

THE OLD-TIME RADIO GAZETTE

JANUARY

1993

HAL ROACH, A FAMOUS FILM PRODUCER AND CREATOR, HAS DIED AT 100.

Harry Eugene Roach was born on January 14, 1892, in Elmira, New York. Roach originally had ordinary jobs and small parts in movies. However, when he inherited \$ 3,000 at the age of 23, he began his own company.

Hal's great success was when he started the Laurel & Hardy comedy films in 1927, in a silent short called "Duck Soup." The Our Gang series was also popular when it started in 1922. Roach won two Oscars for two films which were the following: "Bored of Education"-1936, with Our Gang and "The Music Box"-1932, with Laurel & Hardy.

Hal went as a major in the Army Signal Corps Reserve in World War II. His film center was then used as the Air Corps' Motion Picture Unit, also known as "Fort Roach."

Hal E. Roach made many films with Charley Chase, James Finlayson, Harold Lloyd, Anita Garvin, and Laurel & Hardy. Although Hal died of pneumonia in November, his films and personality will always be remembered.

Sources for this article were the following: The Associated Press-Bob Thomas; The Hal E. Roach Tent of New York-100th birthday.

MANY THANKS...

to Ryan Mihalak and Ralph Doty for contributing to the Old-Time Radio Gazette's files!

Happy Birthday!

Nick Reid (1/11).

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Hal Roach



HAL E. ROACH 1892-1992

Talk With Old-Time Radio Listeners...
Ev Miller.

When I was about ten years old, I listened to Inner Sanctum Mysteries with my brother. These were cold nights, and our mother would bring us hot chocolate. This is one of the most remembered things of my childhood, as I formed "movies" with my imagination.

If you wish to be apart of TALK WITH OLD-TIME RADIO LISTENERS, contact Tom C. Miller. People will also be contacted for this section.

NEW MEMBERS!

Gary Doty, Duluth, MN
Joyce Bickford, South Range, WI
Carl Froelich, New Freedom, PA

Special thanks to Ralph Doty for giving some info on his semi-annual Radio Memories Special! Ralph gave some information on the radio which helped to get people interested in the Old-Time Radio Gazette.

Catalogs

If you are looking for a particular radio show or series, just contact the Old-Time Radio Gazette's headquarters. Please send a self-addressed-stamped envelope. Be sure to make the description of the show/series clear.

Trivia books tells all about holiday film

Associated Press

Los Angeles

Except for the mistake of a film company lawyer, "It's a Wonderful Life" might not have become the most popular movie of the holiday season.

The reason the Frank Capra movie turns up on so many television screens this time of year is that the stations pay no royalty. The copyright for "It's a Wonderful Life" lapsed in 1973, 27 years after it was issued, because the owner, NTA, failed to apply for a renewal.

These and other facts about this holiday evergreen have been compiled in a new book by Hollywood producer Jimmy Hawkins, who appeared in the film, and actor Paul Peterson, who played the son on "The Donna Reed Show." Reed co-starred with Jimmy Stewart in "It's a Wonderful Life."

Hawkins was only 4 years old when he worked in the movie.

"I remember being wakened by my mom while it was still dark outside and going on streetcars and buses to Culver City," he recalled. "I remember the stages then and how they smelled; it was a great odor, something like cook-



Jimmy Stewart

ies."

Hawkins, now a 52-year-old producer ("Evel Knievel," "The Satchel Paige Story"), was already a veteran of more than 20 films when he appeared as the younger son of Stewart and Donna Reed.

To research "The 'It's a Wonderful Life' Trivia Book," Peterson and Hawkins perused the RKO

TEST YOURSELF

A sampling of quiz questions from "The 'It's a Wonderful Life' Trivia Book":

1. What was Donna Reed's name before she married George?
2. A familiar young actor, veteran of "Our Gang," wants to dance with Mary Hatch. His name?
3. The movie's cop went on to star in a hit TV series. His name and the series?
4. What actor played the angel and what was the angel's first name?
5. Who was once considered as George Bailey?
6. Who turned down the role Donna Reed played?
7. Where was the gymnasium-swimming pool scene filmed?
8. Where was most of the movie

- shot?
9. What are the names of the Bailey children?
 10. What is the movie's theme, as expressed by the angel?

- Answers:
1. Mary Hatch
 2. Alfalfa Switzer
 3. Ward Bond, "Wagon Train,"
 4. Henry Travers, Clarence
 5. Gary Grant
 6. Jean Arthur
 7. Beverly Hills High School
 8. At the RKO ranch in the west San Fernando Valley
 9. Peter, Jamie, Zuzu and Tommy
 10. "Each man's life touches so many other lives, and when he isn't around, he leaves an awful hole."

studio archives and talked to all the survivors of the film they could find. They learned:

■ That Stewart did his own stunt but Reed, who couldn't swim, had a double in the scene where a gymnasium floor opens up and they fall into a pool.

■ That Alan Hale Jr., who went on to be the skipper on "Gilligan's Island," worked on the film for

about two weeks, though his part was apparently cut before the film was released.

The trivia book discloses that "It's a Wonderful Life" lost \$500,000 in its first release. But because of the legal oversight, it became available to a new generation through television.

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| 1 | EVE ARDEN
The Well-Dressed Corpse
1-18-51 |
| 2 | LUCILLE BALL
The Ten Grand
6-22-44 |
| 3 | BETTE DAVIS
Goodnight Mrs. Russell
10-20-49 |
| 4 | KIRK DOUGLAS
Story of Markham's Death
10-2-47 |

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| 5 | FIBBER MC GEE & MOLLY
Backseat Driver
2-22-51 |
| 6 | CARY GRANT
Black Path Of Fear
3-7-46 |
| 7 | BOB HOPE
Death Has A Shadow
5-5-49 |
| 8 | DANNY KAYE
I Never Met The Dead Man
1-5-50 |

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| 9 | BURT LANCASTER
The Big Shot
9-9-48 |
| 10 | AGNES MOOREHEAD
The Thirteenth Sound
2-13-47 |
| 11 | RED SKELTON
The Search For Isabel
11-3-49 |
| 12 | JAMES STEWART
Consequence
5-19-49 |

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Questions & Answers

Where was Oliver Hardy originally from? -Nick Reid, Superior, WI

Oliver Hardy was born in 1892, in Harlem, Georgia.

All mail to this club, including Questions & Answers, Memberships etc., should go to the following address: Tom C. Miller, 2004 East 6th Street, Superior, Wisconsin 54880.

Memberships run yearly for \$ 7.50 and includes 12 issues of the Old-Time Radio Gazette. Please make checks payable to Tom C. Miller.

Next Month:

Roy Rogers! Also, we will take a look at a radio listener in TALK WITH OLD-TIME RADIO LISTENERS.

OLD-TIME RADIO TRIVIA

You have until January 5, 1993, to answer this question. Q: Which of the following was a theme song for the radio program "Gene Autry's Melody Ranch," with Roy Rogers?

- a) "On the Lone Prairie"
- b) "Back in the Saddle Again"
- c) "Ralston's Cereal Can't be Beat"

THE OLD-TIME RADIO GAZETTE

Garrison Keillor, a contemporary radio comedian and singer, is back to Minnesota. Keillor started with a show called "Prairie Home Companion," but in 1989, they moved to New York to do a show called "American Radio Company." However, Garrison and his Lake Wobegon stories are now being aired every Saturday evening from 5-6 p.m. (CST) and 6-7 p.m. (EST), at the World Theater in Minnesota. For a free catalog of products call 1-800-998-8173.

Sources:
1992 MPR,
WIRELESS
Catalog;
God's
World
Today,
5/16/'92.



Hope you enjoy this January issue of the Old-Time Radio Gazette! I want to express my thanks to the following people for doing there part to help the club: Tom Miller, Ralph Doty, Ryan Mihalak, Ev Miller, Melinda Ellison, John Kolstad, Radioart, and many more. Also, write the Old-Time Radio Gazette; I would like to hear from you!

God bless,

Thomas Miller

This month...

Alan Ladd/January 29, '64-died
Zasu Pitts/January 3, 1898-born

Sources: page 1, Hal E. Roach picture-The Busy Bodies Tent; page 2, "Trivia books tell all about holiday film"-The Associated Press, LA, * The Duluth News Tribune's Accent North.