 7, 1941 I was still working there while attending Wright Junior College but my salary had been raised to 30 cents an hour.

Pearl Harbor was a devastating shock, and what made it even worse was the instant news blackout. During the days following Pearl Harbor everyone east of the Rockies was convinced that the situation was many times worse than we were being told. Rumors flew about that the Japs had stormed ashore at Santa Monica, and Denver had been bombed. The official denials of such rumors were taken as attempts to prevent panic.

We "knew" our navy had been obliterated at Pearl Harbor. We "knew" our regular army was made up of social misfits who had enlisted only because they could not have survived as civilians. Furthermore, we had all seen newsreels of our recent conscripts training with either broomsticks or obsolete WWI weapons because that was all our country had.

Three customers of the drug store and I — all of us under twenty years of age — made a desperate plan. Each of us had access to a weapon, either a shotgun or a hunting rifle. Two automobiles were available, and we began storing up gasoline and canned food in one of the garages. The plan was that as soon as the Japs broke out east of the Rockies we would swipe one of the cars and drive west until we made contact with the Japs. There we intended to make our stand and, at the very least, trade our lives one-for-one with the enemy. Our only worry was that the roads would be so jammed with cars carrying other men with the same plan that our gas would not hold out. Surely, there would be a spontaneous "modern minute man" army of at least a million men.

It became obvious after only a couple of weeks that our plan was unnecessary. Still, I sometimes wonder what would have happened if we had been put to the test.

— LARRY LAVIERI, Class of 1940

**ED. NOTE** — Thanks for the memories, Larry. Nice to hear once again from a fellow Steinmetz High School alumnus. And thanks for including a long list of big band themes with your letter. Perhaps we'll prepare a quiz for an upcoming issue, using your material.

**CHICAGO** — Thank you for one of the most interesting side-notes I've ever heard. On Tuesday evening's show (April 29), you led into the Jack Benny program by describing what it was like to be in the audience before the program. When the program ended, you concluded by saying that Jack and the cast members would sign autographs briefly and then relax (and/or alter the script a little) before preparing for the 8 o'clock broadcast for the Pacific Coast. I enjoyed your commentary almost as much as the Jack Benny Program. I usually enjoy the insights you bring into old time radio, but Tuesday evening's program was extremely well-done. Again, thanks for the old-time radio programs and your interesting comments which bring further enjoyment of the old shows.

— MARY ELLEN LITTLE

**CHICAGO** — I enjoy *Radio Classics* very much. I listen every week night and enjoy *Those Were The Days* Saturday afternoons. I hope it will be possible to expand *Radio Classics*. Would it be possible for you to be on the air Saturday nights? There is nothing decent on TV then and it would be wonderful to pull up my imagination and listen to some good old plays or whatever you would like to offer us.

— KATHY KLEIN

**CHICAGO** — Can't wait any longer. I'm finally sending in my check for the July "Phil Harris-Alice Faye" tape encore. We love to listen to the old radio shows, but especially on long car trips. Makes the hours and the miles fly by. Thanks!

— MARY ALICE SOB CZAK

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**SUBSCRIBE NOW!**



## GUESS WHO

### 'Who Do You Think I Am?'



This cute little tyke on a bear skin rug was born in 1913 and still keeps busy with a show business career that began in the early 1930s. He has been seen on the motion picture screen and on television. He has appeared on hundreds of radio broadcasts and is considered one of the most outstanding supporting players in the world of entertainment. For many years he was the most famous "yes man" on radio and TV.

If you can identify him, you might win a half-dozen cassette tapes from the Hall Closet and a \$25 gift certificate from Metro Golden Memories.

Any reader of the *Nostalgia Digest* is eligible to make a guess.

Just send a note to GUESS WHO, *Nostalgia Digest*, Box 421, Morton Grove, Illinois 60053.

Tell us who he is and you get the prizes. In case of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine the winner. One guess per reader, please.

Guesses must be received by the *Nostalgia Digest* no later than August 15, 1986 so we can print the name of the winner — and a more recent picture of our celebrity — in the next issue.

Have fun!

ASSETTE TAPE RECORDS

5.50

AUGUST

NEW

### DIMENSION X

#### The Lost Race

In the future, earth men discover thousands of planets once occupied by life completely wiped out by nuclear destruction. An interesting story told in "Future Tense." NBC Broadcast 5/20/50

#### To The Future

A young couple escape "back in time" to the year 1950 in order to save their lives. A strange and interesting story on

DIMENSION X. Broadcast 5/27/50

ENCORE

### FIBBER MC GEE & MOLLY

With Charley McCarthy, Edgar Bergen and Gale Gordon

Fibber and Molly meet Charley and Edgar at the airport, as they are all to attend the "world premier" of their new film, "Look Who's Laughing." The Old Timer is hired by Fibber to do a little plugging for him, but as usual things don't always work out as planned. Sponsored by Johnsons Wax, November 11, 1941.

With Mel Blanc, Gale Gordon and Hal Peary as Gildersleeve

Fibber & Molly are at the train depot putting Uncle Sycamore on the train to Peoria when they meet Molly's old boyfriend, Otis Catwaller (Gale Gofdon). They invite him to dinner and to impress him they get Gildersleeve to hailer for the evening. Sponsor Johnson Wax, 12/26/39.

5.50

SEPTEMBER

NEW

### LIGHTS OUT!

#### Scoop

After forty years of faithful service as a columnist for the Daily Express Newspaper, Sam Roberts is fired because he is over fifty years of age! Roberts, unable to go on, commits suicide and seeks revenge from the grave! A chilling, frightening tale! Hosted by Arch Oboler. Sponsored by I.Y. Broadcast 12/8/42

#### Money, Money, Money

A poor farmer wins \$3000.00 in a Sweepstakes only to be murdered by a "friend", but the dead farmer doesn't take it "lying down." A spine chilling tale on *Lights Out*. Hosted by Arch Oboler, Broadcast 3/30/43

ENCORE

### RED SKELTON

With Verna Felton and Rod O'Connor  
Scrapbook of Satire —  
The Warehouse Elevator

Great Red Skelton comedy with his famous characters, Clem Kiddlehopper, and Junior, "the mean widdle kid," whose "I dood it," became national slang in 1942. The Junior skit, "In the Elevator", with his Grandmom is the feature of this program. Raleigh Cigarettes 2/4/47

Scrapbook of Satire —  
Careless Driving

Chapter #1 of his scrapbook of satire is "Careless Driving", a funny skit between Red, his grandmom and a policeman. Chapter #2, "The Cat of Distinction", is another skit involving his neighbor. Good clean humor. Raleigh Cigarettes, 3/25/47.

GET YOUR TAPES in the Metro-Golden-Memories Shop in Chicago or the Great American Baseball Card Company in Morton Grove. BY MAIL, send \$8.50 (includes postage and handling) for EACH tape to HALL CLOSET, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053.

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## Personality Profile

**JUDY CANOVA**, who was often considered the "Queen of the Hillbillies" was born in Jacksonville, Florida on November 20, 1916.

Judy studied to become an opera singer, but gave up those lofty intentions when she and her brother Zeke developed a vaudeville act that "knocked 'em dead" in the cities with their country-style, hillbilly comedy material.

She and her brother separated their careers when Judy was offered a featured number on Broadway in the Ziegfeld Follies. Next she went to Hollywood for a string of movies at Warner Brothers, Paramount and Republic: *Going Highbrow*, *Artists and Models*, *Thrill of a Lifetime*, *Scatterbrain*, *Sleepytime Gal*, and *Joan of Ozark*.

She made her radio debut with Paul Whiteman and then, in 1943, she began her own series, *The Judy Canova Show*, on CBS for Colgate.



It was a popular program and, coupled with the growing popularity of her movies, Judy Canova's hillbilly comedy style, those calico dresses and the trademark pigtails, she became a national fad. Audiences loved her. Within a year she moved her show to NBC, preceding the extremely popular country-western show, *Grand Ole Opry*. Soon her ratings exceeded the Opry's.

Judy Canova continued to entertain radio listeners through the decade of the 1940s and even into the 1950s. The series ended in the spring of 1953, another in the string of radio shows that died when the television era was born.

She never had a TV series of her own, but she did make a few guest appearances and may be remembered for a fine performance in a 1960 Alfred Hitchcock Presents drama, "Party Line."

Judy Canova died at the age of 66 on August 5, 1983.