



RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO



Volume 28, Number 5

May, 2003

AS TIME WENT BY

(Some OTR Trivia)

by Dr. Charles Beckett

(Continued from the April, 2003 issue of RWUN)

1945 - Popular programs heard for the first time this year included Queen for a Day, with Jack Bailey; Bride and Groom, a show that featured live, on-air weddings; and Arthur Godfrey Time. The top 10 radio serials of the year (soap operas) were; Helen Trent, One Man's Family, Portia Faces Life, Young Widder Brown, Stella Dallas, Our Gal Sunday, Backstage Wife, Ma Perkins, Guiding Light, and Right to Happiness.

1946 - The Second Mrs. Burton (another soap) aired and had a 14 year run. Its main distinction was that it was the last soap opera of the air -- marking the end of an era. This was also the year that the quiz show Twenty Questions had the country asking "animal, mineral or vegetable?" Also new this year was Sam Spade, Detective, starring Howard Duff.



Howard Duff

(Steve Dunn inherited the role in 1950) and the show went off the air in 1951. The most popular shows of

the year included radio veterans Jack Benny, Fibber McGee and Molly, Bob Hope, Fred Allen, Charlie McCarthy, Amos n' Andy, and the Lux Radio Theater.

1947 - The Adventures of Christopher Wells, a crime drama, lasted only one season -- mainly because of its mid-season move into a time slot opposite Fibber McGee and Molly. Another detective drama, The Adventures of Philip Marlowe was more successful, having its first full season in 1948 and leaving the air after a short summer season in 1951. My Friend Irma premiered and had a respectable seven-year life. But, she failed to measure up to the "artfully stumbling footsteps of Gracie Allen, Jane Ace, and other attractive dunderheads." John Dunning described her as being "so dumb that she thought flypaper was the stationary used on airplanes."

1948 - Shows premiering this year included: Information Please, The Hour of Charm, Land of the Lost, and Hop Harrigan. Another new show was Stop the Music, MC'd by Bert Parks. It was so popular that competing shows, Fred Allen* and Charley McCarthy, saw sizable drops in their ratings.

1949 - June 3rd was the first *dum-de-dum-dum* of Dragnet, with Jack Webb playing Sergeant Joe Friday of the Los Angeles Police Department.

"Ladies and gentlemen...the story you are about to hear is true. Only the names have been changed to protect the innocent."

(Continued on Page 3)

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

PO BOX 1908, Englewood CO 80150 (303) 761-4139 - Dedicated to the preservation of old-time radio programs,
and to making those programs available to our members

Old-Time Radio is Alive and Well in Colorado!

KEZW 1430 AM	"When Radio Was", with Stan Frieberg	Weekdays, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
KFKA 1310 AM	"Radio Memories" (Greeley)	Sunday, 6:00 - 12:00 PM
KRMA TV Channel 6	Secondary Audio Program (SAP), "Tribute to OTR"	Sunday, 2:00 PM
KNUS	"Radio Revisited"	Weekdays, 10:00 - 11:00 PM
KUVO 89.3 FM	"Destination Freedom"	9:00 PM

RHAC WEB SITE <http://www.rhac.org>

RHAC *OTR* WEB PAGE <http://www.old-time.com/rhac.html>

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LIBRARIES

Reference Material:	Bill McCracken	7101 W. Yale Ave. #503	Denver, CO 80227	(303) 986-9863
Logs & Scripts:	Fred Hinz	c/o RHAC PO Box 1908	Englewood, CO 80150	
Open Reel Tape:	Maletha King	900 W. Quincy Ave.	Englewood, CO 80110	
Cassette Tape:				
#1 (1-499)	Ron Gallagher	888 S. Dexter #607	Denver, CO 80246	(303) 692-0531
#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	(303) 730-1430
#4 (5001-up)	Mika Rhoden	3950 W. Dartmouth Ave.	Denver, CO 80236	(303) 937-9476
CD Library:	Ron Gallagher	888 S. Dexter #607	Denver, CO 80246	(303) 692-0531

Convention Schedules

15TH RADIO CLASSICS LIVE! May 3-4, 2003 Massasoit Community College - Buckley Center, Brockton, MA; Contact: Buckley Center Box Office, 1 Massasoit Blvd., Brockton, MA 02302 (508) 427-1234. Web Site: www.radioclassicslive.org

REPS Radio Showcase XI, June 26 - 29, 2003 at the Seattle Center, Seattle Washington. Contact Mike Sprague, Box 723, Bothell, WA 98041 (425) 488-9518 hrrmikes@aol.com>

National Audio Theater Festival, June 14 - 20, 2003, Southwest Missouri State University., West Plains, MO; For information call Sue Zizza, 115 Dikeman St., Hempstead, NY 11550 (516) 483-8321 Suemedia1@aol.com or visit their web site www.natf.org. They also have a script contest.

The Friends of Old-time Radio 28th Annual Convention Oct 23 - 26, 2003 at the Holiday Inn-North, Newark, NJ. Our web site will keep you up to date. For information contact Jay Hickerson, Box 4321, Hamden, CT 06514 (203) 248-2887 email: JayHick@aol.com, web site: <http://www.lofcom.com/nostalgia/fotr>

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May, 2003

(author's comment: *During this season, I worked after school in a drugstore. On Thursday nights, while Dragnet was on the air, there were literally no customers -- so the pharmacist and I were able to listen to the programs in their entirety, uninterrupted.*)

1950 - This was the first year that television ratings caught up with radio ratings. But, an article in "Today's Health" reassured parents that their children wouldn't get addicted to TV, by telling them that..."TV is a new toy and its novelty will wear off." This was the year that the Burns and Allen show left the airwaves, after 18 years -- not including their initial appearance on BBC London in 1929.

1951 - The Red Skelton Show premiered on TV and remained on the tube for over 20 years.

1952 - The western drama Gunsmoke began its seven-year run on radio, collecting drama awards five of those years. The series spun onto television in 1955, and stayed there for two decades, becoming the longest-running prime time TV drama series in history, before riding off into the sunset. However, re-runs can still be seen on TV, in syndication.

1953 - The popular Father Knows Best ended its radio days after four years. However -- it continued, on television from 1954 to 1963. Robert Young was the only radio cast member to successfully move to the TV series. James Stewart's western drama, The Six Shooter, ran out of bullets this year. Though a fine program, it had difficulty measuring up to the high standards set by the Gunsmoke and Frontier Gentleman series.

1954 - Sadly, many more radio shows left the air this year. Among them were Amos n' Andy, Beulah, Sky King, Bob Hope, The Falcon, Let's Pretend, Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons; Broadway is my Beat, The Shadow, Bing Crosby, Stars Over Hollywood, and Theater Guild on the Air.

1955 - Casey, Crime Photographer, first heard in July 1943, ran out of film in April of this year. There was some feeling that the jazz music overshadowed the story content. Herman Chittison, and sometimes Teddy Wilson (of the Benny Goodman Trio), played the jazz piano in the show's Blue Note Cafe. Casey had a short life on TV in 1951-52, with Darren McGaven playing the lead. Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy fell mute after 19 years on the air. And Nick Carter, Master Detective solved his final case on September 25th -- and closed up his Brownstone office, after having gumshoed since

1943. But, they weren't alone. The Whistler lost his pucker in September and was silenced after 13 years. He left

"knowing many things...many strange tales...many secrets hidden in the hearts of men and women...and the nameless terrors of which they dare not speak."

Actually, the whistling was done by Dorothy Roberts, who weekly whistled 37 notes during each show -- 13 at the beginning, 11 leading into the story, and 13 at the end.

1956 - You Bet Your Life, hosted by Groucho Marx, had its last "secret word" duck drop in September, after enjoying nine years on the air. For contestants who didn't know the answers, there was a consolation question -- "Who is buried in Grant's tomb?" The right answer was worth \$25.00. Also, after three years of crime fighting, Twenty-First Precinct, a Dragnet clone, turned out the lights and locked the police station's doors.

1957 - The TV show Have Gun Will Travel, starring Richard Boone, premiered in September. In November 1958, it was introduced as a radio series, starring John Dehner as Paladin. It was an immediate success, staying on the air until November 1960. (*there's talk about a Have Gun Will Travel movie being produced in the near future*). Among the top 10 television shows of 1957 were two veteran radio shows which had successfully transitioned to the tube -- Gunsmoke (7) and The Jack Benny Show (10).

1958 - Luke Slaughter of Tombstone rode into town this year, with the warning:

"Slaughter's my name...Cattle's my business. It's a tough business. It's big business. And there's no man west of the Rio Grand that's big enough to take it from me."

Unfortunately, Slaughter went out of business in June -- after premiering in February. The science fiction show, X-Minus One climaxed a successful three year run this year. In 1973, the network brought out the transcriptions to test if radio drama could be successful with modern listeners. The show fell victim to scheduling problems. But in spite of many obstacles, it survived until 1975.

1959 - The laughter stopped this year on People are Funny after a long and successful broadcast

period, beginning in 1942. Along with Truth or Consequences, it was radio's best known audience stunt show.

1960 - The final radio episode of Have Gun Will Travel was broadcast in November. Paladin hung up his gun and departed by train, for Boston, to claim an inheritance left him by an aunt. The long-running



(since 1933) soap opera, The Romance of Helen Trent left the air. Helen was considered "queen of the soaps." In 27 years, she didn't age, laugh, or express an impure thought. Twenty-eight suitors relentlessly pursued her through those years -- without success.

1961 - Two radio shows continued to do well in their TV formats. Gunsmoke ranked 4th and The Red Skelton Show was 10th. The radio version of Gunsmoke -- one of radio's best standard bearers -- left the air in June of this year. the late Parley Baer (Chester Proudfoot) best summed up its demise -- "Those were...happy times. (It) seems as though they were just yesterday...and I wish they were tomorrow."

Well said, Mr. Baer... for old time radio, in general.

Sam Edwards

By Stewart Wright, Copyright 2002

"CORR-LAISS! OH, CORR-LAISS!"

was one of the many memorable lines from the Gold Age of Radio. It was the bellowing cry of love-sick teenager Dexter Franklin for the one, true, love-of-his-life, Corliss Archer and was sometimes used as the opening for episodes of the series Meet Corliss Archer.

Recently, I wrote about Janet Waldo [See RWUN 3/03 - Ed.] who played Corliss Archer. This

time we look at the career of the actor behind that love call, Sam Edwards.

The Family Business:

Sam Edwards got an early start in show business. As part of his family's repertory company, he had lots of years to develop his acting talents.

While the family was living in San Antonio, TX, his mother wrote a kid's radio serial - The Adventures of Sonny and Buddy. Sam and brother Jack played the kid's roles, while his mother and father played the most of adult characters. The entire family made a total of \$50.00 a week and had to pay the other actors and the musicians out of it.

Later, the Edwards moved to San Francisco and Sam's parents wrote the series Sons of the Lone Star which starred the members of the family: Sam's Father and Mother, John and Edna, Sam, Jack, and sister Florida. They also did the first true-life family radio show in which family members played themselves, appropriately called - The Five Edwards.

Radio:

Not surprisingly, Sam's favorite show is Meet Corliss Archer. His brother Jack tipped him off about the audition for the Dexter role. Although Sam didn't think he could play a teen-ager, he auditioned for the part. The series director suggested that Sam develop a distinctive laugh for Dexter. Sam came up with something even better: his CORR-LAISS yell.

Later, Sam wanted to audition for the Walter Denton role on Our Miss Brooks, but he couldn't because he already was doing Dexter on Meet Corliss Archer. He was able to appear on other shows; he just couldn't do a character similar to Dexter.

Brothers Jack and Sam Edwards sometimes competed for the same role during auditions. Both auditioned for the role of Wayne Grubb on One Man's Family. Jack won the role. The next summer, Sam got the role of Tracy Baker on the same series. Ironically, both characters were unsuccessful suitors for Paul Barbour's adopted daughter, Teddy.

Sam also appeared in featured roles in several other radio series: Hawthorne House as Billy Sherwood, Doctor Kate as Morris Young, Father Knows Best as Billy Smith, The Guiding Light as Roger Collins, and The Life of Riley as Egbert Gillis.

Some of the less well-known shows Sam appeared on included Deadline Mystery, My

Hometown, Those O'Malleys, Thrills, Wanted By The Law, and Whispering Streets.

One of the most satisfying roles he ever had was in the radio play "The Game" which aired on both *Escape* and *Suspense*. Sam and Gil Stratton Jr. co-starred in it. It is a story about two bored teen-agers who decide to play Russian roulette. Writer/director Tony Ellis had Sam and Gil put an unloaded gun to their heads while doing the show.

There is a very unusual aspect to another of Sam's favorite *Escape* roles, that of John Unger in the F. Scott Fitzgerald story "The Diamond As Big As The Ritz." It aired three times on the series *Escape*. Each time the Unger role was played by an Edwards brother. Jack played him on 07/21/1947 and Sam did the honors on 08/29/1948 and 03/27/1949.

John Dunning once asked him, about projecting a whole character with just a voice. Sam replied, "In your mind's eye you see the character. You put yourself into the place of the character."

Sam remembers that *Lux Radio Theater* was considered The Big Show in Hollywood. With its multi-day rehearsals, it was almost like a stage production. *Lux* was the best-paying radio show. Supporting actors got \$125.00 for 3 days work; the stars got between \$2,000 & \$10,000. Some of the big movie stars were terrified when they got in front of the microphone.

During the Golden Age of Radio Sam was quite a busy actor. Four of the best producer/directors in radio used Sam's talents on a frequent basis: Jack Johnstone on *The Six Shooter* and *Your's Truly, Johnny Dollar*; Norman Macdonnell on *Escape, Gunsmoke, Fort Laramie, and Have Gun, Travel*; Elliott Lewis on *Crime Classics, Suspense and Broadway Is My Beat*; and Jack Webb on *Pat Novak for Hire* and *Dragnet*. His ability to do an authentic Texas drawl got him lots of appearances on Westerns radios series such as some of the preceding shows and *The Adventures of Red Ryder, The Cisco Kid, Death Valley Days, Luke Slaughter Of Tombstone, The Roy Rogers Show, and Tales of the Texas Rangers.*

Sam liked working for Jack Webb even though some actors had trouble working with him because you had to play your role Jack's way. When *The Five Edwards* was on the air, Jack auditioned for the role Sam's sister's boy friend and didn't get the part. Webb sounded too flat and wooden; in other words,

too much like "Joe Friday." When Jack did *Pat Novak For Hire*, he used both Sam and Jack Edwards a lot. Later, when Sam told him that he was sorry Jack didn't get that role on *The Five Edwards*, Jack said when he auditioned he sounded too much like "Joe Friday."

Voice Work:

As did many radio actors, Sam also worked for the Disney Studios. In the 1942 animated feature *Bambi*, he provided the voice of the adult Thumper the rabbit. For *America Sings*, an audio animatronics show, Sam provided the voice of Mr. Owl. He narrated the *Disneyland Storyteller* albums of "The Cowardly Lion of Oz" and "The Tin Woodman of Oz" and supplied the voice for the character of Owl in the Disney "Winnie-the-Pooh" stories.

Television:

Sam was quite busy on television too. He appeared in the first television episode of *Dragnet* and many later episodes of the series. In 1961 he was cast in the *Lum and Abner* TV pilot that never made it onto the air. On the long-running series *Little House on the Prairie*, he played Mr. Anderson. Sam appeared on several television series that had their roots in radio - *The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet, The Burns and Allen Show, Death Valley Days, Gangbusters, Gunsmoke, The Jack Benny Show, The Red Skelton Show, and You Are There.* Some of his other TV credits include *Adam-12, The Andy Griffith Show, Cannon, Days of Our Lives, Gunsmoke, Happy Days, Hawaii Five-O, I Love Lucy, Lou Grant, Mannix, Mission: Impossible, Perry Mason, Petticoat Junction, Playhouse 90, The Streets of San Francisco, Studio One, The Twilight Zone, The Virginian, Wagon Train, and Zane Grey Theater.*

Movies:

He also appeared in many motion pictures including *The Postman Always Rings Twice, Flight of the Grey Wolf, Escape to Witch Mountain, Hello, Dolly!, Gang Busters, Flying Leathernecks, Operation Pacific, and Twelve O'Clock High.* Sam also played Chuck in the *Captain Midnight* movie serials.

He's Still Got It!

Sam plays a convincing teenager when doing recreations at the Old-Time Radio conventions. But, can he still do his CORR-LAISS yell like a love-struck teen-ager? You betcha!

**The Trivial Matter of Some of OTR's
Commercial Messages**
By Carol Tiffany

*Match the slogan or description with the product
with which it was associated.*

- _____ *The nutritious spread*
- _____ *Tender beef, juicy pork*
- _____ *Better get _____. Charlie*
- _____ *Dream Girl, Dream Girl*
- _____ *Feel GOOD again!*
- _____ *When you need it most, there's comfort...*
- _____ *You can trust your car to the man...*
- _____ *Call for _____*
- _____ *I TASTED it!*
- _____ *Good to the last drop.*
- _____ *Shot from guns...*
- _____ *L.S.M.F.T.*
- _____ *No rubbing or buffing needed...*

- A. Lustre Crème Shampoo
- B. Schlitz Beer
- C. Lucky Strike Cigarettes
- D. Maxwell House Coffee
- E. Quaker Puffed Wheat & Rice
- G. Johnson's Wax
- F. Wildroot Crème Oil
- H. Swift's Premium Franks
- I. Parkay Margarine
- J. Pepto Bismol
- K. Tender Leaf Tea
- L. Texaco Oil Co.
- M. Phillip Morris Cigarettes

In the editor's mailbag...

If you need a copy of John Dunning's *On The Air*, has its Publisher got a deal for you! I am posting this information to the OTR Digest today. You may want to pass the information on to your club members.

I don't know the ending date of the sale, but you can probably reach Oxford University Press at the toll-free number, 1-800-230-3242

Oxford University Press has the book in its Spring Sale brochure for a jaw-dropping \$25.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. List is \$60.00! Oxford's web page is: www.oup-usa.org/springsale <<http://www.oup-usa.org/springsale>>. Click on "The RETURN WITH US NOW..."

Arts" the bottom of the page and go to Page 2 of that category. The item number for the book is 0-19-507678-8.

Thanks to Stewart Wright for this information.



***New in the Tape
Library***

by Dick and Maletha King

This month we are back to adding to the CD library. We are offering the rest of the CBS Radio Workshop. This series of the theater of the imagination is now complete, including a few not currently in the other libraries.

We continue with our offerings with the Avalon Time Shows with Red Skelton. This 1939 series of shows Were Red Skelton's first radio shows and even included his wife as one of the actors. This is another complete series.

We are just starting the five part series of Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar shows. The best part of having these five part show on CD is that you get all five parts on one CD. These shows will continue through June and conclude in September.

Answers to the commercial slogan trivia questions

I	The nutritious spread
H	Tender beef, juicy pork
F	Better get _____. Charlie
A	Dream Girl, Dream Girl
J	Feel GOOD again!
K	When you need it most, there's comfort...
L	You can trust your car to the man...
M	Call for _____
B	I TASTED it!
D	Good to the last drop.
E	Shot from guns...
C	L.S.M.F.T.
G	No rubbing or buffing needed...