



RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO

Volume 26, Number 14

September, 2001

THE TALKING NEWSLETTER

By Mike Fields © 2001

Hello, and welcome once again to the RHAC Talking Newsletter...

My name is Mike Fields and I have been the reader for the blind for RHAC's *Return with Us Now* for over 17 years. I have always loved OTR. My fascination with it started when I was a child traveling with my parents on vacations. My dad always liked to leave for a trip in the wee hours of the morning to avoid the Rush. During that time in the 70's you could usually pick up a show playing somewhere. I was hooked and when CBS Radio Mystery Theater began I would hide a radio under my blankets and secretly listen after I should have been asleep.

Later after I married, I remember a radio station in Denver, Co. that played The Great Gildersleeve in the afternoons. That was the first time I heard Gildy and immediately fell in love with the entire gang. This is still my favorite OTR show. I have every episode available and am still searching for more, especially from the later years.

In 1982 I was transferred with my job to Salt Lake City for a year. During that time, I found KLAF radio. This station was truly unique. All it played was comedy routines and Old Time Radio. It was great. It was at this time that I began collecting shows and started recording off the air. The quality of these early recordings is not good, but it started a passion that has continued until today. My current OTR collection contains over 2200 cassettes, 50 Reels and 100 CDs.

In 1983 I was transferred back to Colorado Springs, Colorado. There I found a weekly OTR Show

hosted by Kevin Shields. He was speaking one day about comparisons between Harold Perry and Willard Waterman. He asked for listener input on which one was the best Gildersleeve. I called and this was the beginning of a long-term friendship. I was invited over to the studios one week to watch him do the show live. It was at that time that I realized that Kevin was blind. It was amazing watching him work the dials, take calls and watch the clock. He introduced me to the RHAC. They had monthly meetings in Denver, but Kevin usually couldn't attend. I offered to drive him and joined RHAC at my first meeting. Each month I would drive over to pick up Kevin and together we would attend the RHAC meetings. This was the first time that I had known a blind person. I guess you never think about it until you really get to know someone, just how much anyone can do, regardless of their disability. I still remember Kevin getting ready to leave and going through the house turning off lights. The TV would be going and kids would be horsing around. His wife would be cooking and cleaning up in the Kitchen. Did I mention that his entire family was blind? I really began to appreciate just what obstacles they had overcome.

One day while driving to the monthly meeting, I asked Kevin if he received the newsletter. He said that he did, but hadn't been able to "read" it yet. He had volunteers come to the house to read and do misc. things but so far they hadn't had the time to have it read to him. I began to ask about other magazines and if these volunteers read EVERYTHING. He then explained how most magazines had a blind reading service. He would get a cassette issue that he would pop in a player and listen to from cover to cover.

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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 Member's Meeting & *Election of Officers* - Thursday, September 20th **The Country Buffet Restaurant, 301 W. Girard Ave. Dinner at 7:00pm, Meeting at 7:30pm** **2blks N. of Hampden, 2blks W. of Broadway** **A visit from the Bard of Congress Park and door prizes!**

Old-Time Radio is Alive in Denver!

KLVZ 1220 AM	Music of the 1930's - 60's with John Rayburn	Weekdays, 2:00 - 6:00PM
KRMA Channel 6	Secondary Audio Program (SAP), "Tribute to OTR"	Sunday, 2:00 PM
KEZW 1430 AM	"When Radio Was"	Weekdays, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
KFKA 1310 AM	"Radio Memories" (Greeley)	Sunday, 6:00 - 12:00 PM
KUVO 89.3 FM	"Destination Freedom"	9:00 PM

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

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

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Reference Material:	Bill McCracken	7101 W. Yale Ave #502	Denver, CO 80227	(303) 986-9863
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#1 (1-499)	Ron Gallagher	888 S. Dextrer #607	Denver, CO 80246	(303) 692-0531
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#4 (5001-up)	Mika Rhoden	3950 W. Dartmouth Ave.	Denver, CO 80236	(303) 937-9476

RHAC Calendar

Watch here for upcoming events

December, 2001 (TBA)

RHAC Christmas Party - Dinner, Raffle and show

2001 Conventions

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

It has been brought to our attention that the SPERDVAC convention has been canceled for this year

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RETURN WITH US NOW...

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September, 2001

We discussed the need to have something similar for *Return With Us Now*. And that's how the Talking Newsletter began. Since it was my idea to suggest it, I was nominated to be the reader. I have read each issue ever since. Not always on time but I haven't missed an issue yet. Through this reading I have made some good friends. I read the issue onto cassette and send it out to several of our members. They then send me back the tape, (often recording all the latest happenings in their own lives). Sometimes they will record a show for me to hear. I think that I look forward to getting back their letters as much as they look forward to getting the newsletter. I also have kept an audio library of the entire RHAC catalog. This now covers 9 c-90 cassettes! When a member joins the Talking Newsletter they send me blank cassettes in a reusable mailer. I then copy the catalog onto their tapes and mail them back.

In the 1980's my Parents and I became partners in a Restaurant. We wanted to set it in the 1940's. It was called Gildersleeve's Old Fashion Diner, and was located in Pueblo, Colorado. Willard Waterman was flown out to cut the ribbon as Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve. He even joined the RHAC players and did an entire Radio Show on the front lawn of the restaurant on opening day! Willard and his wife Mary Anna were wonderful. The restaurant had replicas of old radios sitting at each booth. These played short vignettes of radio shows, big band music, and news of the war. The waitresses all dressed in the 40's diner look and the menu was old fashioned home cooking. It was a great idea; but unfortunately we didn't have the money to survive the first year's costs and shut down after 11 months.

THE TALKING NEWSLETTER MEETS THE WEB

In June of this year the Talking Newsletter began offering each issue by the internet as well. Now instead of waiting for me to mail the tape back and then having to return it to me again, members can log onto the RHAC web site and access the newsletter via Real Audio.

Each month when I receive the newsletter I record it onto cassette. I then load it onto the computer and convert it to Real Audio format. After it is converted, I upload it to the Web. Check us out. You can reach the newsletter at www.rhac.org <<http://www.rhac.org>> and then click on the Talking Newsletter link. I plan on putting the entire catalog online as well. Let me know what you think.

RETURN WITH US NOW...

I moved away from Colorado about 10 years ago and miss being able to attend the monthly meetings. I miss the friendships that I made during that time as well. I am now a regional manager for Sodexho. We handle the management of University Food Services all over the country. This keeps me very busy and on the road quite a bit. I also have four kids ranging from 22 to 8 so if I get a little behind every now and then you'll just have to forgive me.

If you are sight-impaired or know someone who is, why not check out what the RHAC has to offer in the Talking Newsletter. Write me if you would like more information at mfields@usa.net.

OTR and The Comics

By Jack M. Richards © March 10, 2001

Ready for a little trivia quiz? What was it that helped us senior citizens to examine our morals? What not only reflects the American Way of Life, but also helped shape it? For a hint take a look at the following list:

Archie Andrews	Mark Trail
Blondie	Nero Wolfe
Buck Rogers	Perry Mason
Buster Brown	Popeye
Captain Midnight	Red Ryder
Charlie Chan	Reg'ular Fellers
Charlie McCarthy	Roy Rogers
Cisco Kid	Sad Sack
Dick Tracy	The Saint
Dr. Kildare	The Shadow
Dr. Fu Manchu	Sherlock Holmes
The Green Hornet	Straight Arrow
Gene Autry	Superman
Hopalong Cassidy	Tarzan
Hop Harrigan	Terry and the Pirates
I Love Lucy	Tom Corbett, Space Cadet
Little Orphan Annie	Tom Mix
The Lone Ranger	

If you had said these were all OTR shows you would have been correct. You would have been equally correct to identify all of them as comic strips. To those who identified them as TV shows, you get only partial credit. Stop for a moment and consider that list again. Here is proof positive that what we love to read isn't necessary what we care to hear on the radio. Take the case of Reg'ular Fellers.

Reg'ular Fellers was a comic strip created by Gene Bynes during WWI. Bynes, with simple directness, explored the world of tough kid gangs with adventures of Jimmy Dugan, Puddin' Head Duffy, and Pinhead. Reg'ular Fellers was to later serve as the model for Hal Roach's Our

Gang. On the radio, Reg'ular Fellers was to have a short life. It was the 1941 summer replacement for Jack Benny.

Creating a comic strip from a successful radio show was often hard. Can anyone remember reading I Love Lucy or Charlie McCarthy? With all the failures of these OTR/comic strip pairs, there were some very notable successes. In no particular order, let's review a few of these.

Blondie was created on September 15, 1930, by Murat "Chic" Young. Blondie depicted the concept of the American family that carries today on TV. Dagwood is the inept, bungling but sincere husband. Blondie is the patient understanding wife who turned away from her billionaire father to marry for love. They had two children, Baby Dumpling (born 1934) and Cookie (born 1941) who grew over time.

Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake brought the Bumstead family to radio and also the silver screen. Other characters were Hanley Stafford as Mr. Dithers, Harold Perry as Herb Woodley, Tommy Cook as the first Alexander (Baby Dumpling), and Leone Ledoux as the first Cookie. The role of Cookie was assumed by Marlene Ames when she began to talk. The show ended on OTR in 1950. Penny Singleton is still with us today. The whereabouts of Arthur Lake is unknown to me.

Dick Tracy, created on October 4, 1931, by Chester Gould is perhaps the most famous detective comic strip. Tracy was the first strip to depict extreme violence and reflected real life dealings of the police with the underworld. Violence was used as a deterrent to a life of crime. One outstanding feature of Dick Tracy was its bizarre characterizations such as Tess Trueheart, Pruneface, Flattop, Itchy, Measles, B. O. Plenty, B-B Eyes, Gravel Gerty, and a host of even stranger critters. On radio Tracy had two runs of respectable length, 1935 to 1939 and 1943 to 1948. It was one of the more successful juvenile 15-minute serials.

Popeye first saw life on February 17, 1929, as a minor character in Elzie Crisler's Thimble Theatre. Popeye gradually became the leading character and finally obtained top billing in 1932. Popeye also had a packet of zany characters such as Olive Oyl, Ham Gravy, Sea Hag, Poop Deck Pappy, Alice the Goon, and J. Wellington Wimpy. Only after an almost unbearable villainous provocation did Popeye resort to violence. Popeye was first heard on the air on September 10, 1935. The gravel voiced Detmar Poppen was Popeye with Olive Lamoy as Olive Oyl and Charles Lawrence as Wimpy. Maybe because the sponsor changed Popeye's source of strength from spinach to Wheatena, it lasted only one year in its fist OTR run.

Little Orphan Annie was the story of an eleven-year-old girl alone and at the mercy of the adult world. It was first published on August 5, 1924, by Harold Gray and is still running today in the Rocky Mountain News. Leapin' lizards, it was essentially a morality play of good verse evil. Gray was the first to make use of political satire and to

express his own views in a comic strip. As far as I can determine, Annie was the first comic strip to take to the airwaves on April 6, 1931. Shirley Bell played Annie and a youngster named Mel Torme was her friend, Joe Cornstassel. Annie was finally dropped from the air in 1943.

Tarzan first appeared in comic form on January 7, 1927, which incidentally was the same date when Buck Rogers first appeared. The first strips were adaptations of Edgar Rice Burroughs' famous stories of the ape-man. Harold Foster was the first illustrator but soon left to work on his own creation, Prince Valiant. Rex Maxon took over the artwork for the daily strips with Foster returning for the Sunday page mop-up. Burne Hogarth took over the strip from both Foster and Maxon.

Tarzan came to radio in 1932 and along with Annie were two of the earliest serials on OTR. The early shows were 15 minutes long and featured the movie actor James Pierce. Jane Burroughs, ERB's daughter and incidentally Mrs. Pierce, had the role of Jane. More than 350 chapters were broadcast before the series ended in 1935. Another run of Tarzan was from March 22, 1952 to June 27, 1953. Featured were original stories complete within the 30-minute format. Lamont Johnson played the lead in this run.

In 1934 Milton Caniff was asked to create a strip full of action and romance. He was given a book on Chinese pirates and the novel Withering Heights for background. From this beginning came Terry and the Pirates. With a flare for drawing sexy ladies and a love of the Air Force, Caniff guided Terry through the troubled orient until 1947. Caniff loved his adopted country of China and in 1938/39 tried to alert the nation to the growing menace of Japanese expansion. Caniff made history by abandoning a successful strip to create another, Steve Canyon. A statue of Steve Canyon stands today at the entrance to Idaho Springs.

With the sound of a gong, a cymbal, and a bunch of meaningless pseudo-Chinese jabber, Terry and the Pirates came to the airways on November 7, 1937. After some sputtering, Terry came into his heyday during the war years as many of the other juvenile serials did. All went well until the victory in the Pacific in WWII. At its peak Terry was played by Owen Jordan, Ted deCorsia played Flip Corkin, Bud Collyer was Pat Ryan, Camerson Anderson was Hotshot Charlie, France Chaney was Burma, Gerta Rozan was Eleta, Peter Donald played Connie, and the infamous Dragon Lady was none-other than Agnes Moorehead.

Finally one feels compelled to comment on Superman. In 1938 Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster took the pulp novel hero Doc Savage (The Man of Bronze), the Gladiator from Philip Wylie's novel, mixed in a little science fiction and mythology to create the most successful costumed hero ever. Incredibly Siegel and Shuster were to sign a contract giving up all rights to Superman and thus loose several millions of dollars. It was until after the successful movie that recognition came to Siegel and Shuster.

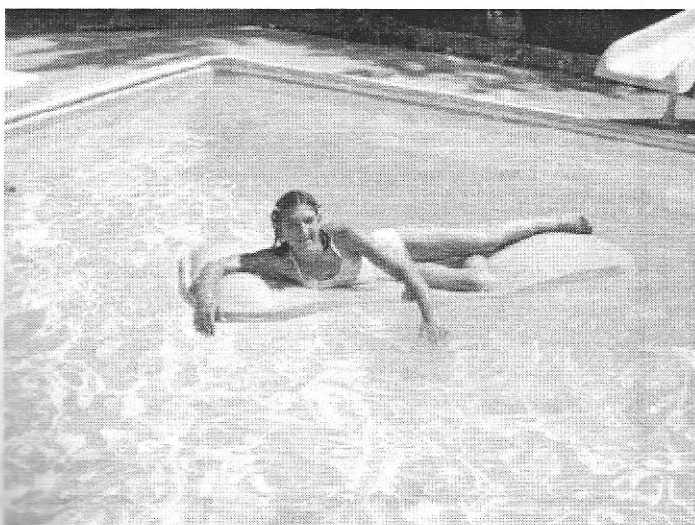
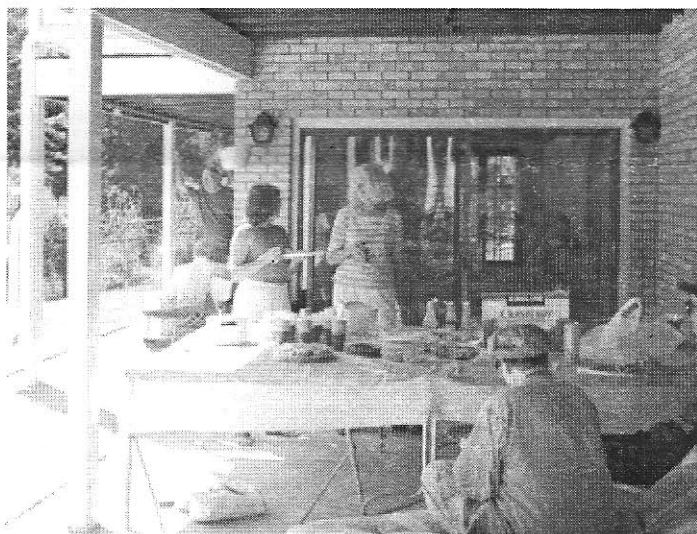
Shortly after his debut in Action Comics, Superman came to OTR. It wasn't until after the third program that Kellogg's Pep began its longtime sponsorship. Bud Collyer was Clark Kent. Bud dropped his voice an octave or so when in costume. In supporting roles were Joan Alexander as Lois Lane, Julian Noe as Perry White, and Jackie Kelk as Jimmy Olsen. Interesting that in the beginning Superman couldn't fly. He was able only to leap a quarter mile.

As long as we have newspapers and as long as OTR tapes exist, many of us will continue to enjoy those characters that speak in balloons.

FUN WAS HAD BY ALL!

by Larry Weide

Well, another annual RHAC picnic has come and gone, and so far there's been no reports of anyone having contracted anything more serious than lingering memories of a good time. As usual everyone enjoyed the RHAC provided grilled burgers and drinks, and all the tasty side dishes that folks brought along as their contribution to the "pot luck".



RETURN WITH US NOW...

As you can see, we also had a visit from the club's official mermaid, Sophia Ernst, the daughter of RHAC members Forest and Helen Ernst.



A real treat for picnic goers were the rides through the neighborhood provided by Les and Ellen Benoit on Les' custom made firetruck. Yes, he built it *himself* from the wheels up!

New in the Tape Library

by Maletha & Dick King

We have a great selection of shows going into the library this month, starting with "The Man Called X". These are interesting adventure stories after WWII, dated in 1947 and 48. They are interesting and very well done. Like most good radio shows, you can almost see the action in each show.

After "The Man Called X", we have the "Casebook of Gregory Hood". A detective show with the star character being a gentleman in San Francisco. The stories are good, and of the same era as The man Called X. We also have some "Gunsmoke" rehearsal shows that are just as good as the finished products, except for a few rerun spots.

We continue on with some Fred Allen and Lux Radio Theater. Lux was always a great way to spend an evening of listening and we are very fortunate to have the tapes from those shows and be able to relive those pleasant evenings. The last reel that we offer this month starts out with two traditional shows, "Man Without a Country" and "The Prisoner of Zenda". Both of these shows have been done by many theatrical groups and each time make a great impression. My Little Margie has four shows on this reel, and the last two shows are wild stretches of the imagination, done by great actors that certainly can hold your attention.

The Trivial Matter of Some of OTR's Sidekicks and Foils

By Carol Tiffany

Match the hero/heroine with his/her chief sidekick(s) or frequent foil. For extra credit, name the show in which the characters marked with an asterisk (*) appeared.

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| __ *Bruce Wayne | A. Tony Dewhurst |
| __ Henry Aldrich | B. Tonto |
| __ Red Ryder | C. Jughead Jones |
| __ *Percy Blakney | D. Tank Tinker |
| __ Jack Benny | E. Margo Lane |
| __ Archie Andrews | F. Dick Grayson |
| __ Mr. Keen | G. Rochester Van Jones |
| __ Hop Harrigan | H. Mrs. Davis |
| __ The Green Hornet | I. Homer Brown |
| __ Lamont Cranston | J. Li'l Beaver |
| __ Nero Wolfe | K. Mike Clancy |
| __ *Slate Shannon | L. Kato |
| __ Sam Spade | M. Archie Godwin |
| __ Sherlock Holmes | N. The Jolly Boys |
| __ The Lone Ranger | O. Sailor Duval |
| __ *Denis Nayland Smith | P. Dr. Watson |
| __ Connie Brooks | Q. Effie |
| __ Throckmorton Gildersleeve | R. Dr. Petrie |

The Last Word

by Carol Tiffany, RWUN Editor

Remember folks,

We're always looking for article contributions by RHAC members for our newsletter. Perhaps you have an interesting anecdote or story about an experience you've had concerning OTR. Maybe you have something interesting in your OTR collection, be it a program or possibly an artifact, that you would like to tell us about. If there's something particular that you'd like to see in the newsletter, let me about that that as well.

Regards, and happy reading,
Carol

Member **Al Harding** has some Sony tape decks that he robbed of some parts to repair his deck. He still has them and wonders if anyone else might need some parts. He can be reached at (636) 239-2182 in Missouri.

Member **Alfred Gillen** writes; I would like to sell a Sony TC 105 reel to reel recorder because my son gave me his Akia reel to reel recorder. The Sony TC 195 has just been overhauled completely by the Instant Repairs Co. This Sony is a rare one. It has not only 7-3/4, 3-3/4 and 1-7/8 speeds but also internal speakers. I would like to have about \$60.00 for the unit as I just paid \$90.00 to Instant Repairs. I can be reached by:
email - alfred1gillen@home.com
Telephone - (303) 751-7805 in Denver area

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| __ N | Throckmorton Gildersleeve | R. Dr. Petrie |
| __ H | Connie Brooks | Q. Effie |
| __ R | *Denis Nayland Smith | P. Dr. Watson |
| __ B | The Lone Ranger | O. Sailor Duval |
| __ P | Sherlock Holmes | N. The Jolly Boys |
| __ O | Sam Spade | M. Archie Godwin |
| __ O | *Slate Shannon | L. Kato |
| __ M | Nero Wolfe | K. Mike Clancy |
| __ E | Lamont Cranston | J. Li'l Beaver |
| __ L | The Green Hornet | I. Homer Brown |
| __ D | Hop Harrigan | H. Mrs. Davis |
| __ K | Mr. Keen | G. Rochester Van Jones |
| __ C | Archie Andrews | F. Dick Grayson |
| __ G | Jack Benny | E. Margo Lane |
| __ A | *Percy Blakney | D. Tank Tinker |
| __ J | Red Ryder | C. Jughead Jones |
| __ I | Henry Aldrich | B. Tonto |
| __ E | *Bruce Wayne | A. Tony Dewhurst |

Answers to Sidekicks Quiz:

* Bruce Wayne - Batman, Denis Nayland Smith - The Shadow of Fu Manchu, Slate Shannon - Bold Venture, Percy Blakney - The Scarlet Pimpernel