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"Give me a little traveling music, Harry". Hildegard on Beat the Band.

MAY MEETING

The May meeting of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado will be held at the Thornton Community Building on Sunday, May 16 at 2 PM. This will probably be the last meeting held at this location since there is a lot of activity in that area during the summer months and this would cause a great many problems in conducting our meetings. You are again asked to find a more centralized meeting place for future meetings.

OUR BIGGEST TURNOUT

Thanks to the presentation of Mr. Bob Lee, the dinner meeting of the RHAC in April appeared to be one of the most enjoyable gatherings our organization has held to date. Mr. Lee, in most amusing style, related his break-through in network radio acting on the Lone Ranger and was able to illustrate his performance with the tape of one of the programs in which he appeared. His vocal impressions of celebrities were very entertaining. Mr. Lee was able to provide us with some news of changes in current radio programming in Denver. Attendance at the meeting may have been our record high thus far at 45. Those present seemed enthusiastic to the proposal that similar dinner meetings be held in the future. Mr. and Mrs. Lee were unanimously voted Honorary Members of the RHAC.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

The RHAC wishes to thank Walter Saunders of the Rocky Mountain News and Clark Secret of the Denver Post for their fine articles about our organization. We are deeply honored to have these fine writers show such an interest in us. I was not able to get a copy in time to attach Mr. Secret's article so I will quote it here:

"If your favorite years of radio extend even further back than what we have just been discussing, do you know that there is an old-time radio club in Denver? There is.

This rather new organization is comprised of people whose likes lean toward the memorable radio series of yesteryear - Fibber McGee and Molly, The Shadow, Mr. District Attorney and so forth.

The name of the group is the Radio Historical Association of Colorado, and I'm sure that each of its members crowds close to his or her radio on Sunday morning, when John Dunning's popular Old-Time radio show is on KPML. Dunning's show, of course, is where it's at for old-time radio fans.

Should you be interested in joining the group, contact Jerry Appleman, 10700 Huron St., Apt 1504, Northglenn."

Karral and I were both in contact with Walter Saunders. Both he and his secretary have been very courteous and cooperative. Mr. Saunders article appears as the attachment to this month's newsletter. We cordially invite Mr. Secret, Mr. Saunders and his secretary to attend any of our meetings as our doors will always be open to them.

OUR ORGANIZATIONS

The RNAC has been in contact with several other Old Time Radio clubs around the country and Canada. We will be exchanging newsletters with them. I have received a newsletter from the club in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. It is called SIGNALS, and it is very good. I recently received the newsletter from SPINOVAC (Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy) from Hollywood, California. It is a most informative newsletter and they are very well organized. I also received a letter from the OTR club in Phoenix. Right now, they are a very small club with no newsletter but they will keep us posted of the latest happenings and growth of their club. We really hope to get some good ideas from other clubs and also hope that they may get some ideas of what we are doing.

LETTERS FROM OUR GOOD FRIENDS

I recently had two nice letters from Mel Blanc. He says: "Thank you and the gang for making me an Honorary Member. If I ever get to Denver I'll be sure to call you. Kindest regards, Mel". I would certainly look forward to meeting such a fine gentleman as Mr. Blanc.

Also had a very nice letter from Harold Peary. Before getting to Mr. Peary's letter, the RNAC is very pleased to announce the election of Mr. Peary to Honorary Membership in our organization. We thank him very much for his tremendous contributions to radio entertainment. Mr. Peary's letter follows:

"Many thanks for your letter of 4/11. Don't worry, I've had many letters addressed to me as 'Dear Throckmorton' or 'Dear Gildy', even 'Henry's Uncle'. I am always delighted to hear from old friends of the 'Great Gildersleeve' program. I am very proud of my old radio creation. As you may not realize, 'The Great Gildersleeve' was the first spin-off in the history of radio (re: the big shows). I created Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve on 'Fibber McGee and Molly' in 1937 in Chicago. The show moved to Hollywood in 1939. 'Gildersleeve' by then was a very important 'Second Banana'.

In the spring of 1941, I was asked to build a show to replace 'Fibber McGee' for the summer months, thirteen weeks to be exact. Borrowing one of Fibber's writers, Leonard L. Levinson, Don Quinn's assistant, we sat down and wrote the framework and dialogue of a show I had in mind. We auditioned it to a studio audience with Billy Mills Orchestra and Harlow Wilcox from the Fibber show. The audience loved us but Mr. Johnson of Johnson's Wax didn't. The ad agency went out and sold us to Kraft Foods as a fall show (not a summer replacement). The show was on the air 17 years. I only had it 11 years. My replacement, Willard Waterman was on for 6.

Best wishes, Harold Peary

Thank you, Gildy, for your letter and for sharing with all of us, the history of one of our favorite shows. We are very proud and happy to welcome you as an Honorary Member of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado.

RECORDED DEMONSTRATION CHANGE

Paul Gardner informs me that the scheduled workshop for stereo upkeep has been temporarily cancelled. Due to some previous commitments there will not be time to fully prepare a demonstration. See Paul or Ray Stofer for further information on workshop scheduling.

GOOD LISTENING

John Dunnings's old time radio schedule for May 1976 is:

- MAY 9 Gunsmoke - The unwanted deputy from 5-3-59
Cavalcade of America - George Gershwin Story from 2-27-39
Adventures by Morse - Dead Man Prowl, episode #3
- MAY 16 Andrews Sisters Show - Featuring the original Abbott and
Costello skit of 'Who's on First'
Suspense - Ghost hunter
Adventures by Morse - episode #4
- MAY 23 Theater Guild of the Air - Candida from 1951
Adventures by Morse - episode #5
- MAY 30 Baby Snooks and Frank Morgan Show from 1942
Howard Hughes Congressional hearing from 8-5-47
Adventures by Morse - episode #6

TRIVIA QUIZ

1. L.A. 'Speed' Riggs was featured on "Your Hit Parade". What did he do?
2. "A box of Mars bars and two tickets to next week's production" were prizes given to losing contestants on what quiz show?
3. Bud Collyer played the title role in an adventure program for children. What was the role?
4. Leila Ranson was a character on a situation comedy. Who was her boyfriend?
5. Who portrayed Daisy Jane, Calamity Jane, Mrs. Willy Lump-Lump, and Junior's mommy on the "Red Skelton Show"?
6. What was the lodge to which Amos and Andy belonged?
7. Complete the opening of this serial: "And now, Crydol's own _____"
8. What dramatic program used stories written by non-professionals?
9. What was the occupation of David Farrell?
10. What was the name of the telephone operator on "Fibber McGee and Molly"?
11. Who was the voice of Mickey Mouse on "The Mickey Mouse Theater of the Air"?
12. Who portrayed Kopalong Cassidy on the radio?
13. Janette Davis, the Mariners, and Archie Bleyer's Orchestra were featured on what daily show?
14. "Nowhere in the pages of history can one find a greater champion of justice" is a line from the opening of what long run program?
15. Name the detective who was a "friend of those who need a friend; enemy of those who make him an enemy"

JUNE NEWSLETTER

The June newsletter will be our anniversary newsletter. The club will be one year old and I would like to put out a super edition. I would like a volunteer to do a cover of an old time radio. If you have any art talent, please let me know at the meeting. Also, I would appreciate any ideas for the next edition. At this time, we are planning a history of the club, Tom Daniels' first chapter of the history of NBC, a super Trivia Quiz, and other features. Your assistance would be appreciated.

TURNING THE DIAL AROUND TOWN

PAUL CARRIER is still looking for some Ellery Queen....DAN DAUGHERTY would like to hear from someone who has the complete episodes of the I Love a Mystery series called Temple of the Vampires....STEVE MORRIS has an interesting trivia problem. He would like someone to let him know what was the "Original Musical Question". Steve says it was used many times to introduce certain songs on radio. I would like to find some shows or records with Walter Brennan, either old radio or record albums.

ANSWERS TO TRIVIA QUIZ

- 1) Tobacco auctioneer for Lucky Strike Cigarettes.
- 2) Dr. IQ
- 3) Superman
- 4) Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve on Great Gildersleeve
- 5) Harriett Hilliard
- 6) Mystic Knights of the Sea
- 7) Ma Perkins
- 8) Dr. Christian
- 9) Newspaper reporter
- 10) Myrt
- 11) Walt Disney
- 12) William Boyd
- 13) Arthur Godfrey
- 14) Lone Ranger
- 15) Boston Blackie

ATTACHED QUESTIONNAIRE

Attached to this newsletter is a questionnaire that we would appreciate having all members complete. This questionnaire is for publicity and to develop future club programs. Please complete and bring to the next meeting or return to me by mail.

THE NETWORKS - - - - - by TOM DANIELS

The Mechanics of The Networks - - This might be a good time between the last installment of CBS's history and next month's start of NBC history, to give you an idea of what the networks are and how they operate. In addition to the Big Four (ABC, CBS, NBC, & MUTUAL), there are about a half dozen smaller networks around the country serving anywhere from one to eight states such as the Liberty, Collier, and Don Lee Networks. In our area, we are served by the intermountain radio network. ABC, CBS, and NBC are headquartered in New York City, Mutual in Washington and INN in Salt Lake City. All network programs come from each network's headquarters with the exception of CBS which can feed from either coast although ABC has been known to feed from Los Angeles also.

For the most part, networks feed their material over telephone company lines or other companies providing microwave facilities between major points. Two of the networks (CBS and NBC demand a 5 MH Bandwidth so special channels have to be used and equalization is required. The other three networks in our area only use a 3 MH Bandwidth which is about the same bandwidth you use when you call somewhere long distance. Some networks like CBS don't have the same thing being broadcast to the same affiliates at the same time such as certain commercials (it's hard to tell snow tires in Florida), so some affiliates have been set up as a

switching center and right in the middle of a newscast, can send different commercials to different parts of the country without even causing a click. Most of the hourly newscasts are still performed live on the air and commentators are almost always taped. Lowell Thomas, for example, may do his commentary from some remote part of the country from a small town affiliate and send it live over the network including mistakes where it is picked up and recorded by WCBS in New York. They then edit out the bloopers, mix in Thomas's announcer comments and air the show as though it originated right from New York although Thomas was miles away.

When you listen to a local news show that has that station's affiliate network adding reports in to it, you might think that the station just records network newscasts and edits out the report for later use, but in reality, the network sends down those special reports in large blocks and lets the stations use which ones it wants. Most of the entertainment programs that are left are sent early in the morning on what the network calls a "pre-feed". The program is still aired later in the evening so stations can air it live off the network, but as double protection, they also have a taped copy of it in case something happens in the evening and the show would be pre-empted or network failure. Most shows are offered free to the affiliates on a swap basis. If they let the network air a 60 second commercial, then the network will provide 60 seconds of space, usually filled with a PSA, so the local station will have space for his local commercials or PSA's. Most of the business that networks do with affiliates is on paper and is mailed out weeks before the show ever goes on the air. Stations have to know weeks in advance what commercials, promos, etc. are going to be aired on what newscast or show, however, sometimes after a mailing has been made, changes do occur and stations find out about it on a daily basis by listening to a closed circuit or conference call that comes over the network on closed circuit and not for broadcast.

Other information like PSA's, Promos, and new commercials are also fed for affiliates to tape. CBS sends the whole week's radio Mystery Theater teaser scenes during this time also for use during the following week. Most of the time the networks are not in use, they remain quiet. ABC does send music filler down theirs when not in use and all networks spend some portion of the day sending test frequencies down the line to make sure they arrive at the correct level thereby maintaining a quality line. We'll discuss more about the mechanics of the networks in some future issue.

NEXT MONTH: The History of NBC - Part 1.



Walter Saunders

Human mind makes best screen

It's not that Harral Peacock dislikes television.

It's simply that he prefers his entertainment on a much larger and more vivid screen — the human mind.

Harral Peacock would rather "see" William Conrad as Marshal Matt Dillon on the old "Gunsmoke" radio series than as Frank Cannon of TV private eye fame.

Harral Peacock is an old-time radio buff.

To those weaned on a steady diet of TV, this may seem like an anachronistic hobby. Old-time radio buffs disdain "Cannon," "Police Woman" and "All in the Family" in favor of "Richard Diamond" "I Love a Mystery" and "Baby Snooks."

Old-time radio buffs contend their interests are neither anachronistic nor a simple hobby. To them, old-time radio is a passion.

There is, obviously, a bit of nostalgia and trivia involved in old-time radio, since it's fun to recall — or listen to — Mr. First Nighter enter the Little Theater Off Times Square. (Do you recall the stars of the series? Barbara Luddy and Olan Soule.)

But there's also a major challenge for old-time radio buffs who find tapes of rare radio shows and improve the quality of old broadcasts through the use of modern recording devices.

THIS PASSION FOR old-time radio led Harral Peacock, a counselor at Northglenn High School, and others to form a Radio Historical Association of Colorado, the first local organization designed for those who love to return to when the Lone Ranger was riding high on the nation's airwaves.

The association will be a year old in June. Thanks to Peacock and other individuals, the club has achieved a good balance of a professional organization with a lot of relaxed informality.

The organization, with Peacock as president, meets monthly. Members hold a formal meeting, make small talk about their favorite radio programs and discuss the techniques of adding to personal collections and improving the quality of tapes and reels.

When the club was first organized, many of the established collectors contributed tapes to a lending library to help newer collectors get started.

These tapes were rented at 50 cents each. When they made the rounds of members who signed up for them, they were put into the association's permanent library.

WHEN THE ASSOCIATION'S funds from rentals reached \$100, the association ordered

recorded tapes from a national company. Included in this batch were rare tapes which members were allowed to record. These tapes were then put into the association's permanent collection.

Members of the Colorado association also have corresponded with other groups around the country, trading and bartering tapes.

As a result, some local members have gained full collections. One member, for example, has been able to collect nearly all the "Gunsmoke" episodes. Another has a good share of "Escape." Others have a full collection of bloopers and rehearsal shows.

The association also publishes a newsletter, edited by John Lloyd, which keeps members informed on happenings locally and nationally. The newsletter also has special features. The latest, for example, traces the chronology of "Gunsmoke" from its radio days to its success as a TV series.

THE RADIO ASSOCIATION of Colorado is far from being an insular group. Many members visit nursing homes to play tapes for the elderly. Members also have taped old shows and given them to organizations for the blind and retarded.

Harral Peacock, 41, grew up in Austin, Tex. which, like Denver, was late receiving local TV. Austin received its first TV in 1952, so Peacock was an avid radio listener while growing up.

"When I came to Denver I became acquainted with John Dunning's old-time radio show on KFML and that stimulated my interest. Dunning, of course, is a major collector and has given the association a lot of help.

"I soon discovered there was a lot of interest in old-time radio but no organization. So we got busy."

The organization began with 25 and now has 46 members.

Peacock's personal radio passion goes to detective shows like "Richard Diamond" and "Sam Spade." He's also on the trail of more tapes of "House of Mystery," with host Roger Elliott.

"The charm and fascination of old-time radio is the fact that listeners visualized exactly what they wanted to see. There was no screen to distort that scene," Peacock said.

"But it's not simply based on nostalgia. Several members of our association are in their '20s. They weren't around when radio drama was a way of life."

Peacock is fortunate. His passion for old-time radio doesn't interfere with his home life. His wife, Mary, is secretary-treasurer of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado.