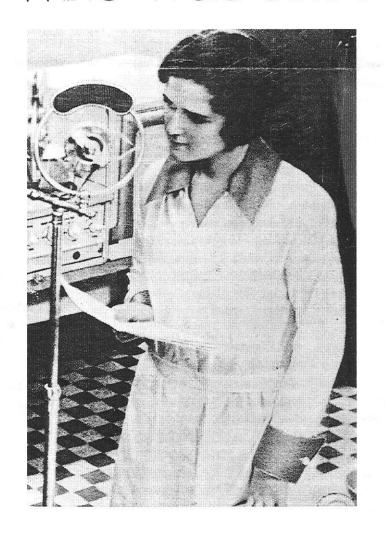


Volume 24, Number 2

September, 1998

AUNT SAMMY Who was she?



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 Thursday, October 8, 1998 - 7:30 PM At John Adams, 2811 S Valentia St., Denver CO

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 1430 AM When Radio Was weekdays from 7:00 till 8:00 PM

KEZW 1430 AM Radio Movie Classics Sundays 5:00 till 6:00 PM

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

RHAC WEB 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 in good standing has full use of the club resources. For further information contact anyone listed below.

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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

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#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

September Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on Thursday, September 17th, 7:30 PM, at the Church of the Master. Election of club officers will be held. Also, the RHAC Players will perform the radio play *A FLAW IN THE OINTMENT*.



RHAC Players

By JoAnn Bantin

The RHAC Players had a real flaw in the ointment at the summer picnic -- IT RAINED. After several wet scripts and canvas over all the equipment--it was time cut....GOOD NEWS --- the hilarious script of Pete Wehner, A FLAW IN THE OINTMENT, will be given at the RHAC meeting on Thursday, Sept 17,1998 at The Church of the Master at 7:30 P.M. We have a wonderful cast who has been having a lot of fun with this play. Also we even have a surprise to add to this flaw in the ointment on Thursday night. This will be an evening of relaxation and fun so please mark your calendar and BE THERE.

The RHAC Players also want to announce that there will be readings for the next exciting play on Thursday, September 10, 1998 at 7:00 P.M. They will be held at Larry Weide's home 5270 E. Nassau Circle, Englewood, CO, 303-758-8382. A definite script has not been chosen yet but we are tentatively looking at the action-packed Richard Diamond. Anyone interested, who has not been active with us, and has that wonderful big desire to get in the act---please call either Jo Ann Bantin at 303-343-7508 or Barry Winograd at 303-617-1868.

1998 RHAC Dicnic

The 1998 RHAC picnic was held at Dick and Maletha King's home in Englewood, CO. About 40 people were in attendance. The King's and Guy Albright provided the burgers and corn. A severe thunder storm forced the postponement of the RHAC Players production of A FLAW IN THE OINTMENT.

Even though the weather didn't totally cooperate, a good time was had by all.

Aunt Sammy — Early Radio

Cook

By Jan Holden

If you can't recall Aunt Sammy, it's not surprising. She wasn't as popular as Betty Crocker, Julia Child, or Duncan Hines. But she was part of Americana. She was Uncle Sam's wife. And she could cook!

Aunt Sammy made her radio debut in 1926, when radio itself was a pretty new form of entertainment. Those were boom times for our nation and we were feeling smug and optimistic. Not only were we enjoying the five-day work week with higher wages, we were finding new ways to spend our "leisure" time.

Aunt Sammy, as the story has it, was an expert on nearly every aspect of home management. She was a kindly-voice, brimming with sound advice about everything from cooking and cleaning to entertaining the boss. She knew how to stretch a dollar and stretch last evening's turkey and dressing. Fact is, there was little Aunt Sammy couldn't converse about. But it was her manner, that generous mixture of humor and charm, that made her so popular!

Of course Aunt Sammy was not just one woman. Over the ten years of her radio career, she was hundreds of ladies, standing before a micro-

phone, reaching into the lives of typical American homemakers.

The American homemaker in the 1920's had a lot of challenges to face. There were no microwave meals, no take-out chicken places. There was a kitchen, usually austere in design. There were no electronic gadgets, no big time-savers. There were no packaged "mixes" - only cooking from "scratch." The task of the homemaker was nothing to be taken lightly. Women didn't need to apologize for their roles in life. It took skill, cunning, and more than a little patience to run a household, feed a husband and children, and still retain femininity. Aunt Sammy was every American homemaker's best friend.

It was on October 4, 1926 when Aunt Sammy made her radio debut. For fifteen minutes, on fifty different radio stations, fifty Aunt Sammys with identical scripts, greeted the American housewife. Hailed as the foremost authority on housekeeping, Aunt Sammy's listening audience was invited to tell others about the ladv who could tell a joke, explain the art of pickling, and enumerate the five basic food groups all within a fifteen minute time span. At the conclusion of Aunt Sammy's program there would always be offered a "menu for the day," foods that were guaranteed to taste as wonderful as they sounded. Step-by-step recipes and complete ingredients listings were never overlooked.

Aunt Sammy's friendly, fifteenminute "Housekeeper's Chat" was a revolutionary breakthrough. Not only was it interesting and informative, it was the answer to the prayers of many lonely women who scarcely had time for socializing.

The popularity of Aunt Sammy's fifteen-minute program was greatly due to the genius of a man named Morse Salisbury, whose guiding hand directed a staff of writers to the type of material that would be welcome by the target group — women at home.

Said Salisbury, "If I am a housewife, I probably am busy with my household tasks, or have dropped them for a few minutes to listen to the radio talk. I don't want a lecture. I just want a chat in my everyday language. If a speaker starts off with a reference to the common, homely things that are part of my daily experiences, my attention is captured."

America's Aunt Sammys followed Salisbury's format, helping women deal with the everyday challenges of being housewives, always remembering to entertain as well as inform.

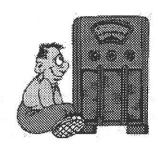
As the program evolved, Aunt Sammy was joined by other diverse characters. There were supporting players in the form of a six-year-old nephew, a nosey but warm-hearted neighbor, an inexperienced young wife, and the Recipe Lady and Menu Specialist — who happened to be the real-life authors of Aunt Sammy's recipes. (Fanny Walker Yeatman and Ruth Van Deman.) There were also advisors in the realm of gardening and plant care, home decorating, and etiquette. Women could leave home without really leaving home. And, of course, that was one of the charms of friendship with Aunt Sammy!

In 1927, Aunt Sammy's recipes were gathered together and published in book form. There was no way around publication, as the enthusiastic public was flooding the radio offices with thousands of letters requesting printed recipes for a particular favorite offered during on of Aunt Sammy's radio broadcasts. The Bureau of Home Economics began by printing 50,000 volumes. Within a month it was necessary to produce another fifty thousand.

Perhaps Aunt Sammy's magic would have gone on indefinitely, had it not been for the Depression. Suddenly the American high was replaced by fear and uncertainty. By 1933, most of Aunt Sammy's compa-

triots, Uncle Ebenezer," the nextdoor neighbor, even her menu specialists, were whisked off the airwaves. Recipes were discontinued two years later. The American homemaker had lost a true friend.

Comics inherited a great deal of air time during the Great Depression, and rightly so. If ever the American people needed to laugh, it was then. But no matter how many smiles Benny and Allen brought their listeners, millions of women would never forget the cheery voice whose words of wisdom had made every single weekday a little brighter.



What I Remember About the Golden Age of Radio and What It Has Meant To Me

By Paul Barringer

I guess I started listening to radio when I was about 8 or 9 years old.

I came down with Rheumatic Fever and was confined to bed for about a year. I had to be carried from room to room by my mother, including the bathroom, so I had nothing to do hour after hour but listen to the radio, and read the funnies, comic books, and comic strips. I learned how to draw by looking at comic characters and drawing what I saw. To this day I can look at a picture or drawing and reproduce it, but I can't create from my mind.

While confined to bed I even listened to the soap operas such as

The Romance of Helen Trent, Our Gal Sunday, Stella Dallas, Ma Perkins, The Guiding Light, and Pepper Young's Family etc. but my favorites were the kid shows and mysteries.

After recovering from my illness and returning to school, I remember I couldn't wait to get home after school and turn on the radio and stay up till 10:00 or 11:00 at night listening. Sometimes two of my favorites would on at the same time. What a dilemma! I would change stations back and forth. Man, what we could have done with a tape recorder and a remote control back then!

In the early forties my Monday afternoon started with Hop Harrigan followed by Jack Armstrong, Don Winslow, Superman, Captain Midnight, Amos 'n' Andy (the whole country listened to them, I guess), and The Lone Ranger (my all-time favorite.) Later in the evening was Lum and Abner, Bulldog Drummond, Lux Radio Theater, or Counter Spy or Gabriel Heatter. It was mostly Gabriel Heatter most of the time during the war years.

Tuesday afternoons were basically the same programs. The evening included Suspense or Fibber McGee and Molly, Bob Hope, and Red Skelton.

Ditto for Wednesday afternoons. Some of the evening programs were *The Thin Man* and *Mr. District Attorney*.

Thursday afternoons were the same. The evening programs included Abbott and Costello, Death Valley Days, or The Aldrich Family.

Friday afternoons were the same line-up as all week. A few of the evening programs were Mr. Keen, Gang Busters, Information Please, and People Are Funny.

Saturday shows included Let's Pretend, Ellery Queen, Truth Or Consequences, and the Green Hornet. In later years Saturdays included Grand Central, Station Smilin' Ed's (McConnell) Buster Brown Gang and

others.

Sundays I always had to listen to *The Shadow*. Evening time included *Gene Autry*, *Jack Benny*, *The Quiz Kids*, *Charlie McCarthy*, and *Inner Sanctum Mystery*.

In later years other programs I remember listening to were Juvenile Jury, True Detective, Quick As A Flash, Nick Carter - Master Detective, Chic Carter - Boy Detective, The Adventures of Sam Spade - Detective, Dick Tracy, Terry and the Pirates, Sky King, The Tom Mix Ralston Straight Shooters, Dr, I.Q., Big Town, The Whistler, Lights Out, Crime Photographer, The Fat Man, The Life of Riley, Charlie Chan, Boston Blackie, I Love A Mystery, and many, many more.

In the back of mind I seem to remember *I Love A Mystery* came on late in the evening. I would turn out all the lights in the house and listen, letting my mind visualize the thrilling and chilling adventure. I loved it!

It's truly amazing how many programs were available to listen to. Those I mentioned are the ones I had an interest in.

Since I read many comic books and comic strips while ill, I associated many of the programs I listened to with the comics.

Growing up, money was pretty scare in our family, but I always found enough money for the Saturday afternoon movies, comic books, and radio premiums. Our house always had a box or two of Kellogg's Pep, Nabisco Shredded Wheat, Quaker Puffed Wheat, Wheaties, Cheerios, or Hot Ralston. And I must have drunk gallon after gallon of Ovaltine.

Some of the premiums I remember included dozens of Captain Midnight and Little Orphan Annie decoders, rings of all kinds, such as Kix Atomic Bomb Ring (mine actually worked), Jack Armstrong's Whistling Ring, and Captain Midnight's Sun-God ring. I also had Hop

Harrigan's Para-Plane, Captain Midnight and Little Orphan Annie Shake-Up Mugs, and more. I think that there was even a promotional contest that awarded an airplane to the winner. I think it was a Piper Cub.

I still have *Little Orphan Annie* and *Captain Midnight* decoders and a couple of *Captain Midnight* Secret Squadron Handbooks.

Speaking of contests, Superman had a contest nation-wide for listeners to write a short essay on their definition of equality and religious and racial intolerance. I entered and was a winner in the Denver and Colorado area. My prize was a film viewer with strips of Superman. You looked through the front viewer and turned the knob on the side to advance the film strip. The prize was small and not real expensive, but I was excited and proud of myself.

As I mentioned before, I collected all the radio premiums that were offered. I also wrote to some of the comic strip artists, such as Chester Gould (*Dick Tracy*), Carl Ed (*Harold Teen*), and Fred Harmon (*Red Ryder*), and they all sent me letters and pictures of themselves or their characters.

At seventeen, I joined the Navy. After three years, six months, four days, fourteen hours, and two minutes, I returned home. I started to collect original art from the comic strips, that is, the original drawing that was used in the actual printing of the strip. I kind of forgot about radio programs, most of them had left the airways and TV was the rage any ways. I guess some thirty years or so passed when I went to some sort of fair at the Civic Center in Denver and happened to notice a booth ran by the Radio Historical Association of Colorado & picked up an application for membership. I joined the club, attended a couple of meetings, went to my first Old-Time Radio convention, & once again, I was hooked.

I guess I started to relive my childhood again, remembering those days I cherished so much. It seemed like only yesterday that I heard the cry of "Hi-Yo-Silver-Awaaaaaay," the sinister laugh of the Shadow, the eerie chime of the bells on Suspense, and the creaking door of The Inner Sanctum. My gosh, where had those years gone?

Well, once again, I can create the pictures in my mind as I did when I was a child, thanks to R.H.A.C., the radio clubs, and radio stations that have preserved the Golden Age of Radio for all of us. Most of this is from memory, so forgive me if I am wrong on some points.

Editor's Note: Many of the series mentioned in Paul's article are in the RHAC Tape Libraries.

Tape Librarian Needed

Yes, we still need a volunteer to become the librarian for our Cassette Library #1. ANYONE INTERESTED? It takes about 3 to 4 hours a week to keep our members happy and be able to enjoy the shows we have available. Just give Dick or Maletha a call at 303-761-4139, if you want to know about what is required.

It was no problem for Maletha to just fill in on a **TEMPORARY BASIS**, but we need a permanent librarian. A Denver area member is preferred for this position.

New in The Tape Library

By Maletha & Dick King

This month's entries are more of the NBC University Theatre with many great actors such as Paul Frees, John Dehner, Parley Baer (a very young Parley), and many more that really add a lot of depth to the stories by their acting. Actors like Larry Dobkin, show up quiet often giving a great depth to the stories that are well-known in their book form and many of them were made into movies. These NBC University Theatre shows are not the movie version, but are from the original books themselves and may differ from the movies as they were written by different playwrights with different approaches to the same story.

Many of our members may have planned to read some of these great books at the time they came out, but never got around to doing it. This is a great chance to catch up on them and enjoy them through the eyes of the NBC playwrights of their day. These shows are some of the best of our American and British literature presented in a non-classroom approach that has and will make them endure for many years. As I read over the catalog sheets going into the library, I can only smile as I remember stories like "Tonobungay" and realize that the quick-money artists are not just a thing of our time, but have been with us for years. I guess there will always be some people that think that way. So as we read of someone being fleeced of their savings, it certainly is nothing new.

When working on the cassette library, I noticed that several members are not signing their tape orders. This is very important for us. Unless these are signed, pledging not to use the tapes for commercial purposes, we cannot send the tapes out to you. It may be small detail, but it helps keep some of the stories that you want available in our libraries. BE SURE TO SIGN YOUR TAPE ORDERS!

Radio Quiz

Member David Michael has submitted several quizzes on old-time radio. Each month a quiz will appear in the Newsletter.

Who lived at or in, or what pro-

gram was set in, or what was at?

- 1 Café Tambourine
- 2 Rushville Center
- 3 Crooper, IL.
- 4 Page Memorial Hospital
- 5 Parkerstown
- 6 Madison High
- 7 Black Swan Hall
- 8 Apartment high atop Fifth Ave.
- 9 321 Bundy Drive
- 10 Tompkins Corner

Tune in next month for the answers

August Answers

Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar

- 1 Who was the very first *Johnny Dollar*? (Hint: He also played *Richard Diamond*.)
 Dick Powell
- Which actor was the last *Johnny Dollar*?

Mandel Kramer

- Who did a *Dollar* audition show that never made it to the air? (Hint: he played a detective created by Raymond Chandler.) Gerald Mohr. An audition tape was recorded, but not aired.
- What city was Johnny's home base?

Hartford, Connecticut

- 5 Which organization gave Johnny many of his cases? Universal Adjustment Bureau
- 6 Who normally represented that organization? Pat McCracken
- 7 Who was Johnny's girlfriend? Betty Lewis. Usually performed by Virginia Gregg and on occasion by Joan Banks.
- 8 What was Johnny's hobby? Fishing.
- Who was the longest-running *Johnny Dollar?* Bob Bailey from Oct 3, 1955 to Nov 27, 1990
- 10 Name the actors played *Johnny Dollar*. (Hint: there were eight.) In order of appearance they were:

Dick Powell, Charles Russell, Edmond O'Brien, John Lund, Gerald Mohr, Bob Bailey, Bob Readick, and Mandel Kramer.

Script Scribes Needed!

My name is Larry Weide, I'm a RHAC member in the Denver area, and I've taken on the responsibility for what is already an on-going RHAC project, but which is in need of updating to meet the current demands of our membership. This project is the management, production and distribution of RHAC's library of radio scripts. In order to accomplish this worthwhile task I am going to need the support of the RHAC membership.

As some of you who have taken advantage of this service know, the present script distribution process is simply to mail out a copy of the RHAC master script. The problem is that these master copies come from many sources, they're in different formats, they're sometimes dark and marked up and generally don't allow the high quality service that is in fact possible.

The basic difference to the script service that we'd like to implement is to have all of our scripts be recorded in and distributed from a computer. The advantages would be:

- standardization of format,
- every distributed script would be a clean and legible copy,
- distribution could just as easily be by computer diskette so that the subscriber could easily change the script format to meet their own needs,
- distribution could also be done through the Internet as well as through the mail, and
- organization and management of the library would be greatly simplified.

Step number one of this project is to transfer the scripts to the computer. I have already been working with Dick and Maletha King on this issue, and for various technical reasons, it's quite apparent that direct typing of the scripts using word processing software is the best way to accomplish this task (rather than OCR or voice-to-text methods).

Now the pitch! A number of you have already expressed eagerness to help RHAC with a project - particularly one that is fairly short in time commitment. What we need are people who would be willing to transcribe a script using their word processing software.

Do you have a home computer? Do you have moderate typing skills?

Do you want to get involved in a RHAC project that will make a real difference?

Can you spare one day?

If you can answer "YES" to the above questions then I would love for you to get in touch with me so that I can send you the details of how you would setup your word processing software, what format you would use as you typed and how you would send the results back to me. Oh, and by the way, don't worry, virtually any modern word processing software will work for this project.

Here in Denver we have a great deal of fun doing live OTR performances using actual scripts from our favorite shows - sound effects, tape recording and all. You can too!

Larry Weide, RHAC member 5270 E. Nassau Cir.

Englewood, CO 80110
(303)758-8382

E-Mail: lweide@ibm.net

OTR Fanciful Marriages

By Jack French, Editor: Radio Recall

If *Hedda Hopper* had married *Titus Moody*, divorced him and then married *Dennis Day*, she'd be

Hedda Moody Day

Mary Noble had left hubby, Larry, and next married Doc Savage, she then would be

Mary Noble Savage

If Lonesome Gal had gotten outdoors man Mark Trail to the altar, she would become

Lonesome Trail

If Madame Queen had left her Amos 'n Andy circle of associates and married, in succession, Sky King and Goodman Ace, she could call herself

Madame Queen King Ace

If Gracie Allen had, instead of marrying George Burns, married his rival, Fred Allen, then divorced him and married Mel Allen, she'd be

Gracie Allen Allen Allen

If *Ilka Chase* had married OTR band leader *Al Katz*, she'd call herself Ilka Chase Katz

If Ann Sothern had married, in succession, Perry Mason, Artells Dickson, and Peter Lyon, she would then be

Ann Sothern Mason Dickson Lyon

If Margo Lane had abandoned Lamont Cranston/The Shadow and walked as a bride into the chapel with detective Charlie Wild, she'd come out as

Margo Wild

If Vera Vague had first married Little Jack Little and later married Bob Hope, she would sign her name Vera Little Hope

If Young Widder Brown had married again, this time to Ezra Stone, she would be

Young Widder Brown Stone

If Candy Matson had broken her engagement with Lt. Ray Mallard and instead chose detective Martin Kane for her husband, she'd be

Candy Kane

Editor's Note: This column appears on Jerry's Haendiges WWW site - The Vintage Radio Place. You can find this site at:

http://www.otrsite.com

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.

The convention season will soon wind up. If you are going to one of them, please share your convention experiences with our members with an article in the *Newsletter*.

23rd Friends of Old-Time Radio Convention

10/22-24/98

Holiday Inn-North

Newark, N.J.

Some special guests are Mason Adams, Kirk Alyn, Dick Beals, Ray Erlenborn, Bob Hastings, Bob Mott, Ted Reid, Frances Chaney, Jill Corey, Toni Gillman, Mary Diveny, and many others.

Contact: Jay Hickerson Box 4321 Hamden, CT 06514 (203) 248-2887 FAX (203) 281-1322 JayHick@ aol.com

15th Annual SPERDVAC Convention

11/13-15/98 Crowne Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles, CA Contact: Larry Gassman (562) 947-9800



Needed: Articles

The last few months have brought several articles from our members, but articles are needed on a regular basis. An article can be on any topic related to Old-Time Radio or New-Time Radio. Send your articles to Stewart Wright at his regular or E-Mail address listed on the inside cover of the newsletter.

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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.



FIRST CLASS MAIL

PO BOX 1908 ENCLEWOOD, CO 80150
RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION of COLO.

A Flaw In The Ointment and Election of Officers

The Regular Meeting will be on Thursday, September 17th 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 Monaco.

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