



← **WALT DISNEY'S LADY AND THE TRAMP**

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NOSTALGIA DIGEST

BOOK 38, CHAPTER 2

SPRING 2012

APRIL-MAY-JUNE

Hello, Out There in Radioland!

With this issue, Funny Valentine Press celebrates its seventh anniversary as publisher of *Nostalgia Digest*. Since taking over from Chuck Schaden (the founder of the publication) in 2005, we've had the good fortune to work with and talk to some passionate and talented writers and performers who were there for the "Golden Age" of radio (and others who, like us, simply wish they'd been there). We've seen the Digest make its way into several hundred stores throughout the United States (and a few in Canada as well). We've entered the brave new world of "social media" as *Nostalgia Digest* has its own group on Facebook and a Twitter account. Over the last year, we've had the chance to meet with many of you through a series of public appearances — and there are more such events scheduled in the Chicago area in 2012, including the Green Hills Public Library in Palos Hills (April 12) and the Mount Prospect Public Library in Mt. Prospect (June 19). We have a few more appearances scheduled over the rest of the year is out and we'll keep you updated through our Facebook group, our Twitter feed... and of course, through *Those Were the Days*.

Speaking of which, the radio show that Chuck started back in 1970 celebrates its 42nd anniversary on the air this spring. Throughout the years, all of us affiliated with *TWTD* have treated it as a place where one can hear the totality of the period known as the "Golden Age" of radio. That's the inspiration behind our April 28 broadcast, as we celebrate our 42nd anniversary by taking listeners through the Golden Age of Radio, five years at a time — from 1932 (80 years ago!) to 1962 (a mere 50 years ago). Speaking of anniversaries, yours truly celebrates his third anniversary as the host and producer of *Those Were the Days* with the June 30 broadcast. You'll find our spring schedule for *TWTD* (and our sister show, *Radio's Golden Age*) beginning on page 32 of this issue.

And with a new year, one finds new challenges and new opportunities. We're taking our love for the Golden Age of Radio in a new direction this year with the launch of the *Nostalgia Digest Podcast*. It's a monthly series of free downloadable files, each one dedicated to people, performers and shows that have been featured within the pages of *Nostalgia Digest*. Appropriately, our first Podcast (posted in January of this year) featured a conversation with none other than...Chuck Schaden. You can learn more about the Podcast (and download each one for your personal consumption) at www.nostalgia digest.com.

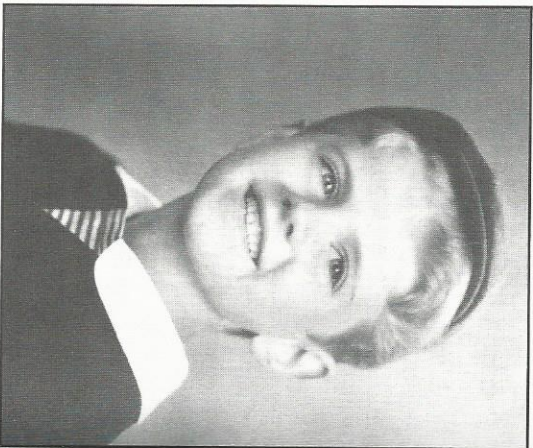
And whenever you listen to us — and however you do it, be it on your radio, your computer, or your portable device — thanks for listening.

—Steve Darnall

A few moments with...

DICK VAN PATTEN

Dick Van Patten has been a fixture of television almost since its inception, thanks in part to his regular role of Nels Hansen on I Remember Mama (one of the early success stories of the medium), and later as head of the Bradford family on Eight Is Enough. However, Van Patten has also enjoyed lengthy careers in radio and on stage. During a conversation at his home in Sherman Oaks, California, he recalled that his radio career involved one summer as Jack Benny's replacement:



PHOTOFEST

On a show called *Regular Fellows*, I played Jimmy Dugan. There were a lot of other kids on it too. I grew up with three other kid actors: Arthur Anderson — whom you know — and then there was a kid called Jackie Grimes, and he did a lot of radio shows, and Ronnie Liss. And myself. We monopolized radio for kid actors.

You have literally been an actor for almost your entire life.

Yes, since I was seven years old.

What inspired you to pursue this interest? When did you know, "This is what I want to do the rest of my life"?

I had nothing to do with it. I had a stage mother. They say "stage mother" like it's a dirty word, but I owe everything to my mother. If it wasn't for her, I would never have been an actor. She pushed me into it and thank goodness. It's been a great life and I owe it all to her. She took me around up and down Broadway, to the different producers and

agents, and she really got me started.

Did she ever tell you why that was? Was she a frustrated performer, or was it the economic realities of the Depression that meant everybody ought to work?

She wasn't a frustrated performer, but she was crazy about my sister and myself, and she wanted to make us big actors. And she did very well.

I opened up 75 years ago on Broadway in a show called *Tapestry in Grey*. I played Melvyn Douglas' son. And then I did 27 Broadway shows after that.

That's amazing. Here you are, literally a kid with no previous experience, and you're on Broadway.

But then I did a lot of radio. I would do two shows in one day. I would do *David Harum* in the morning and *Young Widder Brown* in the afternoon.

And I want tell you one thing: the [woman] who played my mother the most [on radio], she became a big star. Agnes Moorehead. She was a real radio actress and she used to play my mother. And the man who played my father a lot, he became a big movie star: Richard Widmark. Agnes Moorehead and Richard Widmark came right from radio and they monopolized it, they really did. But a lot of people don't realize they were radio actors first.

Well, you came from two good families then! [laughter]

Right, exactly. There was one other radio actor that used to play my father a lot. He was big in radio, but today people don't know him: Frank Lovejoy. Remember him? He was a big radio actor, and his wife was Joan Banks, and they monopolized radio too. I'm mentioning all these people that nobody knows!

Was he an easy guy to work with?

Very easy guy, nice man, and he used to go from one radio show to another. He really did; he did a lot.

And on radio, it was almost impossible to be typecast. So you could have played the sweet kid on one show and the rotten kid on another show.

[Laughs] Well, I was on one show called *Young Widder Brown*. I played Mark Brown, and I was on that for about ten years. That was on at 3:45 every afternoon.

Was school ever an issue in the midst of all of this?

I went to a school called Professional Children's School, and it was for kid actors, so you could be excused to go to work. If you had a radio show that day, you could do your schoolwork by correspondence. That's how I got through school.

You were one of the Let's Pretend's, and you were also on a show on Sunday mornings called Coast to Coast on a Bus. I'd love to ask you about those shows because they were really two very different shows. Let's Pretend dramatized children's stories, while Coast to Coast on a Bus was almost a variety show. I wonder if you could tell us something about the modus operandi of each show — the way Nila Mack worked on Let's Pretend and the way Madge Tucker worked on Coast to Coast.

Well, Madge Tucker was a little more lenient and nicer. Nila Mack was very strict; she would yell at you if you said a line wrong. Madge Tucker was more lenient. She was a little bit easier to be with.

The other thing that's fascinating about Let's Pretend is the list of people who were part of that show. Apparently at one point [future movie director] Sidney Lumet was part of the show?

Yes, he was a kid actor! When I was seven years old, I went into a show called *The Eternal Road*, and it was directed by Max Reinhardt, who was the biggest thing in the country. Sidney Lumet was ten years old, he was three years older than me, and he played another part in the show. We had the same dressing room. That show ran for about a year, so we were together in the same dressing room for a long time. When I was doing *I Remember Mama*, he directed one of [the episodes]. That's the next time I saw him. ■

To hear this conversation in its entirety — including Dick Van Patten's memories of live television and taking direction from Tallulah Bankhead — tune in to Those Were the Days on April 21.

Necrology for 2011

In 2011, we said farewell to some of our favorite performers and personalities from the worlds of radio, television, movies, and music. Here, we take a moment to acknowledge their passing and thank them for their contributions.

GEORGE ANSBRO, 96, who worked as an announcer on radio and television for more than 50 years at NBC and ABC. His many radio credits included *Young Widder Brown*, *When a Girl Marries*, *Ethel and Albert*, and *Dr. IQ*. November 5.

KAY ARMEN, 95, Chicago-born singer featured on the radio quiz program *Stop The Music*, who also performed on radio with Milton Berle, Vic Damone and Don McNeill's *Breakfast Club*. She appeared on the television series *Washington Square* and in the 1955 film *Hit the Deck*. October 3.

JAMES ARNESS, 88, actor who for 20 years played Marshal Matt Dillon on the television version of *Gunsnake*. He also appeared as *The Thing From Another World* in the 1951 movie of the same name. His other film credits included *Background, Honda*, and *Them!* June 3.

JOHN BARRY, 77, who composed music for over 100 films, including *Born Free*, *The Lion in Winter*, *Out of Africa*, and *Dances with Wolves*, but who is best-remembered for his work on 11 films in the James Bond series. January 30.

CHARLIE CALLAS, 86, rubber-faced comedian who began his career as a drummer for the orchestras of Tommy Dorsey, Claude Thornhill and Buddy Rich and appeared on stage and televi-

sion for more than four decades. He was seen regularly on *The Flip Wilson Show* and co-hosted *The Joey Bishop Show*. January 27.

JEFF CONAWAY, 60, actor who appeared in the stage and screen versions of *Grease* and spent three seasons as Bobby Wheeler on the television series *Taxi*. May 27.

JACKIE COOPER, 88, actor and director who began his career at seven years of age and appeared in over a hundred movies and television shows, including a number of the *Our Gang* films. On television, he starred in *The People's Choice* and later played the title role on *Hennessy*. In the 1970s and 1980s, he portrayed Perry White in the *Superman* movies. May 3.

SIDNEY COOPER, 92, veteran musician and arranger who performed with Tommy Dorsey, Billie Holiday, Frank Sinatra and Miles Davis. As a staff musician for NBC, he was heard regularly on *Eddie Fisher's Coke Time*, *The Steve Allen Show* and *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*. July 18.

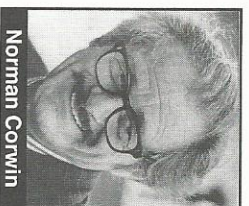
NORMAN CORWIN, 101, legendary writer, director and producer whose groundbreaking efforts earned him the title "The Poet Laureate of Radio." He began his network radio career in 1938 with the CBS series *Norman Corwin's Words Without Music* and became a regular contributor to the *Columbia Workshop*. His other radio credits included *We Hold These Truths*, a special program in honor of the sesquicentennial of the Bill of Rights, and *On a Note of Triumph*, a special program produced to



James Arness



Jackie Cooper



Norman Corwin



Anne Francis

commemorate the end of the war in Europe. Corwin also created plays for United Nations Radio and National Public Radio, and wrote the screenplay for the 1956 film *Last For Life*. October 18.

MADelyn PUGH DAVIS, 90, writer best known for her work with Lucille Ball, on the radio show *My Favorite Husband* and the legendary television series *I Love Lucy*. She also wrote for *The Lucy Show* and *The Mothers-in-Law*. April 20.

SAM DENOFF, 83, writer who began his career at New York radio station WNEW before moving to television, where his many credits included *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *The Andy Williams Show*, and *That Girl*. July 8.

DON DIAMOND, 90, actor who appeared in supporting roles on many radio series, including *Gunsnake*, *Escape*, *Suspense*, *Let George Do It*, and *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*. On television, he played El Toro on *The Adventures of Kit Carson* and was the ambitious but inept Crazy Cat on the series *F Troop*. June 19.

JOHN DYE, 47, actor who appeared for nine seasons as Andrew, the Angel of Death, on the television series *Touched By an Angel*. January 10.

ROBERT EASTON, 81, actor and dialect coach who appeared on radio for two years as one of the Quiz Kids, and later was heard as Magnus Proudfoot on the *Gunsnake* radio series and as neigh-

bor Lester Nelson on *Fiber McGee and Molly*. On television, he provided the voice of Lt. Sheridan on the animated series *Slingray*. December 16.

PETER FALK, 83, Emmy Award-winning actor best known for playing the rumpled detective Columbo over three decades on television. He also starred in the 1965 television series *The Trials of O'Brien* and in such movies as *Murder, Inc.*, *A Pockyful of Miracles*, *The Cheap Detective*, and *The Princess Bride*. June 23.

ANNE FRANCIS, 80, actress who began her career on radio as a child, performing on *Let's Pretend*, *Coast To Coast on a Bus*, and *When a Girl Marries*. She was Altaria in the celebrated 1956 film *Forbidden Planet*. Her other films included *Blackboard Jungle*, *Bad Day at Black Rock*, and *Don't Go Near the Water*. On television, she appeared in the story "After Hours" on *The Twilight Zone* and later starred in the title role on the series *Honey West*. January 2.

DAN FRAZER, 90, actor who appeared on television as Capt. Frank McNeil on *Kojak* and as Lt. McCloskey on *As The World Turns*. His other television credits included *The Phil Silvers Show*, *The Andy Griffith Show*, *Route 66* and *Car 54, Where Are You?* December 16.

CARL GARDNER, 83, founder and lead singer for the Coasters, whose hit records included "Charlie Brown," "Poison Ivy," and "Yakety Yak." June

BETTY GARRETT, 91, comedic actress who performed on stage, in movies and on television in a career that lasted for over 60 years. She appeared in the movies *On The Town*, *Take Me Out to The Ball Game*, *Nephtine's Daughter* and *My Sister Eileen*. On television, she was Irene Lorenzo on *All in the Family* and Edna Babish on *Laverne and Shirley*. February 12.

JOE GENTILE, 87, Chicago entrepreneur and owner of Elmhurst radio station WJIG, where he appeared for over a decade as the station's morning host. October 10.

MICHAEL GOUGH, 94, English actor who appeared in more than 70 movies over a 60-year career, most notably as butler Alfred Pennyworth in the Batman films of the 1990s. Other film credits included *The Man in the White Suit*, *The Boys From Brazil*, *The Age of Innocence* and *Corpse Bride*. March 17.

FARLEY GRANGER, 85, stage and film actor who starred in Alfred Hitchcock's classic films *Rope* and *Sprangers on a Train*. Other film credits included *They Live By Night*, *Hans Christian Andersen*, *O. Henry's Full House* and *The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing*. March 27.

BOBIE GRAY, 71, singer who enjoyed success in the 1960s with "The In Crowd" and "See You at the Go-Go" and in the 1970s with the enduring hit "Drift Away." December 6.

LYNN HAULDREN, 89, Chicago-based advertising copywriter who spent years as the television spokesman for Empire Carpets and wrote the company's celebrated jingle. April 26.

BILL HAMILTON, 87, veteran Chicago-area broadcaster who worked in radio at stations WCFL and WHFC. On

television, he became the first regularly scheduled newscaster on WBKB. He was also the long-time voice of Jewel Food Stores and Polk Brothers department stores. June 28.

DOLORES HOPE, 102, singer who performed on radio and television with Bob Hope, her husband of 69 years. September 19.

FERLIN HUSKY, 85, pioneering country music entertainer in the 1950s and early '60s known for hits like "Wings of a Dove," "A Dear John Letter," and "Gone." On radio and television, he performed on *Grand Ole Opry* and *Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts*. March 17.

SYBIL JASON, 83, child actress who appeared opposite Shirley Temple in the films *The Little Princess* and *The Blue Bird*. August 23.

HAL KANTER, 92, Emmy award-winning writer who worked on radio, television and movies, writing for Jack Oakie, Danny Kaye, Ed Wynn, George Gobel, and *The Beulah Show*. In the 1960s, he created the groundbreaking television series *Julia*. November 6.

TOM KEITH, 64, radio actor who appeared for over 35 years on Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion*, performing an amazing variety of characters and vocal effects. October 31.

JACK LALANNE, 96, pioneering television personality and fitness enthusiast whose workout programs were a staple of the medium for over 30 years. January 23.

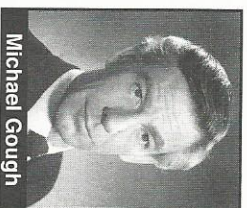
ARTHUR LAURENTS, 92, writer for stage and screen whose work included the landmark plays *Gypsy*, *West Side Story* and *Home of the Brave*, and such films as *Rope*, *Anastasia*, and *The Way We Were*. May 5.

JERRY LEIBER, 78, songwriter who, with his partner Mike Stoller, wrote and



MOMPHOTOFEST

Betty Garrett

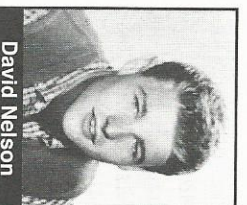


PHOTOFEST/AMERICAN INTL

Michael Gough



Harry Morgan



David Nelson

produced songs for Elvis Presley, The Drifters, The Coasters, Peggy Lee and many others. Their hits included "Hound Dog," "Up on the Roof," and "Is That All There Is?" August 22.

CHARLIE LOUVIN, 83, country music singer who performed with his brother Ira from the 1940s into the 1960s as The Louvin Brothers. They were part of the Grand Ole Opry for eight years and enjoyed success on record with songs including "Cash on the Barrelhead," "My Baby's Gone," "You're Running Wild" and "Satan Is Real." January 26.

SIDNEY LUMET, 86, child actor who grew up to become a renowned director of such films as *12 Angry Men*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Serpico*, and *Dog Day Afternoon*. April 9.

KENNETH MARS, 75, veteran stage and screen actor who appeared in more than 35 films, including *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Radio Days*, and *Young Frankenstein*. Perhaps his most famous role was that of Franz Liebkind, the Nazi playwright whose musical "Springtime For Hitler" was the centerpiece of Mel Brooks' classic film *The Producers*. February 12.

WILLIAM J. MCCARTER, 81, broadcasting pioneer who spent 27 years as President and CEO of WTTW/Chicago, when it became the most-watched public television station in the country. April 21.

BILL MCKINNEY, 80, character actor

who appeared in over a hundred movies and television shows during his career, including a legendary performance as the Mountain Man in the 1972 film *Deliverance*. Other films included *The Parallax View*, *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*, and *The Outlaw Josey Wales*. December 1.

SID MELTON, 94, character actor whose career spanned over 70 years. He played Ichabod Mudd on the television version of *Captain Midnight*, "Uncle" Charlie Halper on *The Danny Thomas Show* and carpenter Alf Monroe on the series *Green Acres*. November 2.

HARRY MORGAN, 96, actor who was a fixture on television for four decades, as Pete Porter on the series *December Bride* and its spin-off *Pete and Gladys*, as Officer Bill Gannon on *Dragnet*, and for eight years as Col. Sherman Potter on *M*A*S*H*. He worked on radio as the announcer for Peter Lorre's *Mystery in the Air* and appeared in more than 100 movies, including *High Noon*, *Inherit the Wind*, *How the West Was Won*, and *The Glenn Miller Story*. December 7.

DAVID NELSON, 74, oldest son of Ozzie and Harriet Nelson and the last surviving member of the Nelson family that appeared on radio and television in *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*. He also appeared in the movies *Peyton Place*, *The Big Circus*, and *Cry Baby*. January 11.

JOHN NEVILLE, 86, actor who played

the title role in the 1988 movie *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* and later appeared as The Well-Mantled Man on the television series *The X-Files*, November 19.

BILL NIMMO, 93, announcer who began his career as an overnight disc jockey at WLW/Cincinnati before moving to television, where he served as Johnny Carson's original sidekick on the show *Who Do You Trust?* His other television credits included *The Jackie Gleason Show* and *The Regis Philbin Show*, February 22.

CLIFF ROBERTSON, 88, actor who won an Oscar for his performance as the title character in the 1968 film *Charly*. Other film credits included *Picnic*, *PT 109*, *Three Days of the Condor*, and *Spider-Man*. On television, he was the villainous cowboy Shame on *Batman* and also appeared on *The Twilight Zone*, *The Chrysler Theater*, and *Falcon Crest*, September 10.

ANDY ROONEY, 92, writer who spent more than 30 years as the acerbic commentator for CBS television's *60 Minutes*. He also wrote for Arthur Godfrey and Clarry Moore during his 60-year career, November 4.

PETE RUGOLO, 95, prolific composer and arranger who worked with Stan Kenton in the 1940s and went on to compose music for such television shows as *Thriller*, *The Fugitive*, and *Richard Diamond, Private Detective*, October 16.

JANE RUSSELL, 89, actress who began her film career in the controversial 1943 movie *The Outlaw*. She later co-starred with Bob Hope in *The Paleface*, with Victor Mature in *The Las Vegas Story*, and opposite Marilyn Monroe in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, February 21. **SOL SAKS**, 100, writer who worked on radio as a writer for *Duffy's Tavern* and

The Beulah Show and later wrote for the television series *My Favorite Husband*, *I Married Joan* and *Mr. Adams and Eve*. In the 1960s, he created the long-running television comedy *Bewitched*, April 16.

SHERWOOD SCHWARTZ, 94, celebrated writer who worked on radio for Bob Hope, Red Skelton, Alan Young, Ozzie and Harriet Nelson, and *The Beulah Show*. During World War II, he worked for the Armed Forces Radio Service, where he contributed to *Command Performance* and *GI Journal*. For television, he created the long-running series *Gilligan's Island* and *The Brady Bunch*, July 12.

ELISABETH SLADEN, 65, British actress best remembered for playing intrepid journalist Sarah Jane Smith in the long-running series *Doctor Who* and in a 2007 spin-off series, *The Sarah Jane Adventures*, April 19.

LARRY SMITH, 81, jazz musician and disc jockey who worked in radio for over 50 years, most notably in Chicago at **WBEB**, June 24.

LEONARD STERN, 87, prolific writer who worked in radio, television and movies during a career that lasted over 50 years. On radio, he wrote for Milton Berle and Abbott and Costello. His television credits included *The Honeymooners*, *The Steve Allen Show*, *The Phil Silvers Show*, and *Get Smart*. With Roger Price, he created the popular word game *Mad Libs*, June 7.

MARGOT STEVENSON, 98, actress who performed on Broadway in the original cast of *You Can't Take It With You*. On radio, she was the voice of the lovely Margot Lane on *The Shadow*, January 2.

ALAN SUES, 85, actor who spent five seasons in the cast of *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*. He also appeared in the film *The Americanization of Emily*



Margot Stevenson
PHOTOGRAPHER



Elizabeth Taylor



Orrin Tucker



Margaret Whiting

and on television in "The Masks," one of the most celebrated episodes of *The Twilight Zone*, December 1.

CLARICE TAYLOR, 93, actress and comedian who performed in stage and movie productions of *The Wiz* but may be best-known for playing mother Anna Huxtable on *The Cosby Show*, May 30.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR, 79, legendary actress and activist who appeared in more than 50 films, including *Lassie Come Home*, *National Velvet*, *A Date With Judy*, *Life With Father*, *Little Women*, *Father of the Bride*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *Cleopatra*. She won Academy Awards for her performances in the films *Butterfield 8* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* March 23.

SADA THOMPSON, 83, Emmy- and Tony Award-winning actress perhaps best known for playing understanding mother Kate Lawrence on the television series *Family*, May 4.

BOB TRENDLER, 99, musician who spent more than two decades as Mr. Bob, the leader of the band on the long-running Chicago version of *Bozo's Circus*. For more than 40 years, he was the musical director of the WGN orchestra and also performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, July 18.

ORRIN TUCKER, 100, musician who led his own band for 60 years, enjoying success on radio and on records, including his 1939 recording of "Oh Johnny" with Wee Bonnie Baker, April 9.

MARGARET WHITTING, 86, singer who enjoyed chart success with her recordings of "That Old Black Magic," "Come Rain or Come Shine," and "Moonlight in Vermont." On radio, she performed with Eddie Cantor, Bob Hope, Jack Smith, Gordon MacRae, and Johnny Desmond, and co-starred with Bob Crosby on the series *Club Fifteen*, January 10.

ROGER WILLIAMS, 87, virtuoso pianist who started out on radio in Iowa before enjoying a string of hit records during the 1950s and 1960s, including "Autumn Leaves," "Born Free," and "The Impossible Dream," October 8.

SUSANNAH YORK, 72, British actress who played Lara, mother of the child Kal-El in the 1978 movie *Superman* and its sequel, *Superman II*. Her other film credits included *Tom Jones* and *A Man For All Seasons*, January 15.

NORMA ZIMMER, 87, actress and singer who for two decades was known as "The Champagne Lady" on *The Lawrence Welk Show*. Her voice was also heard on the celebrated 1951 cartoon *Suzy Snowflake*, May 10.

They are gone... but they are not forgotten.

A complete listing of our Necrology for 2010 is available online at www.nostalgia Digest.com

MEMORIES OF A BOY BROADCASTER!

BY FRANK ABSHER

Sometimes in the innocence of youth, a window to the future opens.

But because we're so young, we don't realize what has happened.

I grew up in a small Southern Illinois farming town of 2,400. It was during the late 1950s, the days when AM radio was really the only choice. We were about 55 miles outside of St. Louis, so we were able to receive most of the city stations with no difficulty.

The big city to the west was a place for special shopping trips and visits, but life in a small, rural community was isolated and innocent of all things urban. Among my summer memories are walks down the town's streets during the early evening. No one had air conditioning. Few ever locked their doors. You could literally follow the progress of the Cardinals' ballgames on St. Louis' pow-

Frank Absher is a retired broadcaster and university instructor living in St. Louis, Missouri.

erhouse KMOX — as related by Harry Caray — as the sounds drifted out from each screen door on the block.

All the kids in town listened to KXOK, the sole source of the day's popular music on our radio dials. There was never a question. That's just the way it was. And since air conditioning wasn't present in cars back then, you'd hear the sound of KXOK coming out of every kid's car as they drove past during those hot summer months, every window in the car rolled down.

My favorite uncle, a bachelor from Chicago, had a knack for coming up with unique gifts that no one else in my town had seen. For my 12th birthday, he gave me a Knight Kit transmitter. This was a gift that hadn't even appeared on my personal radar screen, but there it was, ready to assemble. All I needed were a few tools, a soldering iron, and patience.

I'd never soldered before, but despite my sloppiness, I managed to assemble a working radio transmitter that had a range of about 500 feet. The great part about this little electronic contraption was that you could tune to whatever

AM frequency you wanted.

That was all I needed.

I absconded with the microphone to my dad's reel-to-reel and cut off the old jack, soldering on one that would fit my little transmitter. Then I turned on my clock radio — which was, of course, tuned to KXOK. A few light twists of the screwdriver finally achieved the wonderful whistle of feedback and I knew I was ready.

Grabbing every extension cord in the house, I ran the power source out the front door, across the porch and down into the evergreens that had grown to form a semi-protective wall in front of our house. I plugged in my contraption, sat, and waited.

I told you this was a small town. It was so small that we knew everyone, and we knew the kinds of cars they drove, so my plot was easy enough to carry out.

I waited in the bushes until one of the town's teens drove past. Then I shouted out to them in my microphone: "Hey, Bobby!" "Hey, Richie!"

The flash of brake lights was immediate, followed by looking around and fiddling with the car's radio, but by the time they could react to hearing a kid's voice greeting them on KXOK, they were well past my house. One can only imagine their conversations later, as their friends shook their heads in pity at their delusional peers.

It was fun, but my interest waned after a couple months and I went after new discoveries, eventually passing my toy on to my younger brother. It wasn't until I reached college that I became aware of an interest in radio as a career. This was not an interest that was based in those few fleeting weeks of antagonizing my hometown teenaged friends on their car radios. This time it was because I

truly enjoyed using my natural gift of gab to earn a small paycheck each week, helping to defray my college expenses.

At the age of 12, I had discovered the power of radio. I had also seen how people reacted when radio talked to them, not as an audience, but as individuals.

Twenty years later, I was one of the voices on that 50,000 watt signal of KMOX, and while I can't say that my uncle's gift had anything to do with it, that job was the zenith of my radio career.

Now retired, I cherish the days of innocence of my small-town childhood, as well as the days of professional glory that came in the late '70s and early '80s when it was still fun to be on the radio. ■



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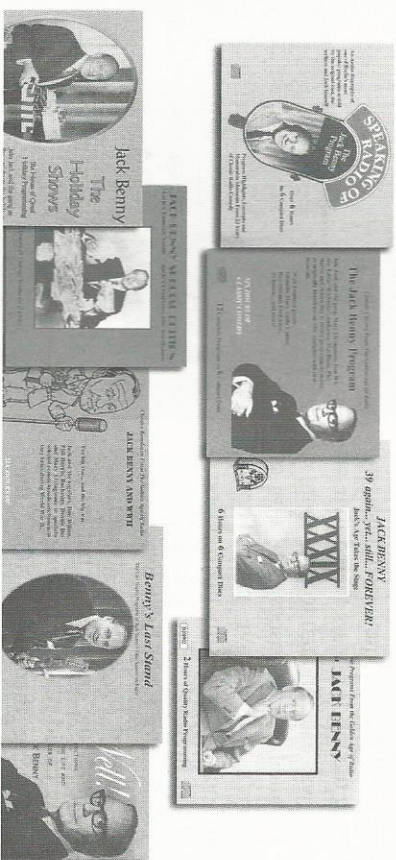
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DISNEY'S FOLIES

THE STUDIO - AND THE FILMS - THAT TRANSFORMED ANIMATION



PHOTO COURTESY OF WALT DISNEY/PHOTOFEST

BY SCOTT SENTINELLA

When Walt Disney died in 1966, his studio had produced seventeen animated features. An eighteenth was still in production, and would not open until 1967. After Disney's death, the quality of the company's animated features took a nosedive that would not be reversed until the late 1980s. As a result, Disney's lifetime is considered to be a "Golden Age"

of animated films. Of course, the true story is more complicated — and less rosy — than that.

Disney's first animated feature was *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937). Contrary to popular belief, it was not the first animated feature ever made — that honor goes to German animator Lotte Reiniger's 1926 film *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* — however, *Snow White* was clearly the first animated feature ever made in America, and it set a standard that, in some ways, was never surpassed.

Snow White cost a then-massive \$1.4

Scott Sentinella is a freelance writer from Carson, California.

million to make, but it became the biggest-grossing film in Hollywood history. Before its release, Hollywood insiders referred to the picture as “Disney’s Folly.” Who in their right mind, they wondered, was going to sit still for ninety minutes of slapstick gags?

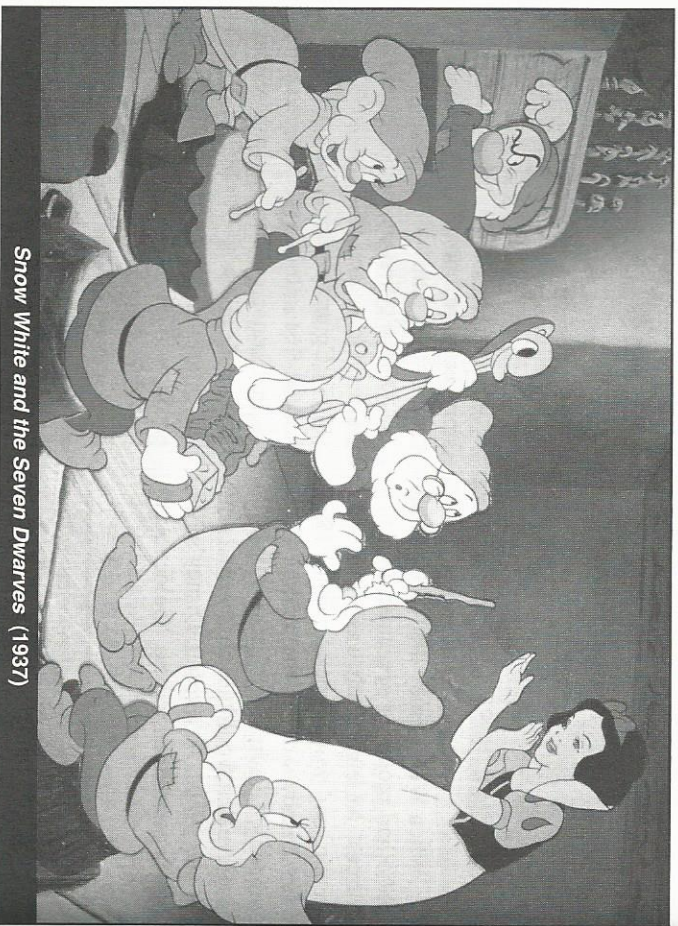
Of course, Walt (and he was usually referred to as Walt, not Mr. Disney) was smarter than that. Working with director David Hand, and a platoon of writers and directing animators, Walt co-created a film that was as emotionally powerful as it was visually stunning. Filled with unforgettable songs, *Snow White* was so successful that Disney used the profits the film brought in to build a new animation studio in Burbank, which is still in use today.

Some 75 years after its initial release, *Snow White* still plays beautifully, with stunningly elaborate imagery and an unerring sense of pace. The Dwarves are such lovable characters that they

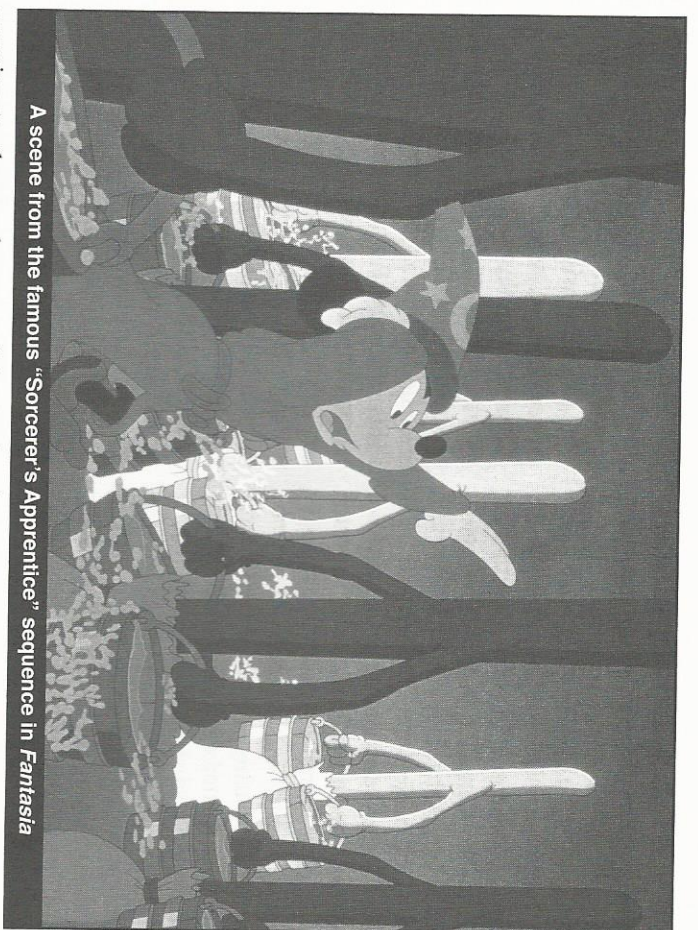
compensate for Snow White, whose high, piping voice comes off as grating to modern ears. Even so, the movie holds up as arguably the greatest animated film ever produced.

Disney’s second animated feature was *Pinochio*, which premiered in 1940. Originally scheduled for a 1939 release, *Pinochio* went over budget and over schedule. Part of this was due to the fact that the film had to be almost entirely redone months into production. The movie portrayed Pinochio as a brash, bratty little boy — a characterization that is true to the way he is depicted in Collodi’s 1883 novel — but he simply came off as too unlikable in the movie. Disney ordered that the film start over from scratch, with Pinochio now rendered as a naive and gullible but sweet-tempered tyke.

When *Pinochio* finally opened, the reviews were ecstatic, but the box office was disappointing. This may come as a



Snow White and the Seven Dwarves (1937)



A scene from the famous “Sorcerer’s Apprentice” sequence in *Fantasia*

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS/PHOTOFEST

surprise to those who weren’t around when the film originally opened, but Hollywood history is littered with films that flopped at the box office and then went on to become classics, from *The Wizard of Oz* to *The Shawshank Redemption*. Seen today, *Pinochio* seems like one of the finest things that Disney ever did. The animation is even more overwhelming than that of *Snow White*, and the songs are again unforgettable. Like *Snow White*, the film isn’t afraid to be frightening, but — unlike *Snow White* — *Pinochio* is a little episodic. This approach is faithful to the book, but it may account for the film’s original unpopularity.

Disney’s third animated feature, *Fantasia*, was so episodic that it didn’t have a plot at all. The film is essentially a series of music videos, some forty years before the term was invented. *Fantasia* plays like a collection of beautifully animated short subjects, each one “illustrat-

ing” a piece of classical music. Some of these are brilliant, like “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice.” Other segments, such as “Toccata and Fugue in B Minor” are lovely to look at, but dull. The overall effect, however — the dancing toadstools in “The Nutcracker Suite,” the rampaging dinosaurs in “Rite of Spring,” the giant demon emerging in “Night on Bald Mountain” — is so stunning that it makes the film an unforgettable experience.

Audiences did not respond to the production when it opened in 1940, and the movie did not come anywhere close to recouping its whopping cost. It would take another three decades before *Fantasia* was rediscovered and appreciated as the classic it is. Primed by “trip-py” productions like 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, baby-boomer audiences now saw *Fantasia* as “psychedelic” and the film began to show a profit through re-releases.

As beloved as they are now,

Pinocchio and *Fantasia* both lost tons of money. Disney needed a hit to start the new decade and he got one in 1941 with *Dumbo*. Short and sweet, *Dumbo* cost about \$900,000 to make, making it the studio's cheapest animated feature to date. The animation in *Dumbo* is not as elaborate as that in *Snow White*, but it is still brilliantly done. The title character — the baby elephant who never says a word — is instantly endearing, and the tale of the triumph of the human spirit (or animal spirit) is unforgettable. *Dumbo* ranks as possibly one of the two or three finest animated films that Walt Disney ever produced.

Bambi, which opened in 1942, is probably even more popular today, although it was not a big hit when it originally opened. Adapted from Felix Salten's novel, *Bambi* features what might be the most famous scene in any Disney film — the death of Bambi's mother. Costing a hefty \$1.74 million, *Bambi*'s depiction of the wonders of nature and the changing of the seasons is consistently gorgeous. Its basic storyline — beginning with Bambi's birth and ending with the birth of his children — is the original "Circle of Life," and it remains moving 70 years later.

For some Disney fans, it is here that the first golden age of Disney animation ends. By the time *Bambi* opened, the U.S. was deep into World War II and all hands were needed on deck. For the duration of the war, the Disney studio had be satisfied with turning out feature films that were really compilations of short subjects — like less elaborate versions of *Fantasia*. The first of these, 1943's *Saludos Amigos*, had a South American theme, as did its follow-up, *The Three Caballeros* (1945), a film so frenetic that it resembles a 70-minute Looney Tune.

Make Mine Music (1946) is a feature-length collection of cartoons with no overriding theme, while 1947's *Fun and Fancy Free* consists of two "featurettes" edited together, with Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy turning up in support. The first featurette is a re-telling of "Jack and the Beanstalk" with Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Goofy replacing Jack. This remake of "Jack" is frequently shown on television, while the film's second half, based on Sinclair Lewis' "Bongo the Circus Bear," remains more obscure.

Melody Time (1948) followed the path of *Make Mine Music*, with songs from Roy Rogers, The Andrews Sisters, Buddy Clark and others. Things took an encouraging turn in 1949 with *The Adventures of Ichabod and Mr. Toad*. The film begins with an entertaining version of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Ichabod's encounter with the Headless Horseman remains scarier than anything in Tim Burton's *Sleepy Hollow*. The second half — based on Kenneth Grahame's "The Wind in the Willows" — is less impressive, but it was popular enough to inspire Disneyland's famous attraction "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride."

The animation in these later films is not quite as lavish as in earlier pictures like *Bambi*, but they still look wonderful.

The same can be said for 1950's *Cinderella*, the first full-length animated feature the Disney studio had done in eight years. Filled with more classic songs, *Cinderella* does not have the kind of emotional power or terrifying moments found in *Snow White*, but it may be the most enjoyable cartoon feature the studio would make between the end of the war and Disney's death. In the hands of a group of directing animators (affectionately dubbed "The Nine Old

Men"), the Disney studio continued to make films featuring rich, beautiful animation through the 1950s.

Cinderella was a success, but the same could not be said for 1951's *Alice in Wonderland*, which was both a financial and critical disappointment. Filled with spectacular animation, *Alice* is faithful to the book, in that it has no plot line and is chock-full of unsympathetic characters. While this worked on the page, it came off as alienating (at least to some viewers) on film. Some twenty years after it opened, *Alice* gained a following among the same audience that had embraced *Yellow Submarine*. Certainly, the film is effective in fits and starts, and what is good about the movie — the Cheshire Cat, the Mad Tea Party, the Queen of Hearts — is very good indeed.

The next film, 1953's *Peter Pan*, received a warmer reception. Based on the play by James Barrie, *Peter Pan* is a wonderfully animated and likable adven-

ture with more classic songs and a villain (Captain Hook, voiced by radio veteran Hans Conried) who is one of the most humorous and least menacing in Disney history.

Lady and the Tramp (1955) didn't have a villain at all, unless one counts the film's pair of Siamese cats. What it did have was an ultra-widescreen picture, and superb animation that had to fill that larger frame. The film is charming, and Peggy Lee's memorable songs help a lot.

By this time, Walt Disney was preoccupied with the production of live-action films, television series and the construction of Disneyland. As a result, the studio's animated films sometimes suffered. It's not that the films weren't good anymore — they remained enchanting — but they may have been more entertaining than great.

That was the verdict for the company's next animated feature, *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). Saddled with a huge



Peter Pan (1953)

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Sleeping Beauty (1959)

budget, the film was a critical and commercial disappointment. *Sleeping Beauty's* animation is stunning in its impact; the widescreen backgrounds are filled with detail and the long, tall and angular characters are vastly different from the studio's usual round and cuddly style. As David Koenig notes in his book *Moose Under Glass*, the new look struck many as "beautiful but cold...like moving stained glass." *Sleeping Beauty's* use of classical music, from the "Sleeping Beauty" ballet, lacked the Hit Parade quantities of, say, "Heigh-Ho" or "Bibbety-Booby-Boo." Having said that, *Sleeping Beauty* (like *Alice*) has aged well.

Nevertheless, *Sleeping Beauty's* financial failure had a major impact on the company. The studio's next animated feature, 1961's *101 Dalmatians*, cost little more than half the budget of *Sleeping Beauty*, but the film's boldly graphic, almost monochromatic look struck many critics as the best thing Disney had done since *Ranbi*. The film was surprisingly witty, particularly its portrayal of Cruella

DeVil, whose spiky hair still looked contemporary when the film was reissued in 1985.

101 Dalmatians was a hit, but 1963's *The Sword in the Stone* disappointed everyone. By this time, the more casual animation style that was so appealing in *101 Dalmatians* was starting to look like carelessness. The film's script was even more problematic; while the movie hews close to the letter and tone of T.H. White's novel, the results fall flat on screen.

Sadly, this was the last animated film that Walt Disney lived to see completed. However, he had one more (posthumous) trick up his sleeve.

Very loosely adapted from Kipling's original work, *The Jungle Book* opened in late 1967 and was greeted with praise and enormous box office. Promoted as Walt Disney's last film, the movie was overrated in its day, although it is still considered a classic. Relying more on catchy tunes and celebrity voices (including Sebastian Cabot, George Sanders, Phil Harris, and Louis Prima) than a strong storyline, *Jungle Book* does feature peerless character animation from beginning to end, and remains a pleasant capstone to Walt Disney's legacy.

After Walt's death, the quality of the studio's animation went into a tailspin, a dive from which it would take over two decades to recover. But the classic cartoon features that the man produced have outlived him, and will be watched and rewatched by generations to come. ■

Tune in to Those Were the Days on April 21 to hear Walt Disney and Donald Duck on The Charlie McCarthy Show, and to Radio's Golden Age on May 20 to hear the Lux Radio Theatre's production of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.



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THE PEOPLES CRUSADE

The story of the Bishop
who took down Dr. Television

BY WALTER SCANNELL

By the early 1950s, the Cold War had turned hot in parishes across America. The greatest mistake of the Russian Revolution might have been Vladimir Lenin's insistence that religion was "the opiate of the people."

Looking over the vast wasteland of 2012, television might seem the last place one would expect to find a saint. But in those early, heady days, there was hope that "the tube" could be a source of information — and maybe even inspiration. After all, *You Are There* recreated historical events every week, Leonard Bernstein was giving Young Peoples'

Walter Scannell is a freelance writer and nostalgia buff from Chicago.

concerts to develop music appreciation, and *Omnibus* premiered Laurence Olivier's filmed treatment of *Richard III*. In this broad spectrum, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen found himself serving as God's salesman.

It doesn't matter what faith you were — or for that matter, whether you believed at all — Sheen was as much a television presence as Liberace. Although Sheen's goal was to reawaken religious feelings during a time of Soviet suppression, his first battle would be in the ratings — and his opponent was Mr. Television himself, Milton Berle.

Although Berle had struggled in radio, he had landed a regular show for Texaco in the spring of 1948. When the gasoline company decided to move to television, Berle was chosen to host television's first *Texaco Star Theater* on



Milton Berle

June 8, 1948. Berle threw everything he could into that live show and was so popular that he became the show's permanent emcee.

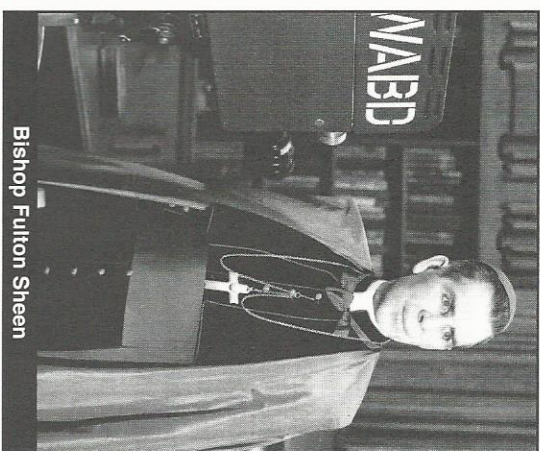
Berle was popular in New York, but he was a bigger smash with national audiences who weren't familiar with the slapstick and Catskills humor that was Berle's *modus operandi*. He wore dresses (the more hideous he looked, the better), he threw pies, and he told outrageous jokes:

"Call me a cab."
"You cab!"

It was said that Berle did more to sell television sets than either advertising or wrestling. Patronage at restaurants and movie theaters dwindled on Tuesday nights as a fantastic 80% of cathode tubes nationwide were tuned in to the *Texaco Star Theater*. In 1951, "Uncle Millic" signed an unprecedented 30-year contract. It seemed like nothing could stop him.

Still, every Goliath has a David, and Berle's was Bishop Sheen.

Sheen was born in the tiny farming community of El Paso, Illinois, where



Bishop Fulton Sheen

one of his uncles reportedly told the family, "You better send this boy to school because he'll never make a farmer." Fulton's interest in the priesthood came as he served as an altar boy in Peoria. Although this was a period of Bible thumpers and high-pitched revival meetings, he was fascinated with the possibility of appealing to humanity's higher instincts. He spent a number of years on radio's *Catholic Hour*. The bishop was vastly read (he would write 66 books) and drew analogies from sources ranging from Algerian-French writer Albert Camus to remarks overheard on the subway.

And so in 1952, a year that saw the television debuts of *Dragnet* and *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, Bishop Sheen's filmed talks premiered on the DuMont network as *Life is Worth Living*. The idea of going on opposite Milton Berle might have seemed like an uphill battle; however, Ross Stragusa, owner of the Admiral radio and television company, soon approached the archdiocese of New York about sponsoring the show. Interestingly, the DuMont network hesi-

tated to accept Siragusa's offer at first, fearing that a sponsored show would no longer fulfill the FCC's public service requirement.

The black-and-white *Life* consisted of a rather nice-looking gray-haired man with a cap, a cape, and a chalkboard. Unlike his powerhouse opposition Milton Berle, *Life* had only a few jokes, but they stayed in the mind longer. For instance: "A girl wondered why she had never seen an angel with a beard or moustache and asked her mother, 'Do men ever get to heaven?'" "Yes," she said, "but only by a close shave."

A running joke in the series was that an angel wiped the blackboard when Sheen moved to another camera and adjusted his red cap as a signal that he was about to make a new illustration. The bishop would then return to a clean slate and mark the top JMJ, for "Jesus, Mary and Joseph."

Instead of using a script, Sheen prepared only notes for each talk and spoke extemporaneously for the most part, using his firm, well-modulated voice, and relying on off-screen gestures from the assistant director to expand or condense his remarks.

Sheen was the right man for the times. Instead of preaching, he spoke of the power of choice, assuring his viewers they had control over their lives. Like millions of Catholics, thousands of Protestants were glued to their seats in front of nine- and 13-inch screens during the show. The bishop's popularity wasn't so much from what he said as the conviction of his carefully spoken sentences. He called for "not a unity in religion but a unity of religious people." New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan told the *New York Times* about his boyhood in St. Louis, when a neighbor — who had

always kidded the Dolan family about their faith — admitted to Dolan's father that he'd been watching Bishop Sheen: "He's not a bad guy. He makes a lot of sense."

And so it was Sheen and not Berle who was awarded the 1952 Emmy for "Most Outstanding TV Personality."

Sheen's usual focus was on a new evil that had come upon the world. Although he seldom directly mentioned Communism, his audience understood. The Soviets had closed churches but were smart enough not to alienate the people by persecuting the clergy — except when it came to Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty, the highest-ranking prelate in Hungary. Mindszenty was considered dangerous to the Red regime because of his fiercely held national interests, and it was for his political activism and not his faith that he was arrested on Dec. 26, 1948, and put on trial for "conspiracy and espionage."

Mindszenty was reported to have been tortured as part of a lengthy brainwashing in the notorious Secret Police headquarters on Andrassy Street in Budapest, but such reports apparently were either made up or exaggerated. What does appear to be true is that the cardinal was not held in a cell but rather in a room with no radio — or any other means of communication with the world. Many people considered Mindszenty a martyr, and his captivity helped inspire a surge of films with religious backgrounds, including 1949's *Come to the Stable*, 1951's *Thunder on the Hill* and *Angels in the Outfield*, 1953's *I Confess*, and 1955's *The Prisoner*, a fictionalized version of the Cardinal's travails.

Sheen had no interest in a passive faith of kneeling and waiting. Week after week, he encouraged people to get up

and start living constructively. Amid fears of nuclear attack and increasing crime rates, he invigorated gloomy times. Many people felt they needed his message, but Sheen facetiously said one lady remarked that "all he needs to get an audience is a blackboard and a black-jack."

At one point, Sheen was the most-watched person on television. He was able to present himself formally in an informal way, and his appeals to intelligence led directly to the conversion of persons such as Henry Ford II and Claire Booth Luce, a writer (*The Women*) and wife of the man who published the highly influential magazines *Time* and *Life*.

Amused that his ratings were giving Uncle Miltie a pounding, Sheen called himself "Uncle Fulty." As for Berle — who personally liked Sheen — he fought back with everything he could: Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, elaborate dance sequences, more jokes, sillier jokes, and less silly jokes. However, he could not win back the 20 million people who were watching *Life is Worth Living* on 123 stations nationwide. As Berle would later say: "We had the same sponsor — Sky Chief. Unfortunately, he had the better writers." (Sheen agreed; when he received his Emmy in 1952, he thanked his four "writers" — Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.)

As for Mindszenty, he was kept in solitary confinement for eight years. During the student-led Hungarian uprising, he was surprised when his captors opened the door of his bare room in October 1956 and he was free to go. Even so, he still felt threatened enough to keep himself in the American Embassy for fifteen years.

With the release of Mindszenty, the

religious wave in the U.S. lost some of its momentum; however, it happened too late to save Berle's once enormously popular show. *The Milton Berle Show* left the air in 1956. When the DuMont Network folded in 1955, *Life* moved to ABC where it ran for another two years. Sheen returned to television in the 1960s with *The Bishop Sheen Show* and was later appointed Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester. He retired in 1969 and was 84 when he died in New York City on Dec. 9, 1979. But he is far from forgotten.

Since his lectures were nonsectarian, the series has been revived from time to time even on some fundamentalist stations. And even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, his talks retain their relevance in asking us to look for the best in people, and reminding us that we are always capable of finding joy in our lives.

In 2002, the Peoria Diocese delivered papers to the Cause for the Congregation of Saints at the Vatican as the first step toward canonizing Sheen. The diocese also issued a worldwide appeal for persons whose lives he may have changed. In less than a year, the Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Foundation received up to 400 letters, some from men and women who said they had been dying but recovered when they met the bishop. (The Peoria Diocese suspended their campaign in 2010, although they remain hopeful concerning Sheen's canonization.)

Back in the town where Bishop Sheen served as an altar boy, Peoria Bishop Daniel Jenky commented that Sheen "had a reputation of intense holiness."

He was also one of TV's greatest showmen. ■

Resortings In Wisconsin

BY JIM DOHREN

In past issues of *Nostalgia Digest*, I've been privileged to share my happy memories of train trips and family vacations in California in the 1950s. However, there was a very different kind of family vacation about which I have fond memories — one that I hope will stir recollections among my fellow readers.

My family made several trips to family fishing resorts in Wisconsin which neatly filled the decade of the 1950s. Between our first trip to Minnesota in 1949 (with my grandparents) to our final family trip there in 1959, the Dohren family vacationed at half a dozen or more family resorts in the Badger State.

Jim Dohren is a retired middle-school teacher from Downers Grove, Illinois. He enjoys volunteering and writing about his many happy childhood memories.

Ranging from one-day jaunts to Lakes Elizabeth and Marie (which spanned the Illinois-Wisconsin border) to two-week trips into the heart of Wisconsin's vacationland, there were wonderful successes punctuated by a couple of memorable failures.

One of the latter was Berry Lake. That summer, I learned that the term "fished-out" meant all you could catch were panfish too small to keep. The beach was nice, though, and our cottage was equipped with a vintage phonograph which fascinated me with its one-sided, quarter-inch thick 78 rpm records. The one I recall best I now know is properly titled "The Prisoner's Song," but for many, many years I remembered it as "If I Had the Wings of An Angel." (Actually, I still like that title better.)

Another dismal near-disaster occurred a few years later at a lake and resort whose names (for good reason) I can no longer recall. There was no swimming area, as the bottom of the lake consisted of gooey mud. The cottage was ill-equipped, dark and damp, the lodge was

a bar and the fishing was another piscatorial fiasco. We caught keeper-size rock bass all right, but they were bony, worm-infested and inedible. Dad, who'd chosen the place based on a patient's recommendation, was disillusioned and chagrined, but Mom was furious.

For me, the place had a couple of compensations. It was the first place where Dad let me take the boat and motor out alone. Then there were the ruins of buildings in the forest nearby. We kids spent hours prowling: digging strangely shaped, colored bottles and other treasures out of the leaf-filled foundations and letting our imaginations run wild as we speculated on what the buildings had been.

Despite (and just as much because of) these disappointments — which in actual fact were much more painful for our parents (who bore all the effort and responsibility of preparing and paying for the trip) than for the kids who could find fun anywhere — the good resorts stand out as exciting and enjoyable. They all offered family fun and adventure, sunshine, swimming, reading, relaxation, good fishing, the chance to play and explore outdoors, with trips to and from town and two great, long, car rides.

As I thought about those vacations so long ago (from the perspective of an adult trying to recapture as many memories as possible), I was quite surprised to find myself thinking of Christmas. Why Christmas? It's because, like Christmas, the annual vacation trip to Wisconsin involved two decidedly different viewpoints. For us kids, of course, both times brought almost unadulterated, joyful anticipation; our responsibilities were minimal. For Mom and Dad, on the other hand, both were labors of love. They — especially Mom — were responsible for

the success or failure of both. Sacrifices, compromises, important decisions, and careful plans had to be made all year long.

Deciding to go to a family resort for vacation had to be done carefully for there were other choices. We could have traveled to visit and stay with relatives, as we sometimes did. We could have traveled through this great country of ours. We could have stayed home and taken day trips, which would have been easier on Mom.

However, going to a resort had distinct advantages at the time. It got us all out of the house. It got Dad away from work to a place where he could enjoy his fishing. And there was one particular advantage which trumped the advantages of the alternatives — it was affordable. Costs for lodging, meals, laundry and the car could be predicted and held to the minimum while opportunities to keep the kids active, involved and happy increased to the maximum.

Once again, it was Mom who made the major sacrifice. For her there would be no shared work as at a relative's home; few, if any, meals out as with sight-seeing. For her, it meant the usual cooking, cleaning, laundry and child care under conditions over which she had little control.

Dad's compromise was easier, I think. Given his druthers, he would have taken us to northern Minnesota or even Canada where the fishing was less tame, but with a wife and young children he knew better than to even think out loud about a trip nearly double the distance to a place with half the amenities. That trip could wait.

Sometimes the Dohren family was joined by another family on our Wisconsin vacations. Once, my Chicago

cousins came to with us to Lake Namekogan. On a couple of occasions, we shared our vacation with our good friends from Aurora, the Nicholsons. Whether we went with others or it was just the five of us there was never a doubt as to the type of resort. It was always what I recall in the brochures was called the "American Plan" or "Housekeeping Cabins." This meant that we paid for a furnished detached or semi-detached cottage. That's all we got other than common resort facilities. The family did all its own cooking, cleaning and laundry. We had to bring our own bedding and towels, I think. The alternative for the wealthy was the European Plan wherein your meals and housekeeping were included. Such luxury was desirable, but unobtainable for us.

Mom was a worrier. I know she dreaded leaving anything behind that we might need on our trip and would therefore have to buy. Early on she hit on a simple solution to her concern. She simply over-packed by about 50% to make sure we had everything. When you consider that there five in our family and we took all our own fishing tackle, most of our live bait (worms), Dad's trusty five-horsepower Johnson Seahorse outboard motor, and food for the week and the road, you can see how preparation and packing was a major family logistical operation.

As with most family operations of such magnitude and importance in the 1950s, vacation preparation called for a division of labor. The women (mostly Mom with help from sister Pat) did the washing, ironing, and packing of clothes and bedding; purchasing and packing of food and necessary household goods; and handling the money. The men (Dad and I with increasing help from little brother

Dave) would do manly stuff like choosing and packing all the fishing gear, catching night crawlers and storing them in moss to keep them fresh until needed (one memorable time they all cooked to a stinking mush in a hot trunk because Mom would not let us keep them in the ice chest with the food). We'd wash and "Simonize" the Studebaker, Chevy or Olds sedan, put the car top carrier on the roof and fit all the boxes and suitcases and genuine military surplus footlocker (plus that Seahorse motor with its gas can) into the car. The only tasks which crossed gender lines were the careful choosing and re-choosing of our clothes and what games we would pack. As the years progressed, an increasingly important decision for me was which books to check out of the library for the trip.

Nearly all the packing had to be done the night before the trip began because for most of the 1950s ours was a one-car family — which often meant we had to pack far into the night. When we finished, the car top carrier was full, the trunk was full and the rear seat floor was packed level with the rear bench cushion. We kids had a dandy platform to ride on. (Seat belts? What are those?) The shocks and springs were in for a real workout.

The next morning, no matter how little the sleep we'd gotten due to late packing and our excitement about the next day (like Christmas, remember?), we were roused from sleep by the parents before dawn for a quick breakfast Mom had ready for us (well, maybe *that* part wasn't so much like Christmas). We ate as much as our nervous tummies allowed and ran out into the chill darkness to find our place in the car.

At this early hour, there was no shouting of "Dibs on the window seat!" It was too dark to see and all of us kids —

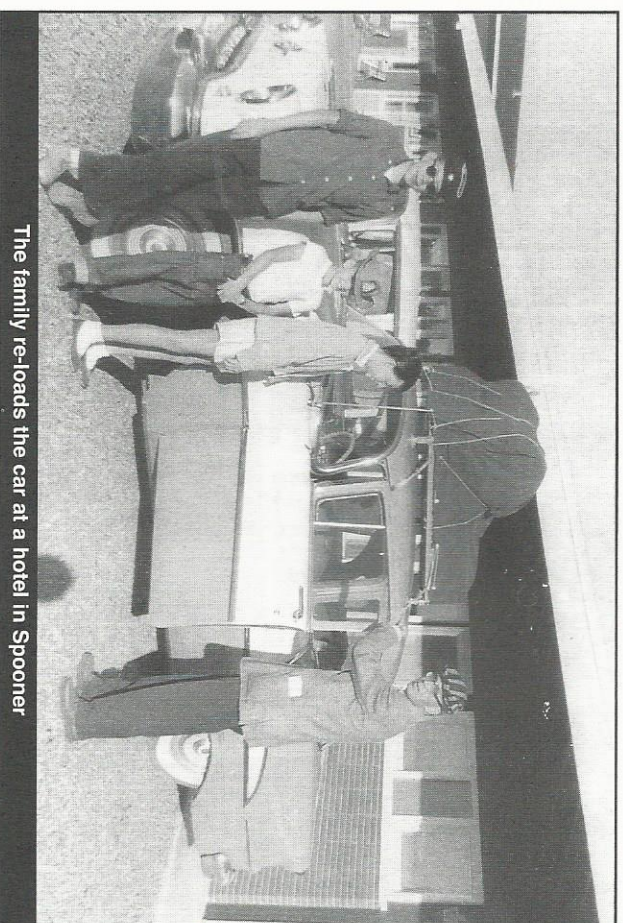
even me, the oldest — were soon back asleep. We left early for several reasons. We wanted to beat the traffic, drive as far as possible when it was still cool and, most importantly, make the long trip in one day so there were no motel and restaurant bills to pay.

In retrospect, I have to recognize what my folks went through during a 12- or 13-hour drive on those old two-lane roads, with three unbelted, active kids and the only air-conditioning being the old "4-60" type (that is, rolling down four windows in a car going 60 miles per hour). It was Mom's responsibility to bring along and direct on-the-road games, produce surprises and rewards and, no doubt, devise impromptu diversions for us. Dad's contribution took less planning but was nevertheless effective: "Don't make me have to stop this car and come back there!" If you knew how normally quiet and calm my Dad was, this phrase (and honest to God, he did say it) would shape you up out of shock.

As the years went by, I had less trouble staying out of trouble. Because I never got car sick, I could read my books to pass the time, but more and more I became fascinated in watching the passing scenery. I would look for familiar landmarks from years before or enjoy seeing new ones. I can see myself gradually, unconsciously becoming a driver as I rode along US Routes 12 or 13 or 51. The towns had strange names like Ladysmith, Rice Lake, Thief River Falls, Baraboo, Tomahawk and, my all-time favorite, Spooner, for goodness sake. What boy would not remember those?

On the road we'd stop every couple of hours to fill the car (at a full-service gas station), to stretch our legs usually at some historic landmark (that's how I first learned about the terrible Peshigo Forest Fire), or to pull a picnic lunch out of the ice-chest at one of those little wayside parks, with their roofed-over picnic tables and long-handled water pumps.

By early evening, we'd have driven



The family re-loads the car at a hotel in Spooner

the 400 miles of the trip. All the bored “Are we there yet?” questions would finally end when we left the highway for a sandy and rutted, forested side road marked by the resort sign (and often a tall post with painted arrows bearing the names of all the private cottages or their owners). For all of us, the trip part was over; the vacation part could now begin.

Of all the resorts we stayed in during our two-week stays, the one I remember best is Killian’s Deerskin Lake Lodge near Eagle River. I’d like to think I remember it best because it was the best. As such it will serve well to describe all the factors which made those myriad fishing resorts so perfect for a family’s vacation adventures.

The Killians, Aft and Sylvia, obviously put great thought, pride and effort into their business. They wanted it to be a place families wanted to come back to, as our family did. The grounds were always well-tended; I remember Mr. Killian working on them. The cottages

were spotlessly cleaned and well-equipped and everything worked. Mom approved (and I didn’t hear that every time). The boats were newer and never leaked. Mr. Killian helped Dad attach the motor to the transom.

There was a large sand beach for all the cottages with a floating rope to mark the drop-off. In deeper water was a diving raft. The lake bottom was weed-free golden sand with a very gradual slope. On shore, there were swings, benches and chairs for adult observation and general relaxing, conversation or reading. There was even a playground for younger children. At the lodge was a little lending library with books and magazines.

On one edge of the Killians’ property, a national forest came down to the lake shore. One summer, we had the cabin closest to the forest, so we took family hikes there. I can still remember the softness of the evergreen needles under foot; the smell of the towering

pinets, firs, and balsams; and the sighing of the breeze in the branches. In a couple of places there were large circular clearings that I thought might have been abandoned farm fields or even logged-over areas. Mr. Killian explained that they were actually once marshes which had naturally filled with silt until no water was left. Eventually, he said, they would become part of the forest.

The best part of the best resort is just what you hoped and expected to be the best part of any of those resorts — the lake itself. Deerskin Lake’s water was so clean and clear that it became where Mom had us take our baths. Both times we were there we had a cabin with its own shoreline and pier. The water at the end of the pier was shallow enough that I could jump in and still be only waist deep, a matter of some concern for a non-swimmer (as I was until I was 12, when I learned at the YMCA).

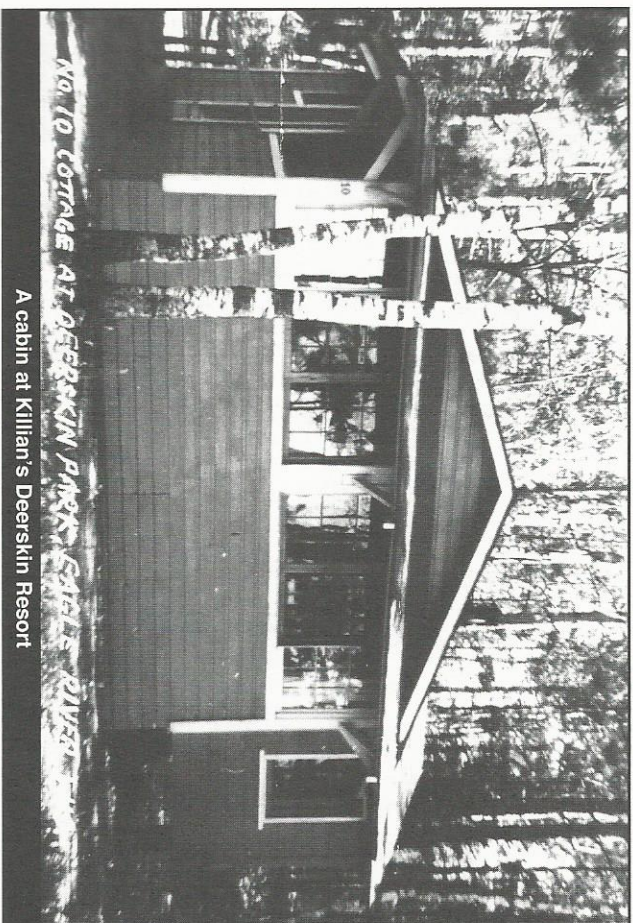
The fishing was as good as at any resort we went to and, as you’ve read, a great deal better than a couple of them. No large bass, walleyes, or Northern Pikes for Dad but lots of keeper bluegill and sunfish for us all to catch. It was at Deerskin Lake that we had our greatest fishing success ever. One sunny afternoon we experienced what I can best describe as a panfish feeding frenzy. In an hour the five of us caught 125 nice-sized fish. Poor Dad! He was so busy taking fish off hooks and re-worming them (not mine, of course) that he didn’t have time to catch more than a few. Pat, normally a very calm child, got so excited she didn’t wait for a new piece of worm (we were running out); she just put her bare hook back in the water where she was promptly (and, in my opinion, improperly) rewarded by catching a fish. Our great fishing ended with a sad

note, for as we were leaving the now biteless spot, Dad lifted an oar and flipped overboard his brand new, expensive fiberglass Shakespeare Wonderrod and reel, which someone had put on top of the car. Plunk! He and I and Mr. Killian went out later with a grappling hook but we could not get it back.

Dad and I cleaned and scaled all of those fish except for the ones we shared with others at the price of listening to our very worthy fish story. (You know, the ones that didn’t get away.) Some we took to the cottage for immediate use; others went into the Killians’ deep freeze to be stored until we could take them home with us. It’s interesting that I would turn up my nose at fish Mom prepared for us at home, but on vacation I relished those pan-fried fish, with their crispy skin and sweet delicate meat that just fell off the bones.

In the evening hours after supper, when the table had been cleared and the dishes done, the family gathered around the table to play games that we could all understand and play together, like Uncle Wiggly, Sorry, and Chutes and Ladders. Mom would make popcorn and we’d have root beer just like at home, but here we did it every night, not just for our once a week “fun nights.” I don’t recall any of the resorts having a television except at the lodge but I also don’t recall missing one despite my over-devotion to TV at home. Nights tended to end early as we kids were bushed from the fresh air and outdoor activities.

There were some nights when bed time would be extended and we would go down to the shore to look out at the lake and the sky. For my parents this must have seemed a simple and safe event, but it wasn’t so for me. With darkness, the lake seemed to change; to take on a simi-



A cabin at Killian’s Deerskin Resort

ter, even scary, character. For one thing, sound carried easily far across the lake. I could hear disembodied voices and sourceless music and other sounds as if they were but a short distance away. The water was even blacker than the night's darkness and often totally flat and still compared to its sparkling, rippling daytime self. It was easy for me to imagine dangerous, mysterious creatures that hid during the day, coming up from the dark depths to swim about at night. How did I know how deep the lake was, or what was down there? By contrast, when I looked up there were more stars than I could possibly see at home and the twinkling lights from the homes and resorts on the far shore were pretty too.

I don't remember many days of bad weather, but those would be days for going to Eagle River to shop for souvenirs or tackle, stop at the Laundromat and maybe even enjoy a movie and dinner. That was fun, even the laundry. One year we went to an outdoor lumberjack show with lots of log rolling, wood chopping and tree climbing. We visited a couple of museums, too.

Our Wisconsin vacation was like summer vacation in a way. When it started, it seemed our two weeks would last a long time, but it always went by fast—a nice little metaphor for our lives. However, as our vacation approached the end, even we kids were ready to go back to the familiarities of home, friends and our regular life. So it was repack and get back on the road. Funny how that return trip always seemed shorter.

Back then, being a mere kid, the great reason for these trips was the anticipation and enjoyment. That's as it should be. In fifty years of reflection I've found much more. I have learned lessons which shaped the rest of my life. I

learned about family responsibility and togetherness. I found valuable information about nature and learned to enjoy and care about it and take care of it. I was given examples of how parents must compromise and sacrifice without complaint so their children can have carefree fun and adventure.

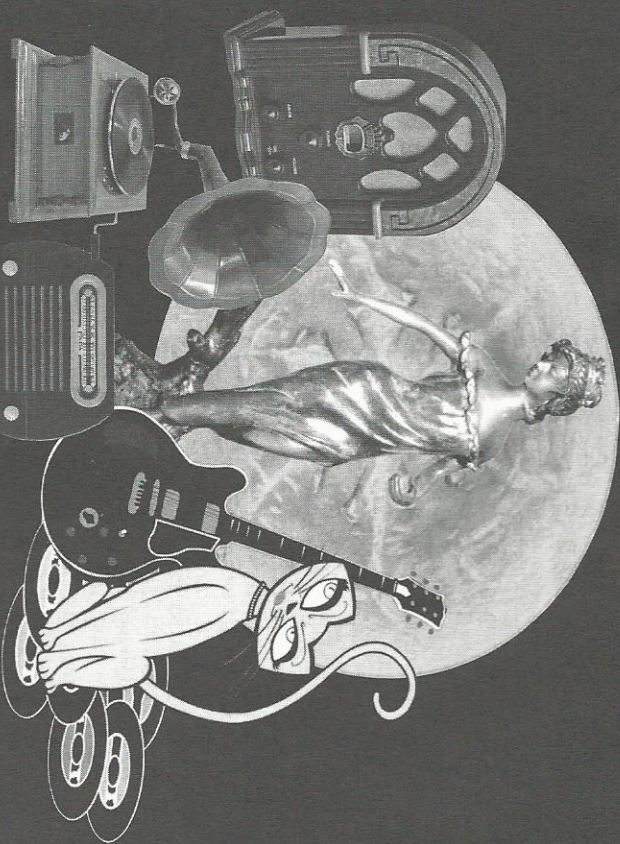
It's true that the value of a family's vacation has little to do with money. The costliest vacations can be worthless while the most economical may become priceless. I have the feeling that many of today's kids would consider such a vacation as I've described cluelessly simplistic, dull and hopelessly low-tech. Modern families don't always have the time or the desire to plan—let alone prepare—for such an event, even if they could find two weeks to keep the family together.

I know from experience, for I admired our vacations at the Killians' resort so much that it's where my bride and I spent our honeymoon—and later, a vacation with our own kids. The Killians were there both times to help us. However, we went only once and then for only a week. There was too much preparation and it was no vacation for Mom. Times and outlooks had already changed.

I wonder how many, if any, of those family resorts remain. Surely, they have nearly all been replaced by a resort of another kind—transformed into a luxury time-share condominium—or subdivided for luxury home sites. I know from a recent conversation with a current resident on Deerskin Lake that of the five or six family resorts once located on the lake, all are gone.

Like so much else that we admire about those kinder, gentler times, it was nice while it lasted—and just as nice to have the memories. ■

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APRIL 2012

SATURDAY, APRIL 7 RADIO'S EASTER BASKET

MEL BLANC SHOW (4-8-47) It's the man of a thousand voices starring in his own show, with Mary Jane Croft, Joe Kearns, Alan Reed, Hans Conried, Jim Backus, the Sportsmen, Victor Miller and the Orchestra. The Chamber of Commerce organizes an Easter Egg Hunt. **COLGATE TOOTH POWDER**, CBS. (24 min)

THE SHADOW (3-28-48) "Death and the Easter Bonnet" stars Bret Morrison as Lamont Cranston, with Grace Matthews as Margot Lane. Margot buys an expensive hat for Easter, but is surprised when the storekeeper wants it back. Andre Baruch announces. Blue Coal, MBS. (29 min)

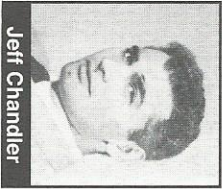
MY FAVORITE HUSBAND (3-24-51) Lucille Ball and Richard Denning star as Liz and George Cooper, with Gale Gordon and Bea Benaderet as Rudolph and Iris Atterbury. When Liz and Iris want new Easter outfits, their husbands challenge the women to reduce to the sizes they wore when they got married. With Frank Nelson, Shirley Mitchell, Jell-O, CBS. (30 min)

McCabe, Herbert Rawlinson, Jan Arvan, James Nusser. Sustaining, NBC. (24 min and 36 min)

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (4-9-52) Willard Waterman stars as Gildy, with Walter Tetley as Leroy, Lillian Randolph as Birdie, Mary Lee Robb as Marjorie. The family persuades Gildy to get up at 4:00 am to attend the sunrise Easter service. Birdie sings "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" Kraft Foods, NBC. (29 min)

SATURDAY, APRIL 14 DEATH AND TAXES

FRONTIER TOWN (5-7-49) "Death and Taxes" stars Jeff "Tex" Chandler as Chad Remington, with Wade Crosby as Cherokee O'Bannon. The tax collector from Medicine Hat asks for Chad's help in exposing municipal corruption. Bill Forman announces. Syndicated. (28 min)



Jeff Chandler

FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY (1-11-44) Jim and Marian Jordan star as the McGees, with Shirley Mitchell, Ransom Sherman, Arthur Q. Bryan, announcer Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the Orchestra. McGee decides to get started on his income tax return early this year. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (28 min)

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(27 min)

INNER SANCTUM (10-2-45) "The Shadow of Death" stars Richard Widmark as a young man who is taken to an institution when he claims that his dreams cause people to die. Lipton Tea and Soup, CBS. (30 min)

LIFE WITH LUIGI (3-11-52) J. Carroll Nash stars as Luigi Basco, with Alan Reed as Pasquale, Jody Gilbert as Rosa, Mary Shipp as Miss Spaulding. Luigi receives a registered letter from the Internal Revenue Service concerning his 1951 tax return. Charles Lyon announces. Wrigley's Gum, CBS. (30 min)



J. Carroll Nash

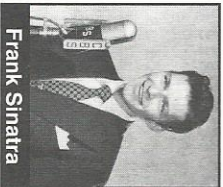
MR. KEEN, TRACER OF LOST PERSONS (10-6-49) "The Case of the Man Who Invented Death" stars Bennett Klipack as Mr. Keen, with Jim Kelly as Mike Clancy, who investigate when an inventor is killed by his own invention. Anacin, Kolynos, CBS. (29 min)

ADVENTURES OF OZZIE AND HARRIET (3-13-49) Ozzie Nelson and Harriet Hilliard with their sons David and Ricky, John Brown, Lurene Tuttle, Janet Waldo. Ozzie is about to mail his income tax return when he receives advice about taking more deductions. International Silver, NBC. (29 min)

SATURDAY, APRIL 21

STROKE OF FATE (10-11-53) A "dramatic conception of what might have happened" had the Earl of Essex succeeded in deposing Queen Elizabeth I. Cast features Judith Evelyn as the Queen, with Karl Swenson as the Earl of Essex and Alexander Scourby as Walter Raleigh. Sustaining, NBC. (24 min)

SONGS BY SINATRA (9-18-46) It's the first show of the season and Frank welcomes guests Andre Previn and actress Frances Robinson. With the Pied Pipers and Axel Stordahl and the Orchestra. Frank sings "The Coffee Song" and "Somewhere in the Night." Old Gold Cigarettes, CBS. (28 min)



Frank Sinatra

SPEAKING OF RADIO (9-26-11) Steve

Darnall's conversation with actor Dick Van Patten, who talks about his career in radio, stage, and early television. Recorded at Mr. Van Patten's home in California. (35 min) *Read an excerpt from this conversation on page 2.*

THEATRE GUILD ON THE AIR (12-31-50) "State Fair" stars Gene, Kathleen, and June Lockhart, Van Heffin, Dick Van Patten and Rosemary Rice in a radio adaptation of the book by Phil Stong, about a trip to the Iowa State Fair that changes a family forever. U.S. Steel, NBC. (25 min and 33 min)

CHARLIE MCCARTHY SHOW (9-21-47) Guests Walt Disney and Donald Duck (Clarence Nash) join Edgar and Charlie to discuss their upcoming film, *Fun and Fancy Free*. With Pat Patrick as Ercil Twing, announcer Ken Carpenter, Anita Gordon, Alan Reed, Ray Noble and the Orchestra. Chase and Sanborn, NBC. (30 min) *Read the article about Walt Disney's films on page 13.*

SATURDAY, APRIL 28 OUR 42nd ANNIVERSARY SHOW "Thanks For Listening"

For this special anniversary show, we'll celebrate the golden age of radio five years at a time, as we present sounds from 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, and 80 years ago!

REDBOOK MAGAZINE DRAMAS (5-26-32) "Anything You Want is Yours" is the story of an actress who breaks into movies by posing as a Swedish chambermaid. Based on a story by Nina Wilcox Putnam, hosted by Redbook editor Edwin Baumer. Syndicated. (13 min)

COLUMBIA WORKSHOP (4-11-37) The premier performance of "The Fall of The City," Archibald MacLachlan's groundbreaking radio play, starring Burgess Meredith, Orson Welles, and a cast of 200! A city receives a message predicting the coming of a conqueror. Sustaining, CBS. (29 min)

CLARA, LU AND EM (6-8-42) First show in the new series, with Louise Starkey as Clara, Isabelle Carothers as Lu, and Helen King as Em, "gossiping over your radio back fence." Clara finds ten pounds of sugar that she failed to declare to the War Ration Board. Bret Morrison announces. Pillsbury Flour, CBS. (12 min)



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

with host STEVE DARNALL

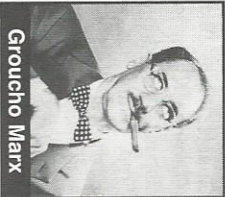
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APRIL - MAY 2012

PHILCO RADIO TIME (4-30-47) Bing Crosby

starts in the first transcribed network series, from Hines V.A. Hospital in Chicago with announcer Bob Murphy, John Scott Trotter and the Orchestra, and guests Groucho Marx and Dorothy Shay, the Park Avenue Hillbillies.



Groucho Marx

Bing sings "Guilty"; Groucho sings "Lydia, the Tattooed Lady"; Dorothy sings "Fedin", Fussin' and Fightin'." Philco, ABC. (28 min)
GUNSMOKE (4-26-52) "Billy the Kid" is the first show of the series, with William Conrad as Marshal Matt Dillon, Parley Baer as Chester, Howard McNear as Doc. Matt Dillon must face down a lynch mob when a Dutch farmer is accused of murder. With Georgia Ellis, Dick Beals, Harry Bartell, Don Diamond, Paul Dudov, Mary Lansing. Sustaining, CBS. (29 min)

X MINUS ONE (4-24-57) "Man's Best Friend" is a story of politics set eight hundred years in the future. A computer has prognosticated the assassination of a ruler, much to the surprise of the assassin. Cast includes William Redfield, Wendell Holmes, Santos Ortega, Leona Powers, Raymond Edward Johnson, Bob Hastings. Sustaining, NBC. (23 min)
SUSPENSE (4-29-62) "Blackbeard's Ace" starring Elaine Rost, John Thomas, Robert Dryden. A woman is convinced that she is receiving messages from the dead. Participating sponsors, CBS. (29 min)

SATURDAY, MAY 5

HERE'S MORGAN (7-9-42) Henry Morgan from early in his career, playing records, poking fun at his sponsors, discussing rumors and promoting his new product, "Rhumba

Flakes." Participating sponsors, MBS. (14 min)

THIS IS YOUR FBI (3-23-51) "Success Story" stars Stacy Harris as FBI special agent Jim Taylor, with Harry Morgan as police detective George Duncan. The FBI tracks down a bootlegger who has become a "respectable" suburban businessman. Cast includes William Conrad, Victor Rodman, Tony Barrett. Equitable Life Assurance Society, ABC. (30 min)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (1-12-12) Steve Darnall's telephone conversation with actor Jamie Farr, who talks from his California home about his career in television, movies, and Armed Forces Radio. (40 min)

MYSTERY IN THE AIR (8-28-47) "Beyond Good and Evil" starring Peter Lorre in Ben Hecht's story about an escaped convict who masquerades as a clergyman. With Henry (Harry) Morgan, Peggy Webber, John Brown, Howard Culver, Russell Thorson. Camel Cigarettes, ABC. (28 min)

RED SKELTON SHOW (4-23-46) With Verna Felton, Gigi Pearson, Pat McGeehan, Anita Ellis, announcer Rod O'Connor, David Forrester and the Orchestra. Red talks about amusement parks and the Skelton Scrapbook of Satire focuses on "Letters," with scenes featuring Willy Lump-Lump and Junior, the Mean Little Kid. Raleigh Cigarettes, NBC. (27 min)
ADVENTURES OF FRANK MERRIWELL (10-19-46) "Clue of the Numbers" stars Lawson Zerbe as Frank, Hal Studer as Bart, Elaine Rost as Inza. Frank investigates when the school safe is blown open and the money for the Athletic Fund is stolen. Sustaining, NBC. (30 min)

SATURDAY, MAY 12

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (5-5-49) "Mother"

stars Linda Darnell with Verna Felton in a warm-hearted story about the relationship between a mother and her daughter, based on the novel by Kathleen Norris. James Hilton hosts. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (30 min)
PERRY COMO FOR A LITTLE WHILE (9-21-43) Perry delivers a message about war bonds and sings "Lost My Sugar in Salt Lake City," "How Deep Is the Ocean," and "If You Please." Sustaining, CBS. (14 min) *Perry Como was born on May 18, 1912.*

COMEDY CARAVAN (1944) Jimmy Durante and Garry Moore star, with Georgia Gibbs, Roy Barry and the Orchestra, announcer Howard Petrie. Garry talks about the start of the horse race season; Jimmy sings about how he was approached to run for office; the pair present a sketch, "Life Under the Big Top." AFRS rebroadcast. (29 min)

HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL (2-1-59) "A Matter of Ethics" starring John Dehner as Paladin, with Ben Wright as Hey Boy. A killer hires Paladin to prevent his being lynched before he can stand trial. Cast includes Jack Edwards, Jack Kruschen, Virginia Christine, Olan Soule, Roy Woods, Vic Perrin. Participating sponsors, CBS. (24 min) *Read the article about Have Gun, Will Travel on page 54.*

SUPPER CLUB (10-9-44) Perry Como stars, with announcer Martin Block, the Satisfiers, Lloyd Shaeffer and the Orchestra, and guest Nat "King" Cole. AFRS rebroadcast. (15 min)
PAT NOVAK FOR HIRE (5-14-49) Jack Webb stars as Pat Novak, with Raymond Burr as Inspector Hellman and Tudor Owen as Jocko Madigan. Novak is hired to pick up and deliver a geranium plant. AFRS rebroadcast. (29 min)

HALLS OF IVY (11-21-51) Ronald and Bentia Colman star as William Todhunter Hall and his wife Victoria, first family of Ivy College. Dr. Hall is visited by Dr. Jarvis, a minister who is worried about his son's choice of major. Cast: Ted Osborne, Rye Billsbury, Eric Snowden, Thurl Ravenscroft. Voice of America rebroadcast. (24 min)

SATURDAY, MAY 19

SPOTLIGHT ON BARBARA FULLER

ONE MAN'S FAMILY (8-29-49) Book 71, Chapter 9: "Father Barbour's Rampage and

What Game of It," with J. Anthony Smythe as Father Barbour, Barton Yarborough as Clifford, and Barbara Fuller as Claudia. Father Barbour is enraged when he suspects that someone has made off with his comb and brush. Sustaining, NBC. (30 min)



Barbara Fuller

SPEAKING OF RADIO (9-28-11) Part one of Steve Darnall's conversation with actress Barbara Fuller, who talks about her radio career. Recorded at Ms. Fuller's home in Los Angeles, CA. (31 min)
MOVIE TOWN RADIO THEATER (1947) "East Goes West" starring Jimmy Wakely, with Barbara Fuller, Earl Lee, Doris Kemper, Rye Billsbury, Jim Nusser, Dirk Trout. A young woman inherits a ranch and plans to make some changes, much to the dismay of the current foreman. Les Mitchell hosts. Syndicated. (27 min)

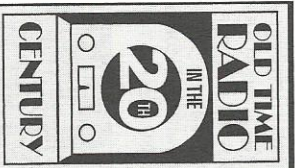
NIGHTBEAT (9-4-50) Frank Lovejoy stars as Randy Stone, night beat reporter for the Chicago Star. Randy's return from a brief vacation is interrupted when he spots an unconscious woman by the side of the road. With Barbara Fuller, Martha Wentworth, Eileen Prince, Rose Hobart, Shirley Mitchell. Sustaining, NBC. (30 min)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (9-28-11) Part two of Steve Darnall's conversation with actress Barbara Fuller. (28 min)
ONE MAN'S FAMILY (11-6-49) Book 72, Chapter 6: "Rex Frome Invades the Barbours." Father Barbour is disturbed by the family's new neighbor, while Claudia and Clifford take a walk by the sea wall. Sustaining, NBC. (29 min)

SATURDAY, MAY 26

MORE BIG BANDS ON ARMED FORCES RADIO

SOUND OFF #51 (1943) "Hepcat" Harry Von Zell hosts a program of records selected by servicemen around the world. Harry spins platters by Kay Kyser ("Why Don't You Do Right"), Maxine Sullivan and Jimmie Lunceford ("Cow Cow Boogie"), Paul Whiteman ("The General Jumped At Dawn"), and the Ink Spots ("If I Didn't Care"). Special Services Division. (15 min) →



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

with host **STEVE DARNALL**

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MAY - JUNE 2012

DOWNBEAT #49 (1943) Program featuring Woody Herman and his Band That Plays the Blues. Host Harry Mitchell interviews Woody and trumpeter-vocalist Billie Rogers, and plays selections by the Herman band, including "Spruce Juice," "I Don't Believe In Rumors," "Down Under," and "Taking a Chance on Love." Special Services Division. (30 min)

MUSIC FROM YOUR HOMETOWN #4 (1945) A remote broadcast from the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago featuring Art Kassel and his "Kassels in the Air" with vocalists Gloria Hart, Jimmy Featherstone and the Kassel Trio. Selections heard include "All of My Life,"

"Good, Good, Good," and "The More I See You," Specially recorded by WGN Chicago for AFRS. (15 min)

MAGIC CARPET #269 (1946) Charlie Barnet and his Orchestra are heard in a remote broadcast from the Casino Gardens in Ocean Park, California. The Barnet band plays "Poor Little Rich Girl," "Skyliner," and "Strollin'." Vocalist Fran Warren sings "Everything But You." AFRS rebroadcast. (15 min)

ONE NIGHT STAND FILL #115 (12-1-45) "Music by that Southern Gentleman" Johnny Long and his Orchestra, in a broadcast from the Terrace Room of the Hotel New Yorker in New York City. Vocals by Franney Lane, Tex Mulcahy, and Don Paladino. AFRS rebroadcast. (30 min)

VICTORY PARADE OF SPOTLIGHT BANDS #615 (3-6-45) Frankie Masters and his Orchestra entertain the soldiers stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky, with vocals by Frankie, Phyllis Miles and the girl quartet. Tunes played include "A Little On The Lonely Side," "Robin Hood," and "Goodnight, Sweet Dreams." AFRS rebroadcast. (15 min)

ONE NIGHT STAND #198 (4-10-44) Count Basie and his Orchestra broadcasting from the Blue Room of the Hotel Lincoln in New York City, with vocals by Thelma Carpenter, Jimmy Rushing and Earle Warren. The Basie band plays "Jumpin' At The Woodside," "My Ideal," "Ain't It The Truth," and other numbers. AFRS rebroadcast. (30 min)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be big band historian **KARL PEARSON**, who will talk about the relationship between the big bands and the Armed Forces Radio Service.

SATURDAY, JUNE 2

CASEY, CRIME PHOTOGRAPHER (10-16-47) "The Camera Bug" stars Staats

Cotsworth as Casey, with Jan Miner as Anne Williams, and John Gibson as Ethelbert. A young photographer who comes to Casey for advice finds himself at the scene of a murder. Tony Marvin announces. Anchor Hocking Glass, CBS. (30 min)

MY FRIEND IRMA (2-24-52) Marie Wilson stars as Irma Peterson, with Cathy Lewis as Jane, John Brown as Al, Hans Conried as Professor Kropotkin, Gloria Gordon as Mrs. O'Reilly, Irma decides to teach herself plumbing when she loses Al's friendship ring down the bathroom drain. Ennds Chlorophyll Tablets, CBS. (29 min)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE (10-22-35) An isolated episode from the long-running series, with Shirley Bell as Annie and Allan Baruck as Joe Cornassel. When the owner of the local emporium takes sick, he asks for Annie and Joe's help in running the store. Pierre Andre announces. Ovaltine, MBS. (15 min) *Read the article about Little Orphan Annie on page 50.*

KOMEDY KINGDOM (1937) "Marriage" is the theme of this show, hosted by "Queen" Elvia Allman, with guests Al K. Hall, Morey Amsterdam (who offers "a blow-by-blow account of a day with an average married couple") and Mabel Todd, who sings "You Ain't the Kind of Guy For a Gal Like Me." Syndicated. (15 min)

SCREEN DIRECTOR'S PLAYHOUSE (1-13-50) "Tomorrow Is Forever" stars Claudette Colbert in a radio version of her 1946 film. A soldier who was listed as dead returns home to find his wife has remarried. With Jeff Chandler, John McIntire, Sam Edwards. RCA Victor, NBC. (30 min)

THE THIRD MAN (8-17-51) "Clay Pigeon" stars Orson Welles stars as Harry Lime, the character he played in the film *The Third Man*, with zither music by Anton Karas. A politician offers Lime \$15,000 to extricate him from a blackmail plot. Syndicated. (26 min)

KAY KYSER'S COLLEGE OF MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE (12-5-45) It's "The Ol' Professor" and his gang, including vocalists Michael (Mike) Douglas and Georgia Carroll, in a show from the Naval Station in Corpus Christi, Texas. AFRS rebroadcast. (30 min)

SATURDAY, JUNE 9

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA (6-9-41) "An-drew Jackson" stars John McIntire as the

country lawyer who helped to prevent a traitor from starting an uprising and who went on to become the seventh president of the United States. Dupont, NBC. (29 min)

JUDY CANOVA SHOW (8-24-43) With Mel Blanc, Ruby Dandridge, singer Eddie Dean, announcer Ken Niles, Charles Dant and the Orchestra, Judy wants a new dress in anticipation of a date with Mickey Rooney. Colgate-Palmolive, CBS. (25 min)

ADVENTURES OF PHILIP MARLOWE (6-14-50) "The Face to Forget" starring Gerald Mohr as Marlowe. A young woman hires Marlowe to find her missing boyfriend. Cast: Harry Bartell, Sammie Hill, Parley Baer, Lawrence Dobkin, Elliott Reid, Junius Matthews, Roy Rowan. Bob Stevenson announces. Wrigley's Gum, CBS. (30 min)

FRED ALLEN SHOW (1-6-46) Guest Phil Baker joins Fred and the gang: Portland Hoffa, Kenny Delmar, Parker Fennelley, Minerva Pious, Alan Reed, The DelMarco Sisters, Al Goodman and his Orchestra. Fred recalls how he became a guest on Phil's show, *Take It or Leave It*. Tender Leaf Tea, Blue Bonnet Margarine, NBC. (28 min)

WEIRD CIRCLE (9-24-44) "The Bell Tower" is Herman Melville's story of an architect in 16th-century Italy, who is commissioned to build the largest bell tower of all time. Cast includes Arnold Moss. Syndicated. (27 min)

CURTAIN TIME (5-8-48) "The Little Liar" stars Harry Elders and Margaret Brayton in a romantic comedy about a real estate agent whose wife gets him into trouble. Myron Wallace announces. Mars Candy, NBC. (29 min)

SATURDAY, JUNE 16

CROSBY, HOPE AND LAMOUR ON THE ROAD

PHILCO RADIO TIME (1-29-47) Bing Crosby stars, with announcer Ken Carpenter, Skitch Henderson, the Chariotiers, John Scott Trotter and his orchestra, and guests Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour, who join Bing for a sketch, "The Road to Hollywood." Philco, ABC. (30 min)

SEALTEST VARIETY THEATER (10-14-48) Excerpt. Dorothy Lamour welcomes Bob Hope, who talks about his ancestors in a sketch concerning the discovery of the new world, "The Road to America." Sealtest, NBC. (7 min)

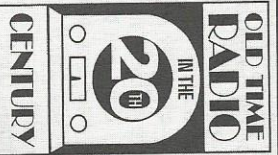
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JUNE 2012

LUX RADIO THEATRE (4-5-43) "The Road to Morocco" starring Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and Ginny Simms in a radio version of the 1942 film, in which Bing sells Bob to a slave trader in mysterious Morocco. Songs include "Moonlight Becomes You" and "Constantly." Cecil B. DeMille hosts. Cast includes Verma Felton, Janet Waldo, Denis Green, Lux Soap, CBS. (18 min & 25 min & 14 min) *Read the article about the Road pictures on page 42.*
JACK BENNY PROGRAM (1-11-53) *Excerpt*, Bob Hope joins Jack and the gang for a parody of Bob's latest film, *The Road To Bali*. With Mary Livingstone, Dennis Day, Don Wilson, Bob Crosby, the Sportsmen. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (16 min)

COMMAND PERFORMANCE (recorded 12-16-44) Bing Crosby and Bob Hope co-host, with announcer Ken Carpenter. The Andrews Sisters, Stan Kenton, Anita O'Day, and Lauren Bacall. The Andrews Sisters sing "Rum and Coca-Cola" and join Bing for "Don't Fence Me In"; Bing and Bob both want to date Lauren. AFRS. (29 min)
BING CROSBY SHOW (12-26-51) Guests Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour join Bing for a sketch, "The Road to Las Vegas." Elsewhere, Dorothy sings "Moonlight Becomes You" from *The Road To Morocco*; Bing sings "Down Yonder" and "Just One More Chance." Chesterfield Cigarettes, CBS. (28 min)

SATURDAY, JUNE 23

LET GEORGE DO IT (5-3-48) "The Tunnel" stars Bob Bailey as George Valentine, with Frances Robinson as Claire Brooks. George is hired to investigate after a series of accidents halts construction of an underwater tunnel. Cast: Francis X. Bushman, Herbert Lytton, Ruth Perrott, Joe Duval, Franklin "Pinky" Parker, Leo Cleary. Standard Oil of California, MBS. (30 min)

OUR MISS BROOKS (5-15-49) Eve Arden stars as Connie Brooks, English teacher at Madison High School, with Gale Gordon as Mr. Conklin, Richard Crenna as Walter Denton, Jeff Chandler as Mr. Boynton, Leonard Smith as Stretch Snodgrass, Walter and Stretch want a photo of Miss Brooks for the school yearbook. Colgate-Palmolive, CBS. (30 min)

MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER (2-19-52) "Strange New World" stars Cliff Carpenter and Lawson Zerbe, with Maurice Tarplin as the Mysterious Traveler. When two Navy pilots are blown far off course during a

typhoon, they land on a mysterious island. Sustaining, MBS. (30 min)
CONTENTED HOUR (8-8-49) A program of music and song with a western theme from Buddy Clark and The Riders of the Purple Sage. Buddy sings "Laura Bell Lee"; the Riders sing "Ragtime Cowboy Joe." Carnation, NBC. (31 min)

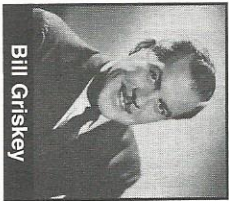
DR. CHRISTIAN (10-25-38) "Boy Loves Girl" starring Jean Hersholt as Dr. Paul Christian, with Rosemary DeCamp as nurse Judy Price. Dr. Christian agrees to talk with the parents of two young people who want to get married. Cast: Richard Cuirne, Joanne Ransom, Albert Van Antwerp, Myra Marsh, Joe Franz, Harry Humphrey, Art Gilmore announces. Vaseline, CBS. (29 min)

BURNS AND ALLEN SHOW (3-23-43) George is unhappy when Gracie uses the house for a meeting of the Beverly Hills Uplift Society. With Mel Blanc, Bill Goodwin, singer Jimmy Cash, Paul Whiteman and the Orchestra, Bea Benaderet, Ewa Allman, Paula Winslowe. Swan Soap, CBS. (29 min)

SATURDAY, JUNE 30 BIG-TIME RADIO

BIG TOWN (1940) Edward G. Robinson stars as Steve Wilson, editor of the Illustrated Press, with Ora Munson as Lorelei Kilbourne. When a friend of Steve's is killed in

a hit-and-run accident, the Press launches a campaign to find the guilty driver. Rinso, CBS. (25 min)
BIG CITY SERENADE (1953) Bill Gristey salutes the Honor City of the day, Florence, Italy, with a musical tour of this famous city. With singer Kyle Kimbrough, Joseph Gallicchio and the Orchestra. Broadcast from Chicago. Sustaining, NBC. (29 min)



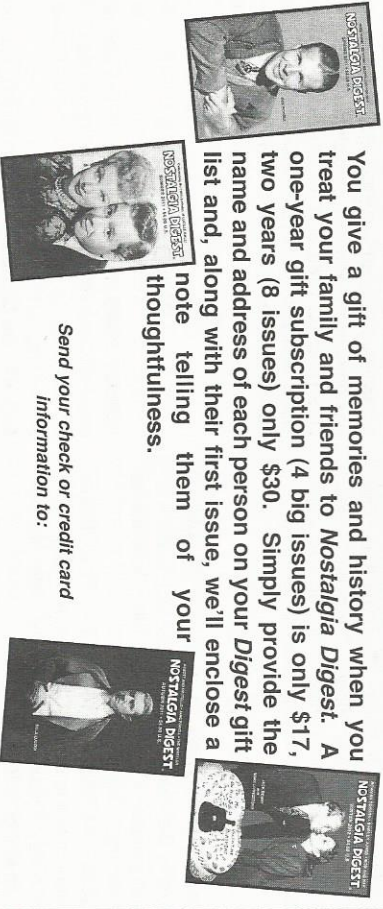
Bill Gristey

THE BIG GUY (10-29-50) "The Case of the Patent Leather Bag" stars Henry Calvin as Detective Joshua Sharp, with David Anderson and Denise Alexander as his children Josh Jr. and Debbie. The Sharps' landlady accuses the children of taking a handbag from her apartment. The last show of the series. Sustaining, NBC. (30 min)

THE BIG SHOW (2-11-51) From Hollywood, mistress of ceremonies Tallulah Bankhead hosts The Andrews Sisters, Joan Davis, Judy Garland, Gordon MacRae, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, Groucho Marx, Meredith Willson and the Orchestra, announcer Jimmy Wallington. Groucho creates a new sponsor for the show; Gordon sings "Porgy's Lament"; Judy sings "Get Happy." Participating sponsors, NBC. (30 min & 28 min & 29 min)

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SUNDAY, APRIL 1

BLONDIE (4-1-40) Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake star as Blondie and Dagwood, who has decided to celebrate his birthday on April Fool's Day. Camel Cigarettes, CBS.

SHERLOCK HOLMES (4-1-46) "The April Fool's Day Adventure" starring Basil Rathbone as Holmes and Nigel Bruce as Watson. An April Fool's prank backfires when a valuable emerald is stolen. Petr Wines, MBS.

COMMAND PERFORMANCE (4-1-42) Kay Kyser is master of ceremonies, with Bea Wain, Lou Holtz, Ella Logan, sportscaster Wendy Davis, and Eddie Cantor, who recites "Ballad of Leatherneck Corps." AFRS.

SUNDAY, APRIL 8

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (4-6-50) "The Arthurus Bonne" starring Ann Blyth in an Easter love story about a young woman's faith. James Hilton hosts. Hallmark Cards, CBS.

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-5-42) It's Easter Sunday and Jack and the gang discuss when Jack's suspenders broke during the Easter Parade! Jell-O, NBC.

DIMENSION X (5-20-50) "The Lost Race" starring Matt Crowley, Roger Dekoven, Joseph Julian. A spaceship searching for a lost civilization is forced to land. Sustaining, NBC.

SUNDAY, APRIL 15

DUFFY'S TAVERN (3-7-44) Ed Gardner is Archie the manager, with guest Col. Lemuel Q. Stoopnagle. It's tax time and Mrs. Duffy wants a fur coat. Bristol-Myers, NBC.

QUIET PLEASE (2-16-48) "The Third Man's Story" starring Ernest Chappell. A strange story of a boy's jealousy toward his older brother. Sustaining, ABC.

MUSICANA (4-14-51) From Chicago, a program of "American music designed for American Moderns" with the NBC Orchestra

and singer Lucille Reid. Sustaining, NBC.

SUNDAY, APRIL 22

HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL (8-23-59) John Dehner stars as Paladin, who is hired to investigate a fire in a silver mine and find the "ghosts" responsible. Participating sponsors, CBS. *Read the article about Have Gun, Will Travel on page 54.*

BOB HOPE SHOW (1-30-51) From March Field, California, with guest Judy Garland, who sings "I'm in Love With a Wonderful Guy," AFRS rebroadcast. *Read the article about Bob Hope and the Road pictures on page 42.*

BOSTON BLACKIE (8-27-46) Dick Kollmar stars as Boston Blackie, who is accused of taking \$10,000 from a woman's grandfather. Syndicated.

SUNDAY, APRIL 29

STARS OVER HOLLYWOOD (12-1-51) "The Perfect Mate" starring Jack Paar as a magazine publisher who hires a psychoanalyst to boost circulation. Carnation, CBS.

CRIME CLUB (6-12-47) "Death is a Knockout" is the story of a prize fighter who believes he has poisoned a gambler. Sustaining, MBS.

IT'S TIME TO SMILE (1-15-41) Eddie Cantor stars, with Dinah Shore, Cookie Farchild and the Orchestra, and guest Phil Harris. Eddie wants Phil to star in a movie. Ipana, Sai Hepatica, NBC.

SUNDAY, MAY 6

ROCKY JORDAN (12-19-48) "Up in Flames" starring Jack Moyle as Rocky Jordan. A woman tries to sell fire insurance to Rocky. Sustaining, CBS.

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (11-7-43) Harold Peary stars as Gildy, who decides to spend his money and ration points to purchase a pot roast! Kraft Foods, NBC.

CALLING ALL CARS (11-17-38) "The Case of the Four-Lead Slugs." Charles Frederick Lindsay narrates the story of a man accused of murdering his mother. Rio Grande Oil Co., CBS.

SUNDAY, MAY 13

PHIL HARRIS - ALICE FAYE SHOW (5-8-49) It's Mother's Day and Phil doesn't have a gift for Alice. With Elliott Lewis as Frank Remley. Rexall, NBC.

THE SHADOW (11-28-37) "Circle of Death" stars Orson Welles as Lamont Cranston. The Shadow investigates after a masked killer sets off a series of explosions. Blue Coal, MBS.

GINNY SIMMS SHOW (1-11-46) Guest Gene Kelly joins Ginny for a parody of *Wuthering Heights*. Borden, CBS.

SUNDAY, MAY 20

LUX RADIO THEATRE (12-26-38) "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," featuring many voices from Walt Disney's classic 1937 film, including Roy Atwell as "Doc," Billy Gilbert as Sneezzy, Moroni Olson as the Mirror, and Stuart Buchanan as Grumpy. Cecil B. DeMille hosts. Lux Soap, CBS. *Read the article about Walt Disney's animated films on page 13.*

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (4-14-48) Jimmy decides to tour the U.S. to examine the housing shortage. With Victor Moore, Peggy Lee, announcer Howard Petrie. Rexall, NBC.

SUNDAY, MAY 27

DOCTORS AT WAR (3-25-44) "Our Blood for Our Boys" is the story of how blood plasma saves the lives of American soldiers. Sustaining, NBC.

FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY (5-6-41) Jim and Marian Jordan star as the McGees, with Harold Peary as Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve. Molly urges McGee and Gilly to collect games for servicemen. Johnson's Wax, NBC.

THE WHISTLER (4-28-48) "Tough Guy" starring Harry Bartell. A man travels to South America for the building of a new airfield and finds "old skeletons in his closets." Signal Oil, CBS.

SUNDAY, JUNE 3

ADVENTURES OF OZZIE AND HARRIET (11-28-48) Ozzie receives a message from a

mysterious woman in the personal column of the paper. International Silver, NBC.

THIS IS YOUR FBI (9-26-47) "The Melancholy Mind Reader," starring Stacy Harris. The wife of a carnival mind-reader is unhappy with her husband's performance. Equitable Life Assurance Society, ABC.

MATINEE WITH BOB AND RAY (7-29-49) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding from early in their careers, with organist Ken Wilson and pianist Bill Green. Participating sponsors, WHDH.

SUNDAY, JUNE 10

NICK CARTER, MASTER DETECTIVE (4-8-44) "Murder By Magic" stars Lon Clark as Nick Carter, with Helen Choate as Patsy, John Kane as Scubby. Nick investigates when Scubby is accused of murder. Sustaining, MBS.

KRAFT MUSIC HALL (12-9-48) Al Jolson stars, with Oscar Levant, Lou Bring and the Orchestra, announcer Ken Carpenter, and guest Dennis Day. Kraft, NBC.

SUSPENSE (9-12-46) "Hunting Trip" stars Lloyd Nolan and Vincent Price. Two friends go on a hunting trip but one suspects the other is out to murder him. Roma Wines, CBS.

SUNDAY, JUNE 17

FATHER KNOWS BEST (6-15-50) Robert Young stars as Jim Anderson, with Herb Vigran as Hee. The family plans to surprise Jim on Father's Day. Maxwell House Coffee, NBC.

SIX SHOOTER (2-14-54) "Quiet City" starring James Stewart as Texas plainsman Britt Ponset. The son of a sheriff refuses to follow in his father's footsteps. Sustaining, NBC.

CHARLIE MCCARTHY SHOW (9-21-41) With Bud Abbott and Lou Costello, Ray Noble and the Orchestra, and guest W.C. Fields. Chase and Sanborn, NBC.

SUNDAY, JUNE 24

SCREEN DIRECTORS' PLAYHOUSE (1-21-51) "Spellbound" stars Joseph Cotten and Mercedes McCambridge in a radio adaptation of Alfred Hitchcock's 1945 film, about an amnesia victim posing as a psychoanalyst. Anacn, RCA Victor, NBC.

FRED ALLEN SHOW (4-11-48) With Kenny Delmar, Minerva Pious, Parker Fennelley, Peter Donald, and guest Basil Rathbone, who joins Fred for a "One Long Par" mystery sketch. Ford, NBC.

THREE FOR THE ROAD

BY RANDALL G. MIELKE

One of the entertainment world's most famous and enduring friendships originated in 1932 on 48th Street in New York City. It happened near the renowned Friars Club, to which both a young comedian, Bob Hope, and a rising new singer, Bing Crosby, belonged. The two entertainers recognized each other on the street, exchanged a few pleasantries, and then went their separate ways. It was a rather low-key beginning for a monumental partnership — one that spanned nearly 45 years.

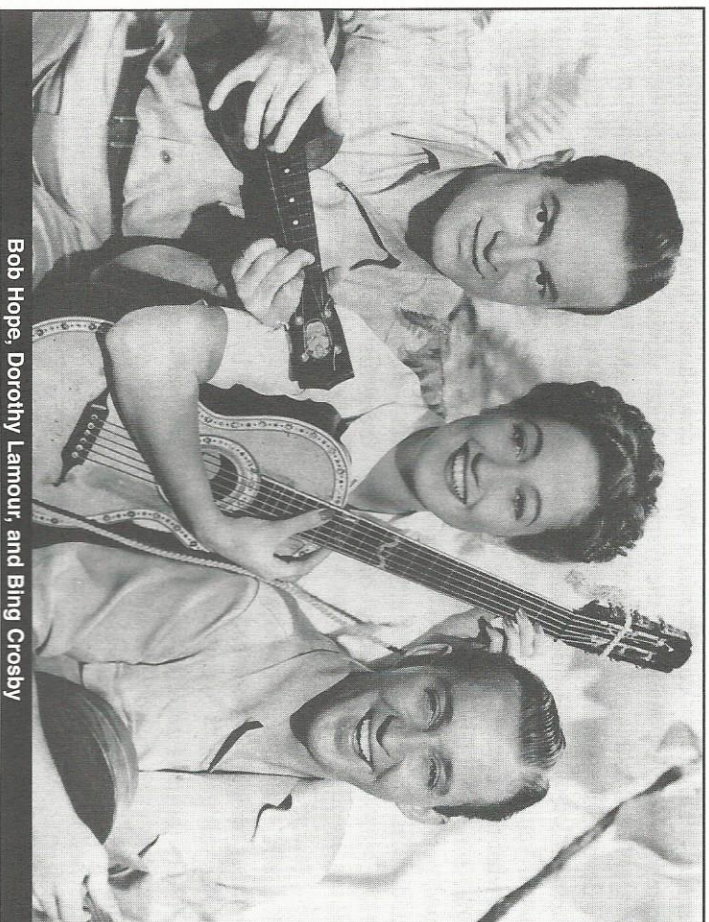
But their paths were soon to cross again. Their talents, and the sincere affection they held for each other, would

Randall G. Mielke is the author of Road to Box Office: The Seven Film Comedies of Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and Dorothy Lamour, 1940-1962, published by Bear Manor Media. This excerpt is ©2010 Randall G. Mielke and appears by permission of the author.

make them one of the most endearing teams in motion-picture history.

Part of Hope's career dilemma in the waning months of 1932 arose from his participation in a Broadway production called *Ballyhoo of 1932*, a show that was not faring too well. Even Hope's hilarious warm-up act could not salvage the weak musical. The critics were exceedingly nasty, and the show closed after just four months. Hope reluctantly returned to the vaudeville circuit, and his next job took him to New York's Capitol Theater in December of 1932.

Crosby was also touring New York in 1932, but on a much more positive note. He had left Paul Whiteman's band and then his own group, the Rhythm Boys, to pursue a solo singing career. His hit record "I Surrender Dear," a national show on CBS radio, and a good showing in his first major film, *The Big Broadcast of 1932*, had put him on the proverbial road to stardom. With his popularity on the rise, Crosby was scheduled for a two-



Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour, and Bing Crosby

week engagement at the Capitol Theater. It was his first personal appearance in New York since his success in the Paramount film. Hope was the master of ceremonies of the Capitol show.

As the emcee, Hope always received an advance list of the scheduled performers he would introduce each night. On one occasion, he was pleased to find Crosby's name heading the list. When Crosby arrived at the theater for the first show, Hope welcomed him warmly. Since meeting briefly several months before, the two had followed each other's show business careers with interest.

There are differing accounts as to how Hope and Crosby first started performing various comedy bits together. Some versions indicate that one or the other came to the theater early each day during the two-week run. It was decided that the two entertainers should try some-

thing different from the standard introductions Hope was using. Other versions imply that the two performers met and talked at a neighborhood bar during their engagement at the Capitol Theater. If they did happen to meet in a local bar during their run at the Capitol, it must have been at a speakeasy because Prohibition would not end for another year.

Regardless of where their discussions took place, the pair found that show business was only one of the things they had in common. People who saw the two entertainers together when they were not on stage during their engagement at the Capitol probably thought Hope and Crosby were just a couple of buddies trading old war stories. What these people were witnessing, in fact, was the birth of a classic partnership.

It was not long before the two enter-

tainers realized they could transfer their competitive good humor to the Capitol stage. It was at this point that they began to develop some comedic ideas and came up with a few routines to replace Hope's usual semi-straight introductions. Most of what they created was old-time vaudeville shtick, but it was funny and when it was performed, it seemed to delight the audiences. Their first routine featured Hope strolling confidently on stage alone.

"Ah, good evening, ladies and gents. I'm afraid we'll have to do without my partner tonight — some cad locked him in the washroom."

As the laughter died down, Crosby would saunter on from the other side of the stage holding a brass doorknob attached to a piece of splintered wood.

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen," Crosby said, as Hope looked on. "I feel I must apologize, you'll have to forgive me for working alone tonight — my partner has an upset stomach."

"Now wait a minute," Hope would retort in perfect timing. "I don't have an upset stomach."

"You will after you swallow this," Crosby would reply, waving the doorknob under Hope's nose.

Other comedy bits quickly followed, such as an impression of two orchestra leaders meeting on the street. Each performer pulled out a baton and led the other while he talked as if he were leading an orchestra. Next they performed an impression of two farmers meeting on the street. One of them asked in a

down-home kind of drawl, "How are things down on the farm?" The other responded in like manner with: "It's pretty cold in the reading room." Then one "milked" the other's down-turned thumbs.

Even when the gags were not that funny, the appreciative audience laughed because it was apparent the two performers were having such a good time. From their first appearance at the Capitol Theater, Crosby and Hope went together like ham and eggs or Scotch and soda. By another lucky coincidence, Hope was signed by Paramount Pictures, and the two were able to renew their acquaintance around the studio lot.

Several factors contributed to the rapport that Hope and Crosby so easily

displayed on stage and in films.

Although both could toss insults with great accuracy, there was never any sting involved. The public accurately perceived that Bing Crosby and Bob Hope were two men who really liked each other. Crosby admired Hope's energy and ambition, and Hope revered Crosby's natural talent. They also shared a love of golf and other sports.

Another secret to the duo's success was the different pace at which each of them worked. The old cliché of opposites attracting may have been the case with these two talented individuals. Crosby was easygoing and laid-back, whereas the impulsive Hope was always on the go. The combination seemed to work to both entertainers' satisfaction.

An example of how well Crosby and Hope worked together, and especially how at ease Crosby felt with Hope, was evidenced when actor Edward G. Robinson appeared on Crosby's radio show in the mid-thirties.

It was standard operating procedure at that time that Crosby's radio show did not include any ad-libs. Pleasurable as the show was, it had very little of the easygoing humor Crosby was capable of displaying. Everything was scripted, and

each show was rehearsed and performed word for word with rarely any variation.

One day the show's producers arranged with guest star Robinson to alter things just a bit, fully believing it would serve to loosen Crosby up. During one of their dialogues on the air, Robinson suddenly asked, "By the way, Bing, how's your golf score?"

Crosby was astounded. Thinking Robinson might have just skipped some pages, Crosby quickly flipped through his script but saw no lines about his golf score. He responded simply, "Oh, I'm getting down in the low eighties." He and Robinson continued the exchange, then returned to the script. Later in the show, Robinson again threw in an impromptu question, and Crosby answered it casually.

After the broadcast was over, however, Crosby was outraged. His producers tried to convince him that his engaging personality came across much better in the ad-lib situations, but Crosby was not one for surprises. He was not satisfied until his friends told him how natural the exchange with Robinson had seemed. After that, Crosby tolerated an occasional ad-lib. But from that incident, it is apparent that many of Crosby's ad-



Crosby and Hope, a couple of song-and-dance men

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libs with Hope on radio, and later in films, were effective because he felt so at ease working with that particular comedian.

With numerous benefit appearances together and successful guest spots on each other's radio shows, it was only natural for Bing Crosby and Bob Hope to continue their acquaintance after Hope arrived at Paramount.

It was during this time that Crosby and actor Pat O'Brien began operating the Del Mar Race Track together. The pre-opening party for the racing season at the track turned out to be a classic evening of entertainment. Performers at the Del Mar Saturday night shindig included Crosby, O'Brien, Mary Martin, Jimmy Durante, Phil Harris, and Al Jolson—all displaying their talents for a select Hollywood crowd.

"Why don't you and I do some of those routines we did at the Capitol?" Crosby suggested to Hope.

"Sure thing," Hope said, never passing up an opportunity to perform.

Reportedly, it was at this affair that Crosby coined the nickname "Ski Nose" for Hope, and Hope in turn took it out on Crosby's unsuccessful race horses. Like many of the benefits they had performed over the years, the Del Mar show featured a number of vaudeville-like impressions and time-honored gags. They finished the show with a song, an old soft shoe, and a flourish.

The showbiz audience was in hysterics over the Hope-Crosby antics. One of those in attendance that night was William LeBaron, production chief at Paramount. When he returned to the studio, he told his aides what he had witnessed.

"Those two boys work well together," LeBaron said, not realizing that

Hope and Crosby had started rehearsing together seven years before. "We ought to put them in a picture together."

Not a bad idea, as it turned out.

In addition to William LeBaron, there were other Paramount bigwigs at the Del Mar Race Track that pivotal night in 1939 who thought Bob Hope and Bing Crosby made a good team. One of them, Harlan Thompson, had enjoyed a great career on Broadway as a lyricist and librettist, and was now a Paramount producer. Thompson also reportedly perceived that Crosby and Hope had viable chemistry as a team. When he took his idea to the Paramount brass, however, he was turned down.

"No contrast," said one executive.

"Crosby needs a girl," said another, "and Hope needs a straight man. And Crosby isn't going to be a straight man for anybody."

"He's right," added a third. "You can't have a team without a straight man."

Thompson argued his case, but the answer was still no.

In 1939, Tinsel Town was going through a period of making South Sea island films which were designed to give the cinema-going public some relief from the harsh realities of life during the Depression. As was often the case in Hollywood's heyday, company executives wanted to take advantage of the current vogue and get something into production and out to the public in short order.

Paramount owned a script called *The Road to Mandalay* which scriptwriters Frank Butler and Don Hartman had adapted from a South Sea tale entitled *Beach of Dreams* by Harry Hervey.

At first, the studio wanted to cast affable Fred MacMurray and comedian

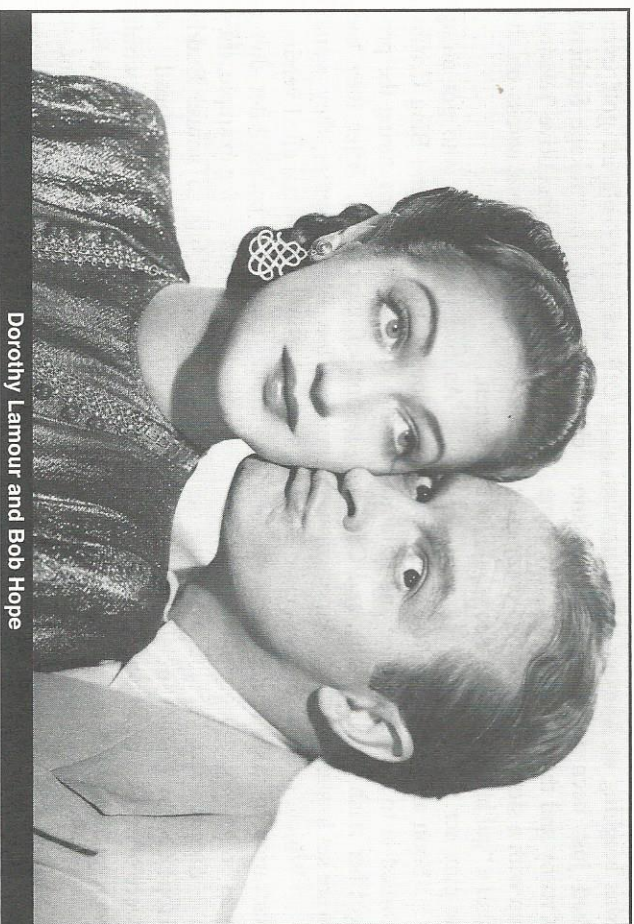
Jack Oakie as two vagabond entertainers on the lam in the tropics. Both stars turned down the offer, however. Then the executives' thoughts turned to the combination of George Burns and Gracie Allen, maybe even with Crosby in the film, but Burns and Allen could not fit it into their schedule.

Still intrigued with the idea of teaming Hope and Crosby, Thompson reportedly discussed the concept with writers Butler and Hartman. They were working on *The Road to Mandalay* and had altered the concept from serious to funny. They had also changed the title. The new screenplay was called *Road to Singapore*. The name "Singapore" was used because the writers did not think "Mandalay" sounded treacherous enough. (Another reason for the change to "Singapore" was to avoid confusion with Al Jolson's hit song "Mandalay.") Butler and Hartman also were wise enough to include a part for a sexy film star.

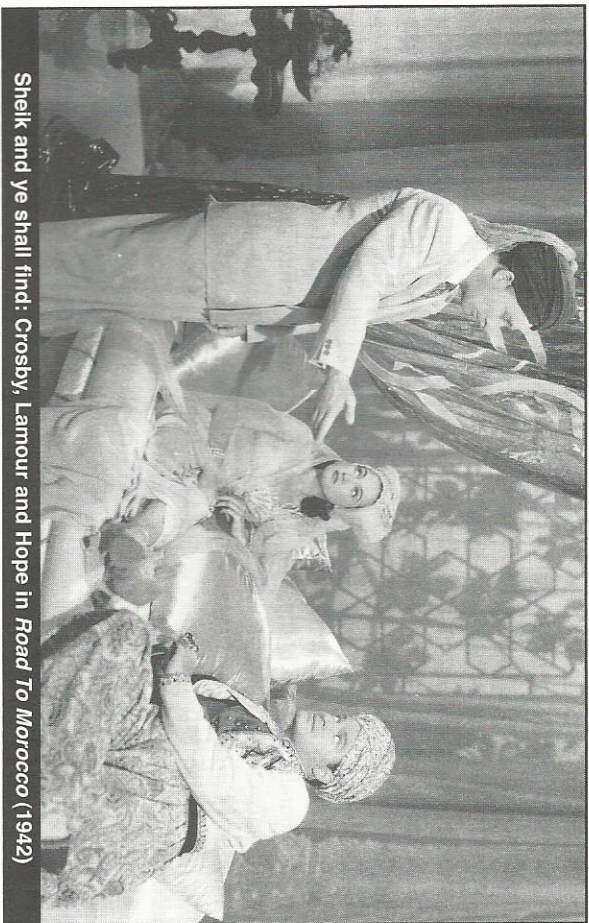
Now everything started to make sense. Combine Bing Crosby and Bob Hope in one movie and add a girl. It all seemed like a winning combination: a foreign land, natives, music, a sexy starlet, Hope being a clown, and Crosby singing the ballads. The idea, first suggested lightly, became a hot business proposition, and Butler and Hartman continued to refine their script.

LeBaron was reportedly the executive who sent for Dorothy Lamour. Lamour, a dark-haired beauty, had become a leading Paramount star as a result of her parts in South Sea island pictures (such as John Ford's *The Hurricane* in 1937). LeBaron reasoned that Lamour and her sarong would supply the elements of glamour and sex the new partnership needed. She had already appeared with Hope in *The Big Broadcast of 1938*, but had not made a film with Crosby.

Lamour, however, remembered a different version of how the "Roads"



Dorothy Lamour and Bob Hope



Sheik and ye shall find: Crosby, Lamour and Hope in *Road To Morocco* (1942)

came to be. She claimed that one day after lunch in the Paramount commissary, she stopped at a table where Hope and Crosby were displaying their usual brand of hysterics. She left the commissary, still laughing, and bumped into two writer friends who asked her what she was laughing at. Lamour told them she had just been joking with Hope and Crosby and that if they could only come up with a story involving two crazy guys and a “gal in the middle,” she would love to play her.

Soon after, the first *Road* story was turned in to the front office and Lamour got her wish — she, Hope, and Crosby were set to star in it.

Whichever version is accurate, the fact remains that the *Road to Singapore* was on its way to being made.

Singapore did much to nurture the Hope-Crosby friendship. The two stars were often likened to two little boys who were just having fun at playtime.

The two often decorated their dressing rooms with retouched pictures of

each other, adding and subtracting features here and there. Hope had Crosby’s ears considerably enlarged for one shot, making a normally big pair of ears look like the handles on a loving-cup trophy. In another photo, Hope had a darkroom artist cross Crosby’s eyes.

Offscreen, they played golf every chance they got. This linkage furthered their friendly yet competitive relationship, which would come across on the screen.

As two performers who got along fabulously, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby also had fun with others during the production of their films. After they had made a few films together, they would often add things to the unedited versions to shake up the top brass. After doing some scenes together, for example, they would add little bits to amuse Buddy DeSylva, a production head at Paramount, because they knew he would be seeing the daily rushes. DeSylva had started to play a ukulele at one point, so Crosby and Hope would finish a scene,

ask the director to keep the cameras rolling, and say, “Now let’s try the same thing over again with a ukulele.”

Few partners in show business history complemented each other so thoroughly. Hope was an outstanding gagster who could sing pretty well. Crosby was a supreme singer who was clever with a quip. In addition, Hope could handle the more physical comedy. As screen performers, neither dominated the other. They enhanced each other’s strengths rather than overwhelming the other’s weaknesses.

In creating *Road to Singapore*, writers Butler and Hartman came up with a formula that was simple, yet surefire: Crosby is the debonair dreamer, Hope his trusting friend. Crosby is the romantic, crooning love songs to the exotic Lamour at every turn. Hope has an adolescent’s ambitions regarding love, and although

he appears at times to be close to his goal, he usually falls short of the mark.

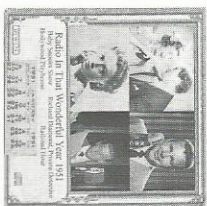
Later, Hartman would describe a *Road* picture this way: “You take a piece of used chewing gum and flip it at a map. Wherever it sticks you can lay a *Road* picture, so long as the people there are jokers who cook and eat strangers. If they’re nasty and menacing, it’ll be a good *Road* picture. The key to the thing is menace offsetting humor.”

Perhaps *Time* magazine summed it up best: “The *Road* shows were rummage sales of stuff out of vaudeville, butlesque — marvelously shoddy masterpieces of farce and fantasy, stitched together with clichés and ad libs.” ■

Time in to Those Were the Days on June 16 for an afternoon on the *Road* with Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and Dorothy Lamour.

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American Orphan, American Icon

The story of Annie, the little girl with a heart of gold who became the darling of the Depression

BY CARY O'DELL

Today, radio's Little Orphan Annie is probably most famous for her frequent referencing in the holiday classic *A Christmas Story*, for her near obsessive shilling of Ovaltine, or as the tireless dispenser of decoder rings. But beyond all that (and long before "Tomorrow," the signature song from her hit Broadway musical), Annie was an icon of the airwaves, the centerpiece of one of the most popular series of her day, completely intertwined with her times and fortifying for a nation that hungered — not for chocolate-y milk or even mere escapism, but for hope in the midst of the Great Depression.

Legendary comic strip *Little Orphan Annie* first appeared in newspapers on August 5, 1924.

Cary O'Dell is Boards Assistant, Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, at the Library of Congress.

It was the creation of Harold Gray, a *Chicago Tribune* worker, World War I veteran, and self-taught artist. After getting his comic feet wet in 1921 (by lettering Sidney Smith's comic *The Gumps*), Gray crafted his own comic strip.

Gray drew his inspiration for *Annie* from film star Mary Pickford's films and from James Whitcomb Riley's 1885 poem *Little Orphant Annie*, a work famous for its refrain of:

*An' the Gobble-uns 'll gits you
Ej you
Don't
Watch
Owl!*

Gray once described his pop-eyed heroine: "Annie is tougher than hell with a heart of gold and a fast left, who can take care of herself because she has to. She's controversial, there's no question about that. But I keep her on the side of motherhood, honesty, and decency."

After her debut in the *New York*

Daily News (an East Coast tabloid owned by the *Chicago Tribune*), *Annie* quickly caught on; soon, it was being carried in several hundred newspapers. The *Tribune* learned just how much *Annie* mattered when they accidentally omitted the strip from their pages on October 27, 1925 and were flooded with phone calls, letters and telegrams demanding to know what happened to her.

In 1930, *Annie* came to radio. Making the aural leap with Annie were all of her comic strip pals — scruffy dog Sandy, boy pal Joe Cornassel and, of course, Oliver "Daddy" Warbucks. Newly added was a catchy theme song:

*Who's that little chatterbox?
The one with pretty auburn locks?
Whom do you see?
It's Little Orphan Annie.*

Originally, the series was carried over WGN/Chicago and went national over NBC's Blue Network in 1931. At the time, NBC didn't have all the connections in place for a true coast-to-coast

radio network; as a result, when it began on the air, *Little Orphan Annie* was actually *two* shows, though produced with identical scripts. One was produced in Chicago (for airing in the East and Midwest), the other, produced that same day, was done in San Francisco (for airing on the West Coast). Two different actresses played Annie: Shirley Bell in Chicago; Floy Hughes in California. In 1933, improved technologies allowed for just one broadcast and Chicago's version won out.

As she had been on the newspaper page, the *Annie* of the air was a unique heroine. There was nothing demure about her. She was talkative, smart and bossy. She thought nothing of ordering around adults. And if that aspect of her personality wasn't enough of a wish fulfillment for youngsters, then her frequent hair-raising adventures certainly were. During the course of the 10-plus years on the airwaves, there were few places Annie didn't go and few things she didn't do: She hunted down missing persons, tangled with an African tribe and international



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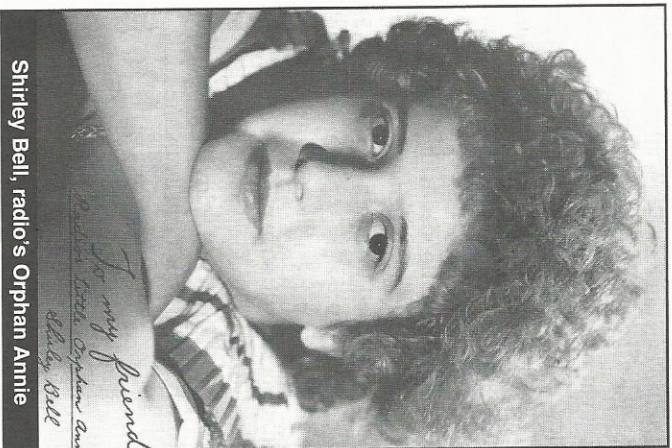
spies, came across a foundling; she even fought the rising Nazi menace. Late in her run, she took on a group of teenage delinquents. Leapin' lizards, indeed!

On radio, *Little Orphan Annie* helped pioneer the cliffhanger ending. Already employed in movie serials, these open-ended, unresolved, suspenseful non-conclusions proved an effective method to get young listeners (and their parents) to return the next day. The cliffhanger would soon become a staple of radio soap operas and later their TV offspring. Today, they are a vital part of most "reality" TV programs.

Annie also helped lead the way for other — usually masculine — afternoon radio adventures. Both *Jack Armstrong, The All-American Boy* and *The Tom Mix Ralston Sraightshooters* would follow in her wake.

On the air six days a week — Monday through Saturday at 5:45 pm — *Little Orphan Annie* packed a lot of action into its short, 15-minute episodes. It also fit in a lot of pitches for Ovaltine, the milk-flavoring additive that sponsored the show. In fact, surprisingly, about half of each episode's allotted time was devoted to smooth-voiced announcer Pierre Andre happily discussing Ovaltine's yummy deliciousness.

In keeping with the norm of the era, the show and its sponsor were closely intertwined. As Andre repeated during every episode, by sending in just one thin dime and the shiny aluminum seal from any Ovaltine can, you could get any number of special knock-knacks — including the top-of-the-line Orphan Annie decoder, good for solving the "secret messages" often given out at the end of the show. (It was this same type of decoder that later became a plot point in *A Christmas Story*.) Besides moving



Shirley Bell, radio's Orphan Annie

product, such premium send-aways were also a primitive way to measure listeners in the days before refined ratings systems.

Child actress Shirley Bell (later Shirley Bell Cole) beat out 500 others to play the role of Annie. She was 10-1/2 when she first voiced the role and would go on to play it for the next nine-and-a-half years. Thankfully, her voice remained youthful and slightly squeaky even as she matured into a young woman. For publicity photos and appearances, Bell even strapped on a curly red wig in order to better look the part.

Besides playing "Annie," Bell also had roles in radio productions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *A Christmas Carol*, and even played another orphan, Oliver Twist, in an on-air version of the Dickens classic.

For her main job, Bell's mother picked her up from school every after-

noon and drove her to the studio to rehearse with her fellow actors (who, for a time, included a young Mel Tormé as best pal Joe Cornassel). By the time she series ended, Bell was earning \$140 a week, roughly the equivalent of \$100,000 a year in today's dollars. She was so famous that letters addressed simply to "Shirley Bell/Chicago" arrived at her home. Even Al Capone was a fan, once requesting to meet her. (He later cancelled and sent Bell cookies instead.)

Annie enjoyed a remarkable run, lasting more than a decade on the air. It left the NBC network in January 1940 and aired over Mutual for its last two years. Ovaltine ceased its sponsorship in 1940 and the show was taken over by Puffed Wheat Sparkies.

Slowly, *Little Orphan Annie* began to mutate. It became known under the title *Adventure Time* and most of Annie's supporting cast were jettisoned. She began to hang out with a new character, Captain Sparks, and gradually became more and more of a supporting character. By 1942, she was gone altogether as her once-core audience of youngsters either grew out of her or moved onto other juvenile serials.

Obviously, *Annie* reflected the times. In retrospect, it makes perfect sense that *Annie* would end on radio not long after the 1930s did. Not only could America make great use of a scrappy little heroine on the air every day during the Great Depression, but *Annie*'s existence (and success) was also in keeping with that era: it was a decade in which America — if not the world — seemed to be preoccupied with little girls. The top box office draw of the time was Shirley Temple. The little ringlet-ed one had her career breakthrough in 1934 with the film *Stand Up and Cheer*. She would

dominate the box office for the next six years. In almost all of her cinema exploits, she was featured as an orphan or another type of put-upon but ever optimistic waif.

That same year, newspapers and newsreels were suddenly hi-jacked by the birth of the five female Dionne Quintuplets, the Canadian medical miracle turned media juggernaut. Throughout their youth, the Dionnes made it into movies and onto the cover of almost every magazine in the world, and saw their likeness turned into every type of toy and household trinket. America even had its own real-life poor little rich girl: Gloria Vanderbilt, age 10, who became the subject of a bitter custody battle which began in 1934 and raged across newspaper headlines.

It doesn't take too much theorizing to realize why these real or imaginary tales of these resilient little girls seemed to define the decade: surely no other group is collectively more vulnerable in society's eyes. Even with a "Daddy" Warbucks hovering around, who would have it rougher during a Great Depression than a little girl abandoned, literally or symbolically, by her parents and all parental and governmental authority (a situation that eventually befell both the Dionnes and Vanderbilt)?

By focusing on and ultimately showcasing their survival, the female orphans and pseudo-orphans of the 1930s served as inspiration to a nation and proxy for thousands of others who suddenly felt both marooned and unmoored. If Annie and the others could weather the storm, well, so could they. ■

Tune in to Those Were the Days on June 2 to hear an episode of Little Orphan Annie.

HAVE RADIO WILL TRAVEL

BY MARTIN GRAMS JR.

With the advent of television, many advertising agencies representing high-profile sponsors attempted to convince their clients to branch away from radio. Television was the popular “rave,” and they were convinced the boob tube would become profitable only if they jumped in with both feet during the earliest stages of experimental broadcasting. Interestingly, a number of successful television programs made the crossover into radio, in an effort to commercially promote products through both markets. Among shows aimed at the younger set,

Martin Grams Jr. is the co-author of The Have Gun Will Travel Companion. His latest books include Science Fiction Theatre: Exploring the Science and History of the Television Program, 1955-57 and The Shadow: The History and Mystery of the Radio Program, 1930-1954.

Space Patrol, Tom Corbett Space Cadet and Howdy Doody began on television before attempting to branch out into radio. On the Western frontier, there was *Have Gun, Will Travel*.

It isn't known exactly who came up with the idea of doing *Have Gun, Will Travel* on radio, but theories have been tossed around. Some believe that CBS wanted to bring another western to radio simply to sell commercial time and make a profit. Another and more logical theory (supported by paperwork that suggests these are the facts) is that Norm Macdonnell — who had produced and directed the radio version of *Gunslinger* — was the man responsible. “There were definite ill feelings between Norm and the television crew responsible for *Gunslinger*,” actor Ben Wright explained. “They took that [radio] show away from him. He had no say in who or what went on the air [on television]. He later became a producer for the [television] program and that settled a little. I think Norm came up with the idea for doing the radio

version of *Have Gun*, possibly to show them that ‘Hey, look what I can do with your program and I did it even better.’”

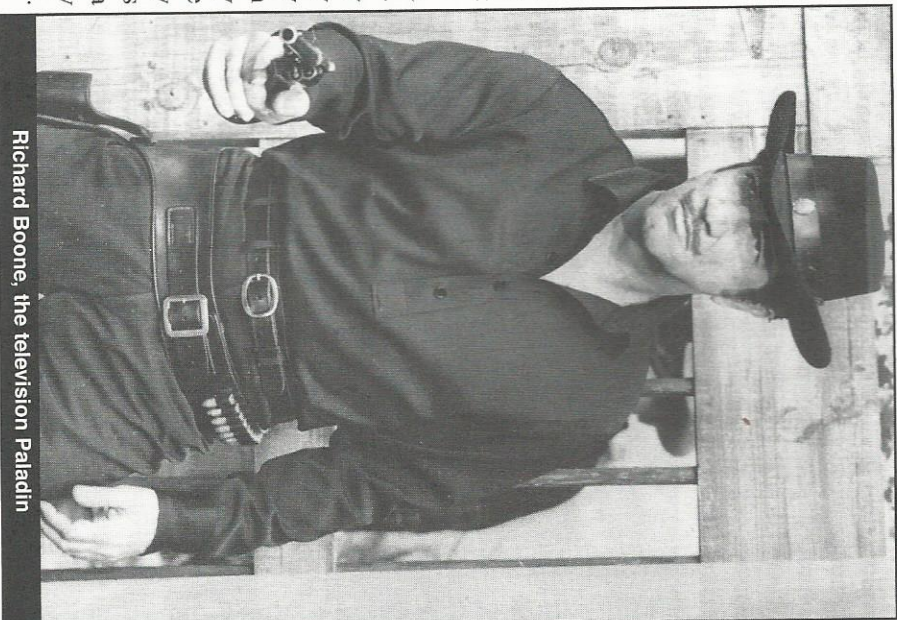
On November 8, 1958, Norman Macdonnell conducted three voice tests, hoping to choose the right actor for the role. John Dehner — who had just finished a nine-month run on *Frontier Gentleman*, another CBS radio western — ultimately won the role. Dehner's casting is especially ironic when one considers that he turned down the role of Matt Dillon on radio's *Gunslinger* because he didn't want to be typecast in a Western.

Dehner chose to play the role of Paladin his own way, without attempting to reproduce the television counterpart. “I didn't pay any attention to [Richard Boone, who played Paladin on television] at all. It was whatever came out of me. I knew that it would be deadly if I were to imitate him or do anything that was even vaguely similar to him. His Paladin was strictly Dick Boone. And I am not about to imitate. So I just did it the way I felt it.”

On radio, Virginia Gregg became a semi-regular in the role of Missy Wong. She worked closely with Hey Boy, played by Ben Wright. When Kam Tong, who played Hey Boy on television, left the series for a season to try out a lead (starting in his own detective series), Lisa Lu was hired to play Hey Girl for the fourth season.

By the time Hey Girl came into the picture, the radio series had expired. Could the television producers have remembered the radio program and been inspired to replace Hey Boy with a female counterpart?

“Ben Wright and I did Hey Boy and Missy Wong on the [radio] show,” recalled Virginia Gregg. “I came on and did the role for a couple episodes and then [producer] Frank Paris asked me to stay on as a regular. From then on, I came in and did almost every episode. The television *Have Gun* had a female Missy Wong for a while. I don't think she had the same name as mine. But I do know that it was Frank and I who started it



Richard Boone, the television Paladin

first!” It’s possible the names were not the same to avoid an internal legal issue at CBS, since the radio program and the television program were totally separate productions.

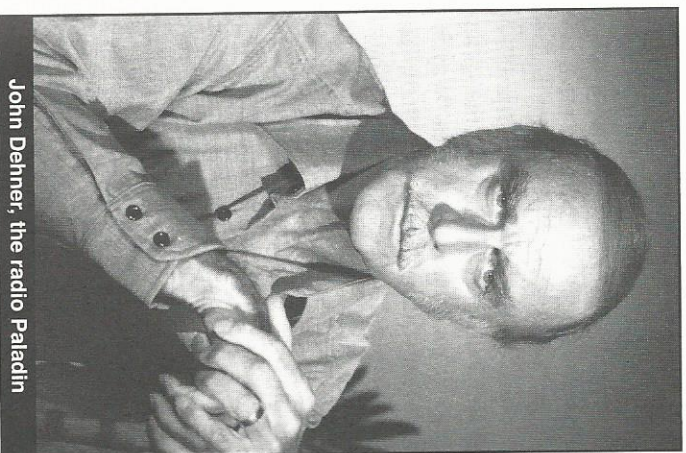
As for Ben Wright, he began his work in radio for the BBC, but never really began an acting career in radio programs until after World War II. Wright played the role of Sherlock Holmes from 1949 to 1950, and was Tulku, a faithful Tibetan servant to The Green Lama in the summer of 1949. Fans of the television version of *Have Gun* can spot the actor playing a supporting role on a number of episodes.

Three days after the voice tests, an audition was cut, with a staff of talented radio actors performing the script for “Strange Vendetta.” The board at CBS approved and four days later, “Ella West” became the first fully-recorded episode of radio’s *Have Gun, Will Travel*. For the first couple of months,

there was a mad dash to record the episodes for scheduled broadcast. “Strange Vendetta” was recorded a second time, two days before the series premiere. “Road to Wickenburg,” the second episode of the series, was performed and recorded only hours before network airing. (“Ella West” was the third show to air, on December 7, 1958.)

The first 30-plus radio scripts were adaptations of television dramas, all from the show’s first or second season. The script writers who wrote the teleplays were never paid any residuals for the reuse of their scripts or plots, which at times were dramatized on radio word-for-word. “We were give a huge stack of television scripts and asked by Norm to try and make radio scripts from them,” [writer] John Dawson recalled. “We had to shorten the 26 to 30-page scripts into short 22-page radio dramas. We kind of divided the scripts... I was in admiration of Gene Roddenberry’s work, so I grabbed all of his scripts. We were allowed to use any dialogue from the scripts, but I found I had to re-word some of it so descriptive actions could be portrayed.” Norman Macdonnell directed the episodes himself, using most of the same crew from his *Gunsmoke* radio program.

Ray Kemper, sound technician, had also turned writer by the time *Have Gun* premiered in 1958. “I do recall an incident on the very first show,” Kemper recalled. “John was really trying hard to do the Paladin character just right. At one point I stopped the rehearsal and asked Norm in a loud voice if he wanted ‘Big Dome’ (referring to Paladin) to wear spurs. Dehner looked stricken and asked, ‘Big Dome?’ In the booth, Norm was laughing like crazy — he hit the talk back and said, ‘John, you just shrank about a



John Dehner, the radio Paladin

foot.’ Of course, Dehner laughed too.”

After more than 20 episodes, Macdonnell realized that the show was not as successful for radio as it was on television. Perhaps it was because the television audience had a strong impression of how the Paladin character should look — and act — due to Richard Boone’s performance on the small screen. More importantly, adapting television scripts into an audio medium was egregious at best. “Well, it turned out they were totally inappropriate for radio, and they were forced to write new and original radio shows which is really what happened,” Dehner recalled. “But they were simultaneously on the air, one on television and one on radio.”

The first person to submit an original script — that is, one not adapted from a television episode — was Ray Kemper, one of the three men responsible for the sound effects on the radio versions of

both *Have Gun* and *Gunsmoke*. It was episode twenty-three, “The Gunsmith,” which provided an intriguing story of anguish and retribution. In the town of Woodland, nestled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada range, Paladin meets Hans Reicher, a German store keep and former gunsmith who suffers from the abuse of Link Dobby, the town bully. Hans swore off making handguns after an old friend died as a result of the gun-maker’s faulty craftsmanship. The sheriff lost the respect of the town’s citizens when he was unable to maintain peace and order with Dobby around. Paladin, after discovering that the bully beat Hans in order to acquire the last (and most beautiful) example of the gunsmith’s talent, faces off against Link Dobby. Good prevails, but only because the gun explodes in Dobby’s face. Hans confesses to the man in black that in the wake of recent events, he felt it wise to create a flaw in the gun, just in case Dobby got his way.

After 36 episodes, Norman Macdonnell left the series to pursue other ventures. His attempt to create better radio productions adapted from the television scripts had failed. CBS, hoping to calm Macdonnell’s disapproval of the television series *Gunsmoke*, asked him to produce the television version. Charles Marquis Warren had been producing the television series and Macdonnell was pleased to take the reins when Warren bowed out. His associate producer, Frank Paris, took over the production and direction of the radio show and remained with the program until it concluded in 1960.

Under Paris’ guidance, original scripts were written for the series — a vast improvement compared to the earliest productions. Not to be outdone by his friend Ray Kemper, soundman Tom Hanley began submitting scripts. Paris



Producer Norman Macdonnell

himself contributed a number of adventures, as did writer Ann Doud and William N. Robson, producer and director of numerous CBS radio programs.

"There was great warmth, as [there was in] many other shows that we did in those days," recalled John Dehner. "Because every week we had a different story. We had actors we knew well and loved dearly, directors and producers, and it was a tight-knit group and we enjoyed it very much. And it was clean and it provided us with a steady and rather lucrative income."

"Stopover in Tombstone" (October 11, 1959) revealed a major difference between the Paladin character on radio versus the continuity on television. On the small screen, Paladin never accepted a deputy's or sheriff's badge, even when a law officer requested that he do so. By contrast, it was not uncommon for Paladin to accept the position on radio. "Tombstone" is a perfect example, as a law officer asks Paladin to serve as a deputy in hopes of legally catching a man on the run before vengeful deputies took the law into their own hands.

The calendar year of 1960 marked the final months of the radio program. (The television series would continue until the spring of 1963.) But before the radio program went off the air, the series would provide a number of intriguing adventures—including a superb closing chapter in the Paladin saga.

Singer Russell Arms (who spent six years on the television version of *Your Hit Parade*) played the role of Dutch Talbot, a wanted man sought by Paladin in "Lina Countryman" (May 15, 1960). Jeanne Bates played the role of his wife, Doss Talbot. "Jeanne Bates was in the first of four *Have Gun* radio shows I did," Arms recalled. "She was a high

school classmate where we played in several stage shows together. Frank Paris knew this and arranged for her to be on the show and as a surprise for me... and it was!"

In "Prunella's Fella" (April 17, 1960), Paladin found himself the victim of a shotgun wedding. Later, in "Way for the Delta Queen" (July 24, 1960), Vic Perrin played the role of Samuel Clemens, a.k.a. Mark Twain.

The final episode of the series, "From Here to Boston" (November 27, 1960), is regarded by fans of *Have Gun, Will Travel* as a landmark in the series. Paladin receives a fat envelope from

attorneys in Boston, alerting him of the recent death of his Aunt Grace. As a result, he has inherited \$100,000 and must travel East to collect it. The gunman is unaware that his latest romantic fling, Louvenia Todd Hunter, was responsible for the death of his aunt. What's more, she's conspiring with Myles Todd Hunter to murder Paladin and make it look like an accident, as they stand to gain the inheritance after Paladin is found dead. A struggle occurs (involving a gun) and Myles is shot by accident.

The episode closes with Hey Boy riding to Oregon with Paladin, so he can board the Eastbound stage. Hey Boy asks how long the man in black will be away. "At least until I can settle my Aunt's estate," he explains. "Who knows? I might take a liking there and decide to settle down." Paladin suggests a future marriage for Hey Boy and Missy Wong, asking to be notified in advance so he can return for the wedding. Instead of riding on horseback into the sunset (West), he boards a train into the sunrise (East).

The radio program faded away with no notoriety in the trade columns. "There was no feedback, really," recalled John

Dehner. "And there would have been no way of our getting feedback really, in terms of fan letters and audio response. It dwindled away to nothing—like a dead leaf in the wind. And that was it. We actors were aghast at the brutality of the networks. I don't want to sound too dramatic about this, but after all, it was an industry and an important industry and a very big industry. But all of a sudden the powers that were in charge of the industry just said 'The hell with it. We don't need you. Good-bye and go home.' And they closed the doors and it was that fast. It was a shock to all of us."

"I guess I didn't think much about it, but that happened a lot," Lillian Buyeff added. "We wouldn't be told in advance that this was going to be the last show or anything. I guess in the back of my mind I was always thinking, 'Oh, this new-fan-

gled thing called television, maybe it will just dry up and go away.' But it didn't. We loved radio and it was a great medium and wonderful because—how should I put it—as a woman I could still be married and have a family and kind of a normal life because I knew what time I had to be at the studio and what time I would come home. In film, you don't have that. You don't really know how long you're going to be gone."

"Also, the people in radio were very special. The people themselves were just warm and kind and good and we all liked each other a lot. Definitely one of the best moments of my life." ■

To hear *Have Gun, Will Travel* on radio, tune in to Radio's Golden Age on April 22 and to *Those Were the Days* on May 12.

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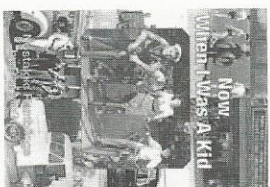
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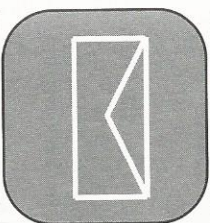
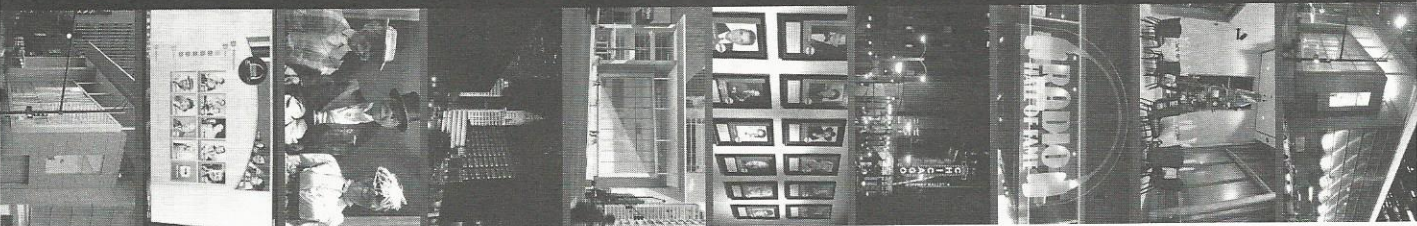
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OAK FOREST, IL — I got my *Winter Digest* on December 7. What a way to spend Xmas: reading the *Winter Digest* and hearing your show on Xmas Eve. That's the best gift of all to get. —**RICHARD PENN**
(ED. NOTE — Actually, this note was a pretty wonderful gift as well. Thanks for listening.)

DYER, INDIANA — I enjoy every issue of *Nostalgia Digest* but you've outdone yourself with *Winter 2012*. Anything about Jack Benny draws my attention. And, like you, Steve, I knew very little about Norman Corwin growing up but all I learn makes me more in awe of him. Who'd have thought that a story about cereal could be so interesting? Also, an excellent piece on Glenn Ford. But the topper was the Shirley Jones article. Many will disagree with me on this, but I didn't realize that Shirley Jones was in them all — *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, and most of all, *Music Man* (yeah, I know, funny choices). I just now finished watching the latter again with tears and laughter. It just gets better and better. So does *Nostalgia Digest*. —**LES NOLL**

WASHINGTON, DC — I enjoyed "Of Mush and Men" about the origins of oatmeal [Winter 2012 issue]. I never tasted oatmeal until I was close to 50 years old. I started eating it every breakfast after reading many medical articles about its unique antioxidants, which can lower cholesterol as well as lower the risks of diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease

(especially oatmeal with "old fashioned" or "Irish style" on the label). It's also very filling due to its high fiber content. I wish I had paid more attention to the Quaker commercials on *Challenge of the Yukon* when I was a kid. —**MITCHELL E. DAVIS, MD**

STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK — I just finished the Winter 2012 issue. The piece on Jack Benny brought back many memories of growing up in the 1940-'50s. Listening to Jack and the gang on Sundays was a joy. Jack, Mary, Rochester, Mel Blanc, Dennis Day... they all helped me grow up. Keep up the good work keeping radio alive. —**ALAN GLASER**

E-MAIL — On last week's show [TWTD, September 17] you remarked on the modernity of the plot line in the *Sherlock Holmes* program, "The Paradox Chamber." I checked and found, as I suspected, that the *Sherlock Holmes* program broadcast two weeks before [May 7, 1945] was written by Dennis Green and Anthony Boucher, which confirms my suspicion that those two were writing the program that year.

Anthony Boucher was well-known as a science fiction and fantasy editor and author in the 1950s and '60s, so it's no surprise that he would come up with such a plot device. I just checked the Wikipedia article on Boucher and found that he was also a mystery writer, editor and critic and instrumental in founding the Mystery Writers of America, as well as

And if you're on Facebook....

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being the founding editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*.
—**BILL ERBACHER**

E-MAIL — Thanks Steve, for being live today on the radio [TWTD, December 24]. It is so much better than hearing a prerecorded show like all the other stations are doing right now.
—**KEN DIETZ**

E-MAIL — I remember the Ajax jingle [TWTD, January 7] and I sing it from time to time — to myself and to/with friends who remember it. I believe the jingle was not sung by a solo guy, but a small group — maybe a trio or quartet, in the style of the Comedian Harmonists.
My recollection of the words:

Use Ajax (Born, Bom)

The foaming cleanser (Born, Bom, Bom, Born, Bom, Bom, Bom)

Floats that grease, right down the drain (Born, Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom)

You'll stop paying the elbow tax

When you start cleaning things with Ajax

So use Ajax (Born, Bom)

The foaming cleanser (Born, Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom)

Floats that grease, right down the drain (Born, Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom)
—**PAUL COLLINS**

E-MAIL — When Ken started singing those lines from the commercial, I instantly recognized it. (In fact, when he teased it, I started humming it to myself, wondering: Is THAT the one he's thinking of?) I think they kept that campaign going for quite a while.

I don't phone and drive and so didn't e-mail or call in while the car was in motion. Just wanted to let you know after the fact. Of course, enjoyed the show as always.
—**WALTER PODRAZIK**

E-MAIL — I do remember the Ajax jingle and it was good to hear you sing it again. I also know why the ad Ken read said, "No glasses needed." Cinerama was a curved screen which required several projectors which projected a 3-D effect. I saw *Battle of the Bulge* in Cinerama that had a 3-D effect. I ducked when a scout plane with Henry Fonda flew over the uphill road. When the car reached the top of the hill (in which I felt I was a passenger), the plane was flying up the hill on the other side. When the car reached the top, the plane was flying straight for my face — as

they say, "head on." It was realistic.
—**GERALD BERTEL**

E-MAIL — I just wanted to tell you that I listen all the time, and anytime you feature *The Whistler* as one of the programs for the day, my cockatiel Kramer whistles along with the program.

I didn't realize what he was doing at first, but we have heard the shows so many times now that he somehow picked it up. He is so funny....

Thank you for all these years of great programming. I will be 41 in a few weeks, but I wish I were old enough to have actually been able to experience listening to these wonderful programs live. What a great era to have lived in. —**SANDRA CUMMINGS (and KRAMER)**

(ED. NOTE) — Thank you, Sandra. You have a talented cockatiel, and his taste in mystery shows is exquisite — and we hope both you and Kramer will tune in to *Radio's Golden Age* on May 27, when we'll feature another strange story from *The Whistler*.

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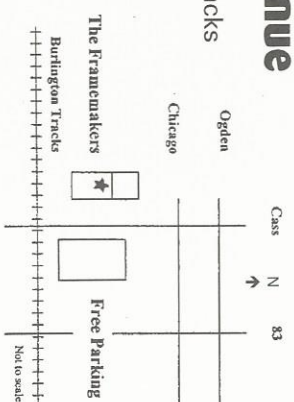
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