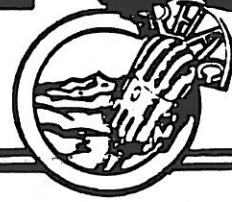


RETURN WITH US NOW...

The Radio Historical
Association of Colorado, Inc.



Volume 18 Number 8

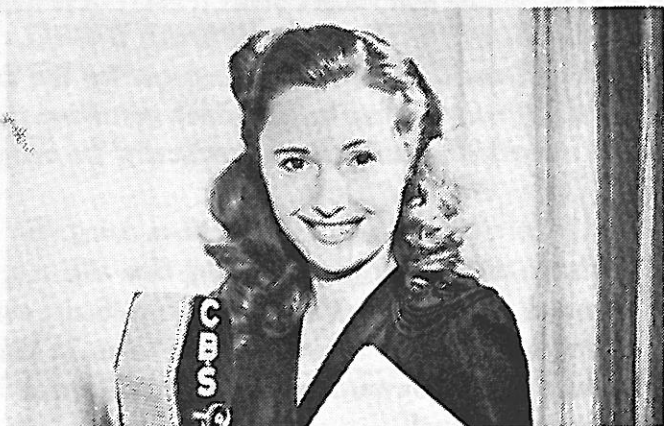
March 1993



Helen Hayes



Tyrone Power



Barbara Stanwyck

"Lux presents Holly-wood . . ." Most of the brightest stars of stage and screen appeared at one time or another on the "Lux Radio Theatre," with its distinguished host, Cecil B. DeMille. (Above) Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell.

RETURN WITH US NOW... is the official publication of *The Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc.*, a non-profit organization. Cost of membership is \$20.00 for the first year with \$15.00 for renewal. Each member has full use of the club resources. For further information contact anyone listed below.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: There will be NO board meeting in March. Next board meeting will be April 1, 1993.

ALL MEMBERS are welcome and invited to attend and participate at the Board of Directors Meeting. The April 1st meeting is at the home of Dick King at 7:30 PM.

CLUB MEETING:

The March 1993 R.H.A.C. meeting will be March 18th, 7:30 PM, at The Church of The Master, located at 17th Avenue and Filbert Court (Filbert Ct is between Fairfax and Forest Sts).

Our **GUEST SPEAKER** will be **HERMAN URSHEL**.

Mr Urshel was Chief Recording Engineer for The Rocky Mountain Radio Council, circa 1937-1947. The council was a coordinating facility which permitted regional radio stations to have access to recorded programs of a regional nature. More practically, the council operated the only significant recording studio in this area during that time frame.

Mr. Urshel went to Barbre Productions doing film sound work 1950-1952.

Western Cine was Mr. Urshel's long-time alliance, from 1952 to 1979. He began at Western Cine doing film sound; in time he worked in many positions; eventually he was president of Western Cine.

He started his own company, Cinema Sales, in 1977. In 1979 Mr. Urshel retired.

We heartily look forward to hearing from Herman Urshel about his experiences during the growing years of sound recording!

From the

King's Roost

March 28, 1993 will be a great day for Denver radio listeners! For the first time in many years, old time radio programming will return to the air.

John Rayburn's Old Time Radio, Sundays, KNUS, 710 AM, 12:00-4:00PM.

There is also some old time radio programming available in Boulder on KBOL, 1490 AM, ((303) 444-1490) Sundays, 9 PM to midnight. We do know that it is not received in most of Denver.

This has been a rough winter in the Denver area. However, we've had an occasional break that has allowed us to catch up on outside chores. We have put our time to good use while inside with various projects

for the good of R.H.A.C. We have worked to improve our libraries and we're preparing our catalog for a new printing. In the months ahead we will issue several supplemental and update sheets related to the catalog and these sheets will be published in the newsletter.

Then, of course, we are sure you will faithfully insert these new sheets in your catalog.

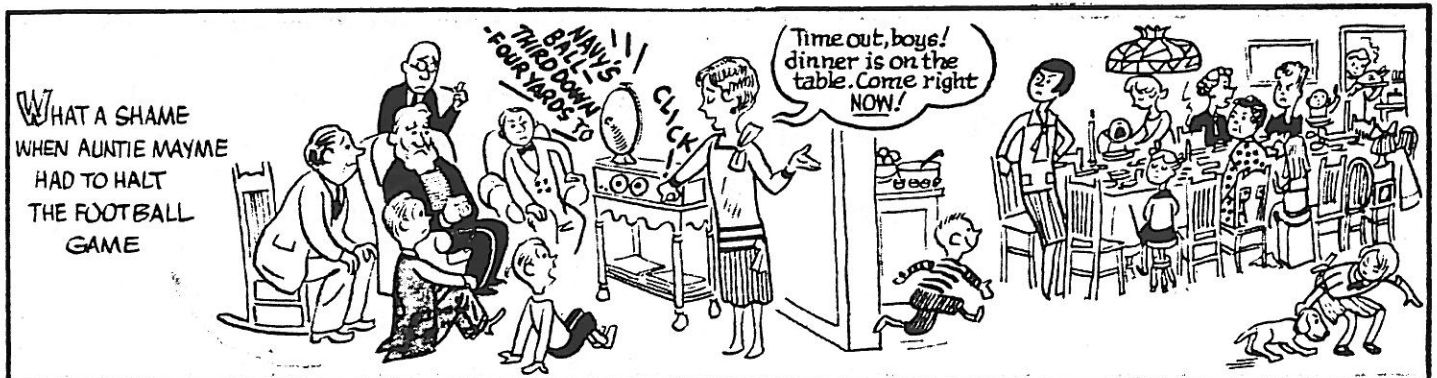
I remember years ago when we assumed some of the R.H.A.C. duties, we were told we could not handle some of those duties because we were not retired. Now that we are retired, we have more problems getting everything done because we have so many more commitments and really have to push to get it all done.

Fortunately, at our house, we both listen to and enjoy old time radio. We both also work on R.H.A.C. business many hours of almost every day during the

winter weather. We also both enjoy taking off to enjoy other activities in good weather. We also find time to dabble in other hobbies. For many years we wanted to spend time on these other hobbies but could never find the time.

Looking back, our only regrets are that we miss many friends who are no longer with us. Looking forward, we find much promise with each new day.

We plan to be in Seattle June 25-26 for the first convention of the "Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound". We hope to meet many R.H.A.C. members and other friends during those busy days, June 25 and 26. For more information about their convention, phone 1(206)488-9518. Entire charge for the convention day is \$49.00 each, including the banquet and evening re-creations.



Nero Wolfe

NBC Star Sydney Greenstreet Debunks Any Idea of Typecasting. But...

He's a Sheep in "Wolfe's" Clothing

By Gaye Howe

Saturday, 6 PM, NBC

It would be disgraceful to call Sydney Greenstreet *old*, for this cunning gent of some seventy years is as spry and sharp as a schoolboy . . . almost, that is, for he doesn't play tennis any more; gave up the sport when he was past fifty.

The only aging the distinguished thespian shows is in his wisdom. "The more you know about acting, the less you really do know," he admits with a sagacious nod.

In his NBC radio role of "Nero Wolfe," the poderous ponderer of Rex Stout's wit, Greenstreet does an apt job of characterizing but he briskly debunks any idea of "typecasting," declaring adamantly, "I'm myself." He finds the part "colorful and away from the usual run of whodunits," is amused at playing the shrewd but sensitive detective whose delicate hobby is raising exotic orchids.

Eyes Tell All

The only fault Greenstreet finds with radio is that he cannot use the power of his most expressive eyes. "How can anybody *feel* what

you are doing without seeing you?" he complains. Although the air allows the listeners imagination vivid play, Greenstreet is still troubled about not being able to create moods with his eyes.

"Nero" is the actor's first regular radio part, although he's guested on some of the West Coast's finest offerings including "Lux Theater" and "Screen Guild." Greenstreet appears to enjoy radio, naturally finds it easy compared to pictures.

Long Career

In the theater for a fabulous forty-eight years, he began his career on the English stage. Member of an astute British family (his father, a tanner, thought son Sydney had a "swollen head" because of his acting ambitions, but his mother emptied the family savings pot so he could study), Greenstreet was the only one out of eight children (five boys, three girls) to be smitten by the smell of grease-paint.

He is perhaps best known for his "Maltese Falcon" picture, so it is somewhat surprising to hear Greenstreet confess that until he went into pictures as a menace, he'd always done

comedy-pathos. In fact, Greenstreet was a musical-comedy star for eight years . . . dramatically has appeared with the Lunts and with Julia Marlowe. His Shakespearean repertoire is a classic in theater annals.

Takes It Easy

With nearly a half century of drama behind him, Greenstreet is now "taking it easy." He lolls around his Hollywood home, adores exhibiting his collection of treasures from all corners of the world. Living alone with his housekeeper of twenty years, Janet Murdoch (he calls her Scotty), the corpulent actor likes to golf and reminisce about the time he was a tea-planter in India. "I was never cut out for that work," he chuckles.

Although he claims he won't travel any more, Greenstreet lets his bright blue eyes grow dimly wistful when he gazes at the painting hanging in his living room. It's a pastel of Oxford captured by the artist in early dawn and, insists Greenstreet, whose family home overlooked the White Cliffs of Dover, "if you look long enough, you can almost feel the fog."

TV-RADIO LIFE, JANUARY 12, 1951

TAPE 5235 THE ADVENTURES OF NERO WOLFE

1200'

- 1L 10-20-50 #1 Case of Stamped for Murder
 10-27-50 #2 Case of the Careworn Cuff
- 2L 11-3-50 #3 Case of the Dear Dead Lady
 11-17-50 #5 Case of the Careless Cleaner
- 1R 11-24-50 #6 Case of the Beautiful Archer
 12-1-50 #7 Case of the Friendly Rabbit
- 2R 12-8-50 #8 Case of the Impolite Corpse
 12-15-50 #9 Case of the Girl Who Cried Wolfe

TAPE 5236 THE ADVENTURES OF NERO WOLFE

1800'

- 1L 12-22-50 #10 Case of the Slaughtered Santas
 12-29-50 #11 Case of the Bashful Body
 1-5-51 #12 Case of the Deadly Sellout
- 2L 1-12-51 #13 Case of the Killer Card
 1-19-51 #14 Case of the Calculated Risk
 1-26-51 #15 Case of the Phantom Fingers
- 1R 2-2-51 #16 Case of the Vanishing Shells
 2-16-51 #18 Case of the Party for Death
 2-23-51 #19 Case of the Malevolent Medic
- 2R 3-2-51 #20 Case of the Hasty Will
 3-9-51 #21 Case of the Disappearing Diamonds
 3-16-51 #22 Case of the Midnight Ride

TAPE 5237 THE ADVENTURES OF NERO WOLFE / BARRIE CRAIG

1800'

- 1L 3-23-51 #23 NERO WOLFE: Case of the Final Page
 3-30-51 #24 NW: Case of the Tell-tale Ribbon
 4-6-51 #25 NW: Case of the Shot in the Dark
- 2L 4-20-51 #27 NW: Case of the Lost Heir
 4-27-51 #28 NW: Case in Room 304
 End of Series
 10-17-51 BARRIE CRAIG: Bodyguard to Gossip Columnist 613 VG
- 1R 10-24-51 BC: Protection Racket 613 VG
 10-31-51 BC: Corpse on Delivery 613 VG
 11-7-51 BC: Case of the Borrowed Knife VG-613
- 2R 11-14-51 BC: Dead on Arrival 613 VG
 11-21-51 BC: Murder in Wax 1231 VG
 11-28-51 BC: Case of the Naughty Necklace 1231 VG

TAPE 5238 BARRIE CRAIG: CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATOR

1800'

1L	12-5-51	The Paper Bullets	1231 VG	1R	1-16-52	Fatal Appointment	DH
	12-12-51	Death and the Purple Cow	1231 VG		1-23-52	The Deadly Fight	
	12-19-51	Ghost of a Chance	1231/151 VG		1-30-52	A Very Odd Job	
2L	12-26-51	Song of Death	1231 VG	2R	2-6-52	Diary of Death	
	1-2-52	Death of a Private Eye	1231 VG		2-13-52	A Time to Kill	
	1-9-52	Murder Island	DH		2-20-52	Motive for Murder	

TAPE 5239 BARRIE CRAIG: CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATOR

1800'

1L	7-9-52	The Long Way Home	1231 VG	1R	7-27-54	Death Buys a Bedroom	340 VG+
	10-8-52	Murder by Threes	DH		8-3-54	For Love of Murder	340 VG+
	10-15-52	Dead Loss	DH		8-10-54	Death's Bargain Basement	613 VG
2L	1-4-53	The Crimson Queen	DH	2R	8-17-54	Mid-Summer Lunacy	340 VG
	2-15-53	The Girl on the Doorstep	DH		8-24-54	Blood Money	DH (9-7-54) VG 340
	3-1-53	Behold a Corpse	DH		8-31-54	Hay is for Homicide	340 VG

TAPE 5240 BARRIE CRAIG: CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATOR

1800'

1L	9-7-54	Ghosts Don't Die in Bed	340 VG	1R	2-16-55	The Moving Target	VG - XT 612
	11-7-54	Lifeline	613 VG		3-2-55	Sweet Larceny	612 VG
	11-21-54	The Sneak Assassin	612 VG		3-9-55	Corpse on the Town	340 VG+
2L	12-19-54	Dead Bull in a China Shop	612 VG	2R	3-30-55	Never Murder a Mummy	612 VG
	1-5-55	Angel of Death	613 VG		5-5-55	Confession of Murder	612 VG - XT
	2-9-55	Nobody Lives There Anymore	612 VG		5-12-55	Visitor at Midnight	VG - 612 XT

VARIOUS REALITY PROGRAMS Tapes 5241 through 5243

Famous Jury Trials (Tape 5241) dramatized courtroom cases over the Mutual and ABC networks at various times between 1936 and 1949. Later shows were syndicated. Strange Wills (5242) was a syndicated anthology series starring Warren William as lawyer John Francis O'Connell, with Lurene Tuttle, Carleton Young, Howard Culver and Marvin Miller among the guest stars.

Confession (5242-5243) and The Loser (5243) were much closer to reality. They featured interviews with convicts in California prisons. Homer Canfield and Warren Lewis were involved in both productions. Confession aired on NBC from July to September, 1954, and The Loser was on NBC from May to August, 1955.

Donations for this section are from anonymous RHAC members.

Timings to the nearest minute are on the index sent with each tape.

Martin Kane,

Private Detective

Martin Kane, Private Detective came to Mutual on August 7, 1949, as a Sunday-afternoon program for U.S. Tobacco. It starred William Gargan as Kane, the gumshoe of the calculating mind and the penchant for danger. Despite Kane's basically quiet nature, *Radio Life* reported in 1950 that he had been "drugged, beaten, locked in a chamber with poison gas seeping in, thrown in the river, stabbed, shot, tied up in a burning building and locked unarmed in a room with a homicidal maniac bearing a meat cleaver." In short, this was an action show of the first magnitude. Kane made an almost effortless transition into early TV in 1950. Soon thereafter Gargan decided to give up the role for a fling a producing. He hand-picked Lloyd Nolan as his replacement, and the radio show ran until 1952. Gargan, meanwhile, would return in 1951 in a new NBC Wednesday night radio private-eye role, *Barrie Craig: Confidential Investigator*, which was heard until 1955.

Tune in Yesterday by John Dunning, Prentice-Hall, 1976

The Cavalcade of America

The Cavalcade of America, one of the most intelligent and longest-running of all prestige shows, was first heard on CBS October 9, 1935. In 1939 it became a regular in the NBC lineup. It dramatized incidents in American history and literature, using top talent from Broadway and

Hollywood. It had to be accurate, authentic to the finest detail, and still have wide common appeal. The series told stories of the famous (Abe Lincoln) and the not-so-famous (Roger Williams), but always kept its audio foundations set deeply in the roots of fact.

Soon after it moved from CBS to NBC, a network press release said the show would combine "authentic history with the appeal of best-sellers." A board of "historical advisors" was established to choose material and to authenticate each facet of the broadcast. Headed by Dr. Monaghan of Yale, the board, which included Carl Cramer, historical writer, and Marquis James, two-time Pulitzer Prize biographer, conducted painstaking research and, to make sure the show wasn't bogged down under the sheer weight of historical detail, hired some of America's best writers to cut away the fat.

In addition to a staff of house writers, special *Cavalcade* projects were put together by such as Carl Sandburg, Stephen Vincent Benet, Maxwell Anderson, and Robert Sherwood. Sandburg even appeared as narrator for the 1941 production of his own *Native Land*. The leads of *Cavalcade* shows were played by stars like Raymond Massey (whose Abe Lincoln would become critically acclaimed), Charles Laughton, Lionel Barrymore, Dick Powell, Tyrone Power, and Edward G. Robinson. Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne made their first radio appearances -- separately -- on *Cavalcade*. Clark Gable's first air appearance was on a *Cavalcade* show. Orson Welles and several of his *Mercury Theatre* stars got early experience before the *Cavalcade of America* microphones. Roger Pryor and later Paul Stewart and Jack Zoller produced. Donald Voorhees, who would go on to direct *The Bell Telephone Hour*, was musical director, and later Robert Armbruster waved the baton.

It was a big prestige show in the truest sense,

carving out an area of expertise and competence that went unchallenged in all radio. With its high budget (some \$7,500 a week, even in 1943), the show paid top rates for its work, and the directors demanded excellence. Homer Fickett, original producer of *The March of Time*, took over directorship in the late 1930's, just before the show went through one of its few phases of transition. Before World War II, *Cavalcade* had concentrated on straight history. Later modern themes and historical correlations were developed; the historical framework was used to illuminate some aspect of modern life. The committee, working about four months and twenty stories ahead of broadcast, now accepted and produced such stories as the life of Babe Ruth, in addition to time-honored heroes like Ben Franklin.

But even with its vast historical references and authorities, *Cavalcade* wasn't infallible. The difference between a *Cavalcade* mistake and mistakes on other shows was that *Cavalcade's* audience itself had a high degree of expertise. Fickett, in a 1943 *Radio Life* interview, recalled one blooper on the production, "Abe Lincoln in Illinois." The sound effects men, creating the sound of a train starting and stopping, used recent recordings of locomotives. The letters of protest came in. Trains of 1860, the producers were told, didn't have air brakes. Humbly, Fickett admitted they were right.

Throughout its eighteen-year run, *Cavalcade* was sponsored by duPont, which first promoted its "Better things for better living through chemistry" slogan on the show. Initially heard on Wednesdays, it moved to Mondays in 1938, to Tuesdays in 1939, to Wednesdays in 1940, Mondays in 1941, and finally back to Tuesdays in 1949. It was last heard March 31, 1953.

Tune in Yesterday by John Dunning, Prentice-Hall, 1976

The CBS Radio Workshop

The CBS Radio Workshop, one of the most ingenious pieces of radio ever aired, was a revival of the old *Columbia Workshop* of the 1930's and 1940's, but done with even greater flair and imagination than the original. Sadly, it premiered in the waning days of the medium, on January 27, 1956, and ended about twenty months later, September 22, 1957.

But it began with a bang. In a great coup, CBS had persuaded Aldous Huxley to narrate an ambitious two-part adaptation of his modern classic, *Brave New World*. Huxley opened the show with a warning: We had moved much closer to the terrifying world he had described than even he had imagined. "If I were writing today, I would date my story not 600 years in the future, but at the most 200."

And then the sounds of the "brave new world" blended in. Huxley took us into the hatchery, where human beings were bred and cultivated artificially. "These are the sounds of test tube and decanter." The sound was only 30 seconds long, but it had taken three sound men and an engineer more than five hours to create. Through the ingenious use of sound, *Time* noted in review, the producers of the experimental theatre "hope to catch the mind's eye with the ear."

The review described the creation of the baby

hatchery for radio. It had consisted of a ticking metronome, the beat of a tom-tom (heart-beats), bubbling water, an air hose, the mooing of a cow, repeated "boings," and three different glasses clinking against each other. The sounds were blended and recorded, then played backward on the air with a slight echo effect. Sound effects were always addressed carefully on *The CBS Radio Workshop*. Creativity and production always took priority over writing, casting, or pace.

The series was "dedicated to man's imagination -- the theatre of the mind." Some of the best professionals of the old days -- probably interested but not hopeful for a revival of their dead medium -- were on hand for the opener. William Conrad was announcer. Bernard Herrmann composed and conducted. In the cast were Lurene Tuttle, Jack Kruschen, Joseph Kearnes, Parley Baer, Vic Perrin, Sam Edwards, Charlotte Lawrence, and Gloria Henry. All through its run the *Workshop* drew the likes of John Dehner, Raymond Burr, Stan Freberg, Edward R. Murrow, Howard McNear, Vincent Price, Herbert Marshall, Robert Young, and then-senator John F. Kennedy. Musical directors included Amerigo Mereno and Leith Stevens. Producers-directors, usually booked on a guest, or rotating, basis, included William Froug, William N. Robson, Jack

Johnstone, Paul Roberts, Dee Engelbach, and Elliott Lewis.

It was big-time, ambitious, creative radio at its best. As CBS president Howard Barnes told *Time*, "We'll never get a sponsor anyway, so we might as well try anything."

The point was well-taken. *The CBS Radio Workshop* was sustained, and did try anything good that came along. It dramatized the science fiction of Ray Bradbury and conducted an "interview with Shakespeare." One of the great early shows "The Legend of Jimmy Blue Eyes," with Conrad narrating the poetry and prose against a backdrop of 1920's New Orleans blues. "Report on the We'Uns," based on the *Harp-er's* magazine story by Robert Nathan, poked not-so-gentle fun at the archaeologists and anthropologists who tell us with such great authority where we came from. "King of the Cats" was a fantasy about an orchestra leader who conducted with his tail. In "1,489Words," Conrad reminded us that one picture is not always worth a thousand words. Perhaps the most unusual of all *Workshops* was "Nightmare," about the terrible dreams of a man in a coma, written, directed by, and starring Elliott Lewis.

The CBS Radio Workshop was one of the great shows of the air. Its life was far too short.

Tune in Yesterday by John Dunning

Prentice-Hall, 1976



RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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HERMAN URSHEL

RETIRED CHIEF RECORDING ENGINEER of ROCKY MOUNTAIN RADIO COUNCIL

WILL BE OUR

GUEST SPEAKER THURSDAY,
MARCH 18, 1993, 7:30 PM AT THE
CHURCH OF THE MASTER
17TH AVENUE AND FILBERT COURT

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