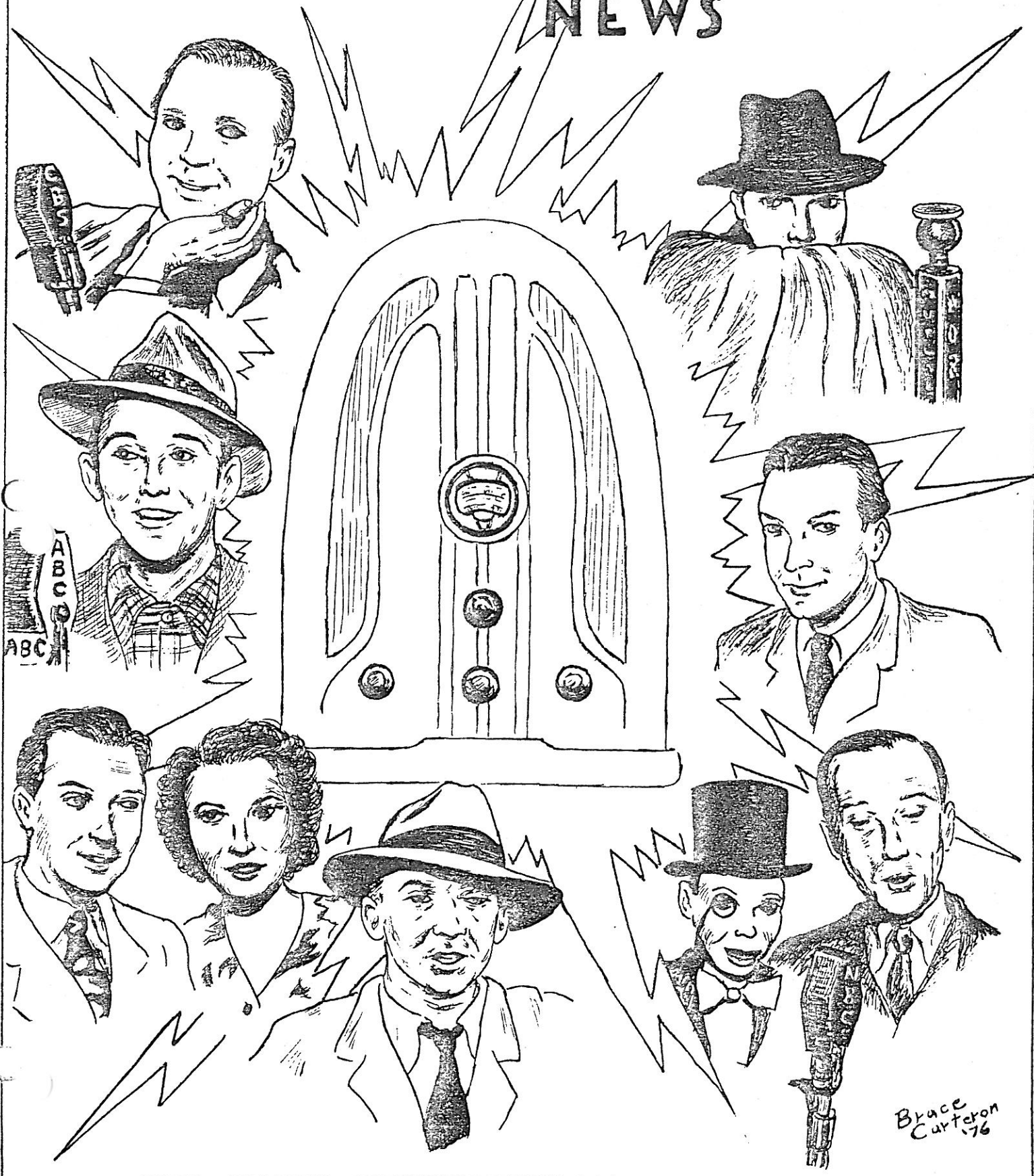
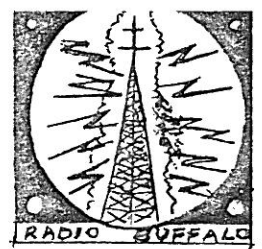


RADIO NEWS

NOVEMBER 1976



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A WORD FROM THE OTRCOB.....by CHUCK SEELEY

Welcome to a first. To my knowledge, two OTR clubs have never collaborated on a joint publication of any kind before. What makes it even more important is the fact that the Radio Historical Association of Colorado and the Old Time Radio Club of Buffalo are not large clubs. Neither has over 100 members and the clubs' combined membership is only a little over that number. Yet both clubs have established regular publications as a service to their members.

It may be that this combined newsletter will be the first step towards a national, or even international, organization of OTR buffs, an organization that could perhaps exert some influence on the radio networks to program more drama or comedy or variety shows. This organization could keep OTR devotees abreast of what's going on in the field of OTR, and provide a clearing-house for info regarding OTR.

But that's in the future. The pages you hold in your hands are very special. If you like (or if you don't like) what you see, tell us. Write to either John Lloyd or me. If we receive enough positive response, we'll do another combined publication next year.

Let us hear from you.

AND A WORD FROM THE RHAC.....by JOHN LLOYD

This newsletter has been a long time in the planning stage. Both Chuck and I sincerely hope that you enjoy it.

Our two organizations have been getting closer every month. We have shared many ideas with each newsletter, each letter and, yes, each long distance phone call.

We would like to receive a card from all our readers on this combination newsletter, whether you like it or not. If you do like it, we can try it again next year and possibly add another OTR club to this endeavor. Please let us know what YOU want.

BOOK REVIEW.....by WOODY SMITH, OTRCOB

CBS: Reflections In A Bloodshot Eye by Robert Metz, Signet Books, \$2.25

This month NBC celebrates its fiftieth year in broadcasting. Next year, CBS will be doing the same thing. This book, then, is quite timely, dealing as it does with the entire history of CBS from its beginnings with the United Independent Broadcasters in 1927 to THE WALTONS in 1975.

Fully a third of this 408 page book deals with radio, mostly concerning the behind-the-scenes of the various programs, the wheeling and dealing that brought Jack Benny and other top-rated stars to CBS, and the further wheeling and dealing that kept those stars in the CBS galaxy.

The book is full of fascinating anecdotes and sidelights about the vast network. For example, I never knew that Goodman Ace (of EASY ACES) had come up with and developed the idea for the CBS WAS THERE radio program (later YOU ARE THERE on TV), or that GUNSMOKE was the lineal descendant of HAWK LARABEE, or that CBS is still involved in litigation over the creation of HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL.

Author Metz apparently never actually worked for the network, but his sources cover most of the broadcasting industry, including such OTR personalities as the aforementioned Goodman Ace, Norman Corwin, and Arthur Godfrey, among others.

I think that the book is excellent. The writing is good, and the topic absorbing. Despite its length, it reads fast. And while Metz recounts various scandals involving Jack Benny, George Burns, and others, I discovered nothing malicious. If anything, Metz is over-kind to the performers, reserving any acidity for the high-level CBS executives (and there is very little of that).

The official comment from CBS is reputed to be "We intend to ignore this book." I don't see why. It's excellent history, with dry facts and dates fleshed out with personal remembering of those involved. I recommend this book to OTR buffs without reservation.

DID YOU KNOW.....by DOM P. PARISI, OTRCOB

...that while Dave Rubinoff actually played the violin on THE EDDIE CANTOR SHOW, his speaking voice was done by double Lionel Stander or Teddy Bergman? In fact, many radio actors had other performers double for them in cases where the voices of the originals were either too heavily accented or where someone had deemed their speaking voices "not right for radio."

...that the Mormon Tabernacle Choir broadcast is the oldest continuous national network series on American radio? It began broadcasting in 1929 and can still be heard today. The choir is composed of 375 singers from all walks of life---farmers, housewives, bankers, teachers, etc.---all of whom are unpaid professionals.

...that between December 7, 1941, and September 2, 1945 (VJ Day), the CBS radio network alone broadcast 35,700 war related programs? That number is the equivalent of nine solid months of war programs!

...that William Conrad of GUNSMOKE and ESCAPE had to sing at weddings and funerals to supplement his meager earnings from early radio? He once received a check from station KMPC in Beverly Hills, California for \$2.50---two weeks' pay!

Each Saturday, the familiar strains of "Old Trail" herald another chapter of GUNSMOKE, the award-winning program which deals with Western life in the 1880's and U.S. Marshal Matt Dillon's struggle to maintain law and order in Dodge City, Kansas. GUNSMOKE is not a typical Western, full of shooting, shouting and fighting. Instead, it combines suspense and excitement with realism and humanness to provide listeners with first-rate dramatic entertainment.

WILLIAM CONRAD, who starred as Matt Dillon since GUNSMOKE was first aired, was born in Louisville, Kentucky. When he was 7, his family moved to Los Angeles, where Bill received his secondary education before going on to Fullerton Junior College to major in literature and dramatics. Following his graduation, Bill became an announcer-director-writer at Station KPCC, Los Angeles, and remained there until 1942, when he joined the Air Force. Commissioned an officer on April 12, 1943, Bill made a double-day of it by taking lovely June Nelson as his bride. Soon after his discharge, in 1945, Bill began concentrating on acting in movies and radio-always playing the villain, in such film classics as "The Killers", "Body And Soul", and "Sorry, Wrong Number", and in radio, on every top network series originating in Hollywood. Consequently, his role as a hero in GUNSMOKE has been a new experience for Bill. The show has also helped to further one of his hobbies-cooking, for GUNSMOKE researchers, in delving into the past, have unearthed old recipes which Bill has enjoyed testing. Concerning his other non-acting interests, Bill says, "Hobbies are my hobby". This he has proved by trying them all-from stamp collecting to taxidermy. But, once he "masters" a hobby, he loses interest in it, as has happened with photography: Bill has \$3000 worth of camera equipment and never even takes a picture! Be-fitting his role in GUNSMOKE, Bill has an extensive collection of early Western firearms. His most prized gun is one which supposedly belonged to one of the West's most notorious figures, Wyatt Earp. Another of Bill's outstanding traits is his love for informal clothes (he insists they help him to relax while working). His favorite outfit combines dungarees, T-shirt, sneakers and an old leather jacket. "My wife used to call me a poor man's clothes horse," says Bill. "But one day, I took her out to Santa Anita and she apologized- to the horses." And, when he and June invite friends for dinner, Bill always adds- quite unnecessarily, it seems-"We're not dressing".

PARLEY BAER (Chester Proudfoot) launched his show-business career in Salt Lake City, Utah, when he was 11 years old and got a summer job at the amusement pier as "key boy"-opening lockers for people spending the day swimming. Four years later he became chief cashier of the pier and made his acting debut at the city's Playhouse. Parley also made a point of working with the circus whenever it came to town-and, after leaving the University of Utah, he traveled with a circus until World War II, when he enlisted and served for four years. Upon his discharge in 1946, Parley married Ernestine Clarke, a circus performer and aerialist. They now have a daughter, Kathleen, 2... Parley got his radio start at KSL, Salt Lake City, before becoming tops in Los Angeles.

GEORGIA ELLIS, in her role as Kitty, is right at home, for she has played in Westerns-in movies and radio-for more than a decade. Although she had always wanted to be an actress, Georgia used music as the stepping stone to her goal. Her father, a cellist and music professor, and her mother, an opera singer, wanted her to become a music teacher, but Georgia couldn't be swayed. After attending UCLA-during which time she won her first paying job as vocalist with Walter Schuman's college band-Georgia forsook her studies to work at the Pasadena Playhouse. Her first acting role came in 1942, when she appeared in a "Hopalong Cassidy" movie. Georgia is married to radio script-writer Antony Ellis. She has a son, Jonathon, 6, enjoys painting, sketching and decorating.

HOWARD MCNEAR has been in love with radio since 1933, when he first "aired" himself as an actor. Prior to his radio debut, Howard had specialized in stage roles. At 15, he enrolled at the Marta Catman School of Theater, then he joined a San Diego stock company. For the next 12 years, he toured up and down the Pacific Coast. As a fitting tribute to his 20th year in radio, Howard, in 1953, won an award as "best supporting actor". Married to the former Helen Spatz, Howard has one son, Christopher. In his role as Doc in GUNSMOKE, Howard says, "We don't have the facilities of modern medicine and science...and sometimes, I guess, we make mistakes. But I think we've got a pretty good batting average." As for Howard, he always bats one thousand as an actor.

OTR CLUBS.BY JOHN ILCYD

The last few years has witnessed a tremendous rise in the number of OTR collectors and also a tremendous rise in the number of OTR clubs. Many collectors are joining together in this fascinating hobby in order to achieve many common goals.

Here in Denver, we knew there were many people who were listening to John Dunning's old time radio show who might want to start a club where they could trade with other collectors locally, buy recording tapes at bulk prices, help themselves and others get started in collecting and, most of all, to keep old time radio alive.

Organized clubs have been very active and memberships are increasing in every one of them. I have kept in close contact with clubs in Buffalo, Hollywood, Massachusetts, Edmonton(Canada) and Phoenix. Many collectors around the country have been seeking information on how to organize an OTR club in their area. If you read Hello Again, you can see that there are subscribers in almost every state.

What does all this mean? To me, it means that old time radio is very much alive and flourishing. It means that people are turning away from TV and seeking a definite alternative and finding that old time radio is it. It also means that young people who may have missed "The Golden Age of Radio" or caught the tail end of it are discovering the joys of it, are "turned on" by it and want more of it.

We have organized our clubs and we can be of great help to other groups trying to get started. By helping them we are helping ourselves. We know the great purchasing power we have as a group and with the help of many more OTR clubs we would have the power to influence future radio programming. We might be able to influence the national networks to bring back OTR to some limited degree.

As I mentioned before, there are interested collectors in almost every part of the country. OTR clubs in many of those areas could possibly be able to uncover previously uncirculated shows and information for all collectors.

I believe the future of OTR is bright, indeed. New programs are turning up every day in better condition than we have ever had. What better way of sharing these new shows than through OTR clubs. OTR clubs are really helping the new collector get involved in this hobby.

Someday, and not too far in the future, I can see a national organization of all the OTR clubs. What a great day that will be! What a way to pass on all the news to collectors and what a way to have the buying power to get many of the shows released that have not been previously out. There is no limit as to what we can all share with other clubs. Tapes, magazines, books, any radio related material could be shared by all.

I am extremely optimistic about the future. Shouldn't we get started?

TRIVIA QUIZ.....by RONALD AMES, OTRCOB

- 1) HAWK LARABEE ran on CBS on Saturday afternoons on a sustaining basis. The title of the show was changed to what after a short time?
- 2) On THE PHIL HARRIS AND ALICE FAYE SHOW, what was Julius' last name?
- 3) Who sponsored JUNGLE JIM?
- 4) What was the full name of Sam Spade's secretary?
- 5) Who portrayed Ish Kabibble?
- 6) Everybody knows that J. Scott Smart played the title role of THE FAT MAN. Who created the series?
- 7) What is the correct title of the famous "Panic Broadcast" presented by THE MERCURY THEATER ON THE AIR on October 30, 1938?
- 8) Who sponsored THE ADVENTURERS' CLUB?
- 9) Who was the host of CREEPS BY NIGHT?
- 10) What famous breakfast food sponsored the first season of DIMENSION X?
- 11) Another science fiction show was hosted by the famous editor of Astounding (later Analog) magazine. Name the show and the host.
- 12) Who played Captain Horatio Hornblower in the Mutual network series?
- 13) THREE SHEETS TO THE WIND followed the misadventures of two drunken detectives. Who played them?
- 14) The Bar-Bar-A Ranch at Three Forks River, at the base of Piebald Mt., near the town of Rimhorn, was home-base for what western star on radio?
- 15) Under what title was LUX RADIO THEATER known as in AFRS distribution?
- 16) Who played Big Stoop on TERRY AND THE PIRATES?
- 17) SUPERMAN came on the radio at 5:45 PM (EST). What time did BATMAN come on?
- 18) What was the name of Humphrey Bogart's boat on BOLD VENTURE?
- 19) Name "the only show in radio where the audience writes the scripts."
- 20) What is the full name of Marshal Matt Dillon's deputy?
- 21) Ann Sothern portrayed "Maisie" in the MGM film series. Who was the actress on the radio version?
- 22) What city served Paladin as home-base?
- 23) What soap produced "the skin you love to touch"?
- 24) A man who is now most well known for producing such films as "The Great Race" and "The Pink Panther" also wrote for radio in the late Forties and the Fifties. He wrote the scripts for a popular radio series about a singing detective. Name the man and the radio show.
- 25) Who sponsored RIN-TIN-TIN?
- 26) What was the theme song of YOU BET YOUR LIFE?
- 27) Who was "Mrs. Hush" on TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES in 1947?
- 28) How was Britt Reid related to John Reid?
- 29) Jim and Marion Jordan had a radio show before FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY. What was it?
- 30) Who had the title role in MICHAEL SHAYNE, PRIVATE DETECTIVE?
- 31) Frankie Remley was an actual guitar player in Phil Harris' band, but who was the speaking voice of Remley?
- 32) What network carried Laurel and Hardy on radio?
- 33) What famous Indian was played by John Todd (who was not an Indian)?
- 34) What was the name of Steve Wilson's newspaper in BIG TOWN?
- 35) Was Doc Savage ever on the radio?
- 36) Of the three John Ford/John Wayne cavalry pictures ("Rio Grande", "She Wore A Yellow Ribbon", and "Fort Apache"), which was presented on LUX RADIO THEATER, with Wayne as the star?
- 37) Who was the creator of John Carter of Mars, Carson Napier of Venus, and Tarzan of the Apes?

EARLY TV: RADIO'S TALENT DRAIN.....by HY DALEY, CTRCOB

Recently I came across a 1951 issue of Radio-TV Mirror and studied the program highlights of TV Channels 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of New York City and New Haven. What I discovered was an evident "brain drain" from radio into the New Media.

Monday nights was LUX VIDEO THEATER NIGHT with big stars in "powerful dramas of ordinary people." I really don't think it sounds as good as LUX RADIO THEATER. However, at 8 PM on Channel 7, you could watch MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY or THE AMAZING MR. MALONE. On radio Mr. Malone was played by Eugene Raymond and Frank Lovejoy. On the tube THE AMAZING MR. MALONE was Lee Tracy, who starred in SILVER THEATER productions and THE TEXACO STAR THEATER.

At 8:30, the old redhead, Arthur Godfrey, introduced his talent scouts. Also at 8:30 Jack Barry, who M.C.'d THE JOE DIMAGGIO SHOW and JUVENILE JURY, and announced for Uncle Don, brought his successful Mutual radio show, LIFE BEGINS AT 80, to TV.

Lucille Ball, who had jumped from MY FAVORITE HUSBAND, was on at 9 PM with Dizzy Desi on I LOVE LUCY. The show was also on radio.

STUDIO ONE, a CBS dramatic presentation which had been on the air on radio since 1947, smiled on NYC at 10 PM.

Tuesday nights kicked off with an old radio favorite, BEULAH, played by a black lady, Hattie McDaniels. Hattie had starred in the radio version along with Marlin Hurt, Bob Corley, and Lillian Randolph; she was also heard on THE BILLIE BURKE SHOW and SHOWBOAT. Also at 8 PM, Frank Sinatra graced the tube with his old HIT PARADE crooning. Competing for this time slot was another radio favorite, Milton Berle on THE TEXACO STAR THEATER; this show was no stranger to American families. Ed Wynn and Fred Allen had starred in the show during the Thirties and early Forties. Uncle Miltie had left his Philip Morris sponsored show with Super Frank Gallop to do his "thing" for the folks in front of their sets.

At 9 PM the successor to SAM SPADE took over, CHARLIE WILD, PRIVATE DETECTIVE. The radio version starred George Petrie, but John McQuade (a Pitt man, how stunning!) showed The Tube Fans how an anemic Bogart really looked. McQuade can best be forgotten as Steve Lansing on the (urp!) OUR GAL SUNDAY (splash...splash) serial.

At 9:30, your old friend SUSPENSE gripped you with tales calculated to send you to the ice box during commercials.

Ted Mack, Major Bowes' Man Friday, displayed The Nation's Talent at 10 PM. This show originated back in 1934 in New York City.

Your other choice at 10 PM was Fred Uttal's mystery quiz show, Q.E.D. Uttal's credits included BUCK ROGERS (as an announcer), two quiz shows called DETECT AND COLLECT and MELODY PUZZLES on radio, and the role of Don Towne on RADIO'S COURT OF HONOR. Q.E.D.'s panel consisted of Margaret Hayes, Lee Rogow, Hi Brown (producer of AFFAIRS OF PETE SALEM, BULLDOG DRUMMUND, CITY DESK, GRAND CENTRAL STATION, THE GUMPS, INNER SANCTUM, THE THIN MAN, and, of course, the CBS RADIO MYSTERY THEATER), and Richard Himber of THE STUDEBAKER CHAMPIONS and YOUR HIT PARADE.

WOW! I didn't think this was going to go this far just for Monday and Tuesday nights. I think you're getting the idea of how TV sucked Radio dry, though.

Next time I'll hit Wednesday and Thursday. Meanwhile...Ah, Ah, Ah, don't touch that dial.....

My grandfather's chair was the prime object with which I associate my memories of old time radio. Within the secure environs of that piece of furniture I listened hour after hour to the Emerson or other brand of radio set that resided on the nearby table. Before REA brought the miracle of light that area, there was a car-sized battery under the table to power the receiver.

There were other locales in which I listened to the golden age of radio. In our own home, my parents always had that indispensable box that brought the entertainment, the information, the world to one's ear. But, it was in the old farmhouse in Northeast Texas that it now seems I heard every show that brought joy to a young boy's heart.

My grandfather's chair was a lounge, but not the type in vogue over the last 20 years that smell of plastic and recline with a pop-up footrest. No, it was stuffed, padded, cloth-covered chair that had arms and if I lay on the seat of the chair, I could rest my feet on the old, tin family trunk that my grandfather always kept in front of him. He rested his legs and feet on it, too.

The shows that hold the earliest memories for me were the ones on between 4:45 PM and 6:00 PM Central Standard Time. These were the juvenile serials, but after all, at the time I was definitely a juvenile. My recollection is the first show in this afternoon line-up was Hop Harrigan, followed by Captain Midnight, and then came Terry and the Pirates. Yes, I did send for the secret decoder rings, simulated cardboard cockpits, autographed pictures and the like, but I don't have them now and don't collect them. My favorite, Jack Armstrong, came on at 5:30 PM and was followed by Tom Mix as played by Curley Bradley.

While I was still very young, I remember that I Love A Mystery scared me so badly that I would back out of the room to escape the sound of the eerie wolf howls. (This must have been some episode from "Bury Your Dead, Arizona) Although I was a 'good boy', I relished hearing the antics of Baby Snooks and the misadventures of Henry Aldrich.

Later, but still during World War II years, I developed a fondness for Fibber McGee and Molly, Red Skelton, Truth or Consequences, and the Judy Canova Show. On Sunday afternoon the shows I never missed were Martin Kane, Private Eye and the House of Mystery and later on Sunday evening came Amos and Andy.

You may ask, "How did you spend so much time in your grandfather's chair?" Well, he was out and about the farm most of the time and usually went to bed about sundown. It was "his" chair automatically during news programs which he heard in the morning, at noon, and around 6:00 PM. The entertainment shows for which I relinquished the chair were Lum and Abner, and while it was a serial, Amos and Andy.

It was after the war, in my early teens that I developed an appreciation for Jack Benny, Phil Harris, Mel Blanc, Sam Spade, Richard Diamond and Curly Howard. My mother and I stayed at my grandfather's place while my Dad was in the service. Therefore, many of these later named shows were not listened to in my grandfather's chair. By the time I was in high school about 1950, the only radio show that made much of an impression was Escape.

And then came TV. You know what happened to radio after that. We traded the box you heard for the magic box you could see and hear.

My grandfather's chair is gone.

My memories remain.

Thanks to the magic of magnetic tape, some of the shows remain.

OTR LISTENERS' POLL.....supplied by CHUCK SEELEY, OTRCOB

Back in the "Golden Age," the popularity of radio performers and programs was often measured by "postcard polls" conducted by various radio stations. The poll listed below was taken the week of May 18, 1935, and was printed in the Rocket's Blast-Comicolector #99 (March 1973). Unfortunately, no further details were given concerning the poll.

BEST PERFORMERS: 1) Jack Benny 2) Frank Parker 3) Eddie Cantor 4) Lanny Ross 5) Joe Penner 6) Bing Crosby 7) Fred Allen 8) Steven Barry 9) Will Rogers 10) Don Ameche

MOST POPULAR ORCHESTRAS: 1) Wayne King 2) Guy Lombardo 3) Richard Himber 4) Ben Bernie 5) Jan Gerber 6) Fred Waring 7) Don Bestor 8) Rudy Vallee 9) Kay Kyser 10) Eddy Duchin

BEST MUSICAL PROGRAM: 1) JACK BENNY PROGRAM 2) SHOW BOAT 3) RUDY VALLEE'S VARIETY HOUR 4) RICHARD HIMBER'S CHAMPIONS 5) FRED WARING'S PROGRAM 6) BEAUTY BOX THEATER 7) TOWN HALL TONIGHT 8) WLS BARN DANCE 9) BREAK-FAST CLUB 10) JAN GERBER'S SUPPER CLUB

BEST DRAMATIC PROGRAM: 1) ONE MAN'S FAMILY 2) MARCH OF TIME 3) RADIO THEATER 4) FIRST NIGHTER 5) DANGEROUS PARADISE 6) MARY PICKFORD'S STOCK COMPANY 7) RED DAVIS 8) TODAY'S CHILDREN 9) MYRT AND MARGE 10) DEATH VALLEY DAYS

MOST POPULAR TEAMS: 1) Amos & Andy 2) Jack Benny & Mary 3) Burns & Allen 4) Myrt & Marge 5) Lum & Abner 6) Hitz & Dawson 7) Black & Sully 8) Molasses 'n' January (Pick & Pat) 9) Mary Lou & Lanny Ross 10) Vic & Sade

BEST ANNOUNCERS: 1) James Wallington 2) Don Wilson 3) David Ross 4) Harry von Zell 5) Ted Husing 6) Phil Stewart 7) Milton Cross 8) Tiny Ruffner 9) Don McNeill 10) Graham McNamee

Although radio was regional as well as national, this poll seems to reflect network stars or programs that originated on both coasts or in Chicago. I find it odd that there wasn't a category for comedy shows, especially since most of the "Best Performers" are comedic stars. It's also interesting that Jack Benny was so popular as to be top-rated in three different categories, though I never considered the Benny show as a "musical" program.

It is significant that THE MARCH OF TIME is included under "Dramatic Programs" since that shows that the radio audience recognized the show as a dramatic re-creation of the news rather than as a straight "hard" news program. It is uncertain, however, if the news content of THE MARCH OF TIME was responsible for the high rating or if it could have been attributed to the show's dramatic quality.

Another argument for inclusion of a comedy category is the high rating of Amos and Andy as a team, with Jack Benny and Mary Livingston just behind. Would the AMOS 'N' ANDY show have beaten out the Benny program as "Best Comedy"? Both were immensely popular (though I'd give AMOS 'N' ANDY the edge in 1935) and it would have been a difficult choice for audiences. Certainly both shows would finish in the one-two positions.

Hollywood's latest rediscovery, George Burns, was born on January 20, 1896, in New York City. I say "rediscovery" because it was a 36 year hiatus between "Hawaii" (an MGM feature that starred George and his late wife, Gracie Allen) and "The Sunshine Boys", the movie for which he won a Best Supporting Actor Oscar.

Vaudeville in New York City was the start of George's career. He has often said that he would congregate with out of work vaudevillians on the street corners, smoking a cigar, something that made him fit in with the "talent". Now he is the one who is imitated.

Life was not exactly perfect; far from it. Then, in about 1923, George met Gracie Allen, who was perfect for him. He found that by writing all his own material he was supposed to get all the laughs, but he didn't. Gracie soon fixed that. All George had to do was to ask her, "How's the family, Gracie?" and stand back and puff on the ever-present cigar while Gracie put the audience into hysterics.

On radio, George and Gracie starred in THE ROBERT BURNS PANATELA PROGRAM along with Guy Lombardo. The show began in 1932 and was carried over the CBS network. The show was very popular, and its popularity was enhanced by Gracie's search for her "long-lost brother." Ads were run in the major daily newspapers, and Gracie popped in on many other shows, even on rival NBC!

Next it was BURNS AND ALLEN, sponsored by Maxwell House Coffee. The few shows from this series that I have heard are truly great, with the most outstanding character being Mel Blanc in his role of The Happy Postman, who was anything but.

In the introduction to the biography, Jack Benny: An Intimate Biography by Irving Fein, George wrote "...in the entire fifty years I never walked out on Jack when he played the violin, and he never walked out on me when I sang a song. Now that's really putting friendship to the test." In recent months, "Sugarthroat" has been singing quite a bit. One I remember quite well was on the Grammy Awards when he sang a song Marvin Hamlisch wrote for THE ENTERTAINER. Gracie was always trying to get George to sing, whether it be with James Melton or Bing Crosby. One Crosby show I have heard has Al Jolson as a guest and Gracie visits at the end of the program. She says, "Bing, I just want you to know that I think you're the second best singer in the world," making Jolson think he's number one in her book. The results are hilarious.

THE BURNS AND ALLEN SHOW was on television for eight years and is enjoying a rebirth. A New York City station is carrying it at about two in the morning. In fact, over twenty TV stations are airing the show on a regular basis.

"Sunshine Boys" is about two old vaudevillians who are re-united after many years for a TV special. They still can't get along, but still they need each other.

As George said as he accepted his Oscar this past March, "It just goes to prove...if you live long enough, you become young again."

Yes, Nathaniel Birnbaum has become young again, making numerous guest appearances on television, doing countless ad campaigns, and now touring the country with Carol Channing.

George Burns, whose suave, sophisticated wit I and many others have grown up with, is an American institution, and we thank him for making our lives richer.

SPERDVAC: OTR IN CALIFORNIA.....by CHUCK SEELEY, OTRCOB

The Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety, and Comedy (SPERDVAC) was founded in November of 1974 by a small group of OTR collectors on the west coast. At that time, the members of the fledgling group set seven goals for the society:

- 1) To promote and encourage drama, variety, and comedy programs---old and new---on radio today.
- 2) To provide a collection of programs that members may listen to and duplicate for their own enjoyment.
- 3) To collect and maintain for members and other interested people a library of radio history and to use this material in the publication of a newsletter, of special brochures, and in preparation of an accurate and complete account of radio from its earliest days to the present.
- 4) To contribute to the support of noncommercial radio stations interested in and aiding the goals of the society, including broadcasting "old time" radio programs.
- 5) To alert members to trends in drama, variety, and comedy broadcasting, and to publish special radio program listings and news releases to inform members and the general public.
- 6) To collect today's news events on tape, to form an audio file for tomorrow's historians.
- 7) To seek out and honor the people who made radio's "Golden Age" possible.

This month, the second anniversary of SPERDVAC's founding, sees the group's membership up to over 200. The society's archive contains several hundred programs on over 200 reels of tape, all of which are available for the enjoyment of club members.

A monthly bulletin is published by the group to provide the members with news and information on upcoming SPERDVAC meetings. The newsletter, edited by Dan Haefele, is excellent, combining imaginative use of graphics with interesting writing.

The first issue of the SPERDVAC Magazine is due out this month and promises to be quite good. The editor is Joe Crawford. The magazine is available for \$2.25 per copy from SPERDVAC, 201 E. Chapman Avenue #31J, Placentia, California 92670.

SPERDVAC has monthly membership meetings, usually with special guests such as Stan Freberg, Marvin Miller, and Jim Harmon.

Membership in the group is \$15.00 annually, and further information can be had by writing SPERDVAC, P.O.Box 1587, Hollywood, California 90028.

By any measurement you care to use, SPERDVAC is successful in fulfilling its seven goals. The RHAC and the OTRCOB wish SPERDVAC much continued success.

DID YOU KNOW.....by DOM P. PARISI, OTRCOB

...that the COLUMBIA WORKSHOP carried no advertisements not because of any lofty noncommercial stance, but because the dramas ran opposite Jack Benny on NBC Red and CBS regarded the time period as unsalable?

To hear them talk on the radio, you would never guess that they had graduated from the School of Speech at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. And you might not have guessed even if you had heard them speak outside the radio studio; because when they went shopping together, these three smartly-attired suburban matrons would often begin to converse "in character" about the ripeness of a melon or the price of grapefruit. Around them in the market, heads would turn and eyes would widen at this incongruous combination of sight and sound.

Louise Starkey, Isobel Carothers and Helen King had been friends since their first meeting at the university in the mid-1920's. And when they enrolled there, they brought with them more than just their wardrobe trunks and the desire for a college degree. Each of them also brought her own unique talent, which in one spontaneous moment in their sorority house in 1925 gave birth to a stylized comedic "act" later to be known nationwide as "Clara, Lu 'n' Em."

It was at a birthday party, a party which included a roasted chicken as well as a birthday cake, when Louise, Isobel and Helen began to improvise their ungrammatical characterizations of small-town ladyfolk.

Louise was a monologist who held imaginary conversations with her "husband Charley", a fantasy-figure she had created in kindergarten; Isobel was a gifted mimic and interpretive dancer; and Helen was an accomplished pianist and soprano as well as an impressionist and writer (she had written her high school senior play titled "Too Many Washboards").

These young ladies' collective improvisations during that birthday party regaled their sorority sisters, and each of the three "performers" soon developed a complete "second identity". Louise Starkey became "Mrs. Charley (Clara) Roach"; Helen King became "Mrs. Ernest (Emma) Krueger"; and Isobel Carothers became "Mrs. (Lulu) Casey", a widow.

For the rest of their college days, these three performed both for their own and their classmates' amusement. But after graduation, they went their separate ways to pursue individual careers, only to be reunited soon again in Chicago where they decided to put their "college capers" on the air. If you know their voices, you can almost "hear" this dialogue as quoted in "Tower Radio":

Em: "Why don't we try and put the 'girls' on the air?"

Clara: "You don't really think that a radio station would pay us money for this nonsense."

Lu: "It doesn't sound very practical to me either."

Em: "(Well, I dunno, you two)..Talking acts are going over awfully well just now. Look at 'Amos 'n' Andy'."

Their efforts to gain auditions were fruitless until WGN "hired" them (at no salary to begin with, of course, as "Clara" had almost predicted) to test their ability to hold the attention of an unseen audience with their chatter. The date? June 16, 1930.

Happily, they succeeded; and at the end of the second week they went on the payroll (at \$33 a week). Soon after that they went "commercial"; and the Colgate-Palmolive Company became their long-term sponsor.

They had started on a night-time schedule which continued until the NBC-Blue Network moved the show into the "lead-off spot" for its daytime "serial-drama" programming in February, 1932. Although the show was lumped into the group of programs thus-named because there was script continuity from one episode to the next, and later called "soap operas" because of the prevalent sponsorship by soap products companies, it was different from the other series. In the vernacular of the advertising agencies, "Clara, Lu 'n' Em" is the "Soap" with a difference...a difference you can HEAR!

"Clara, Lu 'n' Em" was essentially a subtle situation comedy program; a gentle satire of small-town housewives, their families, their everyday experiences, but with a "PLUS": topicality. Woven into its daily plots were the girls' reporting and reacting to news items of the day. Whether it was politics, fashions, medicine, child psychology or world events, the girls wrote it into their scripts. No other daily program, excluding news broadcasts, contained more current events than did "Clara, Lu 'n' Em." Why, you could read something in the paper one day and likely hear Clara, Lu or Em comment on it the next.

These "loquacious housewives" with their "pots and pan" humor all lived in the same house. Clara and her family lived in one-half of the big double house on the corner. Em and her family lived in the other half; and Lu lived with her daughter Florabelle in an upstairs apartment. Obviously their lives had to intertwine.

Clara's husband, Charley, was a garage mechanic. They had three sons during their marriage. Em and Ernest were the parents of six children. Ernest never did stay at one job very long; at one time he had been in the mattress business, but it "folded". Lu was the perennial widow, not that she wanted to be.

"Clara, Lu 'n' Em" achieved great popularity within a short time. Their fan mail was abundant and fell generally into two categories. Letters to "Clara" and "Em" came mostly from women and tended to be sympathetic to "their families' situations"; but much of the mail which "Lu" received came from male admirers and even included some "mash notes" (after all, she was an "available widow").

In the radio studio, the three performers always sat at a table, using only one microphone which was suspended on a "goose-neck" stem. "Em" sat at the left; "Lu", at the right; and "Clara", in the center. This arrangement was deliberate in order to accommodate each one's unique "broadcast voice." "Clara's" voice was low-pitched, and her intonation conveyed "level-headedness" and a practical personality. "Lu's" voice was high-pitched (sometimes shrill) and "girlish" with a self-conscious giggle. "Em's" voice was the pivotal one in keeping with her pivotal characterizations in the trio.

Among the many notable distinctions in this threesome's successful radio career are the following "firsts": As mentioned earlier, "Clara, Lu 'n' Em" was the first network daytime soap opera (by fact of its early morning broadcast time). Also, it was the first "soaper" to offer a premium (a souvenir spoon from the Chicago World's Fair--"The Century of Progress") in exchange for the mailed-in boxtop (from Super Suds). Finally, for now, "Clara, Lu 'n' Em" was the very first WGN network "studio" program to be broadcast from outside the city limits, when, for a short time, it became a 'remote' from Evanston while the real-life "Em" stayed at home to nurse her new baby. And, while perhaps it was not a "first", the "girls" were accorded a rare privilege in radio in not having to submit scripts for approval in advance of broadcast. This, however, sometimes led to their scripts' running short (once when this happened, "Em" filled in by telling the others how she kept her son Junior's tonsils in a bottle on the pantry shelf).

In 1934 the girls were given the "celebrity treatment" when they were "requested" to come to New York to appear between the acts of the operetta "Robin Hood" on the "Palmolive Beauty Box Theater". They did their own morning show from New York that week, utilizing the announcing services of Edmund "Tiny" Ruffner, who was Colgate-Palmolive's New York announcer, rather than their regular Chicago announcer, Jean Paul King.

In the summer of 1936 the trio switched back to night-time programming in a half-hour show sponsored by Frigidaire with Ted Fiorito supplying orchestral background music.

Shortly afterward, sadness struck the personal and professional lives of "Clara, Lu 'n' Em" when Isobel Carothers died in January, 1937. "Clara" and "Em" chose not to continue the series by themselves, and the program went off the air that year. Before the decade ended, however, they did move into another medium and syndicated a daily newspaper feature called "Letters of Clara and Em," transferring their radio style to the printed page. Reading their "letters" was the next best thing to hearing their voices through the speaker.

In 1942, radio beckoned again in the form of a thrice-weekly daytime "soaper" sponsored by Pillsbury Mills and announced by Bret Morrison on the CBS network. It was Pillsbury's intent to provide some laughter (as well as some timely commercial messages) for the war-harried housewife. The role of "Lu" was taken by Harriet Allyn, who had also been a classmate of the girls at Northwestern. Her re-creation of the unique voice of Isobel Carothers' "Lu" was astonishingly accurate.

Sorry to say, the series was short-lived, lasting only six months on the air. One factor which contributed to its early demise that Louise Starkey became ill in the early fall and could not continue in her role of "Clara." Another factor was undoubtedly the failure of the show to attract the ratings Pillsbury desired. Unfortunately for those listeners who had hailed the return of "Clara, Lu 'n' Em" to the air-waves, there were all too few opportunities to hear the girls' timely, topical war-time home-front humor before December 4, when "Em" addressed the radio audience in a closing farewell.

The program was brought back for one more revival in 1945, but Louise Starkey and Helen King were no longer associated with it. Harriet Allyn returned in the company of Fran Allison and Dorothy Day, and Kitchen Klenzer sponsored the series; but its run was also short-lived, and "Clara, Lu 'n' Em" did not reappear on radio after that time.

As Helen King Mitchell, the original "Em" had explained in a newspaper interview, the country became so serious about topical and political humor that it "became impossible to write our spontaneous brand of it."

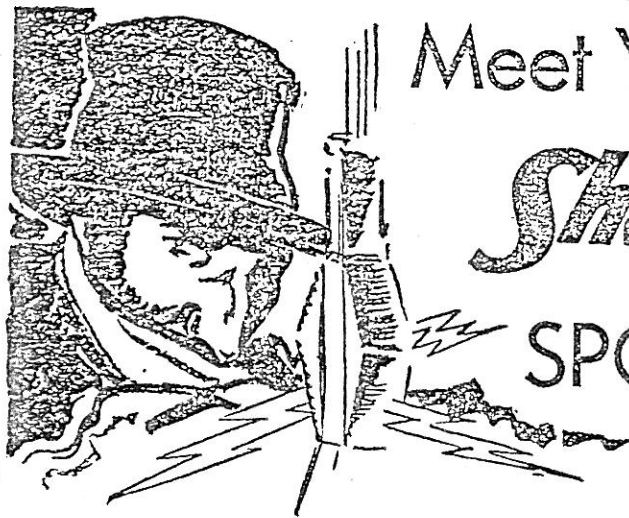
References: Stedman, Raymond W., The Serials. Publ.: Oklahoma Press, 1971
"Tower Radio" (magazine); August, 1934
"Newsweek" (magazine): June 15, 1942
The writer's personal collection of memorabilia

(NOTE: Don Koehnemann is a collector and writer from Westchester, Illinois and we certainly thank him for his contribution to this newsletter.)

TRIVIA ANSWERS

- 1) Would you believe HAWK DURANGO?
- 2) Abbruzio.
- 3) The Hearst Sunday News.
- 4) Effie Perrine.
- 5) Mervyn Bogue.
- 6) Dashiell Hammett.
- 7) "Invasion From Mars"
- 8) The Shaeffer Pen Company.
- 9) Boris Karloff.
- 10) Wheaties.
- 11) EXPLORING TOMORROW. The host was John Campbell, Jr, deservedly known as the father of modern science fiction.
- 12) Sir Michael Redgrave.
- 13) John Wayne and Preston Foster.
- 14) Wild Bill Elliott.
- 15) YOUR RADIO THEATER.
- 16) Nobody. Big Stoop was a mute.
- 17) Batman guested on SUPERMAN, but never had a show of his own.
- 18) The "Bold Venture", natch.
- 19) DOCTOR CHRISTIAN.
- 20) Chester Goode, or Proudfoot.
- 21) The same Ann Sothern.
- 22) San Francisco.
- 23) Woodbury.
- 24) Blake Edwards and RICHARD DIAMOND, PRIVATE DETECTIVE.
- 25) The National Biscuit Company (Milk-Bone dog biscuits, of course).
- 26) "Hooray for Captain Spaulding"
- 27) The "It" girl of the silents, Clara Bow.
- 28) Britt Reid, who was of course the Green Hornet, was John Reid's grand-nephew. And John Reid was the Lone Ranger.
- 29) THE SMACKOUTS.
- 30) Jeff Chandler.
- 31) Elliott Lewis ("Listen, Curley, I know a guy...").
- 32) None, unfortunately. Stan and Ollie recorded a pilot in 1938, but it went unsold.
- 33) Tonto, of course ("What do you mean 'we', white man?")
- 34) The crusading Illustrated Press.
- 35) Yes! There was a Doc Savage radio show that played for one season and was broadcast from New York City. However, it seems that none of the shows survived, although a program log does exist.
- 36) "She Wore A Yellow Ribbon" was presented on LUX, while "Fort Apache" was performed on SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE. Both starred Wayne.
- 37) The amazingly prolific Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Sidelight to #35 above: George Pal, producer of the recent Doc Savage film, mentioned in an interview with Jim Harmon that some scripts from the old radio version of Doc Savage had been found and were to be the basis for a record album. The record would have contained two shows, and would have served as pilots for a possible new radio series. Alas, nothing came of it.



Meet Your New

Shadow

SPONSOR

DON'T MISS THIS THRILLING PROGRAM

After twenty-six successful weeks on the air for "Blue Coal," your favorite, THE SHADOW program, will be continued over a large number of stations by another sponsor, and give listeners the same thrilling type of entertainment that has made this one of the most outstanding shows on the air today.

This new SHADOW series will be sponsored by Goodrich Silvertown Tire Dealers, who will use it to announce a new kind of tire, The New Goodrich Silvertown with Life-Saver Tread.

In this change of sponsorship the list of SHADOW radio stations, as well as broadcasting time have been changed. Below is listed for your handy reference a few of the radio stations carrying the program. This will be increased just as soon as more extensive arrangements have been completed. Additional stations may be found in the forthcoming issues of THE SHADOW MAGAZINE.

STATION	CITY	STATION	CITY	STATION	CITY
WBRC	Birmingham, Ala.	WIBM	Jackson, Mich.	WHP	Harrisburg, Pa.
WALA	Mobile, Ala.	WIDX	Jackson, Miss.	WJAC	Johnstown, Pa.
WMSD	Sheffield, Ala.	WAML	Laurel, Miss.	WORK	York, Pa.
KELD	Eldorado, Ark.	KCVO	Missoula, Mont.	KABR	Aberdeen, S. D.
KIUP	Durango, Colo.	KGEZ	Kalispell, Mont.	WMC	Memphis, Tenn.
KFXJ	Grand Junction, Col.	KMOX	St. Louis, Mo.	KFDM	Beaumont, Texas.
KGHF	Pueblo, Colo.	KFVS	Cape Girardeau, Mo.	KRLD	Dallas, Texas.
WMFJ	Daytona Beach, Fla.	WSNJ	Bridgeton, N. J.	KNOW	Austin, Texas.
WRDW	Augusta, Ga.	KGKY	Scotts Bluff, Neb.	KABC	San Antonio, Texas.
WAYX	Waycross, Ga.	KAWM	Gallup, N. M.	KNET	Palestine, Texas.
KSEI	Pocatello, Idaho	WCNY	Newburgh, N. Y.	KRGV	Weslaco, Texas.
KTFL	Twin Falls, Idaho	WFBL	Syracuse, N. Y.	KDYL	Salt Lake City, Utah.
WMBD	Peoria, Ill.	WSJS	Winston-Salem, N. C.	WLVA	Lynchburg, Va.
WCBS	Springfield, Ill.	WWNC	Asheville, N. C.	WCAX	Burlington, Vt.
WREN	Lawrence, Kan.	WSOC	Charlotte, N. C.	WNBX	Springfield, Vt.
KALB	Alexandria, La.	WDAY	Fargo, N. D.	KXRO	Aberdeen, Wash.
WJBO	Baton Rouge, La.	KVSO	Ardmore, Okla.	WIBU	Beaver Dam, Wis.
WLBZ	Bangor, Me.	KMED	Medford, Ore.	WRJN	Racine, Wis.
		KOOS	Marshfield, Ore.	KWYO	Sheridan, Wyo.

Plan now to keep in regular touch with the Goodrich-Shadow Show. Watch your local newspapers and newsstands for the exact time of these broadcasts.

NEXT MEETING- The next meeting of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado will be held on Sunday evening, December 5 at the Golden Ox Restaurant. The address of the restaurant is 3130 E. Colfax. This will be our only get together during the Holiday Season.

The evening will begin at 5:30 PM with a cocktail hour, followed by dinner at 6:30 PM. Dinner will be followed by the introduction of our guest speaker for the evening. We are extremely happy to announce that our guest for the evening is Walter Saunders of the Rocky Mountain News. Mr. Saunders has been a good friend to the RHAC and I know we all look forward to meet him. The Golden Ox is an excellent restaurant and prices begin at \$3.50. Let's make this our biggest gathering so far. Bring the wife or girlfriend(not both) and any other interested friends. There will be a little gift for the ladies. Please let Joe Madden know how many will be coming with you so we can tell the restaurant the number attending. See you there.

GOOD LISTENING-Here is the listing of shows John Dunning will play for the month of November:

- November 7 - Broadway is My Beat
 - Romance
 - Wild Bill Hickok
 - Grand Old Opry (will be played on Harry's show after OTR show)
- November 14 - CBS Radio Workshop "The Legend of Annie Christmas"
 - Aldrich Family from 1939
 - Suspense "Circumstantial Terror"with Roanld Reagan
- November 21 - Screen Directors Playhouse "All My Sons" with Edward G. Robinson
 - Fort Laramie- First show
 - Mormola Entertainers (15 minutes)
 - Vic and Sade (15 minutes)
- November 28 - Fibber McGee and Molly- 15th anniversary(1 hour)
 - Escape "Dream of Armagadon"

"TUNE IN YESTERDAY"- We have had a very good response to John Dunning's book order. They should be in shortly but we will need the money by the time they arrive. If you ordered the book through the RHAC please send your check to John Nicholson or myself as soon as possible.

RHAC SERVICE PROJECT- We have had a very favorable response to a service project that we will be undertaking. Channel 6 (KRMA) will be having a fund raising drive and they have asked us to help them answer the phones on the night of November 20. We will be taking the pledges over the phone. We are supposed to be there at 6:30 PM and will handle them for several hours. It would help if we showed up a little before that in order to get our instructions. KRMA is located at 1261 Glenarm Pl. Parking should be no problem. KRMA will be showing a fine show about old time radio on November 13 and again on the 20th so when we are answering the phones we might get some good leads on some new members. My special thanks to John Adams and Glenn Ritter for organizing this project. Glenn sure did a lot of phone calling. Wives are more than welcome.

WEDDING BELLS-Time for another wedding. RHAC member Larry Moser is getting married to Mary Jane Iauth on Saturday, December 4. Speaking for all of the members of the RHAC, I'd like to wish them joy and happiness for the future.

The History of the NBC Network, Part 4 (The 1940's)

By 1940, NBC was offering a wide variety of fare-fashion shows, kitchen shows, puppet shows, wrestling, college baseball- everything from sidewalk interviews at the premier of "Gone With The Wind" to the 1940 election returns.

Excitement over television ran high and the medium appeared ready to take off. But by the end of 1941, America was at war and precious materials and assembly lines were needed for the war effort, so NBC put TV on the shelf. Radio, too, was going to war. NBC was the first network to send a reporter to Europe. H. V. Kaltenborn came to NBC, joining a distinguished staff of correspondents that included John McVane and Don Hollenbeck. Dozens of foreign pickups, including battle front reports, were broadcast every day of the war. Network radio, which had helped create a sense of national identity and hope during the depression, now strengthened the American purpose in a time of greater trial. Radio had reached maturity. It had proved that it could do a variety of things well, even brilliantly- entertain, enlighten, innovate and inspire.

In 1942, NBC launched the "NBC University of the Air", the first network series to offer college level instruction on a systematic basis. Action adventure programs like "Mr. District Attorney" which had premiered in 1940, found wide acceptance all through the forties. NBC's comedy-variety lineup now included stars like Red Skelton, Phil Harris and Alice Faye, Abbott and Costello, and Perry Como; and programs like "Duffy's Tavern", "The Aldrich Family", and "Grand Old Opry". NBC panel shows like "Quiz Kids" and "Information Please" became national pastimes, along with audience-participation programs like "Truth or Consequences" and "People Are Funny". The tape recorder, a wartime invention, was revolutionizing program production, especially news and documentaries. And radio's success as an advertising medium was triggering another development-the resurgence of television.

1943 was the year that NBC sold it's "Blue" network to Edward J. Noble and this in turn lead to the formation of the ABC radio network. Bob Hope, Jack Benny, Fibber McGee and Molly and Walter Winchell were in the top four spots in 1944, but by 1948, Lux Radio Theater, My Friend Irma, Duffy's Tavern and Arthur Godfrey were the most listened to. Radio had indeed reached it's "Golden Years" and would be dealt a hard blow in the coming decade that it would never recover from.

COMING NEXT MONTH: HISTORY OF NBC, PART 5 (1950's)

BITS AND PIECES- John Dunning tells me that the Nostalgia Book Club has chosen his book and will offer it through their club in the future...Hal Peary dropped me a line and said he is working on a book.....The circulating library will be available at the December 5th meeting....Please bring any circulating library tapes you have the day of the next meeting since we want to find out where they are and can trace the lost ones...Bruce Carteron deserves special mention here. He will be going to New York for a few months on a job but said he would do some extra covers before he leaves. That is very unselfish and much appreciated by all the members....I would like to see a column about good and bad local dealers, good and bad out of town collectors, special sales and good and bad stereo brands. It would be a real service to all members. Can you help?...Does anyone know of any radio mags we can borrow to make copies?....See you December 5th and have a very nice Thanksgiving.

THE JACK ARMSTRONG MURDERS (PART 5)BY CHUCK SEELEY OF THE OTR CLUB OF BUFFALO

The sub came closer; I could see men on deck with guns. One of them was spying us with binoculars. He turned to one of the men, who apparently relayed an order. The big sub slid up close to us and stopped. About a dozen men had guns on us.

The one with the binoculars slung around his neck was stocky and dark. He was balding, with a trim mustache and goatee and he was dressed in a red and black uniform of some kind. He stood there, hands on hips, regarding us and grinning a toothy grin. Then he laughed.

"Throw them a line," he ordered, in a heavily accented voice that I could not place.

Spade caught the line and they drew us alongside. Rough hands pulled us on deck. We stood there, shivering, facing this grinning man. Then what I thought at first to be another crewman appeared next to him. It took me a minute to realize that it was a girl. But what an ugly girl! She was taller than the grinner but built the same and dressed similarly. In fact, it was the culottes that betrayed her as a girl. If she had shorter hair and a goatee, they would have been twins. The hair she had was long, black and stringy. I got the impression she had five o'clock shadow. I mean, this chick was ugly!!

As ugly as she was, the man on the other side of the grinner was uglier. I was watching him and waiting for him to drool. He reminded me of the cover of an old E.C. horror comic. He laughed kind of hideously.

Spade didn't seem willing to let go of Margo, so I took a step forward.

"Hi," I said, thrusting out a hand. "My name is Kyle Foster."

The grinner didn't take it. He looked thoughtful.

"Foster...Foster," he repeated slowly.

The ugly broad spoke up in a voice that was a fingernail on a blackboard.

"Kyle Foster! He is the one, Father, he is the one!"

She laughed horribly.

The grinner's eyes lit up.

"You are sure, daughter?"

"Yes, yes, Father," she cackled.

The grinner turned to the creature on his left.

"Take them below, Fang, except for the girl. I may wish to, ah, question her. Take her to my cabin."

Fang drooled.

"Now, just wait a minute, my--" Spade said before a gun butt cracked his skull.

I decided not to make a noble gesture. Two men grabbed my arms and two more began dragging Spade to a hatchway. The grinner looked at me and smiled again.

"Welcome, Mr. Foster," he said in that odd accent. "You are the guest of Ivan Shark!"

She was super-ugly and she wanted to kiss me. She came close, so close that I felt ill. Her breath smelled of rotting fish. The worst part about it was that I was chained, hand and foot.

"You are so handsome, Kyle Foster," Fury Shark told me.

"Yeah, well, just lucky, I guess."

She put one clawed hand behind her head. I guess she thought she was cute.

"Do you find me.....attractive, Kyle? You don't mind if I call you [unclear], do you?"

I told her I didn't mind.

"Well?" she said.

"Uh, what---what did you want?"

She spun around on one foot, sending a vague stench of something unpleasant floating by me.

"I asked you if you thought I was attractive."

"Oh yeah, yeah, that's right. Mmmph, well, I've never seen anyone quite, ah, like you before."

She hurled herself on me, her warty arms around my neck, her smelly breath in my face.

"Do you really mean that, Kyle darling? Do you?"

I almost passed out.

"God, yes, yes!" I choked.

She squealed unappealingly and planted a slobbery kiss on my cheek (I had turned my head in time). She jumped up and down and hugged herself.

"Oh, I must run and tell Father. He'll be so pleased! I'll get someone to take off those nasty chains and we can be married right away!"

She capered out the door and I had the dry heaves.

Shortly, two guards came and removed my fetters, then hauled me into Ivan Shark's cabin. He sat there behind an immense desk. Fury stood, beaming hideously, next to him. He fixed me with a piercing gaze.

"Well, young man, I understand that you want to marry my only darling daughter."

His accent was getting easier to understand.

"Well," I gulped, "She seems to have her heart set on it."

Ivan Shark joined his fingertips together.

"Unfortunately," he said, "I cannot allow it."

I almost let my elation show. Fury screamed.

"YOU WHAT?"

Ivan took a conciliatory tone with his loving daughter.

"Now, now, my dear, you know it would be quite impossible---"

"YOU LET ME HAVE HIM! YOU PROMISED!"

Ivan was forced to grab her arms to keep her from hitting him.

"Please, Fury. You can have another. How about that nice Mr. Spade down in the hold?"

She tore loose from him and ran sobbing from the room. Ivan looked after, then straightened his clothes.

"Now, ah, Mr. Foster," he said. "As to your...disposition. It seems that you are eagerly sought by both the forces of the law and a...relative of mine."

I was puzzled.

"Relative?"

"Yes. You know him as Dr. Fu Manchu. We had the same father, you see."

"Then why---"

"Why did I attack your steamer? Because I knew that the Si Fan were aboard. I did not know why, but that they were aboard was sufficient. My half-brother and I do not get along, Mr. Foster. We never have. And now it comes to my attention that he wants you. Why is that, do you think?"

I shrugged.

"Beats me, I never met the man."

Ivan smiled thinly.

"You will. Fu Manchu will pay dearly for you, Mr. Foster, more than the reward offered by Warbucks Industries for the slayer of Jack Armstrong. I intend to sell you to him. Before I do, however, I wish to know what it is that makes you so valuable."

"Gee. I wouldn't know, really."

Ivan looked impatient.

"Come, come, Mr. Foster. You will tell me one way or another. If need be, I'll sell you by bits and pieces."

I thought it over. Torture never turned me on. I'd almost rather marry a woman. And I figured I was on my own. The Shadow never came out of the water, so he must have drowned. Spade was locked up in the hold, nursing a nasty scalp wound. Of what Ivan Shark had done with Margo Lane during the three days since our capture, I shuddered to think. I hadn't even seen her, so I didn't know if she was alive or dead. I could expect help from no one.

So Ivan Shark and Fu Manchu didn't get along, eh? There might be a way to work both ends against the middle and maybe stay alive.

"All right," I said. "I'll talk."

And I did, for nearly an hour. I spun such a tale, he had to believe me. I told Shark all about the Collier Door into other realities and about Fu Manchu's conspiracy with criminal geniuses from other worlds, but I embroidered it a little. I told him that, while Clay Collier had invented and built a small model of the Door, I was the only one with the necessary knowledge of "cryalosis mechanics" which was a vital component of the Door. Of course, I made it all up. Ivan Shark bought it. His eyes gleamed.

"So!" he said. "Without you, Fu Manchu cannot carry out his plans. Good. Good! You will construct a Door for me!"

Uh. I hadn't figured on that.

"But I can't," I replied. "Collier has all the formulae and blueprints. I'll need those."

Ivan frowned.

"Very well. I'll have the plans stolen."

"But there are no plans, Mr. Shark, not written ones. They're all in Collier's mind."

"So?" Ivan thundered. "Then we'll steal Collier! Fang!"

The creature came running. Ivan rapidly explained to him that they were going after Collier. That was just what I wanted. I didn't think that Shark could pull off his plan, but it would give me time to escape, well, try to escape with Margo and Spade.

"First, however," Ivan told Fang, "We will put in at our base. We will leave Mr. Foster there to prepare his laboratory for our return."

"Yes, Master," slobbered Fang, and he slinked off to give the necessary orders.

Ivan turned to me.

"I think perhaps I shall leave Fury with you, Mr. Foster. I think romance makes her color better."

Yeah, I thought. Puss green.

"I would like to have Mr. Spade and Miss Lane with me, also."

"Really? Why?"

"Well, Mr. Spade is rather handy in the lab---"

"A private detective?" snorted Ivan. "Handy in the lab?"

"Oh. Well, we are close friends, you see, and---"

"Oh very well. He will live as long as you do."

That didn't spund heartening.

"As to Miss Lane, " he continued, "I shall indeed leave her at my base. I would not want to take her into serious danger."

So I knew Margo was alive, at any rate. We had a chance.

TO BE CONTINUED

JOHN DUNNING

TUNE IN YESTERDAY

The Ultimate Encyclopedia of OLD-TIME RADIO 1925-1976

What two shows tried to copy *The Shadow's* success? Who was Ma Perkins' lumberyard friend? Who was the voice of Superman? Who ran *House Party* before Art Linkletter? How did Bing Crosby, Jimmy Durante, Red Skelton, and Bob and Ray make their radio debuts? And who played Oogie Pringle last?

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