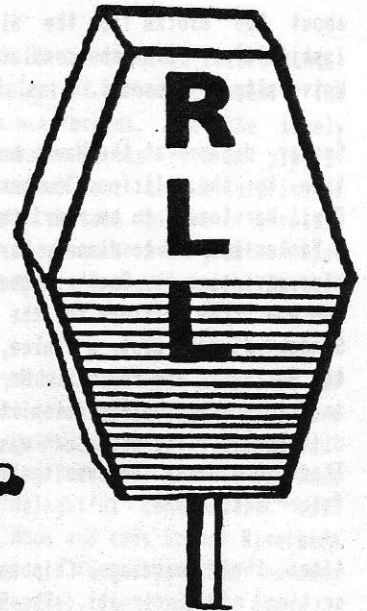


# RLL



## *On the Air*

Number 7

October, 1993

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### **"MERRY MARY" WOOD GUEST AT RLL'S AUGUST MEETING**

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After spending more than three hours with Mary Wood, one understands clearly what the late radio-TV star, Ruth Lyons, called her "Merry Mary." For 37 years the renowned and very popular TV-radio columnist for The Cincinnati Post shared her wit, satire and light-hearted humor with thousands of readers. That same wit and humor was displayed for our RLL members during the August meeting. I had the additional advantage and pleasure of chatting with Mary and her friend, Elsa Sule, while serving as their chauffeur that day. Elsa was a longtime associate and friend of Ruth Lyons.

Mary Thompson Hawes Wood was born in New Orleans. Her father, Robert E. Lee Hawes, was the music-drama critic of the New Orleans Times-Picayune, where he met her mother, Ida May Thompson, who also worked for the Times-Picayune.

The Hawes family moved to the Cincinnati area in the 1920s. During the economic depths of the Great Depression of the 1930s, Mary lived with her parents and Lucy (the African-American cook and dear friend of her mother) in a 20-room Victorian house on Oak Street in Cincinnati. Lucy was from Greenville, Mississippi, the birthplace of Mary's mother. Mary's father, Lee, was a writer for The Cincinnati Enquirer during these years.

Mary (always called Mary Thompson by her parents, Lucy and others) was fresh from New Orleans when she entered the fourth grade at Miss Kendrick's Oakhurst School, in Cincinnati. Oakhurst was chosen because both Miss Kendrick and Mary's mother were members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Stonewall Jackson Chapter. Mary noted that her mother had never been north of the Mason-Dixon Line until she moved to Cincinnati, and was not about to let her daughter be educated by a "damn Yankee." Mary also attended Millersburg Female College in Millersburg, Kentucky (which, much to the delight of the female students, was located

about two blocks from the all-male Millersburg Military Institute). Later she completed journalism courses at the University of Missouri.

Sunday dinners at the Haves home were fun times. In addition to the delicious Southern meals, the history of the Civil War tended to be rewritten. Because there was seldom a Yankee invited to dinner, Mary's parents had little trouble convincing the Southern guest that history would rightly concede true victory for the Confederacy. However, one Sunday dinner guest, a Yankee, could not be convinced that the South had won the war. He even claimed that one of his ancestors was the abolitionist, John Brown. Despite these differences, the young man was accepted by Mary's parents. Thank goodness, because that man, Chip Wood, was Mary's future husband.

After their marriage, Chip and Mary moved to the Clifton section of Cincinnati. The Busy Bee was a very popular Clifton saloon, where they met numerous new friends, many of whom were writers, actors and announcers at the nation's most powerful single radio station, WLW. In 1939 Mary was hired as a writer by that station, which at one time in the 1930s blanketed the country with its 500,000 watts.

Mary was part of a stable of WLW writers at the prestigious Arlington Street studios. One major assignment involved writing dramas for the "tear your heart out" soap operas. To keep them going day after day, the writers had a motto for the soaps: Nothing is so bad today that it can't get worse tomorrow.

The WLW writers tended to be free spirits. At times this could cause some major problems. Mary noted that in one group of writers, each person was responsible for an episode of The Life of Mary Sothern. It seems that a Thursday episode of the show concluded with Mary Sothern being chased into a cabin by a demented woods monster, which started pounding on the locked door. Unfortunately, the writer who was responsible for Friday's episode wandered off, got drunk and failed to write the next script. Thus, when the staff gathered on Friday to air the show, there was no script and no time to write one. Hence, that day's entire episode consisted of the sound-effects man creating door-pounding noises, the snarl of the monster, and Mary Sothern (played by Minabelle Abbott) screaming "at the top of her lungs."

Mary related the story of the origin of the long-running WLW show Moon River, told to her by its creator, Eddie Byron. One Friday WLW's owner, Povel Crosley, Jr., called Byron into his office and told him that he had just purchased a new organ for the station. Moreover, the organ was dedicated to Crosley's mother. He wanted Byron to create a new late-night program featuring that beautiful organ, other lovely music and poetry. So, Bryon had to come up with a

theme song and opening poem to get the show going. In addition, Crosley wanted it to air the next Monday night!

Well, in those prohibition days (1930) a favorite hangout for Eddie and some WLW musicians was a speakeasy (also known to be a "house of ill repute") located on Court Street in Cincinnati. After the Friday meeting with Crosley, that same night Byron joined his friends for drinks at the speakeasy. He got right to work writing ideas for the new program, while the WLW staff violinist played music to entertain the merrymakers. After a few drinks and several re-writes, Bryon decided he had something good. Thus, as the violinist played "Caprise Viennoise," Byron recited his work for the crowd. When the "ladies of the night" started weeping as Byron recited the show's opening, he was convinced he had a "winner."

The same "Moon River" organ that Crosley dedicated to his late mother was involved in another significant event. Fats Waller, the great jazz pianist and one of WLW's stars, was very fond of black derbies, cigars and gin. Unfortunately, he also grew fond of the organ in question. One night, Waller, decked out in his famous black derby with cigar in mouth, was playing jazz on the organ. In walked an enraged Povel Crosley! He accused Waller of desecrating his mother's memory and then fired him on the spot. But what about Waller's third love, the gin? After he was fired, a cleaning lady found numerous empty gin bottles stashed away in the organ.

As one might expect, Crosley experienced many other frustrating moments with his often unattended, free spirited actors, announcers and writers.

One example involved the great and beloved announcer, Peter Grant. For some time, various employees had been trying to "break up" Grant as he read the evening news. One night they really went to extremes by doing a complete striptease in front of him. Grant, as usual, did not "skip a beat." However, that night Crosley happened to be taking several of his dinner guest on a tour of his Arlington Street facilities. Guess what studio Crosley and his guests entered just in time to view the high jinks of his talented group of employees.

Mary and RLL members noted that many of the biggest names in the entertainment world either started their careers, or became much better known, by performing and working for the "Nations Station." Rod Serling, Red Skelton, Doris Day, Andy Williams, Eddie Albert, the Clooney Sisters, Jane Froman, Anita Ellis, Singing Sam, the Mills Brothers, Little Jack Little, Red Barber, Sailin' Ed McConnell, Frank Lovejoy, Bill Nimmo, Durward Kirby, Eddie Bryon and many others could be cited as examples. Bill Nimmo, RLL member and nationally known radio and TV personality, related that

those artists who worked at WLW radio and then moved on, found that many doors of opportunity were opened simply because they had the WLW experience. There is no question that WLW was the "Cradle of the Stars."

During World War II, millions of men and women were serving in the military. Therefore, our nation had a critical shortage of workers, and it was actually difficult to get fired. Mary Wood, however, found a way. In 1943 she dared to ask her WLW boss for a raise. Thus, in her mind, the old joke about the station was right. The call letters WLW stood for "World's Lowest Wages." In fact, one WLW performer Toby Tuttle, said to his boss, "If I had known I was to be here so long, I would have brought more money."

After discussing her jobless situation with some Cincinnati Post reporters, they helped her prepare a wildly exaggerated resume of her "very extensive" academic and journalist background. The Post's managing editor hired this "talented and experienced" reporter, but he decided that her skills should be confined to the obituaries. Mary related that she was and still is a "weeper." Hence, she became an immediate hit with the many bereaved when she phoned them for information about the deceased, because she frequently found herself weeping profusely over the deceased she had never met. "If the bereaved wept, I wept," she said. As a result, the editor was inundated with letters of praise for Mary's deep compassion and understanding.

When the radio editor was drafted for military service, Mary's experience at WLW paid off. She was the logical choice to replace him.

During our drive from Mary's home in Covington, I mentioned that as a high school "reporter" in the 1940s I met Paul Dixon when he was broadcasting news for WCPO radio from a small studio in the newsroom of the old Cincinnati Post building on Elm Street. That was about the time that she had begun writing her daily radio columns.

Mary responded that Dixon had indeed read the news from a small "reclaimed broom closet" and hated every minute of it. They became friendly and had coffee together every morning, and almost daily the unhappy Dixon (who wanted to be a DJ) insisted that he was the "world's worst newscaster." Mary agreed. Mort Watters, WCPO's general manager, finally agreed with both of them and granted Dixon's wish to become a disc jockey. Within a few months, he soared to the top in Cincinnati radio.

When WCPO-TV went on the air in 1949, Dixon was assigned to do a daily two-hour afternoon record show. Dixon knew he couldn't just spin records for two hours every day. However, he remembered seeing three men in a Chicago night club who dressed as the Andrew Sisters and pantomimed their

records. He took that idea to TV and combined record pantomiming with the beauty and talent of two young women. The stunning Dottie Mack pantomimed records, and the lovely artist, Wanda Lewis, drew sketches as the records played. The show enjoyed remarkable success, much to the surprise of the many "experts" who predicted certain failure of a record show on TV. Dixon, of course, went on to even greater fame at WLW-TV, where his morning show was also seen in Dayton, Columbus and Indianapolis.

Like all good pet owners, Mary admits that she talked to her dogs. First, there was her "no-good collie dog" Buster, and later her "mut-pup" Sam, both gallant leaders of the Riverside Drive Cold Nose and Marching Society. Many of her best loved columns found her in delightful conversation with Buster and Sam and many other dogs and cats in her Riverside Drive neighborhood in Covington, Kentucky. Her amusing stories often referred to the animal friends of her dogs.

Mary also liked to write witty anecdotes about the "quiet" weekends spent with her daughter Sally Thomson and her grandchildren, Betsy, Dougie and Stevie. Those visits, however, seldom turned out to be "quiet."

Readers were fond of Mary's many columns which poked fun at TV commercials. You name a major product, or category of products (deodorants, laxatives, detergents, headache remedies) and it's very likely that she "gave them the business."

When asked to pick her favorite columns, she mentioned "To Sally With Love" (in which she related her emotions on her daughter's wedding day) and the touching story about the death of her dog, Buster. Both columns, she said, were tearjerkers and well received by her readers. In fact, copies of the columns were requested by readers for years after they were originally written.

Mary still writes some articles for The Cincinnati Post and Cincinnati Magazine. She said that she is working on a series of articles on the birth of each major TV station in Cincinnati.

All radio and TV fans are urged to read Mary Wood's two books. Just Lucky, I Guess is an excellent collection of many of her humorous, highly treasured, and sometimes touching columns. In One Ear and Gone Tomorrow recounts Mary's life with "Mama, Father and Lucy, the family friend and cook" during the 1930s. It also contains a wide selection of her favorite columns.

*by Jack Rothwell*

## BROADCAST HOUR OF STARS

by Robert W. Newman

As promised in the last issue of "RLL on the Air" here is the concluding installment of the Hall of Fame article.

The stars were numerous, ones that we have loved from the early years of our lives and as full of fun and talent as ever. For this portion of the evening Bob Braun was ready to take over as master of ceremonies from his son Rob. However, Rob had one more piece of nostalgia for us. He brought two chairs onto the stage and proceeded to take various articles from a bag and place them on the chairs reminding his Pop that each one had been a product that Bob had promoted on his programs. Bob promptly reminded Rob that those products were the source of his college education. Two interesting stories came from this. First, we were informed that all of the products that Bob advertised had the prior approval of his wife. This being the case, Rob wanted to know how "Gas-Ex" came to be advertised. The second story centered around Oreo Cookies. Everybody knows the only way to eat an Oreo is to twist it so that it came apart and then lick the middle first. After picking up the package, Bob related the story about the time Nabisco had him go to the Cincinnati Zoo to make a special commercial for Oreos. While there, they gave some of the cookies to the monkeys who promptly twisted them apart and ate the middle. After a few more stories it was time to give the other stars their time in the spotlight.

Number one was Coleen Sharp. A singer who had "retired" from full time entertaining at the peak of her career to become a preacher after getting religion. Her contribution was to sing "It Was Almost Like Being in Love." Next came Nancy James to sing a melody of songs that included "You Made Me Love You", "The Trolley Song" and "Some Where Over The Rainbow" as well as other great songs.

Cliff Lash, a graduate of Julliard, band leader, arranger, composer, etc. etc. etc., as well as a great guy along with his trio, supplied accompaniment for everybody on this splendid evening. At this point he came into the spotlight to play an inspired version of "Stella by Starlight." Then Bob Braun was encourage to sing "After the Loving," which he did very well.

Following Bob's song he brought Ruby Wright Rapp onto the stage to sing "Our Love is Here to Stay." After she had finished Bob and Ruby reminisced about their time together and then did a duet of "Doodle Doo."

As the next fanfare was played, Al and Wanda Lewis came before the microphone. This lovely couple had taken a motorhome trip through Europe and in memory of it Al played excerpts of songs that represented the countries they had seen, concluding with a Polka and then "Lady of Spain." Now it was Wanda's turn and she reminisced about the early days of television where "everybody" did "everything." This included not only the entertaining, but all of the other task like making sets, operating the camera, the boom, etc. This was also a fond memory of the other entertainers as well. Then Al told the story about the big insurance claim for damage to his accordion. He had a habit of placing the smaller kids on his accordion while he played. This stopped the day a little girl "tinkled" while sitting on it doing \$300.00 worth of damage to the accordion. The insurance company promptly responded by adding a "no tinkling" clause to his contract. Then it was kiddie time. Uncle Al and Captain Wendy had the audience join them in singing some of the old songs from their program such as "Clap Your Hands," "The Hookey-Pookey" and "Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah." Then with a flip of Uncle Al's hat, they were gone.

At this point Bob Braun related another note worthy story as a means of introduction for the next entertainer. While he was eating in the hotel dinning room after a show in Seymour, Indiana, the waitress informed him that he was wanted at the switchboard. An exasperated operator informed Bob that someone kept calling for him claiming to be Bob Hope. Mr. Braun said he would take the call and found out that it really was Bob Hope. Bob B. tried to explain the problem to Mr. Hope by asking how often he called a wide spot in the road like Seymour. Mr. Hope responded by saying, about as often as Bob Braun played there.

It seems they were doing a show together the next day at the Ohio State Fair and Mr. Hope needed Bob's help with a problem. Doris Hope was sick and Bob needed someone to take her place, could Mr. Braun supply a singer? After assuring Mr. Hope that he could, they hung up and Bob called a very talented singer and explained Mr. Hope's routine to her in such detail that Mr. Hope could never get over how she learned his routine the next day with only five minutes of rehearsal. With this introduction Mary Ellen Tanner came on stage and did a glowing rendition of "Can't Help Loving Dat Man" from Show Boat.

Next with a gravelly voice akin to Louis Armstrong, Eddie Bennet did his entertaining version of "You Got to See Your Mama Every Night." Followed by Marian Spellman singing "This is All I Ask." (Marian was once married to club member Bill Nimmo). It was a thrill to see and hear her again after all these years.

Then with fingers of magic, Bert Farber showed us why he is so great. It does not matter if you heard him 50 years ago

or on this wonderful night, Bert transports you to another realm of blissful serenity. He does not play the piano, he gets it to present you with the best it can be. After he entertained us for what seemed such a short time, he coaxed Bob Braun (it wasn't hard folks) into singing "All the Things You Are", as he played.

Bob introduced the next entertainer by saying that the two of them had sung on the back of more manure wagons at county fairs that we will ever know in our lives. It may be so but I will tell you this when Bonnie Lou took the microphone there was not a whiff of recycled hay. It was all sunshine, wild flowers and pure electricity. Bob went on to state that it was always necessary to put her on at the end of the program because nobody could follow her. When she started to sing "A Cowgirl Has to Sing" she proved that she was like fine wine and improved with age. It seems strange to say age or older about her, there was so little evident. If one must indicate the passage of time in connection with Bonnie Lou, maturing would be a better word but still not right. She proved this when she started to sing and yodel. There was no doubt, Bonnie Lou still has what it takes. May she give it to us for many more years.

After Mr. Braun introduced the producer and director of the evening Dick Murgatroyd, Nancy James came on stage and sang "God Bless America." Bob Braun soon joined her and then the rest of the cast. As they sang you wanted to stand up, place your hand over your heart and beam with the pride that is the right of every American. As I write this I have the same goose pimples on my arms and tears in my eyes that I had that glorious night. Yes, "God Bless America." May it always be the land of God fearing, hard working, honest, moral and compassionate people.

Thank you to the Cincinnati Historical Society and all these wonderful, talented people for giving us a night that will not be soon forgotten. Why don't you plan on attending next year and share the fun and excitement with us.

Please indulge me while I expound one more event of the evening. After every thing was all over, Ed Dooley took Barbara and I onto the stage and gave us a personal guided tour of the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ. Not only did we get to look at the part that every one generally sees and considers the organ, but all the parts that you do not normally see. While giving us this behind the scenes private tour of all the pipes, baffles, bells and whistles Ed explained all that had gone into reconstructing it. Thank you Ed for going to the extra trouble.

(You might ask Barbara about her getting to meet Bob Braun and getting his autograph. Will she ever wash the hand that touched him?)

## RANDOM THOUGHTS

by George Wagner

Just some random thoughts on this collecting passion of ours, DTR:

"A Moment Frozen in Time." That phrase certainly contains much of the magic of classic radio. Some time back I was listening to a women's program from 1938. The show's MC was interviewing a 98-year-old woman in the audience. She had been downtown for lunch with her 60-year-old daughter, and they had stayed over for the afternoon broadcast.

It suddenly struck me that right in the center of my living room was the living voice of a woman born in America of 1840. She had been born a scant six years after the fall of the Alamo, and the Mexican-American War was fought when she herself was six. What sort of magic time machine is this speaker of mine?

Even more recently I was listening to - and laughing at - an old Jack Benny program when another crazy thought jumped into my head: "People are a lot less dead than they used to be." Surely Jack Benny or Bing Crosby will be more alive ten centuries from now than a music hall performer from 1890 was ten minutes after his death.

One of the mistakes we DTR collectors make is failure to make and maintain contact with this country's thousands of jazz, dance band and popular music 78-rpm record collectors. These people began as far back as the 1940s to preserve the recorded entertainment of the 1920s and 1930s. Many of the lost DTR stars of the 1920s made commercial records of their radio specialties, and thus the record collectors have more 1920s "radio" material than we do. These include records by the Everready Hour Orchestra, plus such "Everready" stars as Walter C. Kelly ("The Old Virginia Judge") and Moran and Mack ("The Two Black Crows"). While the radio work does not survive, radio orchestras cut hundreds - perhaps thousands - of commercial recordings in the 1920s, and those records do survive. I'll mention just one of those orchestras here - the famous A. & P. Gypsies. A number of non-surviving 1930s radio comedians exist on commercial records issued during the 1920s - for example, a double-sided recording of Phil Baker (with later radio sidekick Sid Silvers) dating from 1927. I don't know of any surviving radio work by the most famous of all the early radio "crooners" (the word was coined for her) Vaughn de Leath, but dozens of her commercial recordings survive.

I used to collect stamps, but I prefer hobbies that at least talk to me.

## WESTWARD HO!

by R. Joel Senter

Because of the rousing response (well, I got one call but that's infinitely more than I usually get) to my article about the activities in the New Orleans OTR group and their contributions to the promotion of "new OTR" broadcasting, I thought RLL readers might have some continuing interest in the doings of other "out-of-town" clubs. We've all heard a lot of gloom and doom talk about the gradual and inexorable demise of OTR, both as a hobby and as an art form, but there are some indications to lead me to believe that these dark prophecies may be greatly exaggerated. The "new OTR broadcast" activities of the New Orleans group constitute only one such indication. There is also a relatively new group out on the West Coast which seems to be developing into a real hotbed of OTR preservation and revival. Maybe some of you have heard of them; they call themselves REPS (Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound) and their center of activity is in the Seattle area. (This humble contributor to RLL proudly holds membership number 48 in REPS; the #1 member is John Archer).

The reason that the REPS group comes to my attention at this time is that they recently (June 25 - 26) sponsored their very first OTR convention. Although the affair had much in common with some more established meetings, with which most of us are familiar (e.g., FOTR in Newark, Bob Burchett's local convention, SPERDVAC), it seemed to radiate a certain singular enthusiasm and sparkle which always goes along with fresh and ambitious new enterprises. Part of the enthusiasm is reflected by the fact that they called the affair the "first annual" convention bespeaking of their faith in more to come! I didn't actually go to the West Coast for the convention (although the thought of mortgaging the old homestead and flying out there did flit through my mind), but as a member of REPS I do receive their newsletter so I was able to enjoy the convention, too - at least vicariously.

The convention began on Friday night with an assembly at the Museum of History and Industry where the 300, or so, attendees enjoyed performances of two original shows by the KIRO Mystery Playhouse players directed by Jim French. After breakfast on Saturday the special celebrity guests joined in a sort of an informal "down-home" chatfest with REPS members and their other fans. One participant commented that it was "... almost like a family reunion." Later, Dick Beals (whom I understand was scheduled for Bob's convention here last spring but had to cancel at the last minute) discussed his radio career with some interesting commentary on radio commercials. Space here prohibits my recapping every sterling event which was packed into those scant two days, but I

can mention a few. Frank Buxton, of "Big Broadcast" fame was there and performed, among other things, as a sound effects howling dog. Harry Bartell (one of my favorites, of course, because of his enduring radio "gig" as the announcer on so many of the Rathbone and Bruce Sherlock Holmes' broadcast) also made an appearance and said that it was all worth it in spite of the Seattle traffic.

I don't know whether a single affair can have more than one piece de resistance, or not (in any event, I don't know what the plural of piece de resistance is), but they did have a couple of outstanding presentations, either of which could well have qualified as a climactic event. John Archer (who, I believe, is the only radio Shadow still gracing the land of the living with his presence), played the starring role in a Shadow episode called "The Man Who Dreamed Too Much" (broadcast 11/19/44). Mr. Archer did actually play the Shadow during parts of 1943 and 1944, hence, I presume (but cannot immediately document) that he was recreating a role which he originally played during The Golden Age. Mr. Archer was "backed up" by a cast including Frank Buxton, Merrill Mael (Vic and Sade's Uncle Fletcher for a while - currently being billed as "the oldest active radio voice in Seattle"), and others.

The second "really big show," and the final event of the convention, was a recreation of the very first Gunsmoke radio show. Parley Baer enchanted the audience with his original role with Herb Ellis playing Matt. Supporting cast included Page Gilman, Merrill Mael, Frank Buxton with Stewart Conway serving with sound effects.

I am told that the general reaction to the "First Annual REPS OTR Convention" was, "It couldn't have been better!"

REPS does accept corresponding members from other parts of the country. They have an expanding library of unusually high quality audio cassettes which can be borrowed in lots of ten (you have to select 30 including 20 alternates) for 30 days at a time for \$5.00 postage and handling (REPS has just published a brand new catalog of available tapes including audio recordings of their meetings - some meetings are also available on video cassettes). For any one interested, memberships are currently being handled by Dick and Phyllis Zornes; 12837 109th NE; Kirkland, WA; 98034.

REPS is clearly an organization which our British friends might call a "proper club;" they seem to have such a diversity of activities going on that there is something to interest and involve every member. Even though most of us here in the Midwest may never get to a REPS meeting, or to one of their conventions, the club seems to be doing an absolutely exemplary job of promoting and preserving OTR and, for that, it certainly deserves the full "moral support" of this writer and of OTR devotees everywhere. Good work, REPS, carry on!

## HUSHED VOICES

07-18-93 (76) DAVIS ROBERTS - ACTOR - His 50 films ranged from "The Long Night" in 1947 to the 1990's "To Sleep With Anger." On the TV show "Sanford and Son" he portrayed Doc Carter.

08-06-93 (73) JAMES PETER DIXON - MUSICIAN/ACTOR - Besides being in radio he worked with Rod Serling on the TV program "The Storm." Other credits include The Covington Players, Theatre Productions Inc. and the Westwood Drama Group all of the greater Cincinnati area.

08-08-93 (88) HARRY BELLAVER - ACTOR - On the soap opera "Another World" he played Ernie Downs, while on the series "Naked city" he portrayed Sargent Arcaro.

08-13-93 (74) THOMAS J. HAILSTONES - BROADCASTER/EDUCATOR/UNIVERSITY DEAN - From 1958 through 1963, he was part of a weekly radio broadcast on WLW-AM and a panel member on the WLW-TV program "World Front." Mr. Hailstones authored numerous textbooks, was a newspaper columnist, and was on the board of several prominent corporations. (Club member Jack Rothwell co-authored one book with Mr. Hailstones and was a contributor on others).

08-16-93 (80) STEWART GRANGER - ACTOR - He was given the name of James LaBlanche Stewart in England 80 years ago. After being a star in English theater revues for many years, he made his first movie, "So This Is London" in 1939. He started his American film career in the 1950 film "King Solomon's Mines." It was when he came to America that he changed his name to avoid confusion with Jimmy Stewart.

08-16-93 (78) HERBERT A. PHILBRICK - CITIZEN/COMMUNIST/COUNTERSPY - His book "I Led Three Lives," based on his life as a U.S. Government counterspy in the communist party was the inspiration for the TV series of the same name.

08-16-93 (83) IRENE SHARAFF - COSTUME DESIGNER - She won both Oscars and a Tony Award for her designs. Her design work included "The King and I," "West Side Story" and "Cleopatra."

08-19-93 (76) JEAN KING - ACTRESS/BAND SINGER/BEAUTY CONTEST WINNER - "Radio's Lonesome Gal," has died of a heart attack. She created the sultry-voiced lonesome gal character in Dayton, Ohio, in 1947. In addition she was on "I Love A Mystery" in 1943 and had been in the Tarzan films. (See article on this page).

08-30-93 (56) RICHARD JORDAN - ACTOR/DIRECTOR - He

portrayed Joseph Armagh in the TV drama "Captains and the Kings." His film credits includes Woody Allen's "Interiors" and "The Hunt For Red October."

09-04-93 (50) HERVE VILLECHAIZE - ACTOR - The 3'11" actor played Tattoo on Fantasy Island. His last wish was that a doctor specializing in dwarfism study his remains, then have his body cremated and the ashes distributed at sea.

## LONESOME GAL DIES

by Jack Rothwell

Jean King, 76, died of a heart attack on Thursday, August 19. The sultry beauty queen appeared on I Love A Mystery in 1943, before trying her luck in Hollywood films (with very limited success).

Jobless and short on funds, she arrived in Dayton, Ohio in the 1940s, and was hired by radio station WING. In October, 1947 she became the star of an unusual disc jockey show at WING. Known only as the Lonesome Gal, she used an exaggerated sexy voice and conducted the show as though she and only one male listener were alone. She spoke to "him" in an intimate, come-hither voice.

After her popularity soared, she syndicated the show in December, 1949. Within a few months she was heard on more than 50 stations. Because Miss King decided to completely "localize" each show for each station broadcasting the program, her approach was indeed unique. For each show supplied to a particular station, she described local streets and other points of interest in that area, and even wrote and read local commercials for each community involved. At one point, she wrote and recorded about 300 shows each week!

## TAPES OF GUEST SPEAKERS

The following meetings of RLL were recorded and placed in the club library. They may be requested on the cassette order form along with any other tapes from the library.

GS01 08-08-92 Elsa Sule (Secretary to Ruth Lyons)  
GS02 10-07-92 Mark Magistrelli (OTR Researcher, DJ)  
GS03 10-07-92 Mark Magestrelli - Tape 2  
GS04 07-10-93 William L. (Bill) Nimmo (Actor, Announcer)  
GS05 08-14-93 Mary Wood (Columnist for the Cinti. Post)

This is a publication of RADIO LISTENER'S LYCEUM, an old time radio club dedicated to the preservation and promotion of radio from its golden era.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership year is May 1 through April 30.  
\$15.00 per year (U.S.A.)  
\$20.00 per year (Canada)

### CASSETTE LIBRARY RATES

\$.60 per cassette, per month (20 cassette maximum)

Shipping and Handling  
\$.00 per shipment U.S.A.  
\$.00 per shipment Canada

### MEETINGS

We meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 5:00 PM.

### ADVERTISING RATES

\$20.00	- Full Page	7 1/2 x 10
\$15.00	- Half Page	3 1/2 x 10
\$15.00	- Half Page	7 1/2 x 4 3/4
\$10.00	- Quarter Page	3 1/2 x 4 3/4
\$ 7.50	- Business Card Size	3 1/2 x 2
\$20.00	- Preprinted Flyers	8 1/2 x 11

Rates are per issue.  
All advertising must be camera ready.  
The right to reject any or all advertising is retained.

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### **IN SEARCH OF**

"Those We Love" on cassette or reel. A soap opera that ran from 1937 to 1945.

"The Story of Mary Marlin" on cassette or reel. A serial drama that ran from 1937 to 1952.

Old newsletters and periodicals related to DTR.

Articles, facts and trivia for this newsletter.

All kinds of transcriptions.

"Your Hit Parade" on cassette or reel. Any broadcast from September 27, 1941 through January 10, 1942 containing the song "I Don't Want To Set the World On Fire."

"When the West Was Young" on cassette or reel. A multi-part story on the west, starring Herb Ellis and broadcast over the AFRS network. (Our guess is that it has thirteen parts).

(Unless otherwise designated, response should be directed to the club president).

### **UPCOMING CONVENTIONS**

FRIENDS OF OLD TIME RADIO CONVENTION - October 21-23, 1993  
Holiday Inn North, Newark, NJ. Contact: Jay Hickerson  
Box 4321, Hamden, CT 06514 (203) 248-2887

SPERDVAC CONVENTION - November 12-14, 1993  
Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Hotel, 5985 W. Century Boulevard,  
Los Angeles, CA Contact: Larry Gassman  
Box 7177, Van Nuys, CA 91409 (310) 947-9800