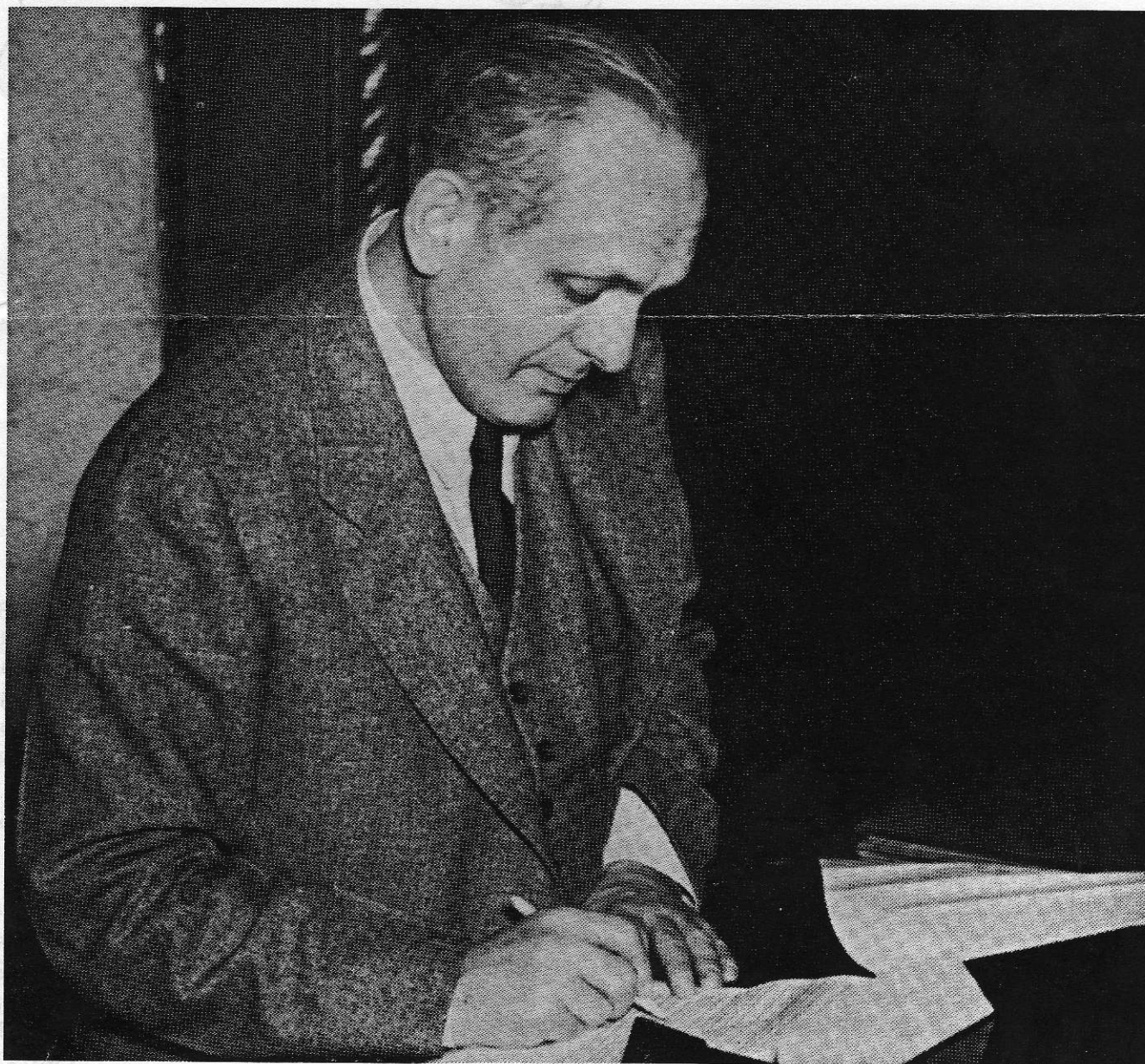


RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO
1975

RETURN WITH US NOW...

Volume 21, Number 1

August 1995



Gabriel Heater (1891-1972) - Hearst newspaperman turned commentator popular in 30s & 40s. Wartime newscasts opened with, "Ah, yes, there's good news tonight." Retired from CBS in 1960.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: There will be a board meeting will be 7 p.m., August 3rd at Glenn Ritter's home. All members are invited and encouraged to attend.



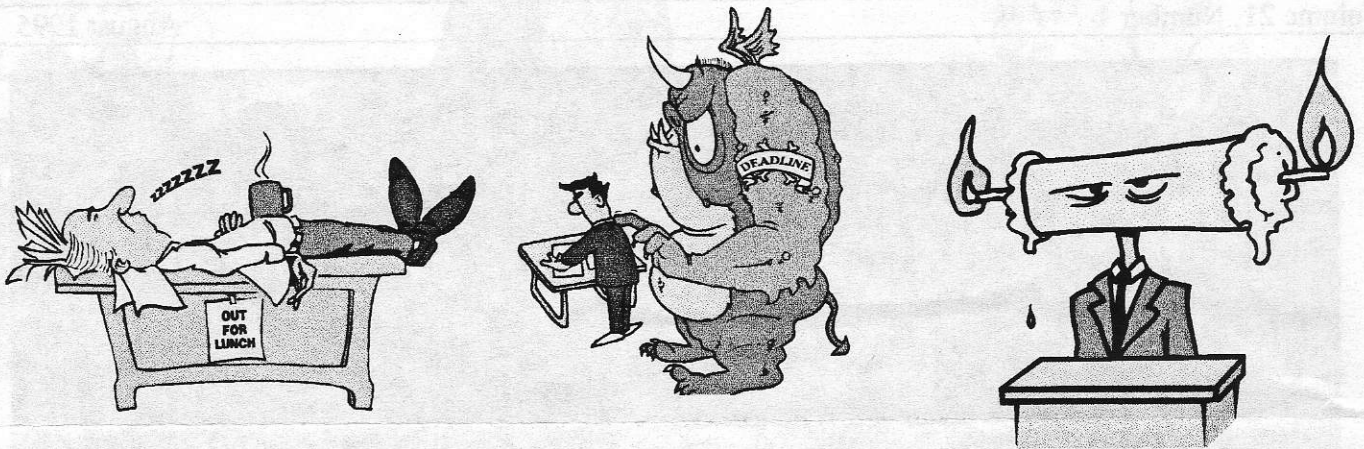
Sept. 19, 1995 there will a special presentation titled "Return With Us Now...A Show of Early 20th Century Broadcasting". This will be a collaborative effort between three organizations; R.H.A.C., Colorado Radio Collectors, and presented at Lakewood's Historical Belmar Historical Village, 797 S Wadsworth Blvd, Lakewood CO

Details next month.

There will NOT be a regular monthly meeting in August, 1995.



You can help with a research project. If you can tell any details of radio receiver sets which were manufactured in Denver CO. Phone your details to Wayne Gilbert at (303)465-0883.



RETURN WITH US NOW... is the official publication of *The Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc.*, a non-profit organization. Cost of membership is \$25.00 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.



Phone numbers are in the (303) area code except where indicated.

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- CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: David L Michael (as above)

Dear Glenn, Dick, and All;

I am sending this item dealing with my bailiwick, here on the West Coast. Much has been published about radio in Gotham, so perhaps it would be of interest to read about OTR in Hollywood!

In reading the "Ed Gardner" article from Radio Life Magazine, I thought it might be of interest to add the follow-up, West Coast Casting for Miss Duffy. From Shirley Booth the part was inherited by Florence Halop, (Sister of Billy Halop, one of the "Dead End Kids" They had worked together on "Let's Pretend" in New York.) Other Miss Duffys were Gloria Erlinger, Florence Robinson, Sandra Gould, and Hazel Shermut.

In 1938, Gardner took over as Director of the first half-hour of The Texaco Star Theater in Hollywood. (The second half-hour came from New York.) The M.C. was comic, Ken Murray, with vocalists Kenny Baker and Frances Langford. Irene Ryan was the Stoooge with David Broekman directing the orchestra. I was "Herman" the sound effects man. Comedy dialogue was written for me each week. As noted in "RADIO LIFE", Gardner was an unpredictable character. I recall sometimes, Ed would be on hand for the rehearsals, but take off during the break for the Brown Derby, across the street from the Vine Street Theater, (Lux Radio Theater). Occassionally, he wouldn't return in time for the air show. The agency man would throw the cues in his absence. (Sorry, I can't recall his name or the name of his secretary, who kept the timing on the show.)

Best of luck with your twentieth anniversary issue.



Ray Erlenborn



RAY Clangs "FIRE CHIEF BELL" and creates Sound Effects on the "TEXACO STAR THEATER" Directed by Ed "Archie" Gardner of "ARCHIE'S TAVERN"

A "TEXACO STAR THEATER"

IT TAKES something extra special to buck Fred Allen's hold on Wednesday night listeners, but "Texaco Star Theater," which soundman "Herman" Ray Erlenborn (at left) ushers in with bells and siren at the same hour over CBS (Wed., 9 p.m. EST, 8 CST; 7 MST; 6 PST), has given Fred some stiff competition. Texaco planned it that way. When the sponsor who had given listeners Ed Wynn, Eddie Cantor and Jimmy Durante decided in 1938 to present a new

program, he resolved to include everything—and tops in everything. With rare exceptions each "Texaco Theater" broadcast has upheld that ideal. Currently, the personalities presented are Kenny Baker and Frances Langford as vocalists, Ken Murray as comic master of ceremonies, Irene of "Tim and Irene" as stooge, and David Broekman's orchestra as musicians. Tops in their field, these stars offer, from Hollywood, the first half-hour unit of an hour show.

Sticking to His Own Racket

By Jane Pelgram

Sunday, 9 p.m.

We are as susceptible as the next fellow to advertising... especially the sort of outdoor billboards and inside street-car cards that picture movie leading men, facing the world of danger with chest bared. Chest, shoulders, back and stomach!

We have seen Alan Ladd in such a pose, on billboards from here to Malibu and in buses from here to Burbank. Thus it was with a problem on our mind that we started for the Ladd menage to talk with Alan about his "Box 13" series and any possible plans he might have video and radio-wise. Should we just shake hands with Mr. Ladd—or should we thump him on the chest?

Our first sight of the Ladd home momentarily diverted us. Being in the heart of Holmby Hills, it is, naturally enough, on a hill. A tasteful, livable place of the only-fifty-rooms-but they're-happy type, every room we spied invited strolling and gazing. Delightfully enough, Alan Ladd enjoys his home, and enjoys having guests stroll and admire.

When our legs tired, the three of us—host Ladd, your Radio-Television Life reporter, and Jezebel, a huge, benign boxer lady who listened attentively to every word uttered—sat in an elegantly comfortable patio at the pool's edge and started pitching questions and answers.

Alan Ladd doesn't talk a great deal—but what he says makes good sense. Despite great movie success, Alan still harbors a fondness for radio and credits his years of work at KPWB with his real start.

"Without the training radio requires, work in which the voice alone has to carry all the action and emotions, I'd be dead."

We had heard that Alan Ladd avoids live radio shows like the plague, and in light of his years of mike experience, which included a stint as the "Richfield Reporter," this seemed a little odd.

Alan's explanation lodges the same complaint we all offer almost daily—not enough time.

"I don't fear live shows. True, I do avoid them, but only because I am so used to transcribed shows that can be edited. You see, on 'Box 13' we have had to cut as many as half a dozen shows each week to keep up with distribution. Working at that speed doesn't allow much time for grooming each show to perfection. On live shows you have to be right the first time. My working habits haven't allowed this sort of perfection."

When Alan mentions working habits, it is a literal phrase. The popular actor makes as many movies a year as anyone can. During the brief vacations between pictures he has his own company, Mayfair Transcriptions, to keep supplied with the adventures of "Dan Holiday." "Holiday's glib patter and narrow escapes are carried by means of open-end transcription into 360 radio stations around the country, as well as into Canada, England and Australia.

Mayfair Transcriptions came into being when Alan and Bernie Joslin realized the gold mine in recorded radio. Records are made, leaving open space at the beginning and end and sometimes in the middle. Into these quiet times local sponsors insert a touting of their own wares. The programs can be offered to outlying stations at a low cost to that station, and at some profit to the packager. Sell enough of them and the packager's profits mount to enormous sums. Alan and Joslin have sold enough.

The format of "Box 13" finds "Dan Holiday," an ex-newspaper man turned fiction writer, going any place and doing anything for people who write to

"Box 13" in response to the fictional ad, "Adventure Wanted."

When the series began, Alan took on as scripter Russell Hughes, in a turnabout-fair-play deal. Hughes had given Ladd his first radio acting job at nineteen dollars a week.

The two of them worked endlessly getting up a good backlog of "Holiday" adventures, most of which found Alan's old radio buddies holding down roles.

As fond of "Holiday" and his adventures as Alan has become, the firm is holding "Box 13" to a given number on hand, rather than piling up shows as they used to in the old days.

"We are sitting tight right now watching to see which way radio goes. There's too much money involved to read and cut hundreds of records and then find that television will step in.

"I personally am not interested in television at this point." (Nor will Mr. Ladd's three-year movie contract with Paramount allow him to be "interested.") "I watch our set practically every night, starting with the kid shows and staying with it till the channels go off. There is a lot that's excellent on television, but I think I'll stick by my own rackets for a while.

"We hope to organize Mayfair Transcriptions into a television production company, and cast all radio now toward that end, but it's radio and movies, for me until such time as I could do TV on film."

Alan's electing film for the new medium bears out his preference for any medium that can be edited: no live shows as long as shows can be transcribed. The choice is more business-like than fearful, and has netted much, much coin for Alan Ladd.

(Incidentally, Alan himself resolved our early problem. When we had arrived at his home, Mr. Ladd was at his pool's edge, sans shirt. En route to greet us, however, he snatched up and donned one. We just shook hands.)

Radio-Television Life, November 25, 1949

QUEEN, ELLERY, pseud. of
Frederick Dannay, Jan. 11, 1905 and
Manfred B. Lee, Oct. 20, 1905.
Author of Murder Mysteries.

Detectives spring up in the most unexpected places! Ellery Queen, whose murder mysteries were dramatized over the Columbia network, started his career over a luncheon table 11 years ago. Frederick Dannay, art director of the advertising agency, and Manfred B. Lee, movie publicity man, sat at lunch one day and toyed with the idea of collaborating on a mystery story for a magazine contest. The conversation bore fruit in a manuscript, *The Roman Hat Mystery* (1929). It won hands down but the magazine folded before the authors received payment.

The book publishing house of Frederick A. Stokes took over the manuscript rights, however, and Ellery was off in a cloud of startling deductions. Three years later (after the publication of *The French Powder Mystery* in 1930 and *The Dutch Shoe Mystery* in 1931) the writers were able to quit their jobs and concentrate all their time on their fiction detective, who was by then a best seller.

Since then they have produced fourteen Ellery Queen books, four Barnaby Ross novels, two collections of detective short stories and a mystery story anthology. Most of these have sold 5,000 copies, and some have gone into popular editions and sold as high as 50,000.

No one wondered about Ellery's identity until Columbia University's School of Journalism in 1932 invited the detective to lecture on mystery writing. They flipped a coin: Lee lost, and Ellery Queen went to Momingside Heights wearing a mask. He spent a good part of that year masked, sitting on tables in department stores autographing books.

Dannay and Lee are cousins, were born the same year in Brooklyn, New York, and have been friends all their lives. Lee attended New York University. They look as much alike as oboe players; they are both of medium height and stocky build. Although they are still under 40, baldness is threatening to push their foreheads up over their heads to their back collar buttons. This made it duck soup for Ellery

Queen when he donned a black mask for a lecture or other public appearance, for either could put on the mask and defy Barnaby Ross (author of *The Tragedy of X*, 1932, and other Drury Lane mysteries), their mystery story colleague, to tell them apart.

Barnaby Ross (Lee) appeared on the platform with Ellery Queen (Dannay) in most of his lectures. Audiences from coast to coast have been thrilled by the contests of wits between these two ratiocinative wizards. Queen would outline a plot; Ross would toss in a complication; and on they would battle, seeking to stymie each other's mental processes, only to arrive finally at a mutually triumphant conclusion that would leave the customers limp. Even the lecture agent didn't know they were collaborators. He thought he had sent out two competing authors to do battle.

"There's enough material in Hollywood for a thousand books," they reported upon their return. "Don't let anyone tell you that fantastic stories of Hollywood are exaggerated. They don't tell you the half of it. Our first assignment was to do a racing story. Neither of us had ever seen a horse race and we haven't yet. But we found a man who knew racing from the ground up, lived with him for three days and nights and wrote the picture.

"Which delighted the producer."

They put in about twelve hours of work a day, doing much of their writing at their homes, and meeting to consolidate their material at their hideout, a tiny office near Fifth Avenue unknown even to their wives.

Gum shoeing Ellery Queen has been in the movies, on stage, on the lecture platform and last year on the radio as both actor and author. Splitting the detective's name between them, Dannay as Ellery and Lee as Queen, the two writers collaborated on the *Author! Author!* program in which literary riddles and radio charades were aired on Monday nights on the Mutual Broadcasting System. Various other writers served as guests, and S. J. Perelman as wisecracking Master of ceremonies.

For the latest radio venture Ellery Queen wrote a \$350-a-week mystery drama, a murder play in which he matched wits not

only with the murderer, but with a board of invited guests who were given all the clues and then challenged to fit the pieces together. The radio audience meanwhile was given a chance to outguess the murderer, detective and group of experts. For a conclusion the rest of the murder drama was then played off, showing listeners and guests just where they blundered in their deductions.

The authors were somewhat reluctant to make a radio character out of Ellery Queen. However, George Zachary, the radio producer who conceived the idea for the show could not let him escape. He had read through 200-odd stories before finding Ellery Queen, and didn't believe he would find another if he read 200 more.

A sort of intellectual Siamese twinship binds them together. Whenever they get together to cook up a mystery thriller they toss their brains into the same pot. Their minds blend so easily and naturally that a third person, talking to them, gets the slightly uneasy impression that he is conversing with one man. Never prompting each other by so much as a glance (in one hour-long interview neither ever once addressed the other), one would begin a sentence, in the middle of which the other would hook on a subjunctive clause, with the first reappearing in the caboose of the train of their thought.

"Almost everywhere we went as Ellery Queen and Barnaby Ross we were asked to work on some local mystery.

"But we remembered Van Dine's experience when he undertook to solve a murder mystery out in Jersey.

"He worked long and hard at it and was getting nowhere. When along came a flat-foot who didn't know the difference between analytical deduction and postular acne. And solved it in two hours."

A chart which Ellery Queen worked out for judging detective stories gave Van Dine's *Green Murder Case* a 79% rating; Agatha Christie's *Murder of Roger Ackroyd* the same and Barnaby Ross' *Tragedy of X* 89%. When asked, "How come?" Ellery Queen answered:

"Oh, we felt we ought to give Ross a break. Because we didn't want to let a pal down."

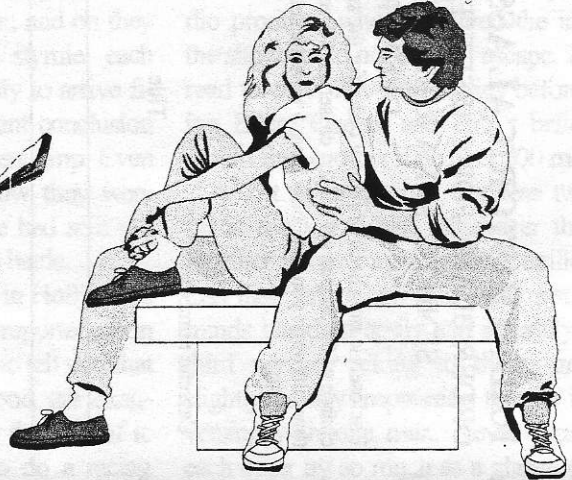
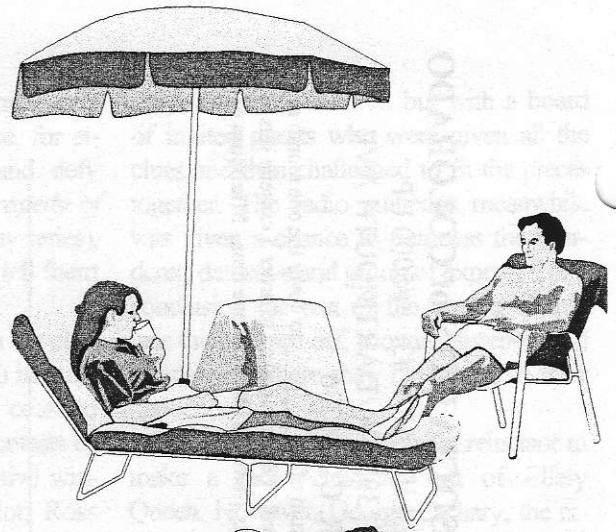
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DON'T FORGET...

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AUG. 6



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