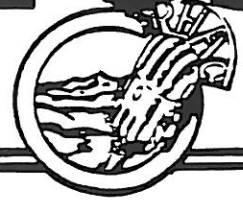


RETURN WITH US NOW...

The Radio Historical
Association of Colorado, Inc.



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July 1992



RETURN WITH US NOW... is the official publication of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc., a non-profit organization. Cost of membership is \$20.00 for the first year with \$15.00 for annual renewal. Each member has full use of the Club resources. For further information contact anyone listed below.



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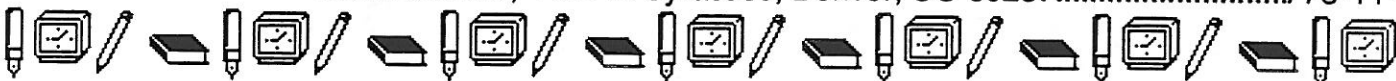
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THERE WILL NOT BE A BOARD MEETING IN JULY!

ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME AND INVITED TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE AT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING. The August 6th meeting is at home of Dick King at 7:30 P.M.



THE JUNE 1992 R.H.A.C. MEETING WILL BE JULY 16TH AT THE CHURCH OF THE MASTER, LOCATED AT 17TH AVENUE AND FILBERT COURT.

MARK IT ON YOUR CALENDAR!! There will be a picnic at the home of R.H.A.C. President Dick King, at 900 W. Quincy Ave., Englewood...Saturday, August 29th. at 2 P.M. Lots of good food and cold drinks. **SPECIAL GUESTS!** R.H.A.C.-members John and Larry Gassman will visit from California and, chances are, they can be depended upon to provide some entertainment. Also, chances are, that entertainment will be related to their specialty...Jack Benny.

Saturday, August 29th., 2 P.M., 900 W. Quincy Ave., Englewood.

Come! Enjoy the FOOD, FUN, and FRIVOLITY!

Duane Griffen is an R.H.A.C. member and has been furnishing cassettes for the Visually Impaired for almost four years. The Lions Club in Idaho Falls, Idaho started furnishing his material to the appropriate people and some of it is now being put out by Talking Books. Duane tells us that they ship to people throughout the U.S. and many foreign countries. The Lions Club also advertises in the Braille Forum and several other publications for the blind. Duane is only 60 and feels that this project is "keeping me off the streets." One can easily imagine that this project helps Duane feel good about life at the end of each day. If YOU are interested in contacting him: write or phone Duane Griffen, 2265 Wahlquist Drive, Idaho Falls ID 83401 (208) 522-9008. Keep up the good work Duane!



Radio Historical Association of Colorado

FROM THE KING'S ROOST

By Dick and Maetha King

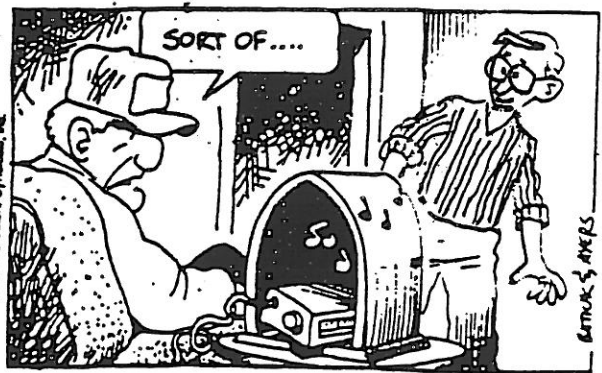
It sure is nice to be home, but we have so many things we want to do and places we want to go, that it is very hard to fit it into our seven day weeks. We have many orders to go out from the reel-to-reel library, but we plan to wait until Monday and hope the railroad strike is over and our boxes will move in good time.

We received a nice note from one of our Canadian members, Cameron Schell, and we feel it is part of our responsibility to our members to handle the nuisance of the postal regulations for the international shipments, but it does make it difficult for the librarians that work during the Post Office hours.

We have been listening to the new tapes going into the library, and they are such a change from the high-powered shows that we have come to expect from the entertainment industry. "Pinto Pete" may be a bit corny compared to Bing Crosby, but these shows appealed and were geared to the small families and the simple life style of their day. Truly a reminder of times when people were not too busy to say hello to their neighbors or anyone that passed by as they sat on their porches on a warm summer evening. Life was much simpler and slower in those days.

We have so many members that want their children and grandchildren to be able to hear the radio shows of a different time, and develop their imaginations and dreams. We certainly hope that our libraries will help shape the minds of some of our future leaders and heros. Our country needs leaders, not just followers, and those leaders must have an imagination.

CRANKSHAFT



NEIGHBORING

(Continued from April newsletter)

Entertainment was only part of KMA's appeal. From the beginning, the station, as part of its service to listeners and as a way of encouraging their interest in the seed business, went in heavily for information aimed at farmers, growers, homemakers, parents, and children. "The chain stations have become monotonous and the programs they present are not desired or appreciated by the average public and especially the rural folk...to whom the radio has given most service," Mr. and Mrs. Jno. P. Ellis, of La Grange, Missouri, wrote to Earl May in January of 1928. What the Ellises appreciated were such programs, listed in the earliest KMA program booklets, as instructive addresses by the "well-known lecturer and world traveler" George Van Houten, stories for children told by "Auntie Blossom" every Friday night from six to seven, radio sermons for shut-ins and "others denied the pleasure of church attendance," advice on solving "the actual problems of the present-day farmer" from a farmer named Frank Coykendall, tips for raising better poultry offered by Mrs. Archie Perkins, and tales of "Life in the Wild" written and read by Jim Whilt, known as "the poet of the Rockies."

Tuning in to KMA to hear George Van Houten lecture on "History of the Children of Israel," as he did in 1926, or listening to the sports announcer, Burke Schriver, give the scores every night during the baseball season was a family event in many households, but during the day, when children were at school and men off at work or in the fields, women with chores to do spent time alone with the radio. From the start, KMA put women on the air to broadcast programs designed specially for those women at home--programs with such names as "Home Hour" and "Visit." Lina Ferguson, who began each broadcast with the salutation "Good morning, flower friends and fellow gardeners," was billed as "the flower lady with the million-dollar voice." Eva Hopkins had a show called "Beauty Aids," and used it to sell her homemade "House of Hopkins" beauty products. An afternoon program called "Domestic Science" provided instruction by Mamie Miller, who was a voice-and-piano teacher but also expounded on the subjects of cleaning, cooking, and home beautification. One of the most enduring of these broadcasters--she was on the air from 1929 to 1981--was Edith Stirlen, an ordained minister. She had a daily program called "Send Out Sunshine," on which she sang hymns, accompanying herself on ukelele, guitar, or pump organ; requested help for the needy; and presented recitals by her singing canary. Earl May's wife, Gertrude, was a regular performer on the air in the early days, singing solos and conducting a Sunday-morning religious show, and she seemed to have a real talent for selling. Bob Birkby's book, "KMA Radio: The First Sixty Years," tells about a time when Earl May found his retail grocery store (adjacent to the radio station) overstocked with prunes. Gertrude May and another KMA announcer took to the airwaves and sang the praises of prunes, discussing their health benefits and staging a contest for the best prune recipes sent in by listeners. The surplus prunes vanished from the store shelves forthwith.

The first of the woman broadcasters at KMA to become known as a radio homemaker was Jessie Young. May hired her in 1926, when she lost her job as bank teller because the bank failed. She had sung duets with her husband, Floyd, on the earliest Earl May broadcasts from WOAW, and her job at KMA was to sing and also to write and read commercials. Her ability to read commercials in a down-to-earth manner, together with the success of a chatty show for women on KFNF called "The Mother's Hour," convinced Earl May that Jessie ought to have a daily women's program of her own on KMA. "The Stitch and Chat Club," which was soon named "A Visit with Jessie Young," became the exemplary radio-homemaker show--a show on which a woman regularly discussed the details of housekeeping, including cooking and sewing, and also created an easygoing daily radio companion whom listeners could depend on. Jessie didn't lecture; she neighbored. Her voice said, "Trust me--I'm just like you." She talked into the microphone as though she were chatting with a friend over the back-yard fence.

"A Visit with Jessie Young" was quickly distinguished by its authenticity. In 1932, to underscore Jessie's folksy manner and encourage the audience to consider her an equal, a transmitting wire was run to her home kitchen from KMA, and she did her broadcasting there; on Saturdays, the show featured the comings and goings of her four children and her husband, including musical selections on the Novachord by their son Robert and vocal duets by Floyd and Jessie. In the course of a week, Jessie might discuss how to make cloverleaf lace and the best way to skim fat from gravy, but she would also muse about what she was fixing for supper that night and worry aloud about family problems; she would talk about her daughter Eileen, whom she and Floyd had adopted, and would invite her elderly mother, Rosa Susanka, to join her at the microphone and share her maternal wisdom. As air time approached, according to Bob Birkby's book, Jessie chased the kids out of the room, lowered the fire under the pot on the stove, wiped her hands on her apron, and sat down in the middle of a working kitchen in the middle of a working day to visit for half an hour with listeners engaged in exactly the same sorts of activities.

As a child growing up in Essex, seven miles north of Shenandoah, Jessie had worked hard: she went door-to-door selling her mother's baked goods and subscriptions to magazines. As a radio homemaker,

she ad-libbed all her commercials, never using a script. She was a natural salesperson, and a homemaker show proved to be a lucrative medium for advertising, not limited to cleaning and cooking products. "I sold cosmetics, roses, fish, horse collars, harnesses, jackets, boots, jam, tires, blankets, and dress goods," she recalled. "But I never sold anything I didn't believe in." And listeners believed in her. Jessie Young was soon receiving three to four thousand letters a week from housewives and farm wives offering advice and product recommendations of their own and telling their own domestic stories. The Shenandoah post office built a special repository in front of her house to hold the daily mailbag, so that it could be dropped off each morning by truck and then toted to her front door by the mailman as he made his rounds. She said, "The people who wrote me those letters visited with me just like I talked to them on the air."

The idea that a home should be run according to scientific principles and that snow-white sheets, fluffy cakes, and a knife-sharp crease in a husband's trousers were the prescription for domestic bliss had been popularized around 1900. The way to proficiency was through a serious study of housekeeping, and for women living on isolated farms radio home-makers were an invaluable source of knowledge about it.

One veteran KMA listener who never attended a formal class in laundering, housewifery, or cooking said last summer, "It meant so much to me to have the homemakers tell me how to clean off the spots that the baby made when she spat up and how to wash the diapers to get them clean. It was very important--you soaked them in the products they told you about and got them all nice and clean. That was still when a white wash was the sign of a good homemaker. You hung your clothes outdoors; and some of the neighbors had to get the laundry out on the line first in the neighborhood to prove they were the best of the homemakers--by first light...You did the white things first, and as the water cooled you did the other things, and on the farm you wound up with the overalls. Once a week: Monday was washday. So said the homemakers, and so it was."

As recently as the eighties, a radio homemaker named Billie Oakley happened to mention on her show, "It's a Woman's World," that she used Bag Balm, a cream for cow's udders, as a moisturizer, and Bag Balm sales at Jay Drug, a pharmacy in Shenandoah, went from six cans a year to two thousand in a few months.

By the mid-thirties, homemakers were a staple on radio stations throughout the country. The NBC network broadcast "Mrs. Blake's Radio Column," "Sisters of the Skillet," and, on the West Coast, "Woman's Magazine of the Air." The home economist Martha Bohlsen, of Omaha's WOW, began broadcasting the tremendously popular "Kitchen Klub," and in 1949 it became one of television's first cooking shows. In 1932, Proctor & Gamble published a brochure called "Good Things to Eat from out of the Air -- 136 Tested Radio Recipes," each endorsed either by a well know radio homemaker or by a radio performer like Guy Lombardo or Bing Crosby ("fresh from the West Coast" and "already one of the East's favorite baritones").

Shenandoah is different today. It is still arranged along a cheerful main street, but now there are a strip mall and franchised restaurants on the outskirts of town, and Sycamore Street, where radio personalities used to stay in boarding houses, is no longer glamorous. May's seed-and-nursery business continues to thrive, as does Henry Field Seed Company, but KFNF has been off the air for fourteen years. KMA's Mayfair is gone; it was torn down in 1963 and replaced by a rectangular one-story brick radio center. Records superseded live radio music in the early fifties, and there was no longer a place on the schedule for well-remembered KMA personalities such as Elmer and His Axelbenders, and the Everly Family (including Brothers Don and Phil), who used to broadcast "The Everly Family Program" at five-thirty each morning, featuring inspirational songs, guitar blues, and advertisements for XIT rat poison and Foster's Thirty-Minute Wonder Corn and Callus Remover.

Much of what is broadcast on KMA today is what you would expect to hear over any independent five-thousand-watt radio station in farm country. There are network news updates, a syndicated medical minute, McDonald's advertisements, Paul Harvey commentaries, and top-forty hits. Paula Abdul and the New Kids on the Block are as familiar to young people in the small towns around Shenandoah as they are to big-city children. There are soy-bean reports and sow-belly-market updates and other programs that serve the farmer, but now fewer women depend on radio homemakers to learn housewifery and to alleviate rural boredom. They are too busy shuttling their kids to Little League, or they are out of the house all day working at jobs. Even in traditional farm families, few women consider homemaking the sublime occupation it was advertised to be when domestic science reigned.

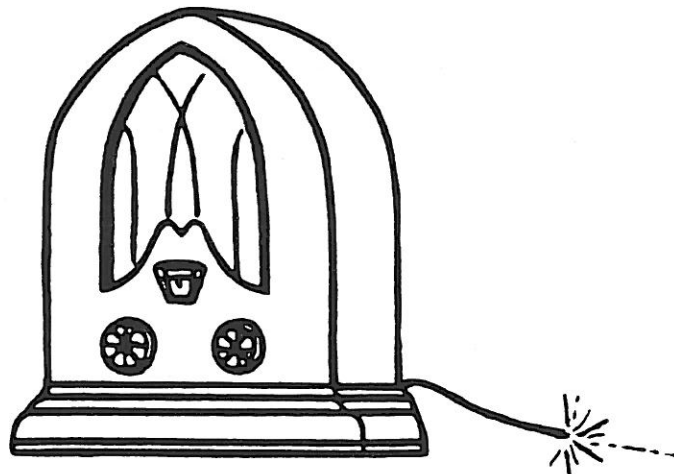
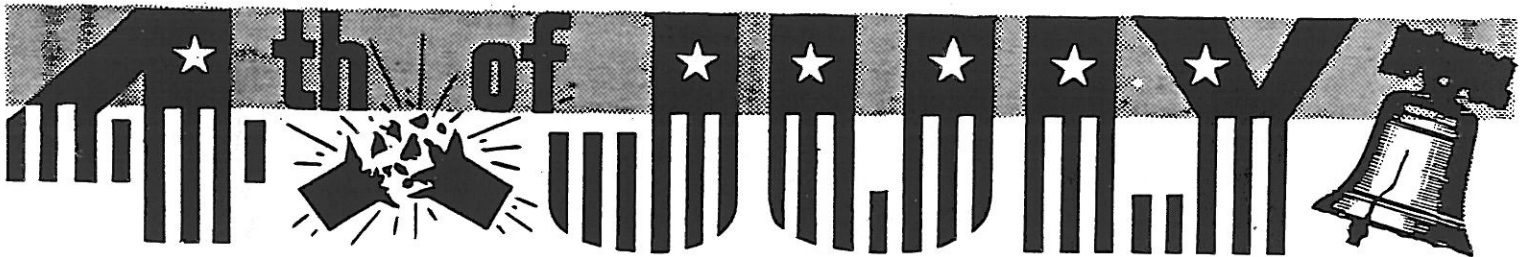
In 1950, KMA broadcast six homemaking programs every day. Now there is one, called "Lifestyles." On occasion, veteran homemakers return to the airwaves for special events and commemorative broadcasts, and Billie Oakley manages to carry on three ten-minute visits each week. Some homemakers got too old to broadcast anymore; some moved away; a few have retired. Whatever the reason for their leaving, it is bad news for radio friends who grew up relying on them for advice and company. Emily Bengston, who runs a cafe in Farragut called the Anchor Inn, recalls the time, just a few years ago, when

KMA replaced the nine-to-ten-o'clock homemaking show with a syndicated call-in program featuring Joy Brown, a psychologist from the West Coast: "Here I was making my pies, and she took the first caller. It was a man who said, 'I'm having trouble getting an erection.' The manager of KMA came in for lunch a few days later, and I went over to his table, slammed my fist down, and said, 'This is enough! I cannot make meringue with somebody's erection on my radio.'" Ed May, Jr., a grandson of Earl May, and the owner of KMA, said that he has tried to make the station more contemporary and increase its appeal to the younger audience, who would lure advertisers, and that most young women aren't as much interested in radio homemaking as their mothers and grandmothers were. But he knows that the homemakers are an important part of the station, and doesn't want to lose the loyal listeners who depend on them. "They are what has made us unique," he said. "There are all kinds of places you can hear Billy Joel records but nowhere else you can go for the homemakers. Their personalities have made our personality."

Billie Oakley, described with affection by others at KMA as "Mother Earth," "a salty old broad," and "Mrs. Gumption," is the current queen bee of radio homemakers. She was syndicated to twenty-four stations, from Worthington, Minnesota, to El Dorado Springs, Missouri, until last winter, when illness forced her to cut back to her three-times-a-week show on KMA. She began her career on the radio in 1931, singing "Lonesome Road," and went on to become the host of "It's a Woman's World" and "The Billie Oakley Show," woman's director at KMA, and the keynote cook at the 1965 Homemaker Day Meat-Arama, in Shenandoah. On show day, she arrives at the KMA studio with her hair majestically sculptured into a white pouf, and her face smooth with meticulously applied makeup, but she is leaning on a black lacquer cane she resents with every step. Her delivery on the air is seamless and, like Jesse Young's visits sixty-five years ago, unscripted. She is seductively folksy as she discusses a recent trip to a "Christmas in July" fund-raiser over in the town of Macedonia and interweaves her narrative with advertisements for the Eastman House Sleep Magic Electrically Adjusted Bed at Shenandoah's J & R Furniture and Carpet ("You go in and try that bed") and for Peterson Mercantile, in Clarinda ("Look things over and meet the girls"). On being asked why she has remained popular among listeners for so many years, Billie answered, "I'm average, average in everything. I have never excelled in anything except maybe broadcasting. Radio friends like that, because I am their peer. When I am on the air, I am talking to them."

Verlene Looker is the current women's director at KMA and the only full-time radio homemaker, broadcasting "Lifestyles." She is forty-five years old and has a face and figure familiar in small-town Iowa but hardly ever seen in cities on either coast. Tall and broad, with close-cropped salt-and-pepper hair and bright pink cheeks, she is a farmer's daughter and talks with ease about birthing cows, rolling piecrusts, and "walking beans" (the farmer's term for weeding). Verlene grew up listening to the radio homemakers, and worked on the air with the "Kitchen-Klatter" women in their last days, in the early eighties.

THE NEW YORKER, Jane and Michael Stern, April 15, 1991



TAPE 5216 PINTO PETE AND HIS RANCH BOYS (Continued)

1800'

- 1R Programs #61, 62, 63, 64, 65 and 66
First songs: Strawberry Roan; Down in Sleepy Hollow; Where the Golden Poppies Grow; the Old Apple Tree; When it's Lamplighting Time in the Valley; and When it's Night Time in Nevada
- 2R Programs #67, 68, 69, 70, 71 and 72
First songs: My Grandfather's Clock; the Cat Came Back; I Want to be Ready; A Cowboy's Heaven; Two Little Girls in Blue; and Back Home Again in Indiana

TAPE 5217 PINTO PETE AND HIS RANCH BOYS

1800'

- 1L Programs #73, 74, 75, 76, 77 and 78
First songs: Keep a Inchin' Along; I Know the Lord Laid His Hands on Me; Ridin' Old Paint; Sierra Mountain Moon; When it's Prayer Meetin' Time in the Hollow; and Call of the Rockies
- 2L Programs #79, 80, 81, 82, 83 and 84
First songs: Mother's Crazy Quilt; Tumbling Tumbleweeds; An Old Lullaby; Take Them Mountains out of My Way; On the Ozark Trail; and Arizona Here I Come
- 1R Programs #85, 86, 87, 88, 89 and 90
First songs: Down in Alabama; Won't You Come Over to My House; Answer with a Kiss; Night on the Desert; My Blue Ridge Mountain Home in the West; and Bring Your Roses to Her Now
- 2R Programs #91, 92, 93, 94, 95 and 96
First songs: Waters of the Mohawk Flow; When the Wandering Boy Comes Home; Back in the Old Sunday School; Lonely and Blue; I Get the Blues When it Rains; and Waitin' by the Silvery Rio Grande

TAPE 5218 SMILEY BURNETTE SHOW

1800'

- 1L Programs #145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150 and 151
First songs: When My Sugar Walks Down the Street; I'm Just Breezin' Along (guests, the Four Deals); If I Had It to do Over Again; She's Gone but Not Forgotten (Eddie Dean); Lay Your Little Head on My Shoulder; Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree with Anyone Else but Me; and I'm on My Journey Home (Tommy Duncan)
- 2L Programs #152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 161 and 162 *Paul Casey*
First songs: Johnson Had an Old Gray Mule; I'll Be True to You; Ezekiel Saw the Wheel; Sticks and Stones (Joe Venuti); Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah; I Wish I Had a Sweetheart Like that Old Sweetheart of Mine; and Hey, Hey Good Lookin' (Cindy Walker)

TAPE 5218 SMILEY BURNETTE SHOW (Continued)

1800'

- 1R Programs #163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168 and 169
First songs: Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie; You're a Slow Poke (Zeb Tennis); They'll Be Some Changes Made; She's Gone but Not Forgotten (Bill Ring); Get On Board; Lay Your Little Head on My Shoulder (Corky Edminster); and Blue Skies
- 2R Programs #170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175 and 176
First songs: I Cry for You (Molly Bee); I'm Just Breezin' Along; Undecided Now (Jimmy Widener); Buffalo Gal, Won't You Come Out Tonight; I'm a Lonely Little Petunia in an Onion Patch (Bucky Tibbs); Please Don't Talk about Me When I'm Gone; and Tell 'em We'll Be There (Johnny Horton)

TAPE 5219 SMILEY BURNETTE SHOW

1800'

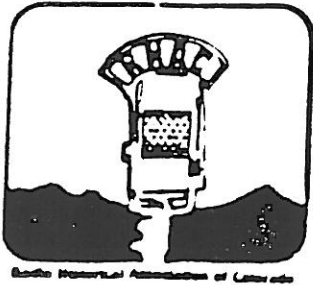
- 1L Programs #177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 and 183
First songs: Tweet'll O' Twill; Someday You'll Want Me to Want You (guest, Bill Russell); Bye, Bye Blackbird; the Dark Town Strutters Ball (Pee Wee King); When My Sugar Walks Down the Street; the Whole World Smiles with You (Billy Strange); and All of Me
- 2L Programs #184, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191 and 192
First songs: On the Sunny Side of the Street (Zeb Tennis); Ride 'em High and Down You Go; Tabby the Cat (Bill Ring); Stay a Little Longer; I'm Happy When I'm with You (Pee Wee King); I May Be Wrong but I Think You're Wonderful; and T for Texas (Cindy Walker)
- 1R Programs #193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198 and 199
First songs: I'm Nobody's Baby Now; Anytime You're Feeling Lonely (Molly Bee); Johnson Had an Old Gray Mule; I'll Never Be Free (Jimmy Widener); Smile, Smile, Smile; I Hear You Knockin' but You Can't Come In (Johnny Horton); and You're the Cutest One
- 2R Programs #200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205 and 206
First songs: How Sweet It Is (Corky Edminster); Poor Baby; Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah; Peachie Pie; Sticks and Stones; Johnson Had an Old Gray Mule; and Buffalo Gal, Won't You Come Out Tonight *Fred Callery*

TAPE 5220 MISC. MUSIC PROGRAMS

1200'

- 1L SMILEY BURNETTE SHOW: Programs #207, 208, 209, 210 and 211
First songs: On the Sunny Side of the Street; Get On Board; Ezekiel Saw the Wheel; I'm Just Breezin' Along; and After You've Gone
- 2L SBS: Programs #212, 213, 214, 215 and 216
First songs: I'm Nobody's Baby Now; On Mockingbird Hill; She's Gone but Not Forgotten; I'm Lonesome and Sorry; and I'm on My Journey Home

(Issued July, 1992)



RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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 ENGLEWOOD, CO 80110

OPEN REEL ORDER FORM

Enclosed is my check or money order in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the one month rental charge of \$1.50 per reel for the reels ordered. You are allowed to order as many as 10 reels at one time, although you may only have 10 reels outstanding at one time.

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2 _____	5 _____	8 _____	11 _____
3 _____	6 _____	9 _____	12 _____

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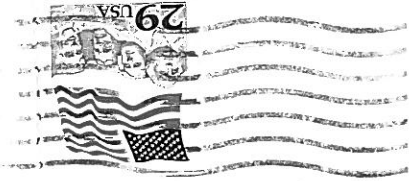
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80470

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01/01/1993



RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO, INC.
(A non-profit organization)
POST OFFICE BOX 1908
ENGLEWOOD, CO. 80150

THE JULY MEETING

WILL BE ON THURSDAY,
JULY 16TH, 7:30 PM AT THE
CHURCH OF THE MASTER
17TH AVE AND FILBERT COURT

