



Volume 26, Number 10

May, 2001



## Production of a *Dragnet* Episode



By Herb Ellis © 2001

This is an excerpt from an interview with Herb Ellis conducted by John Gassman & Bill Bragg on Yesterday USA, May 7, 2000. This was the first of a series of OTR personality interviews that is being conducted on Yesterday USA at: [www.yesterdayusa.com](http://www.yesterdayusa.com)

The actors were first seated at a table, six, seven or eight people; whatever the number of actors that were in the script. We got our scripts and would do a table read rehearsal. Jack wasn't one who liked to do a lot of rehearsal; we did one table read and then did the show. He wanted a spontaneous show; we rehearsed once and did the show.

We did do additional rehearsal if there were some scenes that involved interesting sound patterns; we rehearsed those once with the sound guys. There were three microphones for the actors and there was also a separate telephone mike for the sound effects men. They were about 25 feet away from us, but they were in full view. You could look at them when you were about to take a step or you could put your hand out like you were about to turn the knob on a door. Bud Tollefson and Wayne Kenworthy, the sound effects men, could see that and you were in sync with them all the time.

During the recording of the show, most of us were seated at the table until we had our part to do, we stood and waited for our cues - listening to everything and everybody, and then stepped to the mike. Jack Webb had his individual mike. Barton Yarborough, who was the

original partner, had his own microphone. If you had a scene with Jack, you went to his mike; if you had a scene with Bart, you went to his. We had a third mike for the actors and also the sound effects mike.

On Mondays Walter Schumann came in and did the music for the show. The music was recorded by itself. The shows in the 40's were done on big 16-inch transcription discs. The music and show discs were put together on air.

During the last 2 or 3 years of the radio *Dragnet*, I was the director for most of the shows and also played a part. The original director was Bill Rousseau and then I did the directing; Jack was definitely was in charge. The director did the time show timings. If the director had something to say on additions, deletions or changes, Jack would listen.

*Dragnet* usually had double the amount of dialog of most shows. That was because of the meter or tempo of the show. We talked more as you do in normal conversation as opposed to taking "beats" or measuring your interpretation of the part. Jack wanted it to be as casual and conversational as possible.

*Dragnet* was an interesting half-hour. There was electricity in the air and you knew you were doing something novel and interesting.

For more information on actor and director Herb Ellis,  
See Page 6

# RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

PO BOX 1908, Englewood, CO 80150 303-761-4139

Dedicated to the preservation of old-time radio programs and to making those programs available to our members.

## RHAC Board Meeting Thursday, May 3rd, at 7:30 P.M.

At Maletha and Dick King 900 W. Quincy Ave. Englewood 303-761-4139

*Old-Time Radio Is Alive in Denver!*

|                |  |                                       |
|----------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| KLZ 560 AM     | Music of the 1930's - 60's with John Rayburn   | 2 PM - 6 PM, Weekdays                 |
| KRMA Channel 6 | Secondary Audio Program, <i>Tribute to OTR</i> | Sunday 2:00 PM                        |
| KEZW 1430 AM   | <i>When Radio Was</i> weekdays                 | 7:00 - 8:00 PM                        |
| KFKA 1310 AM   | <i>Radio Memories</i> Sundays                  | 6:00 to 12:00 PM                      |
| KUVU 89.3 FM   | <i>Destination Freedom</i> Tuesday, March 20th | 9:00 PM - See back page of Newsletter |

RHAC WEB SITE <http://www.rhac.org>

RHAC WEB PAGE <http://www.old-time.com/rhac.html>

**RETURN WITH US NOW.** . . is the official publication of the *Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc.*, a nonprofit organization. Cost of membership is \$25.00 for the 1st year with \$15.00 for renewal. Each member in good standing has full use of the club resources. For further information contact anyone listed below.

**CREDIT:** This publication may include images from one or more of the following: *Microsoft Publisher 97, Corel Gallery, Corel WordPerfect Suite 8, Brøderbund Print Shop Ensemble III, and Brøderbund ClickArt 200,000 Image Pak.* These software packages are protected by the copyright laws of the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. Used under license.

**NOTE:** Any mention of a product in *RETURN WITH US NOW.* . . does not constitute an endorsement by RHAC.

|                            |                 |   |              |  |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---|--------------|--|
| <b>President:</b>          | Larry Weide     | 5270 E. Nassau Cir. Englewood, CO 80110     | 303-758-8382 | E-Mail: <a href="mailto:lweide@attglobal.net">lweide@attglobal.net</a>   |
| <b>Vice-President:</b>     | Esther Campbell | 4128 W. 50th Ave. Denver CO 80212           | 303-477-2257 | E-Mail: <a href="mailto:mesther@uswest.net">mesther@uswest.net</a>       |
| <b>Secretary:</b>          | Kathy Melies    | 1280 Dayton St. Aurora CO 80010             |              | E-Mail: <a href="mailto:oslc915@juno.com">oslc915@juno.com</a>           |
| <b>Treasurer:</b>          | Maletha King    | 900 W. Quincy Ave. Englewood, CO 80110      | 303-761-4139 |  |
| <b>Newsletter:</b>         | Vacant          |   |              |  |
| <b>Historian:</b>          | Vacant          |   |              |  |
| <b>Players:</b>            | Helen Lowynsky  |   |              | 303-782-5387   |
| <b>Talking Newslter:</b>   | Mike Fields     | 243 S. 1100 E. Greentown, IN 46936          |              |  |
| <b>Membership:</b>         | Dick King       | PO BOX 1908 Englewood, CO 80150             | 303-761-4139 | E-Mail: <a href="mailto:dickking@ecentral.com">dickking@ecentral.com</a> |
| <b>Tape Donations:</b>     | Bill McCracken  | 7101 W Yale Ave #503 Denver, CO 80227       | 303-986-9863 |  |
|                            | Herb Duniven    | 4184 S. Syracuse St. Denver, CO 80237       |              |  |
| <b>Directors at Large:</b> | David L Michael | 1999 Broadway Lowery Suite Denver, CO 80202 |              |  |
|                            | Herb Duniven    | 4184 S. Syracuse St. Denver, CO 80237       |              |  |
|                            | Dick King       | PO BOX 1908 Englewood, CO 80150             | 303-761-4139 | E-Mail: <a href="mailto:dickking@ecentral.com">dickking@ecentral.com</a> |

### LIBRARIES

|                            |                |                       |                      |              |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Reference Material:</b> | Bill McCracken | 7101 W Yale Ave #503  | Denver, CO 80227     | 303-986-9863 |
| <b>Logs &amp; Scripts:</b> | Fred Hinz      | c/o RHAC P O Box 1908 | Englewood, CO 80150  |              |
| <b>Open Reel Tape:</b>     | Maletha King   | 900 W. Quincy Ave.    | Englewood, CO 80110  |              |
| <b>Cassette Tape:</b>      |                |                       |                      |              |
| #1 (1-499)                 | Ron Gallagher  | 888 South Dexter #607 | Denver, CO 80246     | 303-692-0531 |
| #2 (500-999)               | David Gatch    | PO Box 70             | Glen Haven, CO 80532 | 970-577-0805 |
| #3 (1000-2000)             | Dave Logan     | 5557 S Sherman Cir.   | Littleton, CO 80121  | 303-730-1430 |
| #4 (5001 up)               | Mika Rhoden    | 3950W Dartmouth Ave.  | Denver, CO 80236     | 303-937-9476 |

## RHAC Calendar of Events

*Watch here for upcoming events*

August, 2001  
December, 2001

RHAC Picnic  
RHAC Christmas Party

### 2001 Conventions

**12th Radio Classics Live!** May 4 - 5, 2001 Massasoit Community College - Buckley Center, Brockton, MA  
Contact: Buckley Center Box Office, 1 Massasoit Blvd., Brockton, MA 02302 (508) 427-1234  
<http://www.radioclassicslive.org>

**National Audio Theater Workshop** June 18 - 24, 2001 William Woods Univ., Fulton, MO  
Contact: Sue Zizza, 115 Dikeman St., Hempstead, NY 11550 (516) 483-8321 [Suemedia1@aol.com](mailto:Suemedia1@aol.com)  
<http://www.natf.org/>

**Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound Radio Showcase IX** June 29 - 30, 2001 Seattle Center, Seattle WA  
Contact: Mike Sprague, Box 723, Bothell, WA 98041 (425) 488-9518 [HRRMIKES@aol.com](mailto:HRRMIKES@aol.com)  
<http://www.repsonline.org/01.htm>

**26th Friends of Old-time Radio Convention** Oct 25 - 28, 2001 Holiday Inn-North, Newark, NJ  
Contact: Jay Hickerson, Box 4321, Hamden, CT 06514 (203) 248-2887 [JayHick@aol.com](mailto:JayHick@aol.com)

## From the President

Hello RHAC club members, from your President Larry Weide.

By now you're all aware that our newsletter editor, Stewart Wright, will be resigning after the June issue. We want to thank Stewart for the absolutely superb job that he has done in his 3 1/2 year stint as editor, and we wish him great success in the activities that require that he give up this position with our club.

### Consequently, **We Are Looking for a New Editor!**

The essential responsibilities are as follows - and, by the way, there's no reason why we couldn't "divvy" up the responsibilities to more than one person.

- A. Someone who would assume the responsibilities of collecting and selecting the stories and what other content there may be for a particular issue. As you've seen so many times in the past, most of the stories/articles come from either member submitted articles or articles taken from historical documentation (that is, when a copyright is not an issue).
- B. Someone, with a computer and appropriate software, who would assemble the amassed content into the final master copy to be submitted to the printer.
- C. Someone who would do the transportation and postal work.

(For a detailed breakdown of duties, see article "Newsletter Editor Needed" in April, 2001 issue of *Return with Us Now* . . .)

If we can find some dedicated soul(s) who would assume A and C above, I would take on the responsibility of B above.

If you value our newsletter perhaps you might devote a few hours month to work with others on this very worthwhile activity. Consider this; The newsletter is the *ONLY medium* that we have that reaches ALL of our members. Sure, some of you have read this note on our web site, but only about half of us have this option. So, if we lose the newsletter we will be losing the one vehicle that ties us all together.

I would love to hear from those who would consider taking on some of these responsibilities. Perhaps you have ideas on how to get the job done but in ways we haven't thought of.

I look forward to correspondence from you folks,

Larry Weide - Pres, RHAC

(see inside cover for contact information)



## Just The Facts. . . .

### Or, His Name's Friday: An Appreciation of *Dragnet*

©1999 Elizabeth McLeod

When I was five years old, one of my favorite TV programs was *Dragnet*. *Dragnet* -- 1968! as it was known in those now-kinda-happenin' days -- a jerkily-directed, stiffly-acted homage to the LAPD. Every week, the NBC peacock unfolded his glorious plumage to that odd little harp gliss, and the scene would fade in on a hazy sky shot of downtown Los Angeles.

"This -- is the city."

I loved his voice. That's what really appealed to me about the show. Joe Friday's voice -- that clipped, steady monotone, so firm yet in its own way so gentle. Living as I did in a neighborhood where angry, screaming voices were the rule and not the exception, Joe Friday's laconic drone heralded an all-too-brief visit to a quieter, calmer world. When after thirty minutes that big sweaty hand with the hammer clanged down on the die and it was time for bed -- I was more relaxed than at any other time in the week. I had no idea what the show was about -- I just loved the way it sounded.

I didn't realize *Dragnet* was a cop show until I was ten years old. And by then, I didn't care.

But another decade hence, I found myself working at a small AM radio station which carried Victor Ives' syndicated *Golden Age Of Radio Theatre* series. And one of the programs in the package was the original radio version of *Dragnet*. I listened -- and suddenly realized there was much more to Joe Friday than just his monotone. And there was even more to admire about his creator, Jack Webb: one of radio's few, true geniuses.

Jack Webb was born in 1920, and grew up in wrenching poverty in a particularly feculent section of Los Angeles. By one account, one of his earliest childhood memories was of his mother sending him to root thru garbage cans in search of vegetables that weren't too far rotten to eat. It was a bleak life, with few constants. One of them was the cop on the beat -- a uniformed patrol officer whose name has been lost to history. But Jack Webb remembered him.

Flash forward to 1949. Jack Webb had grown up, served in the Air Corps, and developed a fascination for jazz -- a fascination that led him, in turn, into radio as a small-time announcer/disc jockey. While in the service, he had discovered a talent for writing that led him to

experiment with a number of program formats -- from red-blooded adventure to bizarre Henry Morganesque comedy. But it was his 1947 private-eye series *Pat Novak For Hire* that really got him noticed -- a series that was totally of its time. The postwar years were the heyday of Hard-Boiled-Dick shows, and Novak was the hardest-boiled of them all -- so exaggerated as to be, in the end, a caricature of the genre. It was an entertaining show, but it was hardly unique.

Then, in 1948, Webb's life hit its turning point. While acting in a bit part in an obscure crime movie, Webb met an LAPD sergeant named Marty Wynn, who was acting as technical advisor for the film. Wynn and Webb got acquainted, and when Wynn learned that Webb was involved in radio, the policeman immediately began to criticize the way cops were portrayed on the air: they were invariably boneheads, clods, ignorant oafs -- doltish incompetents who had to be rescued from their own stupidity by the smugly-superior private eyes. It was, to Wynn, a portrayal that was both inaccurate and insulting.

Webb listened. And agreed. He remembered the cop from his old neighborhood -- a stolid, dependable man who was dedicated to his job, and didn't need some smart-mouthed gumshoe to help him do it.

Out of that conversation came inspiration. And a year later, *Dragnet* hit the air for the first time -- presenting, according to its own publicity releases, police dramas of unprecedented realism. There was nothing else like it on the air.

And it very nearly flopped. Listeners accustomed to the purple prose of the private eyes didn't know what to make of this odd cop with the quiet, gravelly voice -- who spent half an hour plodding thru his workday, and who seemed obsessed with the time of day -- punctuating his narrative every few minutes with a check of his watch. *Dragnet* went on the air as a sustainer -- no sponsor -- and NBC was watching carefully to see how the public would respond.

The public didn't seem to care much for the show -- but a very influential critic did. John Crosby was the radio columnist for the New York Herald Tribune -- a bright, urbane man who wrote for bright, urbane readers. And he thought Webb's quirky new show was the most innovative new drama on the air -- "it rings with an authenticity I find absorbing," he exulted in his column. Crosby's readers knew he had reliable tastes -- and sampled the show. Word got out. And Webb's quiet little show was suddenly a major hit.

Webb's show earned its reputation for authenticity -- he was obsessed by it, he was in truth the Erich Von Stroheim of radio directors. Every phrase, every line, every sound effect had to be real. His actors had to sound like they *\*weren't\** acting -- and thus the "Webb Monotone." Every line ended on a downbeat --

murmured from between closed lips. No emoting, no sweeping Orson Welles vocal tricks, no hamminess allowed. Just realism.

The casting of the show was as distinctive as the concept. Webb himself played Joe Friday, the archetypical plainclothes cop: just from his weary tone of voice, you could see the cheap grey suit, the run-over shoes, the frayed tie. Webb played Friday as a civil servant -- just another face on the seventeenth floor -- but one who deeply cared about his job.

Joe's partner was Ben Romero, a tangy-voiced Texan -- played by a man who was a master of that characterization, Barton "Doc Long" Yarborough. But Ben had none of Doc's ebullience -- Ben was a cop. He took life seriously - he had a wife and kids, and a dog, and a house. And all he wanted was to be able to go home to them at the end of the day.

Together, Joe and Ben worked thru exactly one hundred and thirty-two cases between 1949 and 1951 -- for sixty-six of radio drama's finest hours. They solved murders, broke up heroin rings, kept kids away from marijuana -- even investigated sex crimes, in episodes that carried some of radio's earliest content disclaimers ("This program is for you -- not for your children."). They rarely shot their guns. They never wisecracked. They always completed their paperwork. And they made it all sound completely, utterly real, with some of the most innovative, creative use of sound since the heyday of the *Columbia Workshop*.

And then came December 27, 1951.

Earlier that week, the *Dragnet* company had been shocked by the news that Barton Yarborough had collapsed and died in his home -- the victim of a sudden heart attack. And in a gutsy tribute to his friend, Webb ordered the death written into the series. The result was an episode entitled "The Big Sorrow" -- my nominee for one of the most honestly *\*moving\** pieces of radio drama ever presented. Webb plays Joe Friday's grief as tight-lipped and repressed -- and yet, indisputably, Joe is truly and deeply grieving. It's not *\*what\** he says that makes the scene -- it's what he *\*doesn't\** say, and *\*how\** he doesn't say it that gives the moment, and in fact, the entire episode its heart-rending impact. If you don't shed a tear by the end of "The Big Sorrow," you simply have no soul. And you'll come away from this episode with a whole new respect for Jack Webb's skill as an actor.

The series went on for four more years after Yarborough's death, and continued in reruns for a while after that. And, of course, there was television -- a black-and-white run from 1952 to 1959, and a new series in color from 1966 to 1970. Thru it all, Joe never changed. Not even his suit.

But the world around him did. Joe Friday never came to grips with the changing world of the sixties -- although there are moments of surprising compassion in

many of the later TV episodes, Joe's encounters with garishly-dressed pot-smokin' hippies are difficult to take seriously. One wonders how he would have dealt with the Rodney King or O. J. cases.

In the end, we never had to find out. Jack Webb died in 1982 -- and the LAPD paid him the most honest tribute ever paid a radio performer. Badge 714 -- Joe Friday's old badge number -- was retired in his honor. Webb was -- and remains -- the only civilian ever accorded such an honor by the department.

Joe Friday lives on. As long as there are reruns -- as long as, somewhere, a tired detective in a cheap suit sips at a cold cup of coffee, Joe Friday will be remembered.

I know \*I'll\* never forget.

Elizabeth McLeod is a journalist, researcher, and freelance writer specializing in radio of the 1930s. She is a regular contributor to *Nostalgia Digest* magazine and the Internet OldRadio Mailing List, maintains a website, Broadcasting History Resources, and is presently researching a book on Depression-era broadcasting. Elizabeth is always looking for 1930s radio recordings in all formats -- uncoated aluminum or lacquer-coated discs, vinyl or shellac pressings, or low-generation tape copies. You can contact her at:

[lizmcl@midcoast.com](mailto:lizmcl@midcoast.com)

## A Very Special Thank You!

To Gary Mercer of Alexandria, Minnesota who provided the *Dragnet* graphics seen throughout this edition of *Return With Us Now*. . . . Gary is a long-time OTR collector and dealer and can be reached at:

[Goldenrado@aol.com](mailto:Goldenrado@aol.com)

## Dragnet: Fiction, Fact, the Origin of Joe Friday, and More

By Michael J. Hayde © 2001

**FICTION:** Joe Friday's badge number, 714, was Jack Webb's tribute to Babe Ruth. It was the number of home runs that the Babe hit.

The badge number came about because Webb considered "7" his lucky number. His first thought was to give Friday #777, but then decided to add the last two "sevens" together to make fourteen.

**FACT:** Joe Friday's partner, Frank Smith, was named after an uncle of Jack's.

The real Frank Smith, brother of Webb's mother,

owned a clothing store in the San Francisco area, and his wife was named Fay. Incidentally, although Herb Ellis originated the role on TV, the first actor to play Frank Smith on radio was Harry Bartell, in "The Big Safe" on May 1, 1952. It was the only time Bartell did that role. Vic Perrin also occasionally played the part, but Ellis was the primary Frank Smith until Ben Alexander came along in September 1952.

### ORIGINS OF JOE FRIDAY

You might be interested in where the name "Joe Friday" came from. The following is a quote from Herb Ellis, whom I interviewed in 1998: "In 1948, Jack and Julie (London) separated and he came to live with me. And then he got a job on a picture called "He Walked By Night." He played a lab technician in the picture, (and) met Vance Brasher and Marty Wynn (of the LAPD). Marty and Vance were the technical advisors. And Jack came home and said, 'The guys said I should do a show about cops.'

"Well, Jack and I had written a show called *Joe Friday: Room 5* for Vaughn Paul. Vaughn was an erstwhile producer and director, and he was married to Deanna Durbin. I was doing something, and he said, 'Why don't you write a show, and we'll (hold an) audition? I think we can even get it made for television.' He said, 'You've written some things with Jack.' And I did, we'd written a couple of little shows. So, I said 'Okay,' and I talked to Jack, and we wrote a show called *Joe Friday: Room 5*. Just a private dick who's name was Joe Friday.

"Nothing ever happened with it. It was just one of the thousands of things for television in the late forties that never happened. So, when *Dragnet* came along, Jack asked me if he could use Joe Friday."

### PEGGY WEBBER

#### ON WEBB'S RADIO STYLE

In an interview with Peggy Webber, also in 1998, she talked to me a little about Jack Webb's radio style:

"I had worked with him on *Escape*, *This is Your FBI*, and *Pat Novak For Hire* when he brought it down (from San Francisco). I really didn't know who he was. I had heard him on the air just by accident. I was flipping the dial, and I heard this fascinating delivery. It was so intimate, and so much the way I felt radio should be. I was always put off by what I considered to be the radio actor's technique. It sounded phony to me in many instances. I was young and rebellious and I wanted actors to sound as if they were really speaking to someone else. Not reading a script and shouting at the microphone, which was what a lot of them were doing. So when Jack worked with me we sort of clicked. I thought, 'Finally, I'm working with someone who feels the same way I do.'

"I think that his artistry was greater in radio (than television). I really felt he was probably the top of the



line in radio directing. The shows that he turned out were really the best toward the end of the days of radio. He was among the last of the innovative radio directors. And I truly think he was at his peak and his prime in that work, because he was so demanding about sound. I felt he was in the forefront of sound. He understood sound effects, he understood this type of eavesdropping on what was actually happening to people. I think he's been very much underestimated. He deserves a lot of acclaim for what he was doing."

#### UPCOMING BOOK

##### Editor's Note:

Writer Michael J. Hayde is the author of the upcoming book: "My Name's Friday: The Unauthorized but True Story of *Dragnet* and the Films of Jack Webb." This book is the complete story of *Dragnet* and the theatrical feature films of producer/director/actor Jack Webb. The book features interviews with Jack's friends and co-workers, program guides of the radio and television episodes of *Dragnet*, a collection of Sgt. Friday's most well-known speeches, and a glossary of police terms used in the series.

Michael will be attending the *REPS Showcase IX* in Seattle on June 29-30. He'll be signing copies of his book, and talking a little about *Dragnet* on Saturday afternoon, June 30th with Harry Bartell and Herb Ellis.



#### Jack Webb Fact

Editor's Note: I learned the following fact about Jack Webb in a discussion with the late Merrill Mael at a *Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound Showcase*.

"Early in our radio careers Jack Webb, George Fenniman and I were hired to do crowd noises on the *U. S. Steel Hour*. Our mumbled crowd lines were "L. S. M. F. T." over and over."

#### Herb Ellis

By Stewart Wright © 2001

Herb Ellis was born in Cleveland, OH in 1921, his family later moved to California. There he met his long-time friend, Jack Webb, while attending a party.

Working as a disc jockey, doing news, and announcing provided Herb with his first experiences in radio.

His first radio acting was done in San Francisco with friends Jack Webb and Lee Marvin. While in San Francisco, he worked on *Box 13*, *Pat Novak For Hire*, *Yellow Cab Storyteller*, and *Hawthorne House*. He also worked with Webb on the hard-hitting documentary drama *One Out Of Seven*, a series based on a top news story of the week. This series gave Herb the opportunity to play several roles every week. One of Herb's first radio acting roles was that of a young bank robber and his parents and his fellow bank robbers were played by John McIntire and Jeanette Nolan.

For a time Jack Webb lived with Herb and Sylvia Ellis. *Dragnet* was born in the Ellis's house. Herb did the announcing on the audition show and frequently appeared on the radio version. Herb also directed on *Dragnet* during its last years on radio.

In addition to acting, Herb wrote and produced the radio adventure drama series *Jason and the Golden Fleece*. The series starred Macdonald Carey and William Conrad. It aired on NBC during the 1952-53 season. He also contributed scripts for Frank Lovejoy's series *Nightbeat*.

Just a small sampling of Herb's impressive radio acting credits include such series as: *Broadway Is My Beat*, *Dr. Christian*, *Escape*, *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *Frontier Gentleman*, *Gunsmoke*, *The Halls of Ivy*, *Hermit's Cave*, *Horizon's West*, *The Line Up*, *Lux Radio Theater*, *Nightbeat*, *Richard Diamond*, *Screen Guild Theater*, *The Six Shooter*, *Suspense*, *Tales of the Texas Rangers*, *This Is Your FBI*, and *Yours Truly Johnny Dollar*. Herb was one of several actors who played Nero Wolfe's assistant, Archie Goodwin, on *The New Adventures of Nero Wolfe*. Also, he had regular parts on *Rocky Fortune* and *Dangerous Assignment*.

Following radio, he was busy with a lot of television work. Herb was frequently featured on T.V. *Dragnet* as Officer Frank Smith and in other roles and was also an associate director of the series. He had recurring roles in several series including: *The D.A.'s Man* as Frank LaValle, *He & She* as Herb Angostura, *Peter Gunn* as the beatnik Wilbur, and *Hennessy* as Dr. Wagner. He also made many guest appearances on television including: *The Fugitive*, *Not For Hire*, *Sanford and Son*, *Bewitched*, *Get Smart*, *Beverly Hillbillies*, *Perry Mason*, *Dobie Gillis*, *Gidget*, and *The Flying Nun*. In addition to acting, he has done extensive work in commercials including being the spokesperson for Albertson's, Safeco, and Michelob.

For several years, Herb Ellis has volunteered time his time to record books and other materials for the vision-impaired at the Braille Institute, a nonprofit organization in Los Angeles.

Herb will be performing and directing at the *Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound Showcase* in June. For more particulars on the *REPS Showcase*, see page 2.

# Friends of Old-Time Radio Script Contest

From Jay Hickerson

The Ninth Annual Original Script Writing Contest is now open. We would like an original 30 minute script which must be based on any of the great radio programs of the past, such as Jack Benny, Life of Riley, etc. The only difference this time is that they must be a comedy and must be 30 minutes in length. The script can have the characters originating in their original era and time or you can update the time to today. If you have entered before and you have not won in 2 years, please enter again.

The script must have all music and sound cues as well as all the spoken material. Try to arrange it in script form so it doesn't have to be retyped.

It must be double spaced and have large enough type.

The prize for the best script will be \$200 and will have its live performance at our 2002 convention on Thursday evening after dinner. We would like you to attend our convention to participate but it is not mandatory. There will be some rehearsal time. There will also be a second prize winner, who will be awarded \$100, but not performed. Scripts must be submitted by August 1, 2001. Send to Dave Zwengler, 319 Plymouth Rd., North Brunswick, NJ 08902 (732) 940-7639. Return receipt is not necessary. A distinguished panel of three judges including Arthur Anderson will pick the winning script. One of the judges will forward detailed suggestions to non-winners for future improvements. They must be very readable. All are eligible so please spread the word.

Winners have been Michael Giorgio, James Nixon, Edgar Russell, III, Donald Dortmund, Joel Senter, Arlene Osborne and Michael Leannah. This year's winner was K E Bibeau.

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION of COLO.  
P O BOX 1908 ENGLEWOOD, CO 80150

FIRST CLASS MAIL



TOM BROWN  
1402 S. KAHUNA DRIVE  
SPOKANE

WA  
99212

9/1/2001

99212-3238 23

