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DINAH

Old Time Radio DIGEST

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Dinah – Was There Anyone Finah?

by Jack Rothwell

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In his book *DINAH!*, author Bruce Cassidy noted the following: "If Will Rogers never met a man he didn't like, Dinah Shore never met anyone who didn't like her. This universal acclaim stems from her Southern warmth and charm, her ability to appeal to men and women alike, and a singing voice that sounds like it's starting a fire by rubbing two notes together."

Without question, many thousands of her fans agreed with Cassidy's comments, because the qualities he described stood her in good stead as a "guest" in millions of American homes for more than 50 years on radio and television.

After a short battle against cancer, Dinah died at her Beverly Hills home on Thursday, February 24, 1994, just five days shy of her 77th birthday. Her first husband, actor George Montgomery, and their two children, Melissa Ann Hime and John David Montgomery, were at her bedside when she died.

She was born Frances Rose Shore in the small town of Winchester, Tennessee on March 1, 1917, the second child of Solomon A. and Anna (Stein) Shore. Her sister, Elizabeth, was eight when Frances was born. Her father emigrated to the United States as a young man, settled in Winchester after his marriage to Anna Stein, and established a small department store in that town. Because the Shores were the only Jewish family in Winchester, they were regarded as ethnic curiosities by its citizens. By the time Frances Rose was born, however, the Shores had become integrated into the community, and according to Dinah, there was little prejudice against the family.

Dinah's mother was a fun-loving, aspiring opera singer with a

marvelous contralto voice. She was an all-around sports enthusiast who loved tennis, horseback riding and golf. She also liked to spend money! Her father, on the other hand, preferred to save his money. He was a hard worker, domineering and without humor. Because he was 12 years older than Anna, he considered her accomplishments frivolous and nonessential. Dinah noted that these age and personality differences often created dissension in the family.

At the age of 18 months, Dinah was stricken with polio and was afflicted with paralysis in her right leg and foot. For several years she underwent rigid therapy and exercises, and by the age of nine, she had overcome all difficulties.

When Dinah was six, her father bought into a large department store in Nashville, and the family moved to an affluent neighborhood in that city. After the business thrived, the Shores had a maid and other servants to take care of their needs.

In various interviews, Dinah and her childhood friends (who always called her Fanny) noted that as she grew into her early teens she became a skinny, awkward, unattractive girl, with a big nose, very black hair and a dark complexion. But because of the competitive instinct she had inherited from her mother, her inner drive to achieve and succeed led her to pursue a career as a singer.

She took ukulele lessons and learned to strum it as she sang the popular songs of the day. Dinah noted that "she sang all the time" – and everywhere! She sang at the public swimming pool, at school, and even at the meeting of the Ladies Aid Society, to which her mother belonged. Eventually, her parents arranged for her to take voice lessons from a professional teacher, John A.



Lewis.

Dinah graduated from Nashville's Hume-Fogg High School and enrolled at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. While in college she continued taking voice lessons from John Lewis. When she was a sophomore, Lewis (who was appearing on radio station WSM) had her audition for the station's music

director, Beasley Smith. She won a job singing on a five-minute, twice weekly show called "Rhythm and Romance." She billed herself as "Fannye Rose Shore," adding the "e" to take the "edge" off her nickname, Fanny. For years she had endured the numerous jokes and obvious puns about that nickname.

The theme song of the show was

"Dinah," written by Harry Akst in 1926. Fanny sang the song in a very muted, slow, offbeat way, just the opposite of the fast and up-tempo approach taken by most vocalists. In a later interview, she confessed that "I swiped my interpretation from Ethel Waters."

The success of the five-minute spot on WSM convinced her that she had singing talent; thus, between her junior and senior years at Vanderbilt University, she went to New York City and for several weeks tried to get a job as a singer. She made the rounds of booking agencies and radio stations, to no avail. Nobody was interested. A disappointed Fanny returned to Nashville to complete her senior year at Vanderbilt.

After graduating from Vanderbilt, she headed back to New York, seeing that big break. Again, she tried to "sell" her talent at numerous radio stations, booking agencies and record companies. For months there were no "buyers."

Finally, in 1938 she was able to audition at WNEW in New York. She sang "Dinah" in the slow and easy manner she had used in Nashville. Later, she was offered the opportunity to sing whenever the station had a time slot to be filled. Her paycheck was a "big fat nothing." In those depression days, the "no pay" approach was a commonly accepted way for young performers to get started in radio. Other singers performing for free at WNEW included Dennis Day, Frankie Laine and Frank Sinatra. Not only did Fanny get the experience and exposure she needed in New York, she also gave herself a new name - Dinah Shore!

One WNEW sustaining show she was singing for was lucky enough to get a sponsor. Although they were not fond of each other at the time, Dinah was teamed with Sinatra and even sang duets with him. After the sponsor pulled out, the program changed format, but neither Dinah

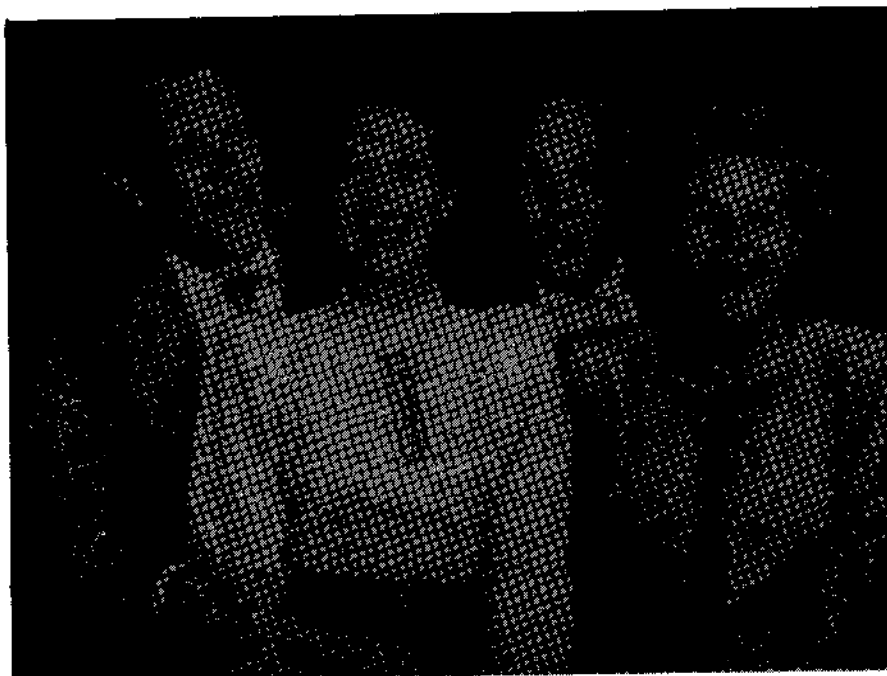
nor Sinatra were included.

Shortly after several appearances on WNEW, she received a pleasant surprise. NBC offered her \$50 a week to sing on a new show that was in the planning stage. Much to her regret, however, the program never aired. Later, she auditioned for Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman and other orchestra leaders, but failed to impress any of them.

When CBS called Dinah for another audition, she was accompanied on the piano by Martin "Ticker" Freeman. He liked her singing and adapted his accompaniment to her style. Although CBS did not hire her, Dinah's friendship with Freeman continued. He acted as her accompanist and arranger for many, many years.

About five months after Dinah started on WNEW, she was hired to sing for Leo Reisman's Orchestra at the Strand Theater in Brooklyn. At last she earned a paycheck! Shortly after her work with Reisman, she was asked to make a record for one of Xavier Cougat's new songs. This was the very first record she made; however, no one seems to remember what song was recorded. One version of the story says it was "The Breeze and I," but another version claims it was "Thrill of a New Romance." Moreover, during all of the confusion and excitement after she finished the record, when the sound engineer asked for her name, he thought she said Shaw. Thus, when the record was released, the labels read "Vocal by Dinah Shaw."

Ben Bernie, the "Old Maestro," had been on radio for several years and still led one of the nation's top bands when he hired Dinah for his CBS show "The Half and Half Tobacco Hour." She debuted in March 1939, but was released after two weeks. George Washington Hill, president of the American Tobacco Company, disliked Dinah's voice and had her fired, even though Bernie tried to keep her on the show. Dinah,



Behold the stars of "Alexander's Ragtime Band"—Dick Haymes, Dinah Shore, Al Jolson, Margaret Whiting.

however, got her revenge a few years later when she was hired as a guest star on another Hill program, "Your Hit Parade." She was paid \$2,500 for her stint on the show, when she was working for a much smaller salary of \$150 a week for NBC at that time.

In August 1939, NBC Blue hired Dinah for one of its sustaining shows. It last aired in January 1940. From June 1940 through September 1940 she did a 15-minute Friday night show for Blue, with the Irving Miller Orchestra.

Dinah's first "major" break came in early 1940. She was hired to perform on "The Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street," which premiered on February 11, 1940. It featured tongue-in-cheek commentary in the long-hair style. According to Dinah, Gene Hamilton did the commentary when she was on

the Blue network show. After she left, Milton Cross took over the commentary. The show was dedicated to "The Three Bs - Barrelhouse, Boogie-Woogie, and the Blues." Dinah was called "Mademoiselle Dinah Diva Shore," and was billed on the first show as the singer "who starts a fire by rubbing two notes together." She appeared on the program for only two months, but in that short time she became a nationally known radio star.

Why did Dinah leave "Basin Street?" Eddie Cantor called! She was signed to a long-term contract. In 1939, Cantor was blacklisted from radio, because he branded some U.S. officials as Fascists at the New York World's Fair. By 1940, however, he was hired again by NBC for Sal Hepatica's

"Time to Smile." Dinah became a regular on that show, where she later introduced the song "Yes, My Darling Daughter." Then she was asked to record it for RCA Victor on the Bluebird label. The song was a smash hit and eventually about half a million records were sold (a huge volume in those days). It was her first hit record.

By the fall of 1940, Dinah's popularity had soared and her singing voice was known nationwide. There was a special "Dinah Shore Day" at the New York World's Fair in 1940. In 1941, she was chosen the nation's "best girl vocalist" in a poll conducted by Motion Picture Daily magazine.

NBC executives knew that they had a winner when they signed her to do a 15-minute Sunday evening show, sponsored by Bristol Myers, beginning on November 2, 1941. This program, "Songs by Dinah Shore," last aired on April 24, 1942. The Bristol Myers 15-minute show moved to ABC on May 1, 1942, with a new title, "In Person, Dinah Shore." The Friday night program ended on April 23, 1943. Dinah's new 30-minute CBS show "Birdseye Open House" premiered on September 30, 1943, moved to NBC on October 5, 1944, then moved back to CBS on September 8, 1945, and last aired on May 30, 1946.

Ford sponsored her Wednesday night "Ford Show" (with Peter Lind Hayes), which ran from September 18, 1946, through June 1947. Her shows were also sponsored by Philip Morse from February 13, 1948, to April 18, 1948, on Friday evenings. Beginning on April 20, 1948, she performed on NBC for Pabst. The Tuesday night show last aired on June 29, 1948. Dinah appeared on various Jack Smith shows from May 1950 through December 1952. In 1953-55, the soundtrack of her television show was played on NBC radio in a twice-a-week format.

Many radio fans feel that Dinah

was at her best as a guest on various shows. She appeared many times with Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and several other popular stars.

Some old-time radio fans overlook Dinah's excellent performance on the 1943 blockbuster "Paul Whiteman Presents." This Sunday night program was a summer replacement for Edgar Bergen. Dinah was the hostess and featured singer on the high-budgeted variety show. Guests included such stars as Eddie Cantor, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Jimmy Durante, Red Skelton, and Ed Gardner. Although it ran for only thirteen weeks (June 8 to August 29), it became a true landmark in variety shows. In addition, it gave Dinah the opportunity to develop her growing talents and to perfect that special blend of formality and informality needed to pull such a variety show together.

On December 5, 1943, Dinah married actor George Montgomery. He was born George Montgomery Letz on August 26, 1916, on a ranch near Brady, Montana. He was the youngest of fifteen children. Both of his parents were born in Sevastopol, Russia. The couple emigrated to the United States in 1913 with their very large family.

Dinah took time off from her radio show at the end of 1947, and on January 4, 1948, Melissa "Missy" Ann Montgomery was born. A few years later they adopted a son, John David "Jody" Montgomery. Her marriage to Montgomery ended in May 1962. Her second marriage in May 1963 to Maurice F. Smith, a building contractor, lasted just a year.

Dinah's headline-making romance with Burt Reynolds in the 1970s seemed to create a situation that would eventually damage her image. Although she was 19 years older than Reynolds, and according to Bruce Cassiday (author of DINAH!) they lived together, the much-publicized affair did not tarnish her reputation very much.



CONVERSATIONAL TRIO: Fanny Brice (Sunday's "Baby Snooks" on CBS) gets the gossip from Dinah Shore (Thursday's singing hostess on NBC) and Dinah's husband, George Montgomery (former film actor).

As one might expect, because of Dinah's rapid rise to fame as a radio star and recording artist, Hollywood executives became interested in her talent, and she signed a contract with Warner Brothers in 1942. After her screen tests, however, the executives did not like what they saw. First, her jet-black hair was all wrong, and her naturally dark complexion was almost swarthy. These problems made her photograph much too dark. Moreover, her nose was too long and had a very noticeable hook in it. Her face was too long and diamond shaped. In addition, Dinah's face looked too heavy, because her mouth was wide, with a very full upper lip. The gap between two front teeth added to her problems. Her eyebrows were too heavy and flat for the shape of her face. Thank goodness her body photographed beautifully, and her singing voice

was a major asset. Otherwise, it is likely that Dinah's movie career would have "ended before it got started."

The Hollywood executives put the cosmeticians and plastic surgeons to work. So sometime in 1942, a "new" Dinah Shore was born. The woman with the dark complexion, jet-black hair, long nose, and gapped mouth became a lovely honey-blond, with capped straight teeth (sans the gap), a pretty "nose hob," and a more femininely oval face. Although these stunning changes helped to boost her limited movie career, in the long-term, these miracles of cosmetic technology were much more beneficial when she moved into television work.

Because of her movie work and the fact that numerous radio shows were being broadcast from Hollywood by the early 1940s, Dinah decided to

move to the area. Her sister and brother-in-law (Elizabeth and Dr. Maurice Sellgman) moved to Beverly Hills and helped her to get settled and to locate adequate housing. Dinah selected a Hollywood duplex and moved in with several other radio actresses and singers, such as Shirley Mitchell ("the Great Gildersleeve" and other shows) and Kitty Kallen. Another tenant was Marian "Rufus" Crain, a Southern woman who became Dinah's personal secretary and confidante. The tenants of the apartment changed frequently, with actresses and singers coming and going - as did the many visitors. Often the apartment was "jumping" with musicians, arrangers, song writers, song pluggers and actors. Orson Welles lived next door and visited from time to time to hear Dinah sing and try out new numbers. Residents and friends had a special name for the place when all of these activities were going on - "The Charm School."

Dinah's motion picture career started with **THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS** (1943), which starred Eddie Cantor, Dennis Morgan and Joan Leslie. Clearly, the movie was a melange of entertainment (with numerous guest stars) strictly for the amusement of wartime America and our GIs. Her second film, **UP IN ARMS** (1944), was designed to make a star of Danny Kaye. It was his first picture. The cast included Dana Andrews, Louis Calhern and Margaret Dumont. One movie critic claimed that the movie's biggest asset was "the vivacious Dinah Shore." **FOLLOW THE BOYS** (1944) was another wartime formula film made at Universal and starred George Raft, Vera Zorina and many guest stars. In her fourth picture, **BELLE OF THE YUKON** (1944), Dinah received third billing, behind Randolph Scott and Gypsy Rose Lee. Supporting actors included Bob Burns, Charles Winninger and Robert Armstrong.

After World War II, Dinah sang in **FUN AND FANCY FREE** (1947), a Disney feature cartoon. **TILL THE CLOUDS ROLL BY** (1947) was a big-budget film about the life of songwriter Jerome Kern. It starred Robert Walker and Van Heflin, but included lesser roles for many others including Van Johnson, June Allyson, Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland and Cyd Charisse. Dinah sang several Kern songs.

Five years later Dinah was the star in her last picture, **AARON SLICK FROM PUMPKIN CRICK** (1952). The cast included radio comedian Alan Young, opera singer Robert Merrill, Adele Jergens and Veda Ann Borg. In this one the city slicker (Merrill) tried to fleece the innocent widow (Dinah).

Now let me digress for the purpose of expressing a personal observation. As is often the case, I disagree with the movie critics who panned most of the films in which Dinah appeared. I especially enjoyed the good old-fashioned fun and musical satire in "Aaron Slick." In addition, **BELLE OF THE YUKON** was good, often fun-filled entertainment. Must all movies match the quality of **GONE WITH THE WIND** or **CITIZEN KANE** to be enjoyed by the "sophisticated" viewer?

Back to Dinah! In various interviews, she concluded that she was not satisfied with her motion picture work, because she was not photogenic enough to succeed. She often stated that films were threatening to decrease her hard-won radio audience. Thus, she refused several roles that were offered to her over the years. According to Dinah, however, the one role that she really tried hard to win was Julie in **SHOWBOAT**. She tested for the part, but Ava Gardner was cast in the role.

The fourth phase of Dinah's career, of course, was television. She first appeared on "The Ed Wynn Show" in 1949. Writer Hal Kantor reminisced

about that NBC show and remembered that Dinah's entrance was unique in those days. He noted that, "It was a showboat set." Wynn came in and asked the ticket taker if dinner was being served on board. "No" said the chap, "if you wish to eat, you must dine ashore." Kantor noted that Wynn then yelled, "Dine ashore. Dinah Shore?" And on came Dinah. Thus, she made her first entrance onto the small screen, and never again displayed much interest and enthusiasm for radio or motion pictures.

Dinah appeared frequently during the winter season on "The Chevy Show." There was no regular star on this NBC variety show, which aired every third Tuesday during the 1955-56 television season on a rotating basis with "The Milton Berle Show" and "The Martha Raye Show."

"The Dinah Shore Show" (November 1951-July 1957) was a live 15-minute musical program which ran twice weekly for six years. It occupied the remainder of the half hour that included the NBC network news. In spite of the short time allotted, Dinah occasionally had guest stars and often gave accompanist Ticker Freeman a chance to do featured roles.

Dinah starred in her own full-hour musical variety show on NBC for seven years. The "Dinah Shore Chevy Show" premiered on October 5, 1956, and the last telecast was May 12, 1963. In 1956, the show was a series of monthly specials; however, the following fall it became a weekly series. The shows featured major guests stars, skits and large production numbers. Dinah's trademarks were the theme song "See the You-ess-ay in your Chev-roh-lay" and the big kiss that she threw to the viewing audience at the end of each program.

Dinah made still another new "career" for herself as a talk-show host in 1970 with "Dinah's Place." This NBC show was last seen in 1974.

"Dinah!" was a syndicated series that ran from 1974-80. This was followed by "Dinah and Her New Best Friends," and "A Conversation with Dinah," on cable's Nashville Network from 1989-91.

In all, she won 10 Emmy awards, had nine gold records, and won the prestigious George Peabody Award of broadcasting. She even wrote a cookbook, **SOMEONE'S IN THE KITCHEN WITH DINAH**.

For more than 20 years, Dinah played host at the very popular Dinah Shore Golf Tournament in Palm Springs, California. The major tournament became a mainstay on the women's golf tour.

Dinah, was there anyone finer? Many radio and television fans think not. They might be right. Who can name another female radio and television star who remained so vivacious and attractive for so many, many years? Dinah's Southern charm and graciousness helped to make her a household name for more than 50 years. She was a television performer who was capable of almost "coming through the tube" at you. She will be missed.

AUTHOR'S NOTES: Many of the facts and dates used in this article came from Bruce Cassidy's **DINAH!**, John Dunning's **TUNE IN YESTERDAY**, Jay Hickerson's **THE ULTIMATE HISTORY OF NETWORK RADIO PROGRAMMING**, and Tim Brooks' and Earl Marsh's **THE COMPLETE DIRECTORY TO PRIME TIME NETWORK TV SHOWS**.

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Information and Help to the OTR Collector--Part 10 **MAKING NEW FRIENDS THROUGH OTR** by Terry G. G. Salomonson

I was sitting working on a Saturday, October 9, 1976, reading the local newspaper and waiting for the day's activities to start. At the time, I was in the U.S. Air Force stationed at Little Rock AFB, Jacksonville, AR. My job then was as a controller for all the aircraft maintenance of 56 C-130's. It was about 0600 (6 o'clock a.m.) and the day was just getting ready to start when I noticed an article on the front page of the Arkansas Democrat. It seems that a local guy enjoyed collecting and listening to old radio programs from the past.

My interest picked up quickly, because several years before, while I was in Southeast Asia, I had read about an organization that had just started up called the North American Radio Archives (NARA), and they were collecting radio programs into a library for member use. I had written to them, but never received any type of a reply. Now, here I was in Little Rock and just down the road a little was a collector that had what I had been interested in for a couple of years.

Work scheduling for the day was becoming a bit busy, so I had to put the newspaper article aside for a while and get on with the business at hand. About 10:30 a.m. I finally had a break and my thoughts kept going back to the newspaper article. The next logical step was to grab a telephone directory and see if the guy was listed in it. He was, so I called the number. I was told that he wasn't home, so I left my telephone number and asked if he could call me later.

That evening Ted Davenport did call. He was the guy in the newspaper article. After we talked

for a while, we made a date that I could come over and see what collecting old time radio was all about. After a couple of days I drove over to Ted's with some blank tape and the hope of getting a few of those programs.

Ted was very informative about how he started, what he had, and where he was getting the programs from. He also advised me that I should give some serious consideration to subscribing to a publication called "The National Radio Trader" and another called "Airwaves." I had never heard of them and in all interest areas, there are always special publications that the general public doesn't hear about.

Both of these publications have long since passed from the scene, but they were the best thing going at the time. I subscribed to both of these periodicals at once. The most interesting area of both publications was the want ad section. It listed collector after collector, the types of interest they had, and the number of programs in their collection, and their willingness to trade for similar programs. I started writing letters to just about every single ad I could find. Catalogs soon started to arrive. By this time I had taped just about everything that Ted had. My only obligation to Ted was that as I received new programs, I would give him the opportunity to copy what he would be interested in. That was the very least that I could do. Soon I started putting together my catalog requests from people that were not listed in the want ads. It seems that a lot of the subscribers also looked for new contacts and didn't necessarily run ads about their own collecting and trading. They are the

more quieter type of collector. But I did send letters to everybody that I read about in those early ads.

These want ads were primarily the meat of "The National Radio Trader." Maybe that is the reason that after a couple of years it folded. I don't know, but it sure was missed by myself and many others. Looking back through the "giant 18-page combined issue" of volume 3, number 4 and volume 4, number 1, which was mailed on October 4, 1979, I find many names listed in the ads which were new to me then, but have since become friends and longtime known collectors and dealers. James L. Snyder, Edward Carr, Gene Bradford, David Reznick, Dick Judge. First twenty words of your ad were free, after that it was five cents a word. Fifty cents for a border around the ad; double that if you wanted a fancy one.

"Airwaves" on the other hand contained articles on programs, collectors, clubs, logs, etc. It was more geared to the much needed information to help the hobby continue to improve and grow. I wasn't fortunate enough to get my hands on the first issue of "Airwaves." I subscribed as soon as I learned about it, but when the second issue arrived, it had a slip of paper in it stating that "Airwaves #1 is out of print. More copies will be available soon, and you will receive one as soon as it is ready." I did receive a copy of that first issue later, but not from "Airwaves." The point is, it was a complete sellout. Traders and collectors wanted that type of information, who to contact, what they collected and had to offer. After all, this was in the days (and years) before the NET and there just wasn't a way of finding out where all the other collectors were located. I was not alone in trying to find others with the same interest in collecting these wonderful broadcasts.

Next was "Collector's Corner." Starting in 1978, it lasted 34 issues

before it departed and was taken over by "The Golden Years of Radio & Television," and also about the same time we had the introduction of "Old Time Radio Digest." These were both good publications, but for the brand new collector, one very important item died with "Airwaves" and "The National Radio Trader." Want ads! If you're brand new to the hobby, it takes a while to meet other collectors without this service of the past. Oh, sure, you can join OTR clubs, and we'll get to those in a minute. But nothing beat those early want ads. What a place to meet collectors, especially those independent collectors who just never seem to join clubs or organizations. And how else would you know where to write to collectors in different states, or even countries for that matter. There just isn't a good source for the exchange of collector names and address information.

Anyway, two years passed by quickly, and I was collecting and trading with about 86 different collectors from all over the country. I mentioned earlier that I wrote to every collector who I could get an address on. I was not kidding! The mailman hated me. Almost daily he would have to get out of his mail



truck and bring boxes of all shapes and sizes (and almost always heavy) to the door. His hernia doctor loved me!!

I mentioned some names earlier in this installment. After twenty years, those collectors are still around and still collecting and still trading. I have met many more collectors over the years, primarily at conventions that are held around the country. Don Aston (who is my partner in AVPRO), John and Larry Gassman, Barbara Watkins, Bob Lynns, Bob Burchett, Barbara and Dave Davies, John Furman, Jay Hickerson, Pat McCoy, Michael Meredith, Fran Striker, Jr., Dave ("The Senator") Warren, Joe Webb, Harold Zeigler, Fred Korb, Jr., Ken Piletic, Carl Amari, Gary and LaDonna Kramer, and many others. Most of these wonderful people I met at conventions and then started trading with. A few I had been trading with before finally meeting them at a convention. So, if you have never been to an Old Time Radio (OTR) convention, please do so at your earliest opportunity. The gathering of collectors is probably your best place to meet new future friends!

I've never said this and should have many years ago. Ted, I want to

publicly thank you not only for your friendship, but also for inviting me into your home so many years ago and giving me the opportunity to start collecting not only programs, but all these wonderful friends that I've gained over the years with this hobby.

Next: Part XI - RADIO WESTERNS

More information and help to the new collector in the next issue. Comments can be directed to me through the Old Time Radio Digest or at the following address:

Terry Salomonson
P. O. Box 347
Howell, MI 48844-0347

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Radio's Golden Era Favorites

by Richard W. O'Donnell

Radio World May 31, 1995

PORT RICHEY, Fla. "The Jack Benny Show" was easily the most popular radio series of all times.

The late Orson Welles' controversial "War of the Worlds" was, without a doubt, the greatest single program ever.

And "Grand Old Opry" rated right up there with the lofty "Voice of Firestone" and "Kraft Musical Hall" among the favorite musical shows of the Golden Age of Radio.

Ironically, the CBS Mystery Theatre, a product of the 1970s, ranked with Suspense and Lux Radio Theatre, two favorites of the vintage years of the '30s and '40s in the dramatic field.

Here are some of the results of a poll of 250 radio buffs from all parts of the nation. They included members of the Old Time Radio Club, the Radio Collectors of America, the Friends of Old Time Radio and other groups, as well as radio buffs in practically every state. In all, almost 500 ballots were mailed out. About half responded.

For the most part, those polled were the men and women who collect vintage radio shows and have read just about every book, magazine or article ever published on the subject.

Radio's skinflint

Jack Benny, radio's mean old skinflint, who also enjoyed success in the movies, television and on stage, won by a landslide as the favorite male performer of all time. His Sunday evening radio show was also an easy winner.

According to the buffs, the top 10 radio series of all time were:

1. The Jack Benny Show
2. Fibber McGee and Molly
3. Suspense
4. Lux Radio Theatre
5. Amos and Andy
6. Fred Allen Show
7. Lum and Abner

8. CBS Mystery Theatre
9. The Lone Ranger
10. The Shadow

The top 10 male performers were:

1. Jack Benny
2. Fred Allen
3. Orson Welles
4. Jim Jordan
5. Brace Beemer
6. Bing Crosby
7. Edgar Bergen
8. John Brown (Damon Runyon Theatre)
9. William Conrad (Escape)
10. Elliott Lewis (Suspense/Alice Faye-Phil Harris Show)

The top ten female performers were:

1. Agnes Moorehead
2. Marian Jordan (Fibber McGee & Molly)
3. Mercedes McCambridge
4. Gracie Allen (Burns & Allen)
5. Gertrude Berg (The Goldbergs)
6. Eve Arden
7. Barbara Luddy
8. Janet Waldo
9. Joan Davis
10. Jane Ace (Easy Aces)



Mercedes McCambridge



Carol Lombard and Jack Benny

The top radio comedy teams, according to the radio buffs, were:

1. Fibber McGee and Molly
2. Amos and Andy
3. Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy
4. Lum and Abner
5. Easy Aces (Jane and Goodman Ace)
6. Abbott and Costello
7. Burns and Allen
8. Alice Faye and Phil Harris
9. Ozzie and Harriett
10. Bob and Ray

The 10 greatest single radio shows of all times were:

1. The War of the Worlds (Mercury Theatre)
 2. Andy Plays Santa (Amos and Andy)
 3. Bryant Gap Episode (The Lone Ranger)
- Bryant Gap Episode is the key one in the Lone Ranger series. It explains why he became the man in the black mask.
4. VA Hospital Show (Truth or Consequences)
 5. Sorry, Wrong Number (Suspense)
 6. Chicken Heart (Lights Out)
 7. A Christmas Carol (Campbell Playhouse)
 8. Funeral of FDR (CBS with Arthur Godfrey)
 9. Your Money or Your Life (Jack Benny Show)
 10. The Thing on the Fourble Board (Quiet Please)

The top 10 soap operas were:

1. One Man's Family
2. Ma Perkins
3. Vic and Sade
4. Life Can Be Beautiful
5. Lorenzo Jones
6. The Goldbergs
7. Just Plain Bill
8. Myrt and Marge
9. Romance of Helen Trent
10. Stella Dallas

The top 10 adventure shows for young people:

1. The Lone Ranger
2. I Love a Mystery
3. Jack Armstrong
4. The Green Hornet
5. Tom Mix
6. Terry and the Pirates
7. Captain Midnight
8. Sky King
9. Sergeant Preston of the Yukon
10. Bobby Benson & The B-Bar-B Riders

The top musical shows:

1. Kraft Musical Hall
2. Grand Old Opry
3. Voice of Firestone
4. Big Band Remotes (Various networks)
5. Cities Service Band of America
6. The Telephone Hour
7. American Album of Familiar Music
8. Chicago Theatre of the Air
9. Your Hit Parade
10. Camel Caravan (Big Band Series)

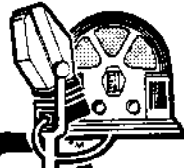
Last but not least, the favorite news commentators:

1. Lowell Thomas
2. Paul Harvey
3. Gabriel Heatter
4. H.V. Kaltenborn
5. Walter Winchell
6. Drew Pearson
7. Elmer Davis
8. Bill Stern (Sports)
9. Boake Carter
10. Fulton Lewis

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Review

"Time to Smile"

"TIME TO SMILE," with Eddie Cantor, Dinah Shore, Harry von Zell, Sidney Fields (Guffy), and Bobby Sherwood's Orchestra.

Wednesday, NBC-Red network, 9:00 p.m. EST, 8:00 p.m. CST, 10:00 p.m. MST, 9:00 p.m. PST. Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Company for Ipana Tooth Paste and Sal Hepatica; produced by Young and Rubicam, Inc., New York City; originates in New York NBC studios. Broadcasts reviewed were heard October 2, October 9, October 16, 1938

EDDIE CANTOR, the prodigal comedian, has returned. A new sponsor (Fred Allen's former sponsor) has killed the fatted calf for him. The public is falling on his neck with welcoming enthusiasm. And Eddie, after a year's absence from the air, has turned over a new leaf.

In his new program Cantor, the crusader, the exhorter, the sentimentalist, seems to have become convinced that the radio public wants its comedy straight.

Always a top-notch comedian, a popular comedian, Eddie has never been satisfied with that—until now, perhaps. Eddie had to play Hamlet on the side, also Paul Revere. He was earnest about his emotional discourses and with his patriotic harangues, and many listeners liked it. Some didn't. Sponsors and prospective sponsors seemingly got Cantor-shy after some disagreeable incidents arose indirectly from Eddie's crusading.

Eddie took a year's vacation. But now he's back as the pop-eyed, pop-off clown who rates as one of the greatest all-time comedians. He may sing a patriotic song now and then, but the first few programs of the series seem to give evidence that there won't be any emphasis on flag-waving. With due credit to Cantor's earnest and commendable leadership in worthy causes outside his program, he's more entertaining than ever as just plain Cantor the comic.

His new show bids fair to be one of the top humor shows, as his programs always have been. He gets very capable stooge sup-



Harry von Zell



Eddie Cantor

port from Harry von Zell, one of the most versatile of histrionic announcers. Comedy support also was afforded in the early programs by the team of Nan Rae and Maude Davis, the latter playing straight to the former's




Dinah Shore

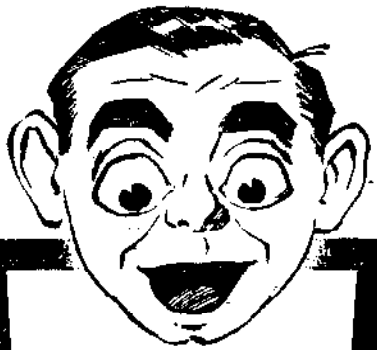
screeching, man-chasing Mrs. Waterfall. Now that this team has swung over to Kate Smith's show, the number two comedy spot is filled by a former Cantor aid, the cantankerous Guffy (played by Sidney Fields), who wears his spleen as a chip on his shoulder to plague Cantor and please the listeners.

One of the real highlights of the show is the torch-singing of Tennessee's Dinah Shore, whose blue-blazes voice is one of the most sirenish and under-the-skin-ish ever to hit the airlines.

The much advertised battle between Allen and Cantor, both on now at the same time on rival nets, should be nip and tuck.



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WANTED TO BUY: Cassettes in the following categories: comedy, general, concert music, musical variety, light music, comedy talk programs, daytime concert music. Would appreciate sending me your catalogs and list of what you have available. Send your replies and information to Mr. Richard Browskie, 10 Reid Street, Amsterdam, New York 12010.

WANTED: Videos of "The Tomorrow" TV show hosted by Tom Snyder in the 1970's interviewing radio stars such as Edgar Bergen and others. I have the audio tapes of them. Will buy or trade. Contact Rob Cohen, 763 Oaksedge Dr., Gahanna, OH 43230, (614) 478-2755.

WANTED ON CASSETTE: Shows with Basil Rathbone. Will trade or buy. Also trade Lux Radio, suspense, others. Bob Minerley, 2 Silvia Pl., North Arlington, NJ 07032.

For Sale: Boxed set of six tapes from Stephen King's Night Shift. Original Price: \$34.95. My Price: \$12.00 postpaid. Five sets available. Phil Nelson, 221 Scioto, Chillicothe, OH 45601.

WANTED: Radio collectibles, premiums, autographs, magazines, scripts. Soaps on cassettes. Bradley George, 2177 S. 62nd St., West Allis, WI 53219-1426.

WANTED: Today's radio station advertising logos, pins, buttons, mugs. Francis Rylance, 1088A Chiefs Dr., Robins AFB, GA 31098

AMOS 'N ANDY TV EPISODES FOR SALE. Licensed videocassettes. 30 volumes, each a double feature. Photo illustrated price list for a LSASE to: Nostalgic Americana, AA, 3067 El Monte, Fresno, CA 93721

The Art of Audiotape Recording/Collecting. Special report includes maintenance tips, multi-recorder hookup diagram. \$3.00 plus SASE. C. Huck, 4S230 River Rd., Warrenville, IL 60555

Amos 'N Andy Collectibles. Photo illustrated list sent for a LSASE to: Nostalgic Americana, Aram H. Azadian, Sr., 3067 El Monte Way, Fresno, CA 93721, (209) 237-8748.

WANTED ON CASSETTE: Cavalcade of America for sale or trade. I have about 600 to trade; also other programs. Contact Bill Yunick, 1241 Peaceable St., Ballston Spa, New York 12020

WANTED: Any information concerning the series "The Shadow of Fu-Manchu." Scripts, magazine Xerox's, East of West coast schedule copies. . . ANYTHING! Will pay reasonable price. Thanks. Jeff Hagerty, 423 S.E. 6th St., Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WITH LARGE COLLECTIONS ON CASSETTE TO TRADE MYSTERY SHOWS. Wanted: Richard Diamond, Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar, Suspense. Also scare shows Creeking Door, Inner Sanctum, Obsession, many more. Send me your catalogue. I will do the same. Write soon to Beth Holman, 16705 Craigmere Drive, Middleburg Heights, OH 44130

WANTED ON CASSETTE: Scary shows. Lights Out, The Haunting, Hermit Cave, The Key, The Clock, Inner Sanctum, Mysterious Traveler, and any others you have. Send listing and I will do the same. Beth Holman, 16705 Craigmere Dr., Middleburg Hts., Ohio 44130. Write soon!

NOW AVAILABLE FROM NARA: OTR Source List of over 100 clubs, pubs, dealers, archives, etc. Includes postal and e-mail addresses. NARA members, \$2.00; non-members, \$3.00. Remit in cash or stamps (no checks) to Jack French, 5137 Richardson Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032

WANTED ON CASSETTE: The following Broadway's My Beat Shows: 4/7/51; 8/12/51; 8/19/51; 12/1/51; 12/29/51. Gene Dench, 53 Faraday St., Hyde Park, MA 02136

MOVIE "B" WESTERN BOOK - GENE AUTRY TO JOHN WAYNE. Send large S.A.S.E. for list, plus other movie Western items. Mario DeMarco, 152 Maple, W. Boylston, MA 01583

MOON RIVER PROGRAMS WANTED: I have a modest collection and would like to have more shows broadcast on WLW Radio from 1930's to 1960's. Write me with your list. R.L. Hawks, 355 Animosa Drive, Durango, CO 81301-3702

WANTED: Programs featuring Walt Disney. Especially anything regional or "esoteric." Paul Anderson, 3136 S. 3200 W., SLC, UT 84119 (801) 967-3955

FOR SALE: The Big Broadcast: 1920-1950" book by Buxton and Owen. Avon edition. \$20.00 plus P&H. Paul Anderson, 3136 S. 3200 W., SLC, UT 84119 (801) 967-3955

New club based in Seattle invites you to membership. Growing 700 cassette library, printed materials and newsletter. For information write Mike Sprague, Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound, 11732 NE 148th Place, Kirkland, WA 98034.

Have 488 archival quality sound Cavalcade of America shows. Will buy or trade for more. Murry Schantzen, 207-B Lynn Ct., N. Aurora, IL 60542

RADIO SHOWS ON CASSETTE, also radio/tv related material. Catalog \$1, Phil Kiernan, 30235 Cupeno Lane, Temecula, CA 92592

MORNING MEN wanted on cassette—older 1940s style especially: Bob Steele, John Gambling, etc. Lieberman, Hazel St., Tunkhannock, PA 18657.

WANTED: NBC, CBS, and ABC Network newscasts from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Will generously compensate. George F. Miller, 9733 S. 51st Ave., Oak Lawn, IL 60453

WANTED FOR TRADE: OTR "sit coms" on 60 minute cassettes. Mail me your catalog and I will send mine. To: Joe Barrow, 7345 Honey Dale Dr., Northfield Ctr., OH 44067-2611 (216-467-9204).

WANTED: 16" transcriptions, for cash or trade. Joe Salerno, Box 1487, Bellaire, Texas 77402.

WANTED: Radio Transcription Discs. Any type, any subject. Gilbert Smith, 248 South 36th St., San Diego, CA 92113-1613

WANTED TO BUY: Red Ryder broadcasts on cassette. Contact Jerry Nicolay, 1401 Suburban Drive, Sioux Falls, SD 57103.

WANTED: Amos & Andy radio program items, puzzles & stand-ups. Bob Morgan, 4005 Pitman Rd., College Park, GA 30349.

WANTED: OTR programs: Mandrake The Magician; Pat Novak For Hire; Children's Serials of the 1930s and 1940s; Johnny Modero; Pier 23; Jeff Regan. Will buy or trade. W. F. Frier, 2951 Fairhill Dr., Jackson MS 39212-2822

Radio books, parts wanted prior 1950 from radio repair shops. Send price list. Richards, Box 1542-D, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT ITEMS wanted. DeWayne Nail, P.O. Box 555, Cleburne, TX 76031

Want these Lux shows: Red River, Alice in Wonderland, Paradine Case, Kent Coscarelli, 2173 Willester Ave., San Jose, Calif. 95124

RADIO ITEMS BEFORE 1935, sets, speakers, tubes, parts, literature & advertising. Schneider, 9511-23 Sunrise Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44133

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Mary Sayer, 801 8th St. F5, Sioux City, IA 51105. Looking for any info on "Uncle" Jim Harkin, Fred Allen's manager.

Wanted: Juvenile adventure serials, Mysterious Traveler, Gangbusters, Fred Allen, 2000+. Cassettes only. Ken Weigel, 7011 Lennox Ave. #126, Van Nuys, CA 91405

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Wanted: 1st Nightbeat program (2-6-50) as well as one where William Conrad appears. Victor Padilla, Jr. 104 Marcy Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211.

Wanted: Trade or buy Tom Corbett and other SF cassettes. Mark Skullerud, 20110 21st Ave. NW, Seattle, Wash. 98177

WANTED: 16" RADIO transcription recordings. All types. —Paul Scriven, 238 West State Street, Niles, OH 44446. my40441

RADIO TRANSCRIPTION DISCS wanted. Any size, speed. — Box 724H, Redmond, WA 98052.

EDWARD HAMILTON, 933 Naismith, Pl., Topeka, KS 66606 wants CBS Radio Mystery Theater; prefers cassettes...

ALLAN SHERRY, 5410 Netherland Ave., Riverdale, NY 10471 is trying to locate the last date for Prescott Robinson on the air plus any other information about him.

THOMAS HEATHWOOD, 22 Broadlawn Pk., Chestnut Hill, MA 02167 looking for Portia Faces Life, especially July 1948 and April 1949.

ROBERT SHEPHERD, 129 Highfields Rd., Abington, MA 02351 wants to know: who was the announcer for Suspense after Larry Thor and also during Bill Hobson's era as producer.

Harry Goldman, RR6, Box 181, Glens Falls, NY 12801 wants Kraft Music Hall of 12-11-47 (Al Jolson) Jack Benny "The Bee", Fiorello LaGuardia tribute to Nikola Tesla over WNYC on Jan. 10, 1943.

WANTED: Kid Shows, Serials, Big Band Remotes, Transcription Recordings on Reel to Reel only please. Write to Wally Stall, 8408 N.W. 101, Oklahoma City, OK 73132.

Phil Evans, Box 136 Downtown Station, Bakersfield, CA 93302-0136. Looking for any info in the Candlelight Hour Broadcast from NYC in 1931.

WANTED: Masterpiece Radio Theater, other multipart NPR or BBC dramas. Buy or trade cassettes. Howard Lewis, 132 Hutchin Hill Rd., Shady, NY 12409

Don Berhent, 807 Glenhurst Rd., Willwick, OH 44094. The Shadow and movie serials. Books on both also.

Frank Tomaselli, 29-10 Donna Ct., Staten Island, NY 10314 is looking for 11 AM from 1939-1944; also Fred Allen's Town Hall Tonight.

Tom Heathwood, 22 Broadlawn Pl., Chestnut Hill, MA 02167. Shadow programs between 1941-44. Has supplement to his catalog for a S.A.S.E.

Chuck Juzek, 57 Hutton Ave., Nanuet, NY 10954. Green Hornet episode where Reid reveals himself to his father as the Hornet around 1943. Need log from 1936-40.

Oldtime Radio-Show Collector's Association (ORCA) is actively seeking members. You can remain loyal to your own local club and still belong. Write Peg Hubert, 45 Barry St., Sudburg, Ontario, Canada P3B 3H6.

Wanted: "We The People" Broadcast 1-13-50 and any Lum and Abner shows prior to 1941. Willing to trade for anything in my catalog. Steve Ferrante, Box 153, Oakland Mills, PA 17076.

Jim Blythe, 941 Redding Rd., Asheboro, NC 27203. Wants Lum and Abner, Magic Island, Jerry at Fair Oaks.

Van Christo, 91 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116. Looking for Goldberg's Episode which was called "The Hannukah Bush."

Ronald Waite, 57B Whitney Ave., New Haven, CT 06511. Interested in Jack Benny.

Bob Proctor, Box 362, Saline, MI 48176. Wants Horatio Hornblower shows with Michael Redgrave.

Wanted. Copies of owner's manual for AKAI reel recorders, Models 1722W and GX-215D. Reproduced copies acceptable. Willing to pay reasonable price. Jack Palmer, 145 North 21st Street, Battle Creek, MI 49015

Wanted To Buy: Jack Benny's Christmas Shopping Shows from 12-8-46, 12-18-49, and 12-2-51. Must have perfect sound. Thanks. John Moran, 6351 Beck Road, Canton, MI 48187

Spiros Koliopoulos, 149 Autumn Ridge Drive, Montgomery, IL 60538. Interested in news bulletins on radio such as Pearl Harbor, Hindenburg Disaster, also broadcast before and during WWII.

WANTED TO BUY: Books and magazines about OTR programs, performers and stations 1920-1948 and RADIO DIGEST, WHAT'S ON THE AIR, VARIETY RADIO ANNUAL, 1937, 1938, 1939. Luther F. Sies, 101 West 23 Street, New York, NY 10011.

Large Collection — Open Reel — VG-EX sound. Will trade for nice sound. Catalog available. Jim Blythe, 941 Redding Rd., Asheboro, NC 27203

Want the following Abbott & Costello Shows: All 1945: April 05-26; May 03-17-24-31; June 14-21; October 04-11-18-25; November 08-15-22-29; December 13-27. Phil Evans, Box 10507, Stockdale Station, Bakersfield, CA 93389-0507.

Alan Ropchan, 8923 84th Avenue, Edmonton Alta, Canada T6C1E3 (403) 468-2761. Have 2500 Reel of OTR for Trading.

George Olsen, Craven Community College, Box 685, New Bern, NC 28563. Wants We The People 11/25/37 and Hobby 9/20/39.

WANTED: Sergeant Preston LP records and VHS videos. Write Lee Weber, 468 E. Metz Rd., Columbiana, Ohio 44408

WANTED: Sergeant Preston or Challenge of Yukon tapes. Also records and videos. Dick Weber, 468 E. Metz Rd., Columbiana, Ohio 44408

Vintage broadcasts, reliving radio's past. Free flyers. 42 Bowling Green, Staten Island, NY 10314.

Trade Fibber McGee and Molly Cassettes VG/EX only. Offer 110 shows. Exchange list. Bill Oliver, 516 Third St. North East, Massillon, Ohio 44646.

Coming up on its 50th anniversary, CARE is looking for any relevant radio material from October '45 onward. Wanted: any programs or commercials mentioning CARE and/or CARE packages. Also, if you received or sent a CARE package, we'd like to hear from you. Contact: Scott Thigpen, CARE, 151 Ellis St., Atlanta, GA 30303. (404) 681-2552.

WANTED ON CASSETTE: Basil Rathbone. Your Hollywood Parade 12/8/37, The Circle 1938, Duffy's Tavern 6/6/44, Which Is Which 10/25/44, Columbia Masterworks: Robin Hood, Treasure Island, Peter & The Wolf, Murder of Lidice, Great Themes in Poetry, Little Jesus, Night Before Christmas, Spike Jones Show, Scotland Yard, Tales of Fatima, Monitor Radio, Dinosaurs 1965, and any other radio programs and memorabilia with Basil Rathbone. Reply to: Bob Minerley, 2 Silvia, North Arlington, NJ 07032

Collector buys original tickets from live network radio and television broadcasts pre-1970. Reply to: Tickets, OTR, 1078 Cross Country Drive, Worthington, Ohio 43235.

WANTED ON CASSETTE TAPE: Eddie Cantor Show (40). I will trade those for more or trade from my 3,300 other shows. Send a list and I will too. I also need Lux (177), Cavalcade of America (246). Please write soon to Beth Holman, 16705 Craigmere Dr., Middleburg Heights, OH 44130.

WANTED: (Cassette or Reel) Copies of That Other Generation program hosted by Rudy Vallee (a series of shows). State price and condition. Luther F. Sies, 101 West 23 Street, New York, NY 10011.

WANTED: Kid Shows, Serials, Big Band Remotes, Transcription Recordings on Reel to Reel only please. Write to Wally Stall, 8408 N.W. 101 Oklahoma City, OK 73132.

Wanted: 1950 Summer Replacement Show "Somebody Knows" by Jack Johnstone. (8 show run) Dick Ockay, 100 Harvey Dr., Lancaster, NY 14080.

GILBERT HUEY, 90 W. Triple Tree Dr., Carrollton, GA 30017 is writing an article on Flash Gordon and needs much information on the radio and tv show.

Pam Nemeck, 1424 Heatherton Dr., Naperville, IL 60563 is looking for program listings of old radio stations of the 30's and 40's especially WDJ, KMMJ, KMA, KFNF and KFEO.

WANTED: Aldrich Family radio programs on cassettes, as well as information. Kenneth Barker, 874 27th Street East, Owen Sound, ON N4K 6P3

WILLIAM OSOVSKY, 2501 Ivy St., Chattanooga, TN 37404. Collector of Ralston Tom Mix premiums, green 20 Grand Ale bottles with neck and paper labels intact. Octagon soap premium kites. Alaga syrup tins.

Would like: Mysterious Traveler, Whistler, Pat Novak For Hire on cassette. I have a lot to trade. Write to: Victor D. Padilla, Jr., 104 Marcy Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211

Wanted: Amos and Andy, Roy Rogers, and Gunsmoke. Will buy or have shows to trade in X Minus One, Dimension X, Sgt. Preston, Captain Midnight, Suspense, Escape, others. Phil Nelson, 221 Scioto, Chillicothe, OH 45601.

WANTED: The Adventures of Frank Merriwell. Herb Brandenburg, 4114 Montgomery Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45212.

WANTED: Aldrich Family, Ozzie & Harriet in VG/EX sound. Comedy nut; have thousands to trade. Still looking for Baby Snooks. Will buy/sell, but prefer to trade. Write Lynn Wagar, B.C.A., 43 Joymar Dr., St. Cloud, MN 56301-9460.

WANTED TO BUY: Cassettes in the following categories: comedy, general, concert music, musical variety, light music, comedy talk programs, daytime concert music. Would appreciate sending me your catalogs and list of what you have available. Send your replies and information to Mr. Richard Browskie, 10 Reid St., Amsterdam, NY 12010

MISSING DAUGHTER MATTER: Looking to contact Bob Bailey's daughter about possible "Johnny Dollar" article. Frank Dattilo, 3350 Wiscasset Road, Dearborn, MI 48120 (313) 271-8339.

WANTED: STRANGE AS IT SEEMS, CBS radio network program. Will meet your price for a copy of the specific episode dramatizing the Cahuenga Pass Treasure legend. Probably broadcast in November or December of 1939. Call collect. Joshua Alper (818) 789-5875.

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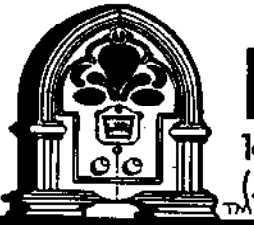
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