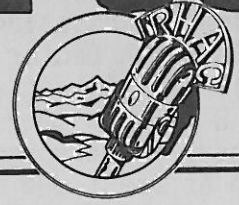


RETURN WITH US

The Radio Historical
Association of Colorado

NOW...



VOLUME 5, Number 2 AUGUST, 1979



DORE L. JOHNSON

INFO ON NEXT MEETING -- NEW TIME AND PLACE!

August Meeting- Special notice should be made that the August meeting of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado will be held at Wyatt's Cafeteria in the Cherry Creek Shopping Center. The date is Sunday, August 19th and the time will be 6 PM SHARP!!! It is important that the meeting begins promptly at 6 PM since we must be out by 8 PM when they close. We have decided that we would try this cafeteria so that those who have not been able to attend on weekday evenings would be able to come to at least one meeting. We hope to have a good attendance since we must purchase AT LEAST \$60 in meals. Bring the family for a night out and when you get your receipt please state that you are with the RHAC. Please allow ample time to get though the line if you are eating with us. See you there.

OLD-TIME RADIO SCHEDULE FOR AUGUST, 1979. SUNDAYS, 1 P.M., KADK.

- AUG. 5; SUSPENSE. "Blood on the Trumpet," starring William Holden, 11-9-50.**
FRONTIER GENTLEMAN. "Charlie Meeker," 2-9-58, second of two.
ONE MAN'S FAMILY. The continuing saga of the Barbour family of Sea Cliff. Book 71, Chapter 6, "Father Barbour Predicts the Worst," 8-8-49.
- AUG. 12: THE JACK BENNY PROGRAM. Guest, Tony Curtis, 11-8-53.**
THE DAMON RUNYON THEATRE. "Hold 'Em, Yale," a ZIV syndication, C. 1950.
ONE MAN'S FAMILY. Book 71, Chapt. 7, "The Return of Joan Roberts Lacey, 8-15-49.
- AUG. 19: THE NBC UNIVERSITY THEATRE. "The Wild Palms," by William Faulkner, 6-18-50.**
ONE MAN'S FAMILY. Book 71, Chapt. 8: "A Very Tough Step-father Indeed," 8-22-49.
- AUG. 26: QUIET, PLEASE. "Whence Came You," 2-16-46.**
CAN YOU TOP THIS. Show of gags and toppers, C. 1947.
ONE MAN'S FAMILY. Book 71, Chapt. 9, "Father Barbour's Rampage and What Became of It," 8-29-49. TO BE CONTINUED.

JULY MEETING -- RETRIBUTION DEFERRED

It will be recalled that, in June, a team called the Illegitimate Sons of the Pioneers defeated Ma Perkins' Pushers in a semi-final match of the OTR trivia quiz. They, in turn, were about to be defeated in July by The Killers and the Spoilers, of which your editor is a member, when another team, The Mental Bankers, was assembled. As more fully reported by John Lloyd below, the K's and the S's defeated Dr. IQ's taxi squad. So, the team with our president on it has had defeat postponed for a month.

The undoubted star of the show was the high scorer, Carol Roe. She is a killer on big bands (we suspect she knew many of the musicians personally). In fact, I wanted to say that she did exceedingly well, considering she is a woman, but she and Mary Jessen promised to put out a contract on me if I said so, so I won't.

CHANNEL 6 FUNDRAISING TIME -- EARLY THIS YEAR

KRMA-TV is having its fundraising on August 25 this year -- at least that's when RHAC is scheduled to participate, from 3:30 to 7 p.m. There is a grant of matching funds for all we help raise. Last year's effort was a

little thin, and we need at least 15 volunteers, with 20 being better. For those who haven't done it, it's a lot of fun. Besides appearing on TV, you get a tour of the station, and a chance to rub elbows with celebrities who are there to help raise money. Finally, you do a good deed for the station that is repeating I Claudius, and featuring such gems as Movie Previews (my favorite), Monte Python, Meeting of Minds, and tons of other quality programs. Call Irv Hale to get on the list, or at least show up. You are still free to enjoy that Saturday night.

IN MEMORIAM
JESSIE HANSEN (1886 - 1979)

Those of you who do not already know this will be saddened to hear of the death of Chuck Hansen's mother. We will miss that indomitable lady at our RHAC meetings. It was my honor and pleasure to know her for some twelve years, dating back to when I first joined The Council of Four, the local Sherlock Holmes club, of which Chuck was a founder. She was a lady of the old school, proud of being descended from the pioneer missionary, Marcus Whitman.

She was lucid to the very end, and it was my good fortune to attend her 93rd birthday party, held at the home of another member of the Sherlock Holmes club. Thank God, she died peacefully in her sleep, without long illness.

Chuck has set up a Jessie Hansen Memorial Fund, and those who care can send him checks at 701 So. Grant, Denver, 80209. We shall all miss her very much.

ERNIE JESSEN PLACES AN AD

Ernie has done an awful lot for the club, and has asked little in return. We are delighted to run this ad for him (if Mary promises not to bruise my body):

USED TAPE FOR SALE--67 Reels of 1200' \$0.75
each and 23 Reels of 600' \$0.50 each. Guar-
anteed to be magnetic tape! Some with boxes.
Ernie Jessen 985-9110.

ENTRIES NEEDED IN WRITING CONTEST -- PRIZE DISCLOSED

Only two more months for entering an article in our writing contest. So far, the grand total of one story has been received. In an effort to stimulate creative effort, I now announce that the prize is "The Big Radio Comedy Programs", a full-size paperback of scripts reviewed by John Dunning in Roundup a while back. An excellent book that is difficult, if not impossible to obtain in town. So, hit those typewriters!

TWO GIGS THIS MONTH, MR. KEEN: DONALD E. FRANKLIN JR. AND HAROLD JACOBS

July newsletters sent to both of the above gentlemen were returned. In my best Sam Spade manner, I attempted to call Mr. Franklin, since he lived in town, but the phone belonged to another family. There is a Donald Franklin Sr., but he decided to change his phone to unlisted. I suppose I could write Sr., but maybe someone can save me the trouble by locating Jr. For Harold Jacobs, the last I had was 1850 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11223.

NOTES FROM JOHN LLOYD. (He had to type them twice, since I lost the first one)

TRIVIA BOWL- Round 2 of the Trivia Bowl was held at the July meeting. The team of Carol Roe, Neil L'Heureux, Scott McCoy and Irv Hale soundly defeated the team of Dan Danbom, Dan Daugherty, Bill Tedrick and Carl Neustrand. The vocal disagreements between Carol and Irv did not stop this team from sweeping on to victory. The evening was enjoyable but didn't match the first round when Ernie Jessen rang his bell and yelled out that he didn't know the answer and Debbie Vaughan attempted to blow the whistle for the time limit without first putting it in her mouth. The August meeting will have the two winning teams competing for the championship. Prizes will be awarded to the winners.

HELP WANTED AND FOUND- Two of our members have offered to help members with some of their taping needs. Rod Button will keep track of all of the members who tape CBS Mystery Theater and Sears Theater. If you tape these shows on a regular or semi-regular basis please let Rod know. If you miss certain shows of these two series, get in touch with Rod at *(see below) and he will try to find someone who recorded that show that can assist you. Dick Henry will keep track of all of those members who record John Dunning's Sunday show on a regular or semi-regular basis. If you do, please get in touch with Dick and let him know. If you miss certain shows get in touch with Dick at 922-2767 and he will try to find someone who has the shows you are looking for. *P.O. Box 27572, Denver, CO 80227

OFFICERS WANTED- We still have not heard from anyone who is interested in running for any of the RHAC offices. We do need your help. We need some new officers with new ideas. I will be asking for your help at the August meeting. What happens if nobody volunteers????????????????

MORE ON THE TRIVIA BOWL- If anyone knows anything about electricity and can develop a system for future trivia bowls whereby we can use lights instead of the bells, could they please let us know. We would like to have a system that when one team presses their button a light would come on and the other teams light wouldn't come on. It would leave no doubt about who was first to answer.

REFERENCE LIBRARY- We owe thanks to a lot of people who helped us organize the reference library. It is finally done and Jim Vaughan, who will be the librarian, is printing up listings of what is available. Thanks for the help to Dan Daugherty, Joe Madden, John Adams, Jack Richards and John Lloyd. Special thanks to Ernie and Mary Jessen for their help in copying and to Mary's employer, Taurus Oil Company for the use of their copying equipment. Thanks to M&T Mortgage for the use of their equipment over a months time. That is John Lloyd's employer. Most especially, we owe thanks to Jim and Debbie Vaughan for all of the organizing of this project. They did a great deal of driving to pick up the information to be copied and were there with the rest of us working hard. We are extremely grateful to John Dunning for making all of this information available to the RHAC. We copied almost all of the material he used for TUNE IN YESTERDAY. We thank him for his generosity.

(NOTE: If we have forgotten anyone who assisted in this project, we are sorry and will definitely mention your name in the next issue of Return With Us Now)

(Editor's clarification: Carol and Irv did not actually have any disagreements, although that's the way it sounded. Actually, it is a form of "in-field chatter" that will bring our team once again to victory.)

BIG BANDS IN TOWN

Last month, Carol Roe called me concerning the fact that some big bands were to be in town for free concerts. Space limitations prevented my inserting the notice, and a couple of them have come and gone, but you can still get to see Woody Herman on Thursday, August 23rd from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the United Bank Center Mall. Again it's free and, who knows, Carol might introduce you to all her old friends.

JULY ADDITIONS TO THE REEL-TO-REEL LIBRARY

REEL 111 ESCAPE 1900'

1L	Funeral Fires	12/01/50
	This Side Of Nowhere	12/05/50
2L	A Passenger To Bali	12/15/50
	Wild Jack Rhett	12/22/50
1R	The Cave	12/29/50
	The Man Who Could Work Miracles	01/05/51
2R	Conquest	01/12/51
	The Killer Mine	02/11/51

REEL 112 FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY 1800'

1L	McGee Invents Football Play	11/19/46
	Miss Tramaire Has A Prowler	11/26/46
	McGee Has Account Trouble At Third National Bank	12/03/46
2L	McGee Stirs Up Trouble Between Doc & The Mayor Over Miss Tramaire	12/10/46
	McGee Buys A Sun Lamp	12/17/46
	Fibber Tries To Repair Toys	12/24/46
1R	Special Program-Fred Waring and His Pennsylvanians' New Years Eve	12/31/46
	McGee Volunteers To Join Posse	01/07/47
	McGee Wants To Remodel His House	01/21/47
2R	McGee's Altercation With Bus Driver	01/28/47
	Teeny Spends Evening With McGees	02/04/47
	McGee, Bill Collector For Doc Gamble	02/18/47

REEL 113 MISCELLANEOUS PROGRAMS 1200'

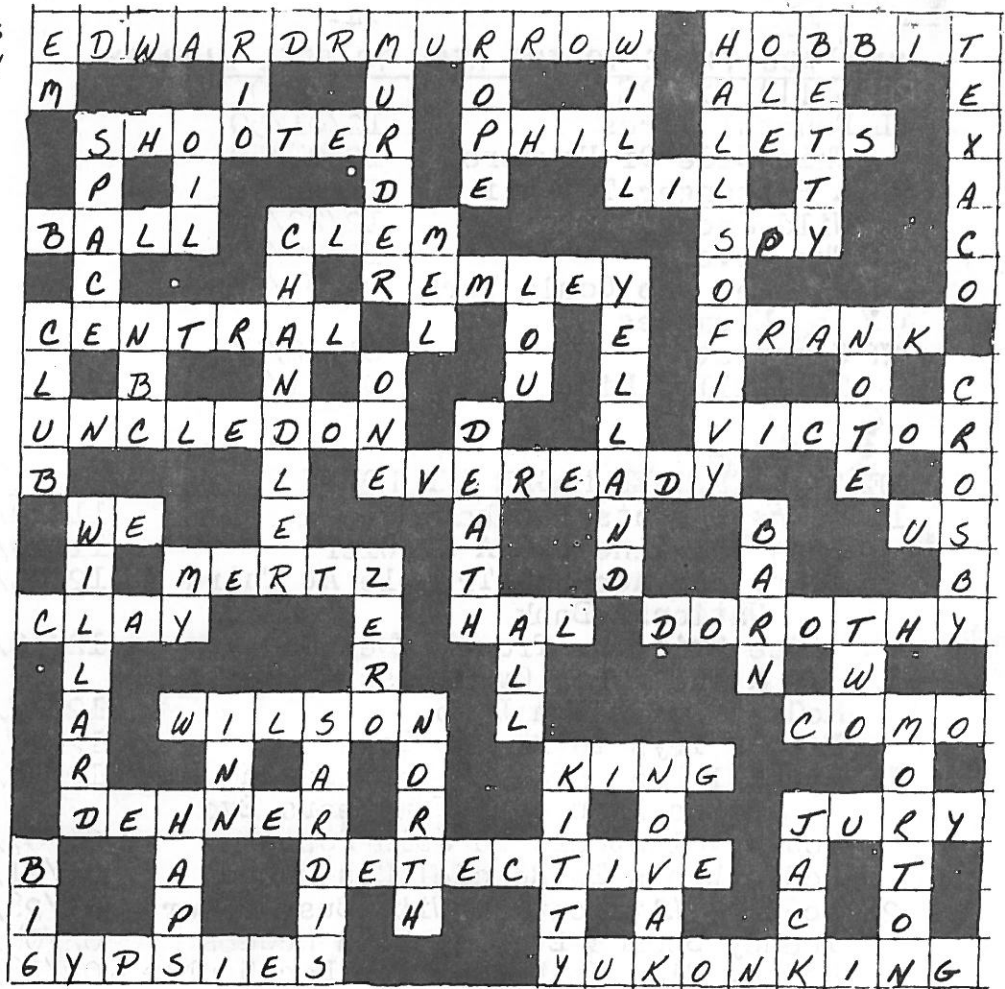
1L	Sounds Of History (From National Archives)	-
	Fireside Chat (FDR)	10/12/42
2L	CBS News - Japanese Surrender	08/14/45
	7:00 P.M. EWT Times Square, Etc.	
	Gabriel Heatter Show	08/13/45
	Feelings In Japan Waiting For Surrender	
1R	Behind The Front Page w/ G. Heatter	07/25/48
	Ed Robbins Story	
	Gabriel Heatter Commentary	05/03/45
	Nazis Have Surrendered	
	Mutual News (Remote)	07/23/45
	B25 Hits Empire State Bldg.	
2R	CBS Sports Special	03/18/36
	Louis vs: Sharkey Fight	
	London After Dark	08/24/40



11	Tom Sawyer, Detective	Mark Twain
12	The Light That Failed	Rudyard Kipling
18	The Adventure of the Red Headed League	Arthur Conan Doyle
19	Markheim	Robert Louis Stevenson
25	Don't Die Without Me	O. Henry
26	The Sire de Maledroit's Door	Robert Louis Stevenson
Sept 1	A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court	Mark Twain
2	The Premature Burial	Edgar Allan Poe

More classic chillers every weekend throughout 1979.

Answer to John Lloyd's
Crossword Puzzle (July
newsletter)



Answers to John's "Complete the Name of the Show" (same issue):

1-N, 2-R, 3-I, 4-L, 5-A, 6-D, 7-T, 8-O, 9-Q, 10-B, 11-F, 12-G, 13-K,
14-P, 15-S, 16-C, 17-H, 18-E, 19-M, 20-J.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

New Members

Pat G. Bates	955 So. Havana, #303	Aurora, CO 80012	4/80
Steve Scalzo	8800 W. Greenwood Terrace	Milwaukee, Wisc. 53224	5/80
Joel Visser	1331 Franklin St., #21	Denver, CO 80218	4/80
Fr. Robert L. Amundsen	845 Fairfax	Denver, CO 80220	7/80

Reinstatement and Address Change

William D. Ahring	1801 Buffalo Ave.	Odessa, TX 79762	6/80
Rod Button	P.O. Box 27572	Denver, CO 80227	7/80
Chuck Nelson	1661 11th Ave., #D3	Brooklyn, NY 11215	
Neil L'Heureux	4500 19th St., #190	Boulder, CO 80301	7/80

Address Changes

Jerry Chapman	900 Elmwood	Wilmette, Ill. 60091
John Nicholson	East Star Route	Elizabeth, CO 80107
George Ravelo	8621 Concord Lane	Westminster, CO 80030

Welcome to the new members, and welcome back to the reinstated ones!

Almost forgot to thank Jim Vaughan for this month's cover.

A NOTE FROM JOHN ADAMS -- A BOB HOPE LP

John Adams writes me that the July 17 issue of "Variety" announces that Bob Hope is releasing a three-record album under the Columbia "King Comedy" label. It will be out this fall and includes such guests as Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Bing Crosby, Vera Vague, Jerry Colonna, Jimmy Durante, Judy Garland, John Wayne, Jack Benny, George Burns and a host of others.

Along with the album will be a collection of photos in booklet form of many of the stars. The album will be entitled "Bob".

Also, Ray Stanich writes John to ask if anyone has heard of "Peril Shows"? He wants to know the country of its origin. Ray has turned up two new Sam Spade shows plus a 1945 Shadow from Australia. With a little work they are now in VG- to VG wound.

Ray says that Congress just released the money to catalog 50,000 AFRS shows that have been sitting in a Baltimore airplane hangar for years. It will be known as AFTRA American TV and Radio Archives. Ray is working with the Library of Congress on cataloging some 200 pages of material. CBS lets Ray search their files for information to use in his logs. He will furnish us with an updated log of CBS and Columbia Workshop when it is finished.

NEW CATALOGS AND A NEW SAM SPADE

Three catalogs have been received in recent months. Mar-Bren is now putting out frequent supplements, and one of the latest lists both East Coast and West Coast versions of "Suspense." Majestic Reruns has a great many "Phil Harris and Alice Faye" shows. And, most exciting to me, George Fowler has a new Sam Spade, called "The Champion Caper". Needless to say, I am obtaining it, and will have it available for other devotees.

RETURN WITH US TO...

CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT

by Bill Owen
Dor 1971
Illustrated

PULSES QUICKENED FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICAN KIDS WHEN THEY HEARD THE MIDNIGHT SONG OF A CHURCH BELL FOLLOWED BY THE SOUND OF A DIVING AIRPLANE...

BONG

IT WAS TIME FOR...
CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT BROUGHT TO YOU EVERY DAY MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY BY THE MAKERS OF OVALTINE!

HE MYSTERIOUS PILOT RELENTLESSLY BATTLED EVIL AND AMERICA'S ENEMIES ALL OVER THE WORLD.

TIME AND AGAIN CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT ENCOUNTERED THE VILLAINOUS IVAN SHARK.

HIS COHORTS WERE MEMBERS OF THE SECRET SQUADRON.

CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT BEGAN AS A REGIONAL RADIO SHOW FOR SHELBY OIL FROM WEN CHICAGO IN 1939. THE PROGRAM WENT NATIONAL FOR MUTUAL FOR OVALTINE SEPT. 30 1940 AND RAN UNTIL DEC. 15, 1949.

© SHERWOOD AND OWEN 1979

7/23/79

'1940s Radio Hour' Marks Lighthearted Return to Old Days

By JAY SHARBUTT

NEW YORK (AP) — Network radio — the old kind with soap operas, quiz, comedy and variety shows, Nash commercials and basso profundo announcers — was dying when Walton Jones was born in 1949.

But he'll bring it back next fall in a Broadway musical he wrote and will direct. It's "The 1940's Radio Hour." It fondly spoofs old-time radio, specifically a live network show beamed coast-to-coast from New York the night of Dec. 23, 1942.

That show-within-his-show, "The Mutual Manhattan Variety Cavalcade," features singers, a smoothie emcee and a 17-piece big band, "The Most Versatile Band in the Land," led by one Zoot Doubleman.

AS THESE are the war years, there's also a guest visit by one of Zoot's old sidemen, trumpeter Biff Baker, now in the Army Air Corps and, like Lucky Strike Green, going off to war.

The show's sign-off: "Bye-Bye, and buy War Bonds."

The author, way too young to recall the real thing, has had various versions of the show afoot, including a hit 8½-week run in Washington, D.C., last year, for five years now.

Jones, son of a doctor from Falls Church, Va., and a Yale Drama School graduate, says "Radio Hour" originally was created because of an emergency in 1974.

ITS FIRST small-scale version was cooked up to fill a sudden hole that developed in the summer schedule of the Yale Cabaret, which he ran from 1974-77. It proved a hit on opening night.

So he spent the next four seasons tinkering with it, refining it, expanding it and putting in long hours of research into old-time radio. He was aided by Dick Rosse, a Mutual Broadcasting staffer he credits with steering him to veterans of radio's glory days.

"I must have put in a month of interviews with them alone," says Jones, a man with a penchant for constantly jotting down ideas in the spiral notebooks he totes everywhere.

He's no stranger to modern radio. He says that during his college days in Florida he worked on two stations in Tampa, one offering late-night rock, the other easy-listening music.

IT WAS during those disc jockey days, he says, that he really got hooked on old-time radio and started compiling a large tape and record collection of vintage radio shows.

"They would kind of tease me with the idea that it was the first time (big-time) entertainment had come to somebody's home. And it was so innocent, the time was so innocent.

"People listened to radio then" — a broad grin splits his face — "like they don't watch television now."

Although installed at the St. James Theater, his show of yesteryear originates in a make-believe studio at the Astor Hotel, where radio networks actually used to do big-band "remotes."

ALAS, THE hotel is no more. It was torn down years ago, replaced by the Minskoff Theater, where "Got To Go Disco," a musical about now, not nostalgia, became instant nostalgia after a week's run in June.

Jones chuckled when asked if any of the radio networks of 1979, in the spirit of yesteryear, had inquired about broadcasting the Oct. 9 premiere of "The 1940's Radio Hour."

"No, they haven't," he said. "But I think it'd be terrific."

Old-Time Radio Personality Dies

WOODSTOWN, N.J. (AP) — A funeral mass will be Wednesday for old-time radio personality John Reed King, the broadcast voice of Sky King and announcer for many others.

King, 64, died of an apparent heart attack Sunday. During the 1930s and 1940s, he announced such shows as "Grand Central Station," "Gangbusters" and "The Mrs. Goes Shopping."

For three years, King was the voice of Paramount newsreels and read the part of "Sky King."

After a stint as news anchorman on KDKA, a Pittsburgh radio and television station, King moved to Fresno, Calif., in the 1960s. He served as a news anchorman for KGO-TV in San Francisco and anchored a news show for a local Fresno radio and television station.

Rock, Main NEWS 7/24/79



Belle Johnson, who was a childhood vaudevillian, brings panache to Arvada Center production of 'The Big Broadcast'

'The Big Broadcast' lacks high polish, but bright in spots

By IRENE CLURMAN

News Staff

"The Big Broadcast," a simulation of a live 1930s radio show "beamed" from the Arvada Center stage, begins as an awkward family affair but gathers steam in the second act to become a memorable slapstick soiree.

Steve Pettit, who wrote the script with Eddie Perez, drew his inspiration from his grandparents and guest stars Jack and Belle Johnson, formerly the vaudeville team of Johnson and Hirsch. The Johnsons, who now live in Dumont, toured the Midwest between 1910 and 1938 (Belle was a child star), and passed the show business bug down to their daughter, who is Pettit's mother, and the rest of the family.

Pettit plays Jack Allen, comic star of the broadcast; his mother is the bounciest member of the Allen-Aires singing trio; his father plays the tenor sax in the show's band; and his wife and two brothers also are in the show.

THE TOGETHERNESS is heartwarming, but, in the first act, not very entertaining. Except for a raucous skit about car repairs, most of the scenarios are flat and do a disservice to the richness of '30s humor. A sketch set at a dry cleaning establishment, for example, seems both pointless and endless; if this were vaudeville, it would have gotten the hook.

Pettit's handicap is that the Allen character has no established identity. Unlike familiar '30s comics such as Jack Benny, Burns and Allen or Groucho, Jack Allen is a stranger to the audience and comes across as a one-dimensional loser with few endearing qualities.

The old-time charisma missing from the first act infuses the second act, however, thanks to the spark provided by guest stars Johnson and Hirsch. Their high spirits infect the rest of the cast, and the last half of the production leaves the "studio audience" with a side-ache.

JOHNSON ELICITS nostalgia with his rendition of "The Sheik of Araby," but his wife Belle steals the show. Denver's answer to Ruth Gordon, the red-haired grandmother demonstrates that *joue de vivre* has nothing to do with age. Her voice is remarkably strong, her stage presence impressive. And when she raises her skirt to accent her version of "Ballin' the Jack" with a few knee swivels and high kicks, she stops the show.

Pettit and Perez then appear in a cowboy and Indian skit so fast-paced and preposterous that it leaves the audience defenseless. Rene Blatter, whose pencil mustache is the most authentic '30s note in the show, plays an Indian, Perez and Pettit are cowboys in 20-gallon hats. Yardley is a tough cookie cowgirl and Mark Hotchkiss is uproarious as a visiting Frenchman.

The plot of the skit gets lost quickly, but the volley of puns, corny jokes and slapstick sound effects by Phillip Pettit and Bill Greenwood is irresistible. Phillip Pettit creates the sound of galloping horses by beating two coconut shells together and gets so carried away with the rhythm he doesn't hear the cowboys shout "Whoa." When a dog is introduced into the action, Greenwood howls and a spritzer of water is squirted on the stage to indicate the dog is lifting his leg. And when someone says, "You have everything in that suitcase but the kitchen sink," the sound effects crew tosses the inevitable sink into the audience.

THE BARRAGE of buffoonery weakens spectator resistance, and the show's floor director, played by Gary Pettit, no longer has to flash the "applause" sign to get the audience to clap.

"The Big Broadcast" is full of such authentic '30s touches as applause signs, a singing jingle for the show's sponsor and a small-scale big band with a suitably creamy sound. That makes the lack of attention in the costuming, hairdos and makeup particularly glaring; a trip to a thrift shop would have made the whole endeavor more believable.

Scripts from real '30s radio shows also could have been plundered to better advantage to replace some of the soggy jokes.

With a good deal of polishing and editing, "The Big Broadcast" could sparkle like Mae West's diamonds. As it stands, the show offers a novel if uneven evening in the "good clean fun" school of entertainment.

The production will be repeated at the Arvada Center Friday and Saturday, July 27-28. For information call 422-8050 or 422-8052.

THE PHANTOM OF THE GREY SKELETON MINE

Part 5--Fang and Blade

by Daniel Daugherty

Gramps didn't like Jack's decision to continue on to the mine, but he came along. Aurora Ashe seemed to be too shell shocked to care. Reggie and Doc had long ago learned to trust to their friend's instincts. As the group neared the entrance to the mine, gramps told them to hold up a while so he could light a lantern. "Still plenty of daylight out here, but it's dark as pitch forty feet down that mine shaft. There it goes. Now we can head on in. Better go single file, with me in the lead."

Jack stopped him. "Give me the lantern, gramps. I think I'd better go first."

"Think you're the better man, eh!"

"No, I just think that if anything happens, Aurora's suffered more than enough loss from this mine."

"Well I'll be," the old man replied. "Looks like you can feel a little pity after all. Well, it don't matter. If'n anyone's going to get hurt, it might as well be an old man that ain't got much life left in him anyhow."

"I don't buy that," Jack said. "I also don't like the idea of our guide being the one to take the most risk. Now give me the light, and stay with Aurora."

One usually enters a mine full of anticipation, and hope for the finding of undiscovered wealth. Never before was one entered so slowly, or so cautiously, as was the Grey Skeleton by these five seekers. Jack was being particularly careful to watch the walls and floor for any timbers that might be covering an abandoned shaft. He didn't really know what he was looking for, but the events of the last few days indicated that any attempt to enter the mine would prompt plenty of activity. He was like the boy who stirs up the rocks in the bottom of the pond to see what wriggles out from between them. Something evil lay dormant inside this mine, and Jack was determined to stir it into action so he could get a good look at it. In the meantime, it wouldn't hurt to get some more background.

"Say, gramps, do you know anything about the history of this mine?"

"A little. As much as anyone alive, I reckon, but that ain't sayin' a whole lot. I knew the three men who opened the mine about fifty year ago. I was doin' a little mining around Folly myself back then. Yeah, what a bunch those three fellas were. Slade Stanger and Hooker Johnson were about the two meanest men in all the Rocky Mountains, but no one ever thought so when they first met 'em. They seemed downright nice 'till you got to know 'em better. Anyways, that young Russian--Rudolph Sterenko was his name--he took to 'em right off. He was a foreigner, but he had some money and could talk English well enough to make a deal with Hooker and Slade. This place was already a cave, and some of us had even explored it a little bit, but no one ever thought of mining it. Slade and Hooker acted like they knew something we didn't, though, and had Rudolph thinkin' he was going to be part owner of the richest mine in all Colorado. If you want to know my opinion, the two vipers only picked the cave because there wouldn't be so much work involved in setting up a mining operation. They never took much to diggin' gold or any other hard work. Probably just wanted a chance to do in ol' Rudolph and take his poke where no one would be around to watch. It weren't too unusual for someone to have

a little accident around these mines, if you take my meaning."

"I do," said Jack. "And is that what happened to Rudolph?"

"I 'spect so, but there ain't no one knows for sure. I don't think things went according to Hooker and Slade's original plans. You see, they found gold."

"Bally good luck!" said Reggie, while Jack raised his eyebrows.

"Yep, they hadn't been up here more'n two weeks when all three came roarin' into town, each carrying a sack of gold dust. Best quality stuff, too. Can't imagine how they got so much out of the place in such a short time. They strutted around town for a couple days, actin' like they had plenty more to come. Then they went back up to the mine and no one saw them again for a couple of weeks. Those who came up here to see what was goin' on got shot at for their trouble, and finally the folks in Folly decided to just leave 'em alone. Winter passed, and when spring came, the three still hadn't shown up in town. I finally came up myself to see what was goin' on."

"What happened, gramps?" Doc was very interested by now. "You get shot at like the rest?"

"Ain't nothin' happened. They were all three gone. Had been for some months, by the looks of things. The way I figured it, Hooker and Slade stayed with Sterenko as long as the gold lasted; then, when there weren't no more to be had, they did the Russian in, and took off for some other state with the loot. No one ever had sight of the slimy vermin again. Not that anyone dropped a tear in his beer over that, mind you; but we never saw Sterenko again, neither, and he wasn't such a bad fellow after all."

"I say, where does the phantom come into all this?"

"Well, with the mine deserted, anything still in it was kind of up for grabs. Men would come up here and spend a few days looking for any gold Hooker and Slade might have left behind, but they never came back to town with any. What they did bring back were stories of a ghost that haunted the mine--Sterenko's ghost, people said. Eventually folks kind of forgot about the Russian, but they still know about the legend of the thing that walks the mine tunnels. It's become such a popular story, that they promoted it from a ghost to a phantom."

"Quite a history lesson, gramps," said Jack. "Only tell me this: why is the place called 'The Grey Skeleton Mine'?"

"Don't know. That's just the name the three of them gave it the day they brought all that gold into town. They acted like the name was some sort of joke. If'n so, I never got it."

"Nor I," Reggie added. "Any skeleton I ever saw was white."

"Wouldn't stay white for long in this place," Doc argued, brushing off some of the dirt that had collected on his clothing.

There was a sudden light. Jack saw an ancient face in a mist of white, but the vision was quickly blurred and replaced by a greater light; a hot, blinding light. Only afterwards did Jack realize that the first light had been a torch, and the second something very combustible which the torch had set fire to. As all staggered back, away from the flames, Doc disappeared through the floor, and Jack stumbled back through an opening in a wall that had seemed quite solid but moments before. Losing his footing, he began a fall by dropping his lantern, and ended it by striking his head against a very hard and uncompromising piece of granite. In seconds all light was out, and so was Jack.

Reggie was confused only for a moment, then went into action. He first picked up the abandoned lantern, but couldn't see anything

of Jack. Then he heard Doc's shouts.

"Reggie, Jack! What's goin' on up there?"

"I say, what's going on down there, Doc. Are you all right?"

"Oh, just fine, Reg, if'n you don't count a broken backside, and about a dozen cuts and brusies. Can you throw me a rope?"

"Sure, Doc old boy, but first let me get a better look at your situation with this lantern."

"Don't, Reg. I've heard some noises down here that make me think I don't want to see any more than I can see right now. Just throw me a rope, and hurry!"

Reggie obliged with the rope, but held the lantern over the edge of the pit also. "See here, Doc. If there really is something in that pit, you'll need this light. Stepping on a snake in the dark is the worst thing you could do." As he looked down, the light of the lantern cast deep shadows that writhed and turned as if each were a living thing, and nothing seemed any too distinct in the dim light. Yet the extreme disturbance in Doc's face was easy enough to see. Strangely enough, as anxious as he had sounded to escape a moment before, he now made no move for the rope. "Doc?"

"It's a bit too late to worry about that light, Reg. I got a mite too close to a critter that was sittin' up on this rock, and he got my leg."

Gramps' head appeared over the edge. "What kind of noise did it make? Was it a rattler?"

"If'n it wasn't, gramps, then this hole's full of babies with fangs."

"Good heavens old man," said Reggie, "Then all the more reason to hurry. Take the rope!"

"Guess you're right, Reggie boy. Here I come!"

As soon as Doc had been hauled up to join with the rest of the party, gramps was ready with his whittling knife. "You hold still, cowboy. I've done this plenty 'a times, and I ain't going to hurt you no more'n I have to."

"Oh, I trust you right enough, gramps. Just keep in mind that that ain't no wooden leg you're whittlin' on."

"I kind'a figured that, sonny, when it started to bleed. Now just let me suck outsome of this bad blood here. . . ." As gramps bent to his work, Doc let out a moan.

"I'm feelin' awful sick inside, Reg. I think it's already too late. Say, where's Jack? Ain't he even going to say goodby to me? Ow! Dern it, gramps! I thank y'all for tryin' to help me, but I think I'd just as soon go with my pants leg down, and all my blood still in place, if it's all the same to you."

Gramps spit with no more worried looks nor sense of dramatics than if he were spitting tobacco, and said, "Now listen here, ya silly ass. The rattlers in Colorado ain't exactly the most poisonous snakes in the world, and even the most potent snake poison couldn't kill ya as fast as you're tryin' to die. If ya quit gettin' so excited and makin' your heart beat faster, you ought to be all right. Now I'm kinda busy savin' your life, and I ain't got much time to chat with ya, so pipe down!"

"Oh, swell! Ain't I the clever one, Reg? I save my neck from gettin' drained by a bunch of vampire priests in a dark old temple in Nicaragua, just so's an old man can bleed me to death in a dark cave in Colorado. And I've got to put up with a leg full of snake poison and his insults to boot!"

"Ya can quit your howlin' now; I'm done, and you don't seem to be done in. At least not yet."

"Well, maybe not yet, gramps; but I just hope that when my life starts flashin' before my eyes, your part in it gets left for the sequel." And having had the last word, the Texan laid back his head to accept death with all the gentle grace and heroic posturing he could manage.

About this time Jack was coming to--which, considering all the abuses his body had taken in the last two hours, was quite an accomplishment. The sight that confronted him made him wonder if opening his eyes had really been the right thing to do.

He was in a chamber that was about 30 feet in diameter and high walled. On a rock in front of him sat a creature holding a torch whose pale light showed the wall behind Jack to be solid. Jack couldn't imagine how he had gotten where he was. He tried, instead, to assess the strange thing that sat before him. Determining the age of the face by looking at the condition of the skin was like determining the age of rock by a view of its weathered surface. The face was old--old beyond comparison with anything Jack had known before. So old, in fact, that it might be called ageless. Framing the face was a wild mane of hair and beard as white as the dirty atmosphere and yellow torch light would allow it to be. The body was gaunt, but gave an impression of agility and strength that was surprising when one had first considered the age of the head that surmounted it. This much Jack could say with a certainty: the misty face of Aurora's phantom was now looking down at him.

"Where are my friends?" was all he could manage to say.

The creature's eyes raged. "You'd overcome me with numbers!" he croaked. "That girl had brought back friends to help her. To kill me. To take my. . . gold!" The phantom reached down beside the rock he was sitting on, and in an instant was brandishing a saber in front of Jack. "I prefer to deal with you one at a time. Yes, one at a time. Did you think you could overcome me in my own domain? I am the master of these caverns and tunnels. You are but ridiculous strangers, stumbling in the dark. If you would keep your life, then go! Now!"

"Where should I go, when I don't even know where I am?" asked Jack.

"Go that way!" and the saber pointed directly behind Jack. "Or that way!" and it pointed to the left. "Choose your direction and go!"

Jack began to realize something. Threatening as the sword was, this phantom didn't seem very anxious to kill anyone. More than anything, he just seemed determined to be left alone. That Jack could not do, however, for there were too many questions that only this creature--this old man--could answer.

"Which way leads to my friends?" he asked.

"I'll see to your friends. Even now, one of them plays with my little friends. They play for him the music that they make with their tails."

"What are you saying?" demanded Jack. "Has someone fallen into that pit of snakes? We've got to get him out before he's killed!"

"No one will die. Some have poison, but I take it away, and the rest never had any. My friends might nibble at the one with the large hat, but they can do him no real harm."

"The rest of them, are they OK?"

"No more talk. Come."

"I'm going no where, old man, unless it's to join my friends."

"I am taking you to them."

"That's better. Let's go, then."

Ancient face and limber body led him into a tunnel with a ceiling only about six feet high, and 100 yards or so down that to an opening in the right hand wall. The old man carried the torch, but the light seemed to be more for Jack's benefit. His guide would no doubt have been perfectly at home in the dark. The old man pointed to the opening with his saber, and said, "In there."

"After you," Jack replied with a very polite gesture. In a moment the sword had slashed a six inch gash in the front of Jack's shirt, and left a thin red line on the skin. The touch of the steel was so quick, so light, that Jack hardly felt it. This had not been an unskilled swing, but the flourish of a man well versed in the use of his instrument. It had proved what it was meant to prove: the phantom had the weapon and the skill to make Jack do what he would have him do. Jack offered no more arguments, but turned and walked through the opening.

With the phantom not twenty paces behind him, Jack's feet suddenly gave way and he tumbled down a steep, wet, rocky slope that seemed to descend forever.

(Note: Many thanks to Chuck Hansen for information about serpents that proved useful in this chapter, and which will be resorted to again in succeeding chapters.)

SPERDVAC MENTIONS OTR BOOK


In their latest newsletter, Sperdvac mentions that the latest Journal of Popular Culture discusses radio. It's 180 pages in length. If interested, send \$5 to Journal of Popular Culture, Popular Culture Building, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403. I have forgotten to mention the able editor*, who is Bernie G. Evans, Jr.

*of Sperdvac's bulletin, that is.

RETURN WITH US TO...

I Love Adventure

by 



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WALTER PATERSON
BARTON VARBOROUGH

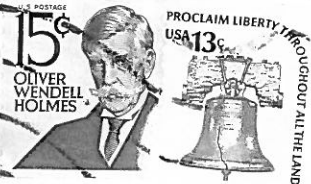
CARLTON E. MORSE

I LOVE ADVENTURE CONTINUED THE THRILLING EPISODES OF JACK, DOC, AND REGGIE IN A 1948 WEWELLY RADIO SERIES. IT STARTED THE ORIGINALS FROM THE EARLIER I LOVE A MYSTERY... MICHAEL RAFFETTO AS JACK BACKARD AND BARTON VARBOROUGH AS DOC LONG. WALTER PATERSON HAD DIED, SO TOM COLLINS PLAYED THE ROLE OF REGGIE YORK. THE THEME OF THE SUSPENSE-PACKED SHOW WAS "FALSE TRISTE": THE SAME EERIE MUSIC OF I LOVE A MYSTERY: THE ADVENTURES OF THE THREE COMRADES WERE ALWAYS SET AGAINST COLORFUL AND MYSTERIOUS BACKDROPS. IN 1949 THE LEGENDARY I LOVE A MYSTERY RETURNED TO THE AIR.

THE BRILLIANT CREATOR OF THE IMMORTAL JACK, DOC, AND REGGIE WAS HONORED ON JUNE 2, 1975, IN SAN FRANCISCO BY THE NORTH AMERICAN RADIO ARCHIVES AT A TRIBUTE DINNER. CARLTON E. MORSE ALSO CREATED, WROTE, AND DIRECTED RADIOS ALL-TIME GREAT *ONE MANS FAMILY*

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