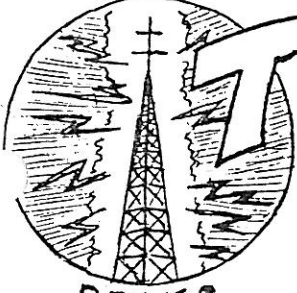


RADIO



DENVER

THIS IS NOT TR

VOLUME TWO, NUMBER THREE
SEPTEMBER, 1976



Bruce 176
Carterton

HUMPHREY BOGART
vs.
FRED ALLEN

SEPTEMBER MEETING

The next meeting of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado will be held on Sunday afternoon, September 19 at 2 PM at Saint Barnabas Church. The address of the church is 1280 Vine St. Vine is 21 blocks east of Broadway, in Denver.

MANY THANKS

I would like to express my thanks to Walter Saunders of the Rocky Mt. News for his wonderful article on this newsletter. The RHAC would like to have Mr. Saunders attend any of our meeting when he is available. A copy of the article is attached to this newsletter.

I would also like to thank a friend of mine, Roger Smith of Beaverton, Michigan for sending me about 25 copies of Radio Mirror. I have read some very good articles about radio and will be making copies to attach to future newsletters.

Thanks also to those members who have contributed articles for the newsletter. The recent influx of good stories makes it a lot more interesting and a lot easier to publish, too.

"TUNE IN YESTERDAY"

We all know that John Dunning's book will be out late this year. I have spoken to some managers of local bookstores and found that Dalton's bookstore downtown will give us a 10% discount if we order as a group. Since the book will sell for about \$15 this will be a savings of \$1.50. It is something we should look into seriously and possibly have our orders paid by the time the book comes out so we can all get them right away.

BOOK CORNER. by John Dunning

OZZIE, by Ozzie Nelson, Prentice-Hall, 309 pages, 1973. The male half of "America's most attractive young couple" writes his autobiography, adding a section of black-and-white plates from his personal family collection of pictures. Ozzie's book is divided into three sections: "Growing Up," "Big Band" and "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet." The section titles indicate the content, with the narrative following Ozzie from a budding law student through his days as leader of one of America's most popular dance bands to emergence as a top comedian on his own airshow. Again, an entertaining narrative, filled with backstage information on staging a popular radio show. No index.

WRITE IF YOU GET WORK: THE BEST OF BOB AND RAY, by Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding. Random House, 177 pages. A collection of the best skits ever performed on the air by Bob and Ray. Features Wally Ballou, Mary Backstage, Mary McGoon, Lawrence Fichtenberger, Biff Burns and many other B&R idiots. Forward by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

A THIRTY YEAR HISTORY OF RADIO PROGRAMS, 1926-1956, by Harrison B. Summers, Arno Press and the New York Times, 1972; 228 pages. Invaluable reference work, containing no text but extensive year-by-year tables showing what was on the air in various categories from 1926 to 1956. The categories covered include comedy-variety; general variety; amateur or talent contest variety; hillbilly-minstrel shows; semi-variety; concert music; musical variety; light music; quiz programs; human interest programs; comedy audience participation programs; panel quiz or comedy programs; comedy talk programs; prestige drama; informative drama; light, homey or "love interest" drama; comedy drama; thriller drama; news and commentary; public affairs and forums; religious talk programs; sports news and interviews; Broadway and Hollywood gossip programs and miscellaneous talk programs. For each show in each category the following information is given: sponsor, title of star of the show, number of years on the air, network, running time, day of the week, time of day and Hooper and Crossley rating. The limiting factor is that the book covers only shows that were on the air in January of each year; thus all summer shows and series that ran at odd times during the year were missed.

TREADMILL TO OBLIVION by Fred Allen. . . . written by Bruce Carteron

One of the best books about radio comedy was written by one of the best known comedians on radio- Fred Allen.

From when he got his start in radio in 1932 on the Linit Bath Club Revue, for which he reinvented the situation comedy as a change of pace from the rehashed vaudeville routines and pie-in-the-face gags then currently in vogue, to the days of "Town Hall Tonight" with 'The March of Trivia' and the Mighty Allen Art Players, to the final days of glory in the 40's with his most famous routine-Allen's Alley, Fred covers it all.

A major part of the fun in reading this book is the many scripts he includes- the famous "Eagle Show" fiasco, both as it should have gone and as it really went; the Benny-Allen feuds; the "Les Miserables" skit with Orson Welles; and the Allen's Alley routines.

Allen also details the agony of turning out the scripts in time for each week's show and the losing battle and final cancelling of his show for a giveaway quiz program.

Quiz shows, advertising agencies and the sameness of programming killed off radio, said Allen, and with the death of radio, a certain type of imaginative comedy also died, leaving only the quickly forgotten images of television- the "treadmill to oblivion".

Unfortunately, this book has long been out of print, but copies can be obtained at the Denver Public Library.

WHATEVER BECAME OF.by Jack Richards

The following series is taken from the short sketches from Richard Lamparski's book of the same name.

Whatever Became of.....Kollege of Musical Knowledge

Kay Kyser, whose real name was James Kern Kyser, originated the Kollege from the Black Hawk Restaurant in Chicago in September, 1934.

Kyser's band featured such vocalists as the King Sisters, Ginny Simms, Harry Babbitt and Michael Douglas (who later became Mike Douglas). Novelty numbers, featuring Ish Kabibble, such as "Praise the Lord and pass the Ammunition," "Foodledy Racky-Sacky," "Three Little Fishes" and most

famous "Mairzy Doats," were Kyser's specialty. Kay retired his famous cap and gown in 1954. He and his wife, Georgia Carroll, live in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Ish Kabibble is now a real estate salesman in Honolulu.

Whatever Became of.....Carlton E. Morse
Old time radio buffs are quick to applaud the gift of the man who gave us "One Man's Family", "I Love A Mystery", and "Adventures by Morse". His most famous work, "One Man's Family" began on April 29, 1932 at 9:30 PST on NBC and ended 3,256 scripts later on May 8, 1959 with Chapter 30 of Book 134. It, of course, followed the fictional family of the Barbours of San Francisco. It included Father and Mother Barbour, Paul, Hazel, who was mother to Pinky and Hank, Claudia and Jack. Morse has all the scripts for his programs and many recordings. He plans to release the recordings thru the Perkins School for the Blind.

A TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM REDFIELD.by Jerry Appleman
(from a CBS Radio (Drama Network) press release

"It saddens all of us", said Hi Brown, producer-director of the CBS Radio Mystery Theater, when he heard of the death of actor, William Redfield, 49. "I knew and worked with Billy for 35 years, both as a child and as an adult actor. Because of his versatility and overwhelming talent, he was invaluable in the rebirth of network radio drama. Despite his commitments to motion pictures and television, he still found time to do nearly 100 Mystery Theater shows in the past three-and-one-half years. His death is a great personal loss- as a friend and co-worker." Redfield, whose most recent performance on film was in the Academy Award winning "one Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," either starred or was featured in 88 Mystery Theater productions in roles ranging from a French detective, a Russian scientist and a professional football star to a phony spiritualist. Before going to Hollywood last month to make a new movie with Jackie Gleason, Redfield taped his last three Mystery Theater programs: "A Magical Place", which will be broadcast Friday, September 10, "Journey to Jerusalem", to be broadcast Tuesday, September 14, and "Pool of Fear", which will be scheduled some time in October. Redfield, whose 40 year career included more than 2,000 performances on the stage, in films and on radio and television, first appeared on Broadway in 1936 in a musical, "Swing Your Lady". He wrote two books, "Letters From an Actor", and, in collaboration with Wally Cox, "Mr. Peepers". He also wrote an off-Broadway play, "The Viewer With Alarm".

ELECTIONS

Try not to miss the next meeting since this will be the meeting for election of new officers for the coming year. Although there were about 30 members at the last meeting, only about 12 sheets of nominations were turned in. We hope to have a lot better showing for the election. It's your club so have a say in who the new officers will be.

The 1930's CHILDREN SHOWS.by John Adams

Unfortunately, many of the RHAC members are not old enough to remember back to the 1930's and all the children's shows. Maybe you do though, because TV wasn't so different.

I can remember when we rushed home from school, books under our arms for the night's task of homework. When 5 PM came, we settled ourselves on the floor under the giant Crossley, Atwater-Kent or Majestic radio. It was a real piece of furniture in those days. We sat so close that we were almost inside the huge speaker so we didn't miss a single word. Our books were spread out on the floor in front of us for the task of listening and doing our homework.

First came JACK ARMSTRONG, THE ALL-AMERICAN BOY. Jack and Betty were off to some far off place in the world for high adventure. Wheaties was the sponsor and every kid had to have mother keep the kitchen well supplied with their product. They might repeat the offer of the Olympic decal for the third time.

Next was ORPHAN ANNIE and Ovaltine was the sponsor. This week they were giving away an Orphan Annie shaker mug for the seal under the lid and 25¢ in postage. The shaker mug was a must, so mother had to rush down to the corner grocer to get a new jar of Ovaltine. Sandy and Daddy Warbucks always bailed Annie out of some crisis.

Now came CAPTIAN MIDNIGHT and they had an offer too. It was a ~~secret~~ decoder ring. Unless you had the ring to decode the secret message, you didn't know what dilemma Captain Midnight was going to be in next week. The offer was only 10¢ and a boxtop from their product. So you tore off the corner of the English paper you were trying to write for homework to jot down the address so mother could be sure to have a supply of the ~~em~~ and send for your decoder ring.

BUCK ROGERS was next. Now you were off somewhere in the 25th century with Wilma, Ardella, Killer Kane and Buck. Popsicle Pete was the sponsor. Do you remember the free sticks. You may have to eat 25 popsicles before you found a stick that had FREE printed on it. Boy was that a day! You hurried down to the corner store, popsicle stick in hand, with a smile a yard wide to present the stick for your free popsicle.

At 6 PM mother was calling "It's supper time!" but you didn't hear Dick Tracy yet. "Ah gee, Mom, can't I just finish this show before we eat?" you asked, but mother knew the kids shows never ended and if she put off supper then she and father would miss the start of Jack Benny as she could not go off and leave the dirty dishes in the sink. That was a no-no. What if someone should drop in and see the dishes in the sink. So you turned up the volume and sat as close to the living room as you could, with one ear tuned in on the radio and the other ear tuned in to the neighborhood gossip as mother told father the news.

Your food was shoveled down in record time, not even noticing the spinach you just ate. Mother was fussing that you should not gulp your food. Dad was saying to leave him alone as he is only a kid once. Now it was back to the radio, sprawling out on the floor before the 12" speaker just in time to catch the closing moments of what Dick Tracy was doing that day. What no offer? They must be slipping this week.

Well, this was the 30's. No wonder we had a depression, what with mother spending all her \$10 allowance for your box tops, popsicles, seals under the lids. It was surprising how much homework could be done while in front of the radio. Half of the fun of the 30's were the offer for junk and mother called it. Heaven's forbid, Mom had her soap offers too. The dishes done and everything neatly put away, mother and dad came in the living room to settle down in their easy chairs for their night of the 30's.

THE JACK ARMSTRONG MURDERS (PART 3) by Chuck Seeley of the OTR Club of
Buffalo, N.Y.

Now I want you to know that I was prepared for this. I was certain about what Sam Spade would look like. But I was still speechless when I shook Howard Duff's hand. We sat down. Duff, I mean, Spade perched easily on the corner of his desk.

"Before we begin, Mr. Spade," Cranston said, "I must ask you to keep everything that is said here strictly confidential."

Spade spread his hands.

"My Clients' affairs are usually confidential."

"Very well. I wish to hire you as a bodyguard."

Spade's eyebrows went up.

"That's interesting. A bodyguard for who, or shall I say, for whoom." He smiled this last and inclined his head at Margo. I swear that guy is on the make 24 hours a day.

Cranston waved a negligent hand at me.

"For Mr. Foster, here."

Spade studied me through narrowed eyes, Nonchalantly, he leaned back and moved his hand towards a desk drawer.

"Wait, Mr. Spade!" Cranston's voice was so full of authority it startled me as well as Spade. "I see you've recognized Mr. Foster from the pictures in the papers."

I never thought of that.

"Yeah, that's right," Spade said. "And now if you don't mind, I'd like to call the police. I dislike harboring murderers in my place of business."

Actually, I was really enjoying it. I felt like I was in a radio show. Orson Welles and Howard Duff. Far out!

"Foster did not kill Jack Armstrong."

"Really? The LA police seem to think otherwise."

Cranston leaned back in his chair and laced his fingertips.

"Are you aware of the Warbucks Industries Foundation?"

Spade nodded. Cranston reached slowly into a jacket pocket and withdrew a small black case. He handed it to Spade, who opened it and read something. I never did get to see the thing up close. Spade handed it back.

"I guess I should be impressed. That thing carries a lot of weight."

"Indeed," Cranston said. "Will you accept my word as an operative of the Foundation that this man is innocent of that crime?"

"Why haven't you gone to the police to them that dingus?" Spade asked. "Or don't you have any proof?"

"The police have the proof."

"Which is?"

"The knife that killed Armstrong. As to why I haven't gone to them, it is because I must be kept out of the limelight. Our...opposition must not know everything that we do."

"Opposition? I'm afraid I don't follow you, Mr. Cranston."

So, Cranston sighed and proceeded to tell Spade what he had told me about the Collier Door and the Manchu-Ming-Luthor conspiracy. Spade didn't say anything, but picked up a pencil and rolled it back and forth between his lips. Cranston finished and Spade put the pencil down. He spoke.

"And you expect me to believe all this?"

"I had hoped you would," Cranston said. "That is why I am here."

"Why me?"

"To be frank, Mr. Spade, you are my second choice. I could not contact a larger company I had in mind. I should say that you are my second choice in that three men could protect him better than one, however, I am quite confident in your abilities. You see, I have studied you, Mr. Spade, you are a survivor, and this little expedition may well need a survivor type before we're through."

"Supposing I do go along with this, what's in it for me?"

"\$500 a day, plus expenses, with a guarantee of \$10,000 no matter what, plus the small satisfaction of helping the world survive."

Spade thought a moment, studied me again. Then he reached out a hand towards Cranston.

"Mr. Cranston, you've hired yourself a boy."

They shook on it. Margo and Cranston stood up.

"Very well, Margo and I shall go make arrangements for the voyage to Singapore. Mr. Spade, I leave Foster in your hands now. You would be well advised to shoot first and ask questions afterwards."

Spade didn't show any surprise at the mention of Singapore. He told me later that it looked to be a vacation as well as a job. Margo and Cranston left. Spade called Effie in and told her to take the rest of the afternoon off.

"Oh, and sweetheart," he said, "I'll be gone awhile on a case and I don't know how long I'll be gone, so--"

"Goneforyoudon'tknowhowlong! Oooh, Sam!!"

"Now, now, sweetheart, don't worry, you just take care of things here while I'm gone and I'll bring you back a China doll."

"A China doll, Sam?"

"That's right, sweetheart, so you just pack up your purse, powder your nose, and shop the afternoon away."

Spade led her to the door and she stopped, putting a small hand on his shoulder.

"You will be careful, won't you, Sam?"

He smiled at her.

"Sure, sweetheart. Good night, Effie."

"Good night, Sam," she squealed and Spade closed and locked the door behind her.

"Sam," I said.

"Yes, Mr. Foster?"

"Call me Kyle."

"O.K. Kyle."

"What's Effie's last name?"

He looked puzzled.

"Perrine, Why?"

"No reason. Just wondering."

We sat around and talked for awhile, waiting for Cranston and Margo to get back. I kept expecting to hear a voice doing a Wildroot Cream Oil commercial. I glanced through a newspaper and, sure enough, there was my picture on the front page, four columns worth. Inside there was an article about Superman failing to show up at a public function in Metropolis. That's right. Superman. I wondered if he looked like Bud Collyer. I would find out later. Spade sent out for sandwiches long about 4 o'clock and pretty soon there was knock on the door.

"Rudi's Deli!" a voice called out. I should have recognized it. Sam unlocked the door, opened it a crack, and was thrown to the floor as the door slammed open. A tall, lanky man leaped over him toward me. He had a gun. A big gun. Two more guys came in and they had guns, too. "Why, you must be Kyle Foster," the lanky man said, his gun aiming at my chest. "Now, you jus' raise yore hands, son, and stay quiet."

The other two pulled Spade roughly to his feet and pushed him next to me.

"Keep 'em covered, Doc," said the leader and I knew who they were. "Reggie, get on that phone in the other office and call the police."

"Righto, Jack."

"Well, well, Doc," Jack said. "It looks like the A-1 Detective Agency has solved another one."

We were being held prisoner by Jack Packard, Reggie York, and Doc Long!

TO BE CONTINUED.....

TRIVIA QUIZ

- 1) Who fired Julius LaRosa on the air?
- 2) Who played Daddy Higgins on Baby Snooks?
- 3) Who played John Bickerson?
- 4) Who played Big Jon and Sparkie?
- 5) Who was hostess on The Big Show?
- 6) Who hosted the Breakfast Club? Was it Don Wilson, Don McNeill or Don Ameche?
- 7) Which of the following did not ever play Charlie Chan? Walter Connolly, Ed Begley, Santos Ortega, or Jason Robards.
- 8) Who usually played the role of Scrooge in the Christmas Carol?
- 9) Who starred in the Colgate Sports Newsreel?
- 10) Who was the Mad Russian on Eddie Cantor show?

Part I . . . The Juvenile Programs

First of all, if anyone in his middle 40's who looks like an Olympic athlete comes up to you and claims he used to listen to Jack Armstrong, tell him he lies in his teeth. (inform him diplomatically, or else he may pound you into the ground.) How do I know this? Because, it was the Walter Mitty, Charlie Brown and "brainy" types who used to slink home and turn on the radio at 5 P.M.. The jocks and those who were "popular" (to use a favorite work of the time) always stayed on the playground and played baseball, football, or "stink" (a form of soccer) and, like a modern-day intellectual sneering at "Good Times", would never admit they listened to JA, Captain Midnight or any of that bunch.

Well, having a lot of Walter Mitty and Charlie Brown in me (two out of three ain't bad), I did listen to the juveniles, and it's fun to hearken back to that less-confused era. My time for following them corresponded pretty closely with our involvement in World War II, from 1941 to 1945. By the latter date, I was 13 and having figured out why Jack A kept Betty around, decided I'd try to line up the same arrangement and bade farewell to that set of heroes.

In the late 40's, there were four stations of any consequence in Denver: KLZ, 560, which I think was the CBS affiliate; KVID, 630, which was associated on-and-off with Mutual, if I recall right; KOA, 850, long the NBC rep, and KFEL, 950, mostly independent. (Incidentally, if I am wrong on any of this, I don't want to hear about it. John Dunning writes history; I write memoirs and don't want to be confused with facts.) The Juveniles ran from 5 to 6 P.M., with the Lone Ranger coming on for half-an-hour at 6 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

I don't recall which station for sure the 15-minute programs ran on, which inclines me to believe that they ran on more than one station, most likely KFEL and KVID. Jack Armstrong and Captain Midnight had a firm lock on 5:30 and 5:45 respectively, but, interestingly enough, there was a ratings problem even back then, for lots of programs bounced in and out of the 5:00 and 5:15 slots.

One of the earliest in my time was Little Orphan Annie, and we were glad to see her go. After all, she was a girl (yeech) and even if we weren't the greatest athletes in our class, we'd have been called sissies if we'd at all idolized a girl. Furthermore, that theme song: "Who's your little chatterbox, the one with auburn locks..." was terrible!

Other programs between 5 and 5:30 included Tom Mix, Terry and the Pirates, Superman and, for a while, one that I bet John Dunning doesn't have much on: In the Future with Biff Baker.

My memories of all these programs don't include much of their plots, and I'll bet that's true of most listeners unless they're real trivia experts. Of course, most of them fought the Germans and "Japs" (being our enemies at the time, they were not dignified with the name "Japanese"). Jack Armstrong did spend some time in the South American jungles. I honestly can't remember where Captain Midnight operated. Tom Mix fought both general "baddies" and spy-type "baddies". Terry and the pirates were definitely over there in the Far East in the middle of things. Biff Baker, a poor man's Flash Gordon, was tooling around space in a compact-model rocket ship and Superman, like Tom Mix, kept domestic and Axis hoods in line.

What I do remember, though, are the products pushed, the premiums offered, theme songs and introductory remarks, and those of you who either haven't fallen asleep or violently oppose the continuation of this discussion may "tune in" next month, same time - same paper, for a review of those topics.

The History of NBC, Part 2 (The Entertainment Programs, 1920's) - - -

The first program ever broadcast as the National Broadcasting Company was carried by 21 charter and four supplementary affiliates. It was a four hour star studded extravaganza featuring the dance bands of Vincent Lopez, Ben Bernie, George Olson and B. A. Rolfe on location. There were also remotes from singer Mary Garden from Chicago and Will Rogers from Independence, Mo., as well as the brass band of Edwin Franko Goldman, Metropolitan Opera soloists and the comedy team of Weber and Fields.

By January, 1927, NBC had created the red and the blue networks (see NBC Part I) and these designations were based on colors on a map used to identify stations in the proposed networks. In NBC's early years, the airwaves were filled mostly with symphonic music with concerts, classical and semi-classical. There were: "Atwater Kent Hour", "Maxwell House Hour", "The General Motors Family Party", "The Cities Service Orchestra", "The Voice of Firestone", and the "Brunswick Chicago Civic Opera".

NBC expanded to the west coast and by January 1, 1927, they had seven stations in the pacific coast web. The first sporting event on NBC was broadcast that day with Alabama and Stanford starring in the Rose Bowl game. Standard brands pioneered the variety format with the start of "The Fleischman Hour" and paid entertainer Maurice Chevalier \$5,000 to headline it. Rudy Vallee came on as his replacement followed by Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Phil Baker and Bob Burns. Even shows who went on to have their own series such as the "Aldrich Family" and "We, The People" were first heard on the "Fleischman Hour". The program ran for 10 years and created a pattern duplicated by many other variety shows including some television shows on today.

In 1925 (pre NBC), Charles Correll and Freeman Gosden began broadcasting as "Sam N' Henry" over WBEH from Chicago's Edgewater Beach Hotel. Their pay was free hotel dinners. They moved to WGN as "Amos N' Andy" for \$50 a week. Finally in August of 1929, they were so good and so famous that pepsodent put them on NBC and paid them \$100,000 a year.

NBC made slow but steady progress in those first years and few could predict the explosive success it would have in the years to come.

NEXT MONTH: The history of NBC, Part 3 (Entertainment Programs-1930's)

ANSWERS TO TRIVIA QUIZ

- 1) Arthur Godfrey
- 2) Hanley Stafford
- 3) Don Ameche
- 4) Jon Arthur
- 5) Tallulah Bankhead
- 6) Don McNeill
- 7) Jason Robards
- 8) Lionel Barrymore
- 9) Bill Stern
- 10) Bert Fordon

FROM TELEVISION TO RADIO.by John Nicholson

Two other articles in this newsletter have dealt with a nostalgic look at old time radio shows. But what about those of us who were weaned on television? Is an oddity all that we get from the old shows? At least in my case, the answer is "no". When I first got into the old time radio programs, I could listen and have an enjoyable time. But with practice, something most television addicts despise, happens. Imagination develops. What a shock to find yourself sitting down to your favorite program, and finding that you no longer enjoy having everything handed to you on a silver platter. You want to do your own thinking. It certainly takes a lot of fun out of watching the old boob tube.

On discovering this terrible revelation, an important question came to mind. Just what is the effect of television on today's children? This is a question of importance to every child psychologist, and being of that breed, was an important question to me. We set up a rather informal study in a church school. The teachers had complained about a terrible lack of imagination in their students. But how can a television baby imagine a person walking across the water? After several weeks of listening to old radio shows, the children showed a remarkable increase in imagination, and attention span. Bible stories were gradually introduced into the setting.

Also being interested in geriatric recreational psychology, I have taken the programs to several nursing homes. The people who have, unfortunately, been taught that they are incapable of anything find that after a few programs that they are having memories that bring them closer to a state of reality. The progress among some of these patients is remarkable. In short, then, we, as collectors of old time radio, have at our fingertips a tool that can be used for far greater things than trading like baseball cards. We can help the young and the old, the blind, the shut-ins, and at the same time help to develop an imagination that will bring our children to the imaginative state necessary to bring this world from the place it is now, to a better future. You, as a listener of old time radio, have an imagination. Don't let your shows sit on the shelf and collect dust. Do something with them. The ideas I have touched on are only a beginning. Now it's up to us to do something about it.

BITS AND PIECES

Just a few short ad libs here.....I have not received any nostalgic story from any of the wives yet and it would be nice to have the ladies side of OTR.....Sure would like to have some remembrances from our Honorary Members and other readers.....How about a contest to name the newsletter? First prize could be to select a tape from the lending library for free.....Anyone know of a copier that will copy a black and white picture of Jack Benny for the RHAC at a good price?.....What ever happened to the tape swap that we tried for a few months?.....Will anyone volunteer to look into the RHAC incorporating as a non-profit organization?.....HAPPY LISTENING

Walter Saunders

Nostalgic newsletter holds spotlight

A reader called the other day to inquire about which broadcasting publications I study regularly.

The first two named — Variety and Broadcasting — struck a chord of familiarity with the caller. The third — the newsletter of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado — brought a period of wondering silence.

Variety is the weekly "show biz bible" which covers, fact, fiction and fantasy about broadcasting and other areas of entertainment.

Variety is so special it even has its own language. For example, in Variety's news columns a broadcasting president (there must be at least 5,000 of them) is known as a prez. A network is a web.

Thus a story about Robert Wussler, president of CBS-TV, would read "CBS web prez Robert Wussler said. . ."

BROADCASTING IS THE official mouthpiece of the industry. This weekly magazine covers the business thoroughly and professionally. But to say Broadcasting's point of view is biased toward broadcasting is like saying Pope Paul's favorite religion is Catholicism.

But my favorite broadcasting publication remains the monthly newsletter of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado.

This newsletter is not in the circulation class of Time magazine. The newsletter's circulation is around 300, with most going to members of the association.

And the publishers, Mr. and Mrs. John H. Lloyd of Thornton aren't in the same class with Playboy's Hugh Hefner when it comes to graphics. In fact, pictures are non-existent.

The newsletter is typed, sent through a duplicating machine and then the pages are stapled together. But the content is pure joy.

The newsletter is not concerned with broadcasting problems of the present but rather with the nostalgic joys of radio's past.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE August edition has a book list on old-time radio, compiled by John Dunning, Denver radio buff who also is gaining national prominence as a mystery writer.

Also featured is a fascinating tale about how the character of Chester on "Gunsmoke" evolved from a character referred to as "townsman."

And what would a good nostalgia publication be without a "Whatever became of . . .?" column. This month's column featured Bret Morrison, who formerly played the "Shadow" (retired and lives in Palm Springs) and Eddie Rochester Anderson (he lives in semi-seclusion in Los Angeles following a heart attack several years ago).

The month's trivia quiz asked readers to match radio shows with their classical music themes.

Most of you "I Love a Mystery" fans know that eerie series featured Sibelius' "Valse Triste." Another easy one: Rossini's "William Tell Overture" introduced "The Lone Ranger."

But what about "The Shadow?" That show's theme was "Omphale's Spinning Wheel" by Saint-Saens.

I ALSO FOUND out that Vicki Vola, who played Miss Miller on "Mr. District Attorney," was a recent Denver visitor.

As a bonus, the newsletter had a delightful, tongue-in-cheek story, "The Jack Armstrong Murders," contributed by Chuck Seeley of a radio club in Buffalo, N.Y.

This wild, imaginative tale featured Jack Armstrong, Fu Manchu, the Shadow and Sam Spade. Today's TV can't match that cast.

I'm not in the business of selling subscriptions to this publication. But if you're interested contact the Lloyds at 2667 E. 99th Ave., Thornton, 80229.

Better yet, you might want to join the association, which operates under the logical premise that Jack Armstrong was more fun than the Six Million Dollar Man.