



RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO

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Benita Colman

Ronald Colman

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

Dedicated to the preservation of old time radio programs and to making those programs available to our members.

RHAC BOARD MEETING DEC. 5TH

A T JOHN ADAMS HOME 2811 So. Valentia , Denver 755 9185 7:30 PM

Old tme radio is alive in Denver:

John Dunning's OTR Program on KHOW 630 Sunday from 1:00 till 3:00 PM

John Rayburn's "Reminiscing with John" Saturday evenings 6:00 till 11:00 PM KEZW 1430

KEZW has syndicated OTR weekdays from 7:00 till 9:00 PM 1430 on the dial.

KEZW Imagination Theater Sundays 5:00 till 6:00 PM

RRSR (Radio Reading Service of the Rockies) is in need of sighted volunteers to help with their radio shows for the blind, being produced at their Boulder studios, 5290 Arapahoe Avenue, unit G, Boulder, CO 80303 their phone number is 303-972-2850 for further information, they need help.

RETURN WITH US NOW... is the official publication of the *Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc.*, a nonprofit 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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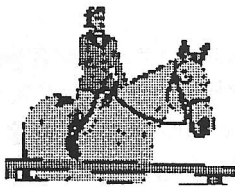
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From the
King's
Roost

Thanksgiving has come and gone, but long before it came the stores were pushing Christmas gifts and music. Have you a friend that you still need to get a gift for Christmas? Why not see if they might be interested in old time radio. They might enjoy having the mental challenges to "see" the shows that are presented on the old radio shows. We always send an acknowledgment of your gift with the catalogs when we mail them as gift memberships and you will certainly be giving a whole new world to the recipient. Memberships are \$25.00 and are sent out promptly so there is plenty of time to have it sent before Christmas.

While we are on the subject of use of the libraries, we have a reminder to the library users that complain about the delays in getting their orders. How about looking in a mirror? Have you given your librarian a full selection of alternatives? If you are ordering five tapes or sets of cassettes and only give a couple of alternates, you

might have to wait a long time for your order. We have over 500 members and the tapes that you want may be out to someone else. Our librarians are volunteers that are trying to send you the shows for you to enjoy but you have to help them by giving plenty of alternates so they can fill your order and not just put it aside because they cannot fill it.

We have so many new shows going into the library that there are shows for all tastes. Remember when most of these shows were on the air, we could only listen to one station, and had to miss the programs on the rest of the stations. Now you can hear them all, and enjoy the talent and entertainment that you missed when they originally aired. Some programs were very regional and other parts of the country never heard them, but now you have a chance to find out what you were missing. We all have different tastes, and some of the shows we have do not appeal to everyone, but many are universally appreciated. We find the ones that are good family entertainment appeal to most of us. We will have many various comedies, detective, historical, and even some horror shows, to be available in the new year.

Our fall weather held on well into November, but now we must expect a bit of winter. The ski slopes have been open

for many weeks, but the weather in the Denver area has been pleasant most of the time. Our horses now have their winter coats on, and enjoy going out in the snow to play, and we are spending more time riding inside in the arena built for riding in the winter. We still have a small bit of fencing to be completed in the spring, but for now, the horses are enjoying an additional pasture to the south of our original farm.

The young caretaker at the barn brought a white ferret. It is very tame and along with the cat, Sox, has cleaned out the field mice that had taken over in the barn. The ferret is a very interesting animal that has round pink eyes that seem to almost glow in the dark. It has cleaned out food that the cat leaves and does not seem to be a problem, so we feel that we are ahead with the addition to our livestock.

Maletha has many orders to ship from the reel-to-reel library and has noted that the usage has picked up noticeably during the fall months. The cassette librarians also have had similar increases in the number of orders. Many of our members that travel use the cassettes to make long trips go by in a flash. Even those who choose to fly can take their cassette players and ear phones and enjoy a few hours of OTR as they travel.

TV Goes to College "Halls of Ivy"

The Colmans of Beverly Hills

It seemed practically an impossibility.

When "Halls of Ivy" scored a resounding success on radio, there was considerable surprise for here was an intelligent, thought provoking comedy with no slapstick, buffoonery, or corn. It was a new departure for radio. And then came rumors that "Halls of Ivy" and the Ronald Colmans would go on television. This was what seemed impossible. For how could you have a show like this on TV? No pratfalls, no tired jokes. Just logic and intellect and a gentle humor. Who would buy such a show?

Well, CBS has heartily taken "Halls of Ivy" to its bosom and with a nice time slot..

How "Halls" was born

Of course, there would have been no "Halls of Ivy" at all if writer Don Quinn hadn't decided one day that after writing for Olsen and Johnson, "Fibber McGee and Molly," and almost all the top comedians for twenty years that he had done nothing he would want to be remembered by.

"So 'Ivy' was born in spirit of revolt," Don Quinn emphatically stated. Don who retired from active writing, is back now doing the

'Ivy' scripts. It was a revolt against low brow comedy. I have been trenchant and ephemeral for so many years. I wanted to do something I'd like to see and hear. I happened to tell my agent and friend Nat Wolff, about how I felt and about an idea I had. He wouldn't let me alone until I got the script on paper. And so was born the first 'Halls of Ivy'.

I used the college setting because I wanted an excuse for a literate type of comedy. And I don't think anyone was scared off by such an academic approach to a show.

"The first thirty-nine shows we're doing for TV are all from the RADIO scripts we have done. There were 108 radio programs, so we have plenty of material to draw from. And, interestingly enough, the radio versions fit very neatly into TV with practically no rewriting, necessary.

Barbara and Milton Merlin do adaptations from the radio scripts, then I edit them. We are very careful to see that none of the literate quality of the 'Ivy' is lost, although we are adding a little more humor for the TV. I am of course, not a good judge of TV fare as it has been, but that doesn't prevent me from having my own ideas about television. Living in Santa Barbara as I have for some time. I haven't had much contact with it. That city is not noted for its great reception. But what shows I have seen if I may make a general statement it seems to me to have been produced without sufficient thought and preparation. There was some care exercised in the production of the first two or three

shows in a series, but after that everybody seems to get tired.

Nobody is getting tired on 'Ivy.' I assure you. We feel were going to bring a quality to TV of which there has been very little evidence so far. A quality of humor by word and I thought and not by action. We don't cut to a chase to get excitement, in other words.

The Colmans

Some people have considered the Colmans not to easy to get along with. They have been labeled aloof, distant, reserved, downright cold. But this is not the way Don regards them.

"The Colmans are gentle people," he said sincerely, "Ronnie is a great gentleman and Benita is a charming lady. That may sound trite, but it's true. I've completed my education working with them. You see, I never went past the tenth grade and these two, with their tremendous intellect, have really educated me.

"Ronnie is a very meticulous person-as all of the real artists should be. He watches every detail carefully-from a movement of the elbow, a camera angle, an inflection in a line. And yet, he has a very sharp sense of humor-even though it is the British throw-away kind..

"For some time the Colmans had been asked to do a TV version of 'Halls of Ivy' and other shows too. I think they must of had the right deal, otherwise they wouldn't have done the series. I am quite sure that under no condition would they have agreed to do any other series.

You may listen to the "Halls of Ivy" on reel numbers 77, 106 and 695

The following article was published in TV-Radio Life in July of 1951

"Halls of Ivy"

Ronald Colman has thirty years as a top star. Don Quinn has fifteen years as an ace script writer of "Fibber McGee and Molly," as they join forces in the happy new program, "Halls of Ivy." One hearing of this charming show is enough to convince one that this may well be the most exciting enterprise of both careers.

For many years Quinn has had "Ivy" on the brain, and to it he brings a gentle humor and a kindly philosophy which are unusual in radio comedy. Colman as "President Hall" is not so far from reality that he doesn't recall that a tap dancing junior is also a veteran of Okinawa.

As the "Halls," Mr. and Mrs. Colman are ideally cast. We learn script wise that Benita Hume, as "Victoria Hall" is the former star of the British stage. Undistinguished as she was in "Lulu's Mad Moment" ("I spent the whole second act on a ladder singing 'Oo'll 'old an 'elpin' 'and'"), "Victoria" was a reigning stage queen in "Give them Tears" when "Professor Hall," on sabbatical sat through twenty five performances of the play. The opening broadcast of the program introduced them in their campus home and reprised the original romance. Gay "Victoria," who cuts her distinguished husband's name, "William Todhunter Hall," to "Toddy," is considered by "Ivy" students to be the ideal prexy's wife, particularly good when it to staging the campus

musical and teaching the aforementioned junior to tap-dance. The board of regents is not so sure--- it seems that one of them saw "Lulu's Mad Moment." "You saw it on Wednesday night?" recalls "Victoria." "Then you saw us at our peak--We opened on Tuesday and closed on Thursday."

Happy Meeting

The romantic comedy is directed by Nat Wolff, who is also director of "Anacin Star Theater." Mr. Wolff is married to Edna Best, at present starring with Maurice Evans on Broadway. Miss Best, another excellent talent from the London stage, was heard as "Victoria" on the audition record of "Halls of Ivy." Previous commitments prevented her and co-star Gale Gordon from actually doing the show. Though it sounds tailored for the Colmans, it was not--until director Wolff suddenly realized that as a friend and former agent of Ronald Colman, he was in a position to bring the two perfect elements together. Colman had other commitments, but he and Benita liked the show so well that arrangements were made to go through with it..

Colman, a man who admits that his early youth was marked by an excessive shyness of young ladies and a passion for the works of Robert Louis Stevenson, remains one of the best mannered men in show business. An astounded press agent watched the actor retrace his steps across the NBC parking lot and reenter the building merely to walk up and shake his hand. It seems that Colman had forgotten to tell the press agent "good-bye" on a routine departure. The business of

good manners is also an important one to writer Quinn and one of the lessons he teaches subtly sandwiched in the romantic comedy situations of "Halls of Ivy."

The Colmans have been married since 1938 and live in the hills back of Beverly Hills--not really next door to Jack Benny. They have one daughter, Juliet Benita Colman, born in 1944. The star's next film, following his Academy Award winning "A Double Life," will be Champagne for Caesar," back grounded on a radio giveaway.

A Banjoist

Born in Surrey, England, Colman is the first actor in his family since the eighteenth century--he made his professional debut as a banjo soloist at a Masonic smoker--served in the first World War as a member of Kitchener's "Contemptibles" and saw action at the battle of Ypres--wounded at Messines. First stage work was in a touring variety sketch--made screen debut in a two reel comedy which, "thank heaven" he says, "was never released--" came to America in 1920 with three clean collars and fifty seven dollars--made American debut in three walk on parts in the same play, wearing for each a different size and color beard...discovered by screen director Henry King and played opposite Lillian Gish in "The White Sister" to great acclaim ...switched to talking pictures with greater success than any other silent star...still considers "Beau Geste" his best film, "The Unholy Garden" his worst. He has long been in demand as a radio guest star including with Jack Benny.

RHAC member John Rayburn attended the SPERDVAC convention and did many jobs at the microphone John also presented his report on the E mail and we will give you the opportunity to read John's report.

"The annual OTR convention staged by SPERDVAC at the Crown Palace Hotel in Los Angeles was held Nov. 8, 9th and the morning of the 10th. It was a resounding success. Among the many features were: A panel concerning OTR on the Internet and Jack Mann's listing on the e-mail Old Time Radio Digest were of tremendous assistance and a big plug was given that may bring new subscribers to the digest. There was an "Aldrich Family" re-creation Friday afternoon with some excellent performances, especially from SPERDVAC members Bobb Lynes and Stuart Lubin as Henry and Homer. In the evening, Parley Baer and Peg Lynch were sensational as "Ethel and Albert". The room rocked with laughter. Three great sound effects specialists-Bob Mott, Ray Erlenborn and Barney Beck did a great sound effects demonstration. "I thought I was a big Hambone until I saw those three in action!" Then, Friday evening there was a "Cavalcade Of America" re-creation of "Citizen Moma" that originally aired April 4, 1949. What a cast! It included Rosemary Rice (who was on the original), Jeanne Bates, Dick Beals, Elliot Reed, Bill Zuckert, Gladys Holland and Alice Backus. Herb Ellis directed and it was a heart warming rendition.

Saturday brought a bit on unique opens and closes of radio shows that I got to do. After lunch came a superb "Suspense" with another truly outstanding cast. Herb Ellis again directed and he couldn't miss with the likes of Larry Dobkin, Parley Baer,

Sam Edwards, Bill Zuckert, Gill Stratton, Frank Thomas, Dick Beals and Eleanor Tammin. Saturday night's feature was "Command Performance," the terrific AFRS variety program. Frank Bresse, who has had an OTR show on Armed Forces Radio for eons, put it together and it excluded such sketches as another "Ethel and Albert", "Baby Snooks"(it was a thrill for me to get to do Hanley Stafford's "Daddy")" opposite "Snooks" by Sandra Gould, who did a great job (Fanny reincarnated). "Dragnet" (a funny, funny Parody, with Herb Ellis taking Jack Webb's part with announcing great Art Gilmore as the foil) and a full "Alan Young Show" with Alan, Jean Gillespie (who played his girl friend on the original) and Linda Romay, possibly the only Xavier Cugat singer he didn't marry. The only sad note here was that Peter Leeds, who wanted to attend, couldn't be there. He was hospitalized, has an inoperable tumor and the prognosis is dire. Wonderful voice specialist June Foray, who did much work with Peter on the Stan Freberg shows, hadn't heard the latest and was devastated when she found out.

The convention wrap-up at Sunday brunch was a "One Man's Family" reunion produced by Mike Sprague of the Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound and historical help from Ed Titus of that group. It was done in the style of TV's "This is Your Life" with the casting responding in character as to how their character may have evolved into the present. Then, they all participated as themselves to talk about the show, Carlton E. Morse, and some great stories about it all. In attendance was Carlton's widow, Millie, but she insisted she was too shy to participate and just wanted to watch and listen.

The "Family" stirred up memories and was warmly received.

Again, those of you who have never had the opportunity to attend one of the OTR conventions, I hope you can sometime. I don't have all the dates right now, but someone will keep us advised. The next scheduled one is the Old Time Radio and Nostalgia Convention in Cincinnati in April; the REPS convention in Seattle and the Lum and Abner get together in Mena, Arkansas, both in June;
John Rayburn

NOTE:

We regret to advise the Peter Leeds has since passed away.

For those of you that don't know, SPERDVAC is the Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy.

"One Man's Family" Family

For those of you interested, Mike Sprague is co-founder of the "One Man's Family" Family club in the Seattle area. They are endeavoring to preserve the marvelous history of this long running program. Membership dues are \$12.00 and they put out a quarterly newsletter and plan to have a lending library, a definitive log, etc. Anyone interested should send inquiries or check to: OMFF/PO Bx 723/Bothell, WA 98041, Phone 206-488-9518.

They are planning to have more "Family Reunions" as they grow into their second year. Please include your phone number with your check or inquiry.

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION of COLORADO

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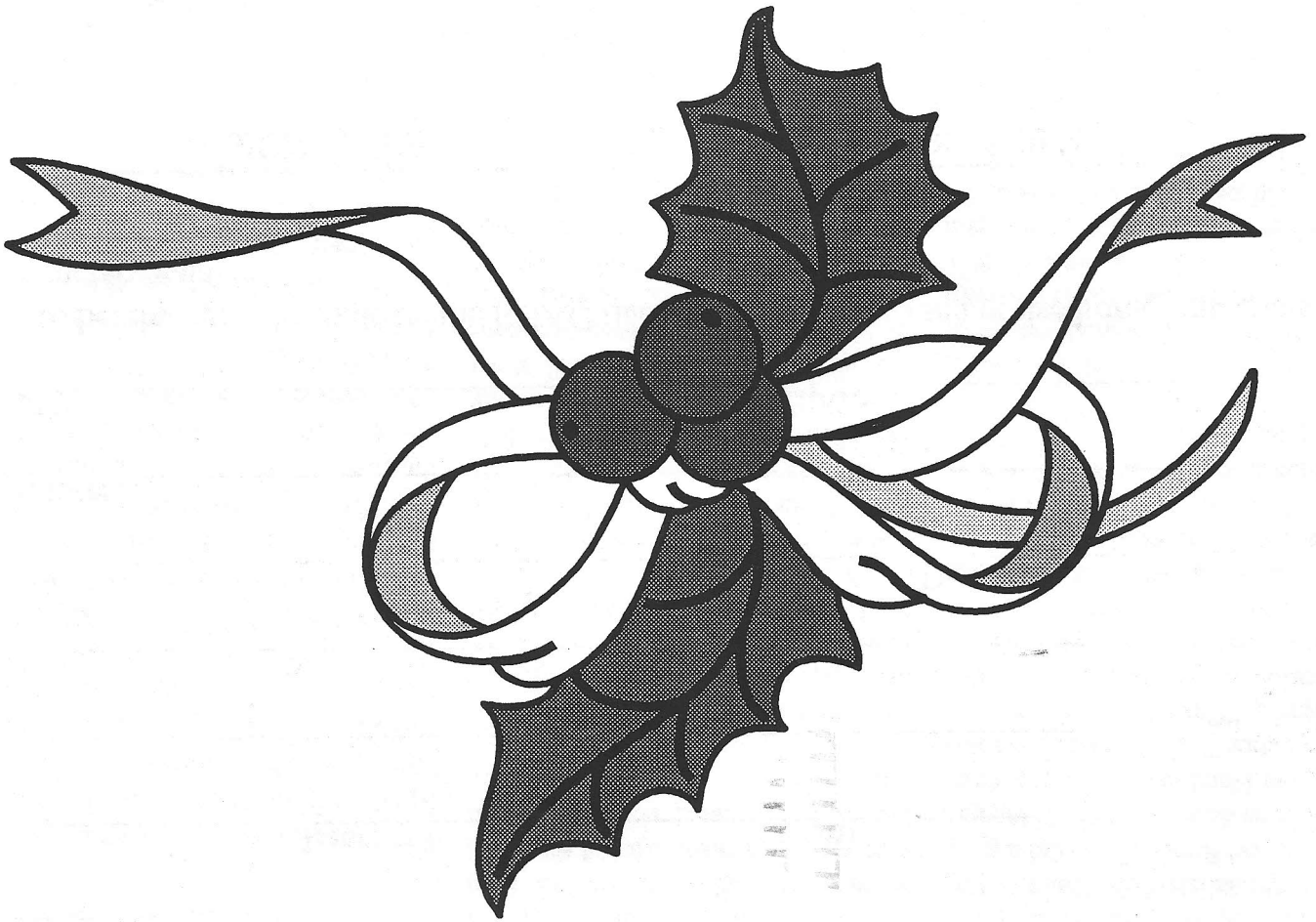
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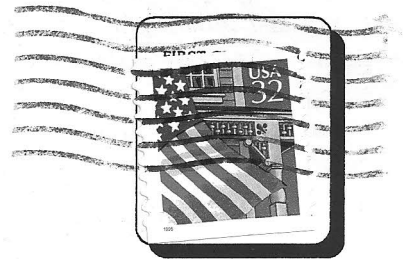
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