



RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO

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THE GREEN HORNET

by Paul Barringer © June 2003

During the early days of the Western United States, THE LONE RANGER and TONTO fought for law and order. The Lone Ranger had a silver mine that he and his brother Dan Reid were going to use after retiring from their Texas Ranger stint. The silver was handled and processed by a retired Texas Ranger who knew of The Lone Ranger's concealed identity. The Lone Ranger and Tonto used the mined silver for food and supplies and to make the silver bullets used by the Lone Ranger. From this mine came the wealth that would construct the foundation of the REID publishing domain.

As the modern day lone ranger, Britt Reid, the grand nephew of John Reid (The Lone Ranger) would assume the identity of "THE GREEN HORNET". The Hornet, along with his faithful companion KATO, working 'outside' of the law, fought for law and justice. On police files a wanted felon, THE GREEN HORNET'S real identity was Britt Reid, the young owner-publisher of 'The Daily Sentinel'

newspaper. This premise was very similar to that of the original LONE RANGER series.

Broadcast on the Mutual Broadcasting System (MBS), 'The Green Hornet' made its initial radio broadcast in 1936, and ran until 1952 (not quite as long as its Western counterpart), enjoying a long and successful run on radio. The early episodes of the program aired twice a week for thirty minutes, then once a week until the last season, when it went back to its' twice-weekly broadcasts.



During its run on radio the cast included: Al Hodge, Donovan Faust, Bob Hall and Jack McCarthy as Britt Reid/The Green Hornet, Raymond Hayashi, Rollin Parker, and Mickey Tolan as Kato, Lee Allman as Lenore Case, and Jim Irwin and Gill Shea as reporter Michael Axford. Jack Petruzzi was ace reporter Ed Lowry. The newsboy was played by Rollin Parker. The announcers were Charles Wood, Mike Wallace, Fielden Farrington, Bob Hite and Hal Neal.

When the program was aired, there were a couple of different openings. The first was as

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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

Old-Time Radio is Alive and Well in Colorado!

KEZW 1430 AM	"When Radio Was", with Stan Frieberg	Weekdays, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
KFKA 1310 AM	"Radio Memories" (Greeley)	Sunday, 6:00 - 12:00 PM
KNUS	"Radio Revisited"	Weekdays, 10:00 - 11:00 PM
KRMA TV Channel 6	Secondary Audio Program (SAP), "Tribute to OTR"	Sunday, 2:00 PM
KUVU 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>

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LIBRARIES

Reference Material:	Bill McCracken	7101 W. Yale Ave. #503	Denver, CO 80227	(303) 986-9863
Logs & Scripts:	Fred Hinz	c/o RHAC PO Box 1908	Englewood, CO 80150	
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Convention Schedules

National Audio Theater Festival, June 14 – 20, 2003, Southwest Missouri State University, West Plains MO; For information call Sue Zizza, 115 Dikeman St., Hempstead, NY 11550 (516) 483-8321 Suemedia1@aol.com or visit their web site www.natf.org. They also have a script contest.

19th annual National Lum and Abner Society convention June 20-21, 2003, Lime Tree Inn, Mena AK. Contact NLAS Executive Secretary at 81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, AL 35062, (205) 674-0101 or by e-mail at Hollis1963@aol.com.

REPS Radio Showcase XI June 26 – 29, 2003 at the Seattle Center, Seattle Washington. Contact Mike Sprague, Box 723, Bothell, WA 98041 (425) 488-9518 hrrmikes@aol.com

The Friends of Old-time Radio 28th Annual Convention Oct 23 – 26, 2003 at the Holiday Inn-North, Newark NJ. Our web site will keep you up to date. For information contact Jay Hickerson, Box 4321, Hamden, CT 06514 (203) 248-2887 email: jayflick@aol.com, web site: <http://www.lofcom.com/nostalgia/fotr>

SPERDWAC Convention, November 7 – 9 at the Hacienda Hotel at LAX. Bobb Lynes will be the convention chair.

18th Annual OTR and Nostalgia Convention, April 16 – 17, 2004; Contact Bob Burchett, 10280 Gunpowder Rd., Florence KY 41042 (859) 282-4333 lucadio@hotmail.com

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RETURN WITH US NOW...

follows; buzzing sound followed by "He hunts the biggest of all game, public enemies that even the G-men cannot reach", followed by Rimsky-Korsakov's "The Flight of the Bumble Bee". At times it seemed as if they played the entire piece from beginning to end. During the wartime years, the opening changed to: "THE GREEN HORNET (buzzing) He hunts the biggest of all game, public enemies who try to destroy our America". (theme) "With his faithful valet Kato, Britt Reid, daring young publisher, matches wits with racketeers and saboteurs, risking his life so that criminals and racketeers will feel the weight of the law by the sting of THE GREEN HORNET" (sound of a car driving off and shifting gears) "Ride with Britt Reid in the thrilling adventure (title of the episode), THE GREEN HORNET strikes again".

Like THE LONE RANGER, THE GREEN HORNET never killed his foes; his purpose was just to bring them to justice. The Lone Ranger used silver bullets that shot straighter and truer and only wounded the outlaws he captured. The Green Hornet used a non-lethal gas gun that would render the criminals unconscious until the police arrived.

Almost every episode included the following announcer's description: "Stepping through a secret panel in the rear of a closet in his bedroom Britt Reid and Kato went along a narrow passage-way built within the walls of the apartment itself, this passage leads to an adjoining building which fronts on a dark side street. Though supposedly abandoned, this building serves as the hiding place for the sleek super-powered Black Beauty, streamlined car of The Green Hornet. Britt Reid presses a button, the great car roars into life, a section of the wall in front raises automatically, then closes as the gleaming Black Beauty speeds into the darkness."

The announcers always added "The events and characters depicted in this drama are fictitious, any similarity to actual persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

There were story schemes that always had The Green Hornet eluding the police while trying to eradicate felonious deeds by the forces of crime. Time after time the Hornet would induce the police into thinking that he was the director behind the criminal activities during the episode, only to have the police receive a tip from an unknown source as to who the criminals were and where they could be found. The Hornet would just make his escape as the police arrived and to find the criminals conquered



Al Hodge as the Daily Sentinel Owner Britt Reid and "The Green Hornet"

and rendered unconscious with The Green Hornet's seal left conspicuously behind.

Britt Reid's position as editor of "The Daily Sentinel" allowed him to be privy to police information about criminal activities, which, in turn, allowed him to act as The Green Hornet, and to pursue concerted movements against the crime moguls and corrupt city officials. This also ensured that the Daily Sentinel would always have the exclusive news story ahead of the other news outlets. After each episode the epilogue had the newsboy yelling "Sentinel extry paperrr" (followed by a synopsis of the story just told) and then saying "GREEN HORNET implicated, GREEN HORNET still at large, read all about it, Sentinel extry paperrr".

The GREEN HORNET show was created by G.W.Trendle and Fran Striker of LONE RANGER fame. Trendle used many of the same actors on THE GREEN HORNET radio program that he used on THE LONE RANGER program, as well as his other adventure drama, 'Challenge Of The Yukon', about Sergeant Preston of The Northwest Mounted Police. On the radio program Britt Reid's father, Dan, very seldom appeared, but on the few occasions when he did he was played by John Todd, Tonto on THE LONE RANGER. In the 10-28-47 episode titled "Exposed", Britt Reid is exposed as the Green

Hornet by Linda Travis. In the two following episodes, "Graft Crosses a Bridge" (11-4-47) and "Too Hot to Handle" (11-11-47), Reid finds out about his connection to The Lone Ranger from his father. Also appearing on THE LONE RANGER were Jack Petruzzi, Ed Lowery on THE GREEN HORNET, and Jay Michaels, Sergeant Preston. Another radio personality Trendle used was Amos Jacobs, who might not have been a household name back then, but who would later change his name to Danny Thomas.

With the popularity of the radio program in was inevitable that, like many other radio programs, THE GREEN HORNET would appear in the movies. In 1940, Universal released "THE GREEN HORNET" a 13-chapter serial with Gordon Jones as THE GREEN HORNET/Britt Reid and Keye Luke as Kato, followed by another serial "THE GREEN HORNET Strikes Again" a 15-chapter sequel. This time with Warren Hull as the Green Hornet/Britt Reid and once again Keye Luke played Kato.

The radio show and serials in turn spurred the crossover of THE GREEN HORNET into the comics with Holyoke, Harvey, Dell and Gold Key being publishers at one time or another, as late as 1989. Into the 1990's, Now Comics published and held the rights to THE GREEN HORNET in comics and initiated THE GREEN HORNET into modern times.

Of course we all remember the TV show THE GREEN HORNET (A Greenway Production), starring Van Williams as Britt Reid/The Green Hornet and Bruce Lee as Kato. It was produced by William Dozier who had produced the BATMAN TV show. Somehow the TV GREEN HORNET didn't take off like the TV BATMAN and only aired for 26 episodes, 1966 through 1967.

The opening on the TV show; "Another challenge for THE GREEN HORNET, his aide Kato, and their rolling arsenal, The Black Beauty. On police records a wanted criminal, THE GREEN HORNET is really Britt Reid, owner-publisher of The Daily Sentinel, his dual identity known only to his secretary and the District Attorney. And now, to protect the rights and lives of decent citizens, rides THE GREEN HORNET" was read by producer William Dozier.

WGHP radio (Detroit) was acquired by G. W. Trendle and John Kunsky from J. Harold Ryan and George Storer for \$25,000 (the former had purchased the station for \$40,000 from George H.

Phelps) after the station continued to lose money. In 1930 Trendle changed the call letters and with an aggressive promotional campaign soon launched the station onto the national front, but the situation fell into confusion and disorder when WXYZ hastily cut its' association with CBS in 1931. Needing to fill large amounts of empty air time, new programs had to be initiated quickly, the first being THE LONE RANGER.

WXYZ, along with other outlets in Ohio, Chicago, New York, Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Washington, D.C., soon became the Mutual Broadcasting System. Trendle stocked his station with outstanding actors and on-air personalities, including future stars Myron (Mike) Wallace, Hugh Downs, and Douglas Edwards.

George W. Trendle was known as a skinflint, miser, and penny pincher, and, although the station was very successful and the programs enjoyed gigantic esteem, none of Trendle's crew and cast members was justly rewarded. Once, when Fran Striker asked for a \$3.00 per episode raise, Trendle promptly fired him. Striker humbly returned to the show after several months, while Trendle used alternative writers in his absence. Trendle also fired twenty-six station workers on Christmas in 1936.

(Continued in the August issue)

From the Desk of
the Editor
by Carol Tiffany



Welcome to the first of our three Summer issues of RWUN. Unlike Network TV, we will offer no reruns at this time of the year. Indeed, our upcoming July issue promises to be a rare treat. It will feature a biographical article about soundman Ray Kemper by Dr. Charles Beckett AND a short piece authored by Mr. Kemper himself. In August, we will have part 2 of Paul Barringer's "Green Hornet" and an article by a new author.

The newsletter continues to solicit contributions from our members. What shows are YOUR favorites? How about putting down some of your thoughts about OTR and your favorite show(s) to share with your fellow RHAC members?

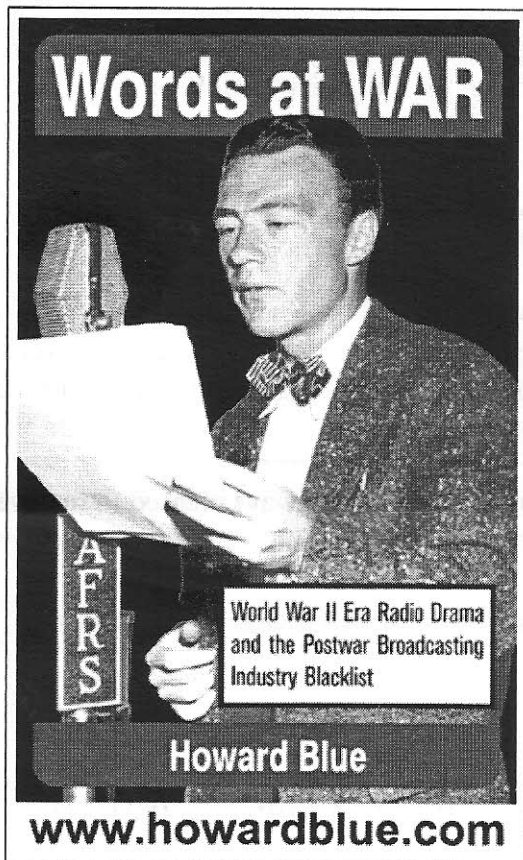
Meanwhile, have a wonderful summer and great vacationing. Good listening to all....

Words at War

A Book Review by Read G. Burgan

(This review originally appeared in the April 7, 2003 edition of "Radio World", published by IMAS Publishing, Inc.)

Words At War was one of the highest quality wartime radio programs of World War II. It is also the title of a new hard cover book that explores the role of American radio during W.W.II. Author Howard Blue has succeeded in creating a scholarly, comprehensive yet readable book.



Blue's book provides mini-sketches of the major writers and actors who spearheaded radio's wartime programming including writers Norman Corwin, Arch Oboler, Archibald MacLeish and William Robson and actors Will Geer, Orson Welles, Canada Lee and Burgess Meredith.

He provides details of their lives, political and social orientation and anecdotal examples of their personalities including their methods of writing and passions for various causes that influenced what they wrote or the causes they embraced. He describes their attempts to affect the American social conscience by including themes dealing with racial intolerance, anti-Semitism and poverty at a time

when radio -- and those who controlled it -- wanted only to entertain.

In addition, he provides details and illustrations of what it was like to live in an era of limited supplies, massive family disruption, hoarding and all of the other problems that are peculiar to a country at war. When America declared war on Germany and Japan, our country was far from united. Many Americans saw it as Europe's war and none of our affair.

Blue gives detailed examples of the radio series developed especially to aid in the indoctrination of the American people. He provides insights into the propaganda purposes of radio's war time programming and detailed examples of series and individual episodes designed to change the attitude of the American public.

Anyone who is a serious broadcast professional will find the list of specific wartime programs worth the cost of the book. Blue lists and describes some of the most outstanding dramatic programs ever aired on American radio including *We Hold These Truths*, *Johnny Got His Gun*, *On A Note of Triumph* and *Bill Of Rights* -- important programs for any serious student of radio..

But he also tells a troubling story -- a story where yesterday's heroes become today's enemies. He relates how many of the writers and actors who produced radio's finest wartime dramas were later persecuted for the very work that had gained them such praise.

Many of radio's finest writers and performers were blacklisted because of alleged Communist ties. It was a time when friends testified against friends. Some committed suicide. Others left the country. Still others struggled to support their families as their livelihood vanished before their eyes.

Blue names names. In many cases, the true villains were highly respected in the broadcast industry.

Blue himself was born, raised, and educated on Long Island where he taught high school Social Studies for 32 years. Why did a high school teacher decide to write a book on wartime radio drama? "A combination of my lifelong interest in World War II and my warm memories of the tail end of the Golden Age of Radio played a role in motivating me to write the book," Blue says.

This is a well-written, wonderfully researched book with ample documentation. To write the book, Blue visited many archives and museums,

interviewed dozens of first hand sources and listened to hundreds of hours of radio programs from the W.W.II period.

Getting interviews from some of the icons of radio's golden age was challenging. "I knew that Art Carey did not like to give interviews, but I wrote a couple of letters to him anyway. He did not respond. However, I was fortunate to have received his unlisted telephone number. An actress who had been very helpful to me and who was a friend of his, urged me to call him and inform him that I was calling on her recommendation. That was how I was able to interview him."

Surprisingly, some of the most famous went out of their way to be cooperative. "Arthur Miller who lives in Connecticut, only responded to my first letter requesting an interview an entire year after I wrote to him I thought that it would be a phone interview if it happened. But he suggested that we meet in his New York City apartment which we did. It was a fascinating experience."

In some cases, doing the actual interview was more difficult than arranging it. "The interview of Allan Sloane who was both a victim of the blacklist and an informer about other people, was one of the most interesting ones. I thought that his informing was awful, but during my two visits to him, I came to like him very much. I never asked him a direct question about the blacklist."

"But he knew the topic of my book and he clearly understood that I was interested in his experience with the blacklist. My indirect approach paid off beautifully. He gave me the most detailed account of how CBS dealt with people whom the network fired because of the blacklist."

Blue's dogged determination to ferret out all available sources relating to his book paid off. *Words At War* is a fascinating read and will serve as a valuable resource.

Words At War by Howard Blue, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., Lanham, Maryland, and Oxford, 2002 ISBN 0-8108-4413-3 (alk.paper) 407 pages. \$34.95 -- available from your local bookstore, the publisher (www.scarecrowpress.com), Amazon.com, or the author at www.howardblue.com at a discount while supplies last.

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New in the Tape Library

by Dick and Malettha King

Last month the CD library was able to offer "The CBS Radio Workshop" and "Avalon Time" with Red Skelton along with just four of the five part series of "Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar". This month we are offering forty-eight more CD's of the Johnny Dollar series. Remember that each CD contains all five parts of one show. There is one exception; #457 and #458 are each a six part series.

We would like to remind our cassette users to be considerate of the other members and be sure to always rewind cassettes so they start correctly for the next user. Also, be sure to put any information on the *outside* of each box that you want to call to the attention of the librarian.

Now that summer is here, your librarian may be off on a trip or a vacation at the time you send your order in, so please be patient if your order takes a little longer than usual.

Our librarians are always pleased to receive your notes thanking these volunteers for their services.

Hey, all you Dads out there ...

Happy Father's Day!

From the officers and librarians of
RHAC and the staff of the *Return
With Us Now* newsletter