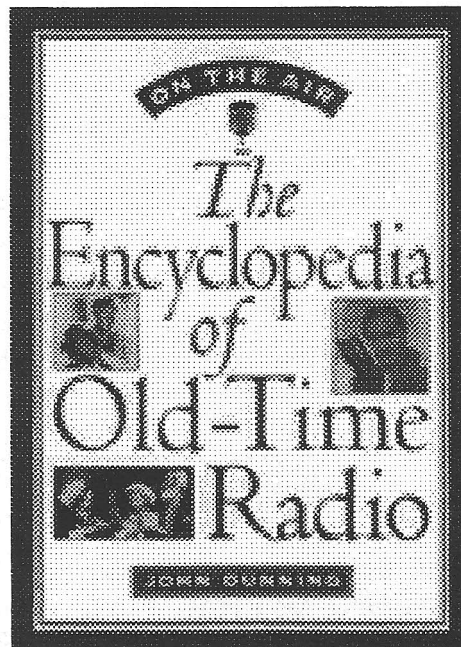


Volume 23, Number 10

May, 1998

John Dunning



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 June 4, 1998

Call Guy Albright for Location of Meeting

Old time radio is alive and well in Denver!

KRMA Channel 6 Secondary Audio Program, RHAC's show "Tribute to OTR" Sunday 2:00 PM

KEZW has syndicated OTR weekdays from 7:00 till 8:00 PM 1430 on the dial.

KEZW "Radio Movie Classics" Sundays 5:00 till 6:00 PM

KFKA 1310 AM "Radio Memories" Sundays 6:00 to 12:00 PM

The RHAC web page and catalog is on the world wide web. <http://www.old-time.com/rhac.html>
Take a look, there is a lot of information at this site.

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.

President:	Guy Albright,	934-0184
Vice-President:	Vacant	
Secretary:	John Stevenson, PO Box 1908 Englewood, CO 80150	573-7558
Treasurer:	Maletha King, address below	761-4139
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R.H.A.C. Players:	JoAnn Bantin 1290 Dayton Street Aurora, CO 80010	343-7508
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Tape Donations:	Bill McCracken, 7101 W Yale Ave #503, Denver CO 80227 Herb Duniven, 4184 S. Syracuse St., Denver CO 80237	
Directors at Large:	David L Michael, 1999 Broadway, Lowery Suite, Denver CO 80202 Herb Dunniven See Above Dick King See Above	

LIBRARIES

Reference Material:	Bill McCracken, address above	986-9863
Logs & Scripts:	Fred Hinz, c/o RHAC, P O Box 1908, Englewood CO 80150	
Open Reel Tape Librarian:	Maletha King, 900 W. Quincy Ave., Englewood CO 80110	
Cassette Tape Librarians:		
#1 (1-499)	Terry Hamilton, 9393 E Colorado Ave., Denver CO 80231	696-8196
#2 (500-999)	David Gatch, PO Box 70 Glen Haven, CO 80532	970-577-0805
#3(1000-2000)	Dave Logan, 5557 S Sherman Cir., Littleton CO 80121	730-1430
#4 (5001 up)	Mika Rhoden, 3950W Dartmouth Ave., Denver CO 80236	937-9476

John Dunning

Certainly no book on Old-Time Radio has been more eagerly anticipated than John Dunning's *On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio*. The wait is now over! John will be our special guest at the May meeting. He will talk to us about *On The Air* and will have copies of available for purchase and autographs.

John Dunning is a man of many talents. He is a best-selling mystery novelist, rare book expert, and recognized authority on Old-Time Radio. John also hosted Old-Time Radio shows on various Denver radio stations for about 20 years.

The following is an excerpt from the inside cover of John's new book.

On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio

The definitive encyclopedia of American radio, from its beginnings in the 1920s until the early 1960s
by JOHN DUNNING
Oxford University Press, 1998.

Now long out of print, John Dunning's *Tune in Yesterday* was the definitive one-volume reference on old-time radio broadcasting. Now, in *On the Air*, Dunning has completely rethought this classic work, reorganizing the material and doubling its coverage, to provide a richer and more informative account of radio's golden age.

Here are some 1,500 radio shows presented in alphabetical order. The great programs of the '30s, '40s, and '50s are all here -- *Amos 'n' Andy*, *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *The Lone Ranger*, *Major Bowes' Original Amateur Hour*, and *The March of Time*, to name only a few. For each, Dunning provides a complete broadcast history, with the timeslot, the network, and the name of the show's advertisers. He also lists major cast members, announcers, producers, directors, writers, and sound effects people -- even the show's theme song.

There are also umbrella entries, such as "News Broadcasts," which features an engaging essay on radio news, with capsule biographies of major broadcasters, such as Lowell Thomas and Edward R. Murrow.

Equally important, Dunning provides a fascinating account of each program, taking us behind the scenes to capture the feel of the performance, such as

the ghastly sounds of *Lights Out* (a horror drama where heads rolled and bones crunched), and providing engrossing biographies of the main people involved in the show.

Editor's Note:

As John mentions in the *Introduction of On The Air*, he conducted interviews with 125 radio stars, directors, writers, newscasters, and sound effects people. Many of the *John Dunning Interviews* are available from the RHAC tape library. Interviewees include: Dennis Day, Elliot Lewis, Norman Corwin, Eve Arden, Georgia Ellis, Gale Gordon, Eric Sevareid, Lurene Tuttle, William N. Robson, Parley Baer, and Carlton E. Morris. If you haven't tried any of these tapes, you are missing a really unique listening experience. See the Tape Library Index.

THE RHAC PLAYERS

Murder at Midnight, "The House That Time Forgot," will be presented by the RHAC Players on Thursday May 21, 1998 at the Church of the Master at the 7:30 meeting. The Sick Cow Buttermilk Company is doing its utter best to make this performance a smash hit. The story is very macabre about a house without tenants. . . except for the dead. A clock that runs backwards in

time brings death out of the past and out of time as the clock strikes twelve.

Most sounds will be live including a wind machine and a rain machine along with thunder, footsteps, etc. The large and wonderful cast and crew includes the following: Dorothy and Larry Weide, Ellen and Les Benoit, Priscilla and John Licht, JoAnn and Fred Bantin, Guy Albright, John Stevenson, Fred Hinz, Jim Hollingsworth Dave Clow, Barry Winograd, and Dick King.

Don't miss it - see you there -
Thursday, May 21, 1998
JoAnn Bantin

Arch Oboler Writes a *Suspense* Show

By Bill Snyder

I worked for Arch Oboler, the radio mystery writer whom I met in 1948 while on a trip to British East Africa. I worked for him both in Africa and off and on for a couple of years after our return to America. I recorded miles of audio tape during the time we were in Africa, and five minute clips of our recordings were broadcast on NBC *Monitor* weekend shows for a couple of years in the 1950's. We had the first

professional tape recorder to be used in Kenya, Tanganyika, and Uganda right after the Second World War.

One day Arch and I were driving into Hollywood from our homes about 50 miles out in the country, when Oboler said, "I've got a good idea for a *Suspense* radio show. See if you can find out who we need to contact and set up an appointment." Oboler was a well-known radio drama writer. Among his many credits were the *Lights Out* series.

Oboler's talent agency was very helpful, and so we met with Tony Leader, the *Suspense* producer-director that afternoon at 3 p.m. When Arch outlined the story he had in mind, Leader bought the idea right away. For about an hour the two men discussed the format of the show, and Leader gave Oboler all the information he would need such as to where to put the commercial breaks, taboos like keeping bloody scenes out of the script, etc.

As we both lived in the hill country northwest of Hollywood and Vine, we had dinner in the city, and took in a movie at the Fox Westwood Village theater.

When we came out of the parking lot, Arch turned on his dictating machine and began the show. He liked to dictate while he was driving, as he had done

to his wife, Eleanor, during our travels in Africa. She would take all his words down as we bounced along the terrible country roads in those days.

He always said all the punctuation marks in the dictation. For example, he would say, "Look out, exclamation mark. Those rats are coming to get you, exclamation mark." It was fun to hear him write a radio play as we rolled along the highway. I knew something of what his idea was, but to hear it dramatized as he was thinking it out, was really fun.

He would stop now and then, and we would discuss the script or traffic problems; he could turn script writing on and off with no trouble.

About half way home, we stopped for a hamburger and talked about other things for a spell. Then back in the car and Arch picked right up with the show. We were driving on Ventura Boulevard when it was a two-lane road; no freeways in those days.

Just a few minutes before he dumped me off, he finished the show with, "And the music rises to a triumphant curtain! The end." Driving time and writing time about one hour and 30 minutes.

The next day his secretary typed the first draft of the show, Arch

made some quick corrections, and she typed it again for submission. The following day I had to go to Hollywood, so I dropped the completed script off at the network continuity acceptance department.

A few weeks later it was on the air. Oddly enough, I can't remember the name of the show or the year it was broadcast. I have searched the RHAC catalog for a clue, but I'm not sure if it is there or not. The subject was an invasion of rats. I'd like to get a copy of it, because I was there at the very beginning.

Editor's Note: Many episodes of *Suspense* are available from the RHAC tape libraries. See the Tape Library Index

Book Note

If you hear about a new book relating to radio, please pass along the information to the *Newsletter* editor so it can be shared with our members.

A book on *Suspense* was recently published. *Suspense: Twenty Years of Thrills and Chills* by Martin Grams Jr., Morris Publishing, 460 pages, 1998. \$29.95 plus \$3.00 shipping. The book details the entire history of the radio & television series *Suspense*. It includes reminiscences of people associated with the show and a highly-detailed broadcast log of each radio and television

episode.

This book is available from commercial sources. It is also available from the author at:
Suspense Book
P.O. Box 189
Delta, PA 17314
Or call 717-456-6208.

New In The Tape Library

By Maletha & Dick King

This month's entries include some great shows on the *Author's Playhouse* including a version of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," which we all read in our early school years. Many of the shows of this series do not have the basic moral issues of the "Pied Piper," but they are all interesting.

The label of Miscellaneous Shows hides some of the best entertainment that the club has, just not enough to make individual reels of each series. The *Seattle Blackout Test* and *FDR's Fireside Chats* will bring those of us old enough to remember, the seriousness of those days of the defense era and the war. Many of us were never told at that time just how critical some of the battles were and how close we came to all speaking German. We need to be reminded every once in a while just how well off we are.

Mystery fans will enjoy the new entry of shows from the *Inner*

Sanctum series and it will help keep them tingling.

We enjoyed the shows of *Cavalcade of America*. Reel 1315 has the very first of that series about our earliest colonists and the hardships they went through, on through the hardships of the Dust Bowl and the grasshopper plagues that broke the hearts of many of our farmers, including many here in Colorado. The commercials were almost as good as the shows and very informative. *Medical Milestones* and *Medical Dramas* that are in the Contributor's Library are of the same informative nature and can really help us appreciate the advances that civilization has made from the hard work and imagination of so few that did such dedicated work.

The National Barn Dance was the door of opportunity to many of the entertainers who went on to become stars.

The ballad singers of Canada, the Western cowboy singers, and the hillbilly singers of the Southeastern mountains all tell tales of strife and heartbreak that was the training ground for generations to remember and develop into some of the leaders our nation depends on.

Radio Quiz

Member David Michael has submitted several quizzes on old-time radio. Ten questions

will a month appear in the Newsletter.

Part 2 - Who resided at or in, or what program was set in, or what was at?

- 1 Three Rivers
- 2 Niagara
- 3 Blair Hospital
- 4 3rd Ave. In New York
- 5 Sandy Harbor
- 6 Sea Cliff
- 7 Hudson High
- 8 Ivy, USA
- 9 Hartville
- 10 24 St. Anne's Place

April's Answers

Part 1 - Who resided at or in, or what program was set in, or what was at?

- 1 79 Wistful Vista
Fibber McGee & Molly
- 2 Summerfield
Great Gildersleeve
- 3 1879 Rogers Road
Ozzie & Harriet Nelson
(The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet)
- 4 Yale
Frank Meriwell
- 5 14th & Oak (at least two)
Drugstore, Department Store, Restaurant
(Everything in Wistful Vista was at this address)
- 6 Town Hall
America's Town Hall Meeting Of The Air
- 7 Monroe
Betty & Bob
- 8 Glenn Falls
Big Sister
- 9 Big Town
Steve Wilson (Big Town)
- 10 Havana

Bold Venture

Tune in next month for the answers to May's quiz.

Needed: Articles From Our Members

As you can see from the last two issues of the *Newsletter*, we are beginning to receive articles from the membership. This is a good start, but articles from our members are needed each month. An article can be on almost anything relating to Old-Time Radio. Share your interests and knowledge with your fellow members.

The convention season is just beginning. If you are going to one of them, please share your experiences with our members through an article in the *Newsletter*.

Upcoming Conventions

Watch this column for the latest information on Old-Time Radio Conventions and special events. Listings will be updated as information is received.

12th Annual OTR and Nostalgia Convention

05/29-30/98

Location: Cincinnati, OH

Contact: Bob Burchett
10280 Gunpowder Rd,

Florence, KY 41042

(606) 282-0333

See March & April Newsletter for particulars.

3rd Old-time Music and Radio Conference

06/2-4/98

Mt. Airy, North Carolina.

Contact: Surry Arts Council
Box 411

Mount Airy, NC 27030

1-800-286-6193

RadioActivity 98 Mid-Atlantic Antique Radio Festival

06/11-13/98

Location: Laurel, MD

Scheduled events: Three-session radio repair class, Seminar "50 Years of FM Radio," old equipment contest, flea market, and auction.

Contact: Brian Belanger
(301) 258-0708 or
e-mail BCBelanger@aol.com

Radio Showcase VI

06/19-20/98

Sponsored by Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound

Location: Seattle, WA

Contact: (425) 488-9518 or
e-mail HRRMikes@aol.com

See the March Newsletter for particulars.

14th Annual Lum and Abner Society Convention

06/26-27/98

Mena, Arkansas

Contact: Tim Hollis

81 Sharon Blvd.

Dora, AL 35062

(205) 648-6110

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION of COLORADO

ORDER BLANK FOR CASSETTE LIBRARY #2 #500-999

SEND TO: DAVID GATCH

PO BOX 70 GLEN HAVEN, CO 80532

970-577-0805

Enclosed is my check or money order for the sum of \$ _____ to cover the one month rental charge of **\$2.50 per set** for the cassettes ordered. You are allowed to order 5 cassette sets at one time although you may only have 5 cassette sets from this library at one time.

Minimum order is \$7.50.

Cassette number: Title:

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Please help in the preservation of old time radio by supporting legitimate organizations who strive to preserve and restore the programs and related information.

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I do hereby agree to abide by the RHAC rules and agree not to sell or use library materials for monetary gain and *I will return the tapes on time.*

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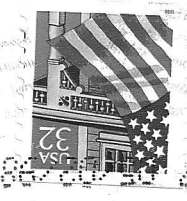
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TOM BROWN
1402 S. KAHUNA DRIVE
SPOKANE WA

09/01/1998

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P O BOX 1908 ENGLEWOOD, CO 80150



ISS#2 DENVER PADC 20:27 05-10-98

Murder At Midnight & **John Dunning's New Book**

Will be the Subjects of the May Meeting

The Regular Meeting will be on Thursday, May 21st at 7:30 P.m. The place is as usual, the Church of the Master — East 17th Ave. at Filbert Court. Enter at the Filbert Court door.

Filbert Court is between Colorado Blvd. and Monoco.