

# SPERDVAC RADIOGRAM

Vol. XIV, No. 9 The Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy September 1988

## Workshops Planned for November Convention

Radio director Fletcher Markle will participate in a workshop we've titled "Through the Director's Eyes and Ears" during our November 11 and 12 convention. The workshop will be presented on Saturday.

In addition, Art Gilmore, Harfield Weedon and Alan Botzer will participate in a workshop titled "Columbia Square Revisited." It will pay tribute to CBS Radio's Hollywood home.

The convention's Friday night banquet will feature a re-creation of radio **Gunsmoke**. Parley Baer will play Chester and George Walsh will serve as program announcer. Other cast members will be announced next month.

Janet Waldo will join the cast of Norman Corwin's presentation of "The Undecided Molecule." The classic originally presented on CBS in the 1940s will conclude the SPERDVAC convention at the Saturday evening banquet.

SPERDVAC has also added a "Meet the Authors Workshop" to be moderated by Chris Lembesis.

The convention will be at the Viscount Hotel, 9750 Airport Blvd., Los Angeles. The hotel is located next to Los Angeles International Airport and shuttle service is available. A flyer giving convention and hotel reservation costs is enclosed with this edition of the Radiogram.



Scott  
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**SPERDVAC  
MEETING**

## Jean Carson Visits Sept. 17

Actress Jean Carson will discuss her career in New York and Hollywood radio when SPERDVAC meets Saturday, September 17.

Our guest has appeared frequently on Broadway (including "Two Blind Mice," "The Bird Cage" and "Men of Distinction"). In television she was a regular on *The Andy Griffith Show* and *The Betty Hutton Show*. The *Twilight Zone* story "A Most Unusual Camera" was written for her by Rod Serling.

In Hollywood, she appeared frequently on the CBS series **Frontier Gentleman**. Her New York radio credits include many of the top dramatic programs of the era.

The *September 17* SPERDVAC meeting, which is free and open to the public, begins at 12 noon. It will be held at the Buena Park Public Library, 7150 La Palma Ave., two blocks west of Knott's Berry Farm.

## KUSC To Air Treasures of Literature

An audition broadcast of a proposed new radio drama series will air late this month on KUSC-FM in Los Angeles.

**Treasures of Literature** will present a 90 minute edition of Rober Lewis Stevenson's classic *Treasure Island*, adapted and produced by SPERDVAC honorary member Peggy Webber. The show is a remake of a television series she wrote, produced and directed in 1947.

KUSC will air the program Saturday, September 24 beginning at 6 pm. It will be followed at 7:30 pm by a 30 minute live conversation/phone-in program discussing radio drama production. Radio

greats Norman Corwin and Les Tremayne will be featured in this segment.

"The station needs to hear from listeners after the show is aired," Miss Webber told SPERDVAC recently. "Letters and post cards will help the station decide if they want to carry shows like this regularly."

If the series is successful, Webber hopes to present six more programs. "We would like to do sixty minute live programs with a studio audience," she said. The series would present adaptations of other literary classics, plus two new plays.

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# MEMOS FOR MEMBERS



A SPERDVAC Library Users' Guide insert accompanies this issue of the Radiogram. Former editor Dan Haefele prepared it based on input from librarians Bruce Biller and Richard Glasband, plus former librarian Roberta Goldberg. Because of persistent difficulties many of the librarians frequently encounter, our Board of Directors voted to devote a section of this newsletter to library use. Note that the insert can be easily pulled from your Radiogram for easy addition to your SPERDVAC catalogs. Please take the time to read it before placing your next order and review it again periodically to help our librarians use their volunteer time to our greater advantage.

Morton Fine, long-time writing companion with David Friedkin, allowed SPERDVAC's Dan Haefele to record an interview with him. We're adding his recollections to our tape library. Also, Mr. Fine has been kind enough to allow us to copy some of his scripts, including some he ghost wrote for the Sam Spade radio series.

The SPERDVAC trading roster will soon be released. Our deadline for submitting information was Sept. 1, but we are waiting a few more days since the form sent with last month's *Radiogram* arrived at vacation time. Please note the mailing address at the bottom of the form.

Hyman Brown now syndicates the **Radio Mystery Theatre** which originally aired on CBS from January 1974 to December 1983. In Southern California it airs weeknights at 10 pm over XTRA (690 AM), which can be heard along the entire West Coast. (XTRA carries an hour of syndicated OTR weeknights at 9 pm.)

A new radio version of **War of the Worlds** is being made available to public radio stations for airing on the original program's 50th anniversary. Otherworld Media of Freeland, Washington is distributing the show. The script, like the original, has been adapted by Howard Koch. Steve Allen, Jason Robards and Douglas Edwards are featured in the cast. Station *KPCC-FM* in Pasadena (which recently moved *Same Time, Same Station* to Sundays at 6 pm) will carry the show beginning at 7 pm October 30, plus a rebroadcast Monday, October 31, at 10 pm. Members in other listening areas should contact their local public stations to ask if they will carry the show. We expect to have additional details in the October *Radiogram*.

## CASSETTE TAPES AVAILABLE

C - 60s for \$1.00 each

See Michael Plett at SPERDVAC meetings

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Thank You

by Larry Gassman

...To Bob Gaskill of Pennsylvania for reading all eight of SPERDVAC's magazines onto tape for our blind members. We will tell you very shortly how blind members may obtain copies.

...To Dan Haefele who was our guest editor for more than a year. Dan has over the years contributed more time as newsletter editor than anyone else and we thank him for his efforts and dedication.

### Archives Cassettes

Bruce Miller was on vacation recently and was unable to fill Archives cassette orders. He is rapidly filling orders now and will quickly be caught up.

The SPERDVAC Board has elected to cancel plans for SPERDVAC Radio Magazine #9. There has not been enough demand for previous issues to justify another edition at this time. A 1989 edition will be considered if orders deem it worthwhile.

### IRS Tax Deductions

SPERDVAC has been notified that even though we are a non-profit public benefit corporation with tax deductible status, not all monies we receive are deductible on a member's tax return. The IRS has ruled that annual membership fees and convention fees are not deductible. Neither are library fees. However, if you make a donation which is separate from dues or convention fees and you do not receive anything in return for your gift, you may deduct the value from your taxes.

### Lassie, Anyone?

Radio program syndicator Charles Michaelson called to ask us to inquire about *Lassie*. He wonders if anyone has a run of this series. If so, he offers "handsome rewards." Write to Mr. Michaelson at 9350 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90212.

## McGee's Closet

**WANTED:** Old cinemas on video tape. Especially want silent flicks of Lillian Gish. Anybody out there know of a silent movie club? Kathy Glaze, 125 Cherokee St., Miami Springs, FL 33166.

**WANTED:** Jack Benny Show of August 12, 1946. Jack buys shoelaces for Don. I am also interested in any other Jack Benny or Burns & Allen shows. Steve Oualline, 10214 Black Mtn Rd., San Diego, CA 92126 - (619) 695-2637.

**FOR SALE:** Amos 'n' Andy radio shows. Send large SASE to Charlie Salvato at 12119 Pompano St., Houston, TX 77072.

**SEND ITEMS FOR THIS COLUMN TO BARBARA WATKINS, PO Box 561, South Pasadena, CA 91030 - (213) 256-5879.**

# HUGH'S HUES:

by Hugh Anderson

On September 24, 1924, David Sarnoff (RCA) hired Ted Husing as an announcer for WJZ in New York. He joined a staff of Milton Cross, Norman Brokenshire, J. Lewis Reid and John B. Daniel with Major Andrew White doing sports. A 1927 popularity survey announced these results: 1) Milton J. Cross, WJZ; 2) Lewis J. Reid, WPCH; 3) Norman J. Brokenshire, WPCH; 5) Major Andrew White, WJZ; 7) Ted Husing, WJZ; 10) John B. Daniel, WRC.

That year (1927), Husing decided he was worth more than WJZ paid him so he motored up to Boston to help open a new station, WBET, owned by the Boston Evening Transcript. After that, he went back to New York and WHN. In the fall of '27 he broadcast the Columbia University football games. He was back in very familiar surroundings where his father had been a steward at one of the University Clubs eleven years previous. He gained his unusual amount of sports knowledge and sense of strategy while serving as a mascot for Columbia's football, basketball and track teams. WHN was owned by the American newspaper which promoted Ted's broadcasts. The Herald Tribune in New York wrote that Husing was better than Graham McNamee.

1927 was the year that CBS came into being. Under the direction of Major Andrew White, the Columbia Phonograph Broadcasting System debuted at 3:00 PM on Sunday, September 18th from two rooms in the Paramount building in Times Square, using the facilities of WOR as the originating station. Since Husing and White were WJZ alumni, it was natural for them to strike an agreement. Ted joined the new chain as White's assistant on Christmas Day.

The following year, 1928, twenty-six year old William Paley became President of Columbia when a Philadelphia group bought controlling stock. It was renamed the Columbia Broadcasting System. In the fall, Andy White was assigned to broadcast a football game in Chicago. White became ill before the game and Paley sent Husing to Chicago instead. His coverage was outstanding and he quickly became the Network's principal sportscaster.

In 1930, at the age of 38, Lowell Thomas began his employment with NBC because of some late-night shenanigans of Floyd (black eye-patch) Gibbons involving the President of Literary Digest.

Both were world correspondents. Gibbons covered the world for the Chicago Tribune. He was aboard the liner Laconia when it was sunk by a submarine five weeks before the U.S. entered World War I. He survived and went on to cover the fighting of the U.S. Marines in Belleau Woods in France where he lost his left eye, hence the eye patch. He covered what some historians consider the turning point of the war where the Marines stopped the Germans drive through France. The battle started on June 6, 1918 and lasted seventeen days. He began broadcasting on Christmas night, 1925 on WGN, the Tribune's radio station. In the spring of 1929, Gibbons joined NBC with "Headline News."

Gibbons, for NBC, and Ted Husing, for CBS, were both assigned to broadcast the arrival of the airship

*Graf Zeppelin* on August 5, 1929 in Lakehurst, New Jersey. Husing was assigned to cover downtown New York before going to Lakehurst. Gibbons was at the site with a 24-pound shortwave transmitter strapped to his chest, transmitting to an adjacent hanger roof and on back to NBC headquarters. Husing was on a ledge on the twentieth floor of the Steinway Building at WABC, which CBS purchased in January. Ted was using his binoculars, took a step sideways, tripped on a cord and started to fall. Rush Hughes, CBS announcer, grabbed his knees with one arm and hung on to the window sash with the other. Husing regained his balance and continued the assignment sitting down before rushing off to Lakehurst.


Lowell Thomas grew up in Cripple Creek, Colorado, a mining camp, where his father was a doctor and where he started his newspaper career. Lowell's Dad had him memorize poems in dialect and practice them for the correct inflection until he eliminated all nasal tones. Thomas stated in later years he thought a person's speech was dependent on his physical condition. During WW1, as a war correspondent, he had an exclusive on-the-scene story of the capture of Jerusalem. He knew Lawrence of Arabia quite well.

On the 24th of January, 1930, Gibbons began a series of newscasts on NBC sponsored by Literary Digest, at 6:45 PM, just before *Amos 'n' Andy*. During the dog days of summer, Gibbons and three of his friends were enjoying the festivity one night after midnight in a place of entertainment when they hit upon the idea of presenting some jolly good songs to the president of the sponsor. They did so from the street in front of the president's home and the word was out that Literary Digest wanted another newscaster.

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## **RADIOGRAM**

*Friends*

SPERDVAC  
**RADIOGRAM**  


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**PHIL LESLIE**  
**ANDY RUSSELL**  
**KAY ST. GERMAIN**  
**JUNE FORAY**  
**ART GILMORE**

Honorable Mention:  
Hugh Anderson

*We are so grateful to the many RADIOGRAM friends and supporters who have contributed \$50 or more to help defray costs of printing our monthly newsletter. The above members have donated funds during the past year.*

The first program stars Dan O'Herlihy, Jeanette Nolan, Parley Baer, Linda Kay Henning, William Woodson, Sean McClurey, Lou Krugman, Shaphard Menken, Richard Erdman, Ford Rainey, Kay Kuter, John Carver, Vic Perrin, Kevin Tracy and Richard Sheldon. The sound effects men are Budd Tollefson and David Krebs. SPERDVAC member Jerry Burling served as engineer.

## SPERDVAC DIRECTORY

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SPERDVAC INFORMATION AND OFFICIAL BUSINESS: Box 1587, Hollywood, CA 90078 - (213) 947-9800.

MEMBERSHIP AND RADIOGRAM SUBSCRIPTIONS: Duane Harding, 443 Appletree Court, Camarillo, CA 93010

### LIBRARIES:

GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 1 - 499: Bob Steinmetz, PO Box 669, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 500 and up: John Madigan, Box 3777, La Habra, CA 90632-3777

GENERAL LIBRARY - Open Reels, No. 1 thru 499: Don Keith, Box 5861, Glendale, CA 91201

GENERAL LIBRARY - Open Reels, No. 500 and up: Richard Glasband, 7700 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046

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ARCHIVES LIBRARY - Open Reels: Pam Hanson, Box 5205, North Hollywood, CA 91616

HOLLYWOOD MUSEUM LIBRARY - Open Reels: Bobb Lynes, Box 628, South Pasadena, CA 91030

HOLLYWOOD MUSEUM LIBRARY - Cassettes: Michael Plett, PO Box 3101, Van Nuys, CA 91407

PRINTED MATERIALS LIBRARY: Duane Harding, 443 Appletree Court, Camarillo, CA 93010

AUDIO RADIOGRAMS: Send C-90 cassette in returnable mailer to Barbara Watkins, Box 561, South Pasadena, CA 91030.

AUDIO SPERDVAC CATALOGS: Contact Bob Herman, 437 Curtis St., NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505

MEMBERSHIP BADGES: Send \$5.00 each to Don Keith, Box 5861, Glendale, CA 91201

ACQUISITIONS: (Discs and Tapes): John Gassman, Box 1163, Whittier, CA 90604 (213) 947-9800 for both the General and Archives Libraries.

PRINTED MATERIALS ACQUISITIONS: Jerry Williams 13861 Rayen, Arleta, CA 91331, (818) 892-1446

## DEADLINE

OCTOBER 1988 ISSUE Friday, September 23

At this point, Bill Paley saw an opportunity for his young CBS Network to obtain a choice account if he could come up with the proper voice. He remembered a speaker he had heard at the Covent Garden Royal Opera House in London. The speaker's name was Lowell Thomas. Paley called, Thomas traveled to New York, met with Paley and was told to start talking about anything for fifteen minutes at the sound of the buzzer. The sponsor group, of which Thomas was unaware, was intrigued and wanted to hear Thomas on the air. At 6:00 PM, Thursday, late August, Lowell did fifteen minutes for CBS, followed by Gibbons at 6:45 PM, NBC. Paley was happy, the sponsor was happy.

September 26, 1930 was the last broadcast of Floyd Gibbons for Literary Digest. On September 30th, Lowell Thomas began in Gibbon's time slot on both NBC and CBS for the Digest. Frank Knight was the announcer for CBS with Ed Thorgerson for NBC. Six months later, the sponsor decided, because of the lead-in to *Amos 'n' Andy*, to drop CBS and stay with NBC. As it turned out, Bill Paley actually hired Thomas for NBC.

In 1923, A. McDonald and George S. Naill did the announcing for Earle C. Anthony's KFI in Los Angeles which was located atop the Packard Motor Building. In 1923, Don Wilson graduated from the University of Colorado, a football star and joined a singing duo to form a trio. Piggly Wiggly stores hired them to tour the Western states as the *Piggly Wiggly Trio*. In 1927, they began singing on KFRC in San Francisco, owned by Don Lee. A year later they transferred to KHJ in Los Angeles, also owned by Don Lee and still sponsored by Piggly Wiggly. The trio eventually split up and Wilson became a full time announcer at KHJ. Don Lee owned a Cadillac agency in Los Angeles. Wilson wanted to buy a Cadillac but he couldn't make a deal with his boss' outfit so he strode over to Earle Anthony's Packard agency and "cut a deal." When Don Lee saw the big man in the Packard, unaware of the problem which Wilson had had with his own agency, Lee fired Wilson. This time, Wilson rode over to Anthony's and applied for a radio job. In 1929 Don Wilson began announcing at KFI which led to his great success in network programming.

I would like to take a couple of lines to thank Dan Haeefe for including my elementary freshman efforts at being a columnist. More importantly, I would also like to applaud his efforts in continuing the monthly *Radiogram* (and his new skill at computer typesetting) so that those of us out in the hinterland can be abreast of all the late-breaking news. Shades of Steve Wilson and The Illustrated Press!

Our Fact of the Month: In September 1929, Fred Smith produced a five minute recording which he called "*News Acting*." He offered it as a once-a-week syndicated feature around the country and over one hundred stations bought it. Out of this grew Smith's half-hour concept and *The March of Time*.

"I'm goin' back to the wagon, boys. These shoes are killin' me!"

# Spielers Stanley and Sweeney Speak

Last month SPERDVAC featured two guests at the membership meeting held at the Thousand Oaks Public Library.

Announcer Don Stanley and actor/comic Bob Sweeney visited SPERDVAC's microphones and told of their varied experiences during their careers.

Stanley's career began 51 years ago, when he and fellow performers from the University of Wisconsin performed a Greek play on WHA, Madison. Station management offered him an announcing job, which he accepted. During his stay at WHA he worked with another radio beginner, Vic Perrin.

The announcer spent two years at WIBA, Madison and an additional two years at WTMJ, Milwaukee. After announcing for ABC, Chicago for six months, he moved in March 1944 to NBC in Hollywood, where he remains today.

"Radio announcing has been a hobby," Stanley told SPERDVAC. He also earned income in real estate.

Bob Sweeney also got the radio bug while in college. He was going to school in San Francisco, training to be a teacher, when his interest shifted to drama. His desire to enter this form of show business "meant more to me than anything else in the whole world."

Sweeney took a job as a taxi driver and chose the early morning work hours so he could be free for daytime auditions. Initially hired by KSAN, San Francisco, he was later hired as chief announcer at KYA. There in 1942 he met another San Francisco radio beginner, Hal March.

"Hal...had just gotten out of the Army. They (KYA) assigned him the opening hour on the station. We were disc jockies," he explained. "Hal was on from six to seven and I was on from seven to eight."

Occasionally they would play straight man for each other. They asked for - and received - permission to become a team and merge their air time.

"At that time Hal's name was Hal Mendelson," his partner recalled. "It was suggested by what we now know as an anti-Semitic management that he change his name...Hal wanted to be able to say when his program started that '*Hal March is on!*'"

While Sweeney and March were able to expand their careers, Stanley feels announcers were less able to add to the variety in their work schedules. Often assignments were given to a particular announcer because another already had two or three shows. "I've always felt quality in announcing is a very subjective thing," he added. "Each ear, I think, hears a voice in a different way."

Stanley recalls deciding not to do the **Dragnet** radio series. "Eddy King and I were the first announcers on **Dragnet**. It was a total disaster...It was chaos before the first broadcast. They couldn't even decide how they wanted us to say "Dragnet" ...After the first show...I'd been asked to do the **Charles Boyer Show**....So I said, 'That's got to be the show that will go.'"

The **Boyer** program was short lived while **Dragnet** remained for several seasons and moved to television.

"What they really wanted (in announcing) was the way George Fenneman did it," he added.

One of the NBC radio series he fondly remembers is **NBC University Theatre**, particularly because of the director, Andrew C. Love. "He was every actor's favorite director because he would rarely give direction per se," Stanley explained. "His genius was casting. Andy knew exactly who he wanted for what part. After he'd done that he figured his job was over. His line before every show was, 'Well, folks, all we have to do now is get it off the paper.'"

On one occasion announcer Ken Niles was delayed getting to the NBC studios in time for the West Coast broadcast of the **Life of Riley**. Stanley, playing cards in a room nearby, was summoned, handed a script, and received the director's cue to begin immediately.

"I think the actors were more nervous than I was," he reflected. "I didn't have the time to get nervous."

Stanley was uncomfortable about doing audience warm-ups. He was once blamed for the failure of a pilot comedy featuring Ronald Reagan and Nancy Davis because the audience allegedly wasn't in the mood to respond well.

Hal March added there were problems created by having announcers do warm-ups. "They were required to be comedians and they had no training for it, no material," he observed. "They had a staff...preparing material for the stars and nobody wrote anything for the announcer."

One of the comedy shows Stanley announced was **Mr. and Mrs. Blandings**. Following his warm-up, he introduced program star Cary Grant. "Cary would come out in tennis shoes, no socks and an old pair of jeans," he said. Audiences were usually surprised at Grant's mode of dress.

He did that show primarily for his wife, Betsy Drake, who always wanted to do a radio series," the program announcer added. "She was too nervous to stand up at the microphone."

The San Francisco Sweeney and March team broke up when March moved to Hollywood, hoping to become a movie star. Sweeney traveled to Los Angeles later and had a chance meeting with his former partner. "He was living in an attic above Hollywood Blvd.," he said. "The two of us lived in this attic for \$10 a week."

The reunited team had their own programs on network radio for several years. Sweeney also worked on shows separate from his partner.

One was a half hour drama produced and directed by Bob Nye. The series was memorable because the show wasn't completely written when it went on the air. "Frequently," he recalled, "we would be on the air while they were still typing it...I said to Bob Nye one time, 'Bob, why is this always done this way?' He said, 'I'll tell you how I operate. Something is going to start at 8 o'clock and something will end at 8:30. And what that is I frequently don't know!'"

# Radio in Review



by Chris Lembesis

The passing scene ... a sad note in publishing. Stein & Day is closing its doors after twenty-six years of publishing. A few titles they have published over the years that are radio history related: **THE SOAPS** (1973), **FROM MARY NOBLE TO MARY HARTMAN** (1976), **MORE FUNNY PEOPLE** (1981), and **RCA** (1985).

A rare find ... in July of 1972, *Library Trends*, a quarterly scholastic journal, published an issue entitled: "Trends in Archival and Reference Collections of Recorded Sound." The theme of this issue is not about Old Time Radio per se, but about how and why archives are created, including what institutions got what collections, along with techniques on re-recording the discs (both commercial 78's and broadcast 16" E.T.'s) and the importance of saving the old recordings (including radio shows). Highlights vary, but my favorite is the discussion of how the KIRO-CBS Collection was saved (now in the National Archives). Even though it was written over sixteen years ago, it is still a very valuable collectors' item. Thanks to Jim Dowling and Hazel Billman of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for making the last few copies available to us. They will be available at SPERDVAC's September 17th meeting.

**RADIO MANUFACTURERS OF THE 1920's: Vol. 1 A-C Dayton to J. B. Ferguson, Inc.** By Alan Douglas. *The Vestal Press, Ltd. 1988. \$29.95 Clothbound or \$19.95 Softbound. (Post Office Box 97, 320 N. Jensen Road, Vestal, New York 13850),*

As the radio industry blossomed in the 1920's, many firms jumped on the bandwagon to produce receiving sets to meet the public's demand. Some of the sets were simple, some were very ornate, but all of them are covered in this new work written by an expert in the field. There were so many manufacturers that three volumes are required to tell its story.

I like its arrangement, alphabetically by company. Each manufacturer is represented by the product it produced, including advertisements of the time. A background on each company and the people behind it make this an excellent work I highly recommend.

The author, Alan Douglas, has painstakingly put together a work that is required reading for those collecting or wishing to start a collection of the early radio sets. The clarity of the sets of drawings and photographs is impressive. His background includes more than one hundred articles and papers for collectors' clubs, amateur radio magazines and engineering publications.

Another interesting highlight of this book is the reprints of magazine articles of that time that take the reader to the various manufacturers of receiving sets to demonstrate how they were put together. Volumes 2 and 3 will be published later this year.

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**FIFTY YEARS OF RADIO.** Edited by Hugo Gernsback. *The Vestal Press, Ltd. 1988. \$14.95 Softbound (same address as above).*

*Radio-Craft* was a magazine published about the field of radio back in the 1930's. Articles ranged from reviews of new sets of that time, an article or two by someone in the radio field, advertisements and so on. But in the March 1938 issue, editor Hugo Gernsback devoted its entirety to a look back at fifty years of radio growth, and a look fifty years into the future (to 1988) and the state of radio and TV.

In a 1938 article titled "Radio in the Future," Gernsback predicted what he felt would happen in the field of communications and presented drawings to substantiate what he thought would eventually occur. He predicted beepers (common today), watch-size pocket receivers (transistor sets, Walkman), and 3-D television in his 1938 article.

This is a rare issue and an obvious collectors' item for those who can find an original *Radio-Craft* magazine. Vestal Press has done the next best thing by reprinting it in its entirety. Recommended for a look back and a look ahead to radio, as it was, and what it became.

**GREAT RADIO PERSONALITIES IN HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS.** By Anthony Slide. *The Vestal Press, Ltd. 1988. \$11.95 Softbound. (Post Office Box 97, 320 North Jensen Road, Vestal, New York 13850).*

In 1982, Dover Publications published a fascinating book with the above title that eventually went out of

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

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## In Review CONTINUED

print. Many of us have programs with performers who had no careers in film or TV and perhaps have wondered what they looked like. Perhaps we have favorites but do not have a photo or two in our collection.

Vestal Press has reprinted an important work that belongs in every collector's library. Compiled by a distinguished historian of American Entertainment and author of many works on film history, Anthony Slide's work includes accurate biographical captions under each photo. The pictures cover the gamut of those who made radio programming what it was: personalities, vocalists, announcers, comedians, dramatic actors and actresses, musicians, and so on.

Some radio favorites are missing. "Not included are the majority of performers who starred in the various soap operas and mystery series such as **THE ROMANCE OF HELEN TRENT**, **LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE**, **THIS IS NORA DRAKE**, and **THE LONE RANGER**. The author explains in his introduction: "my feeling is that it was not the actresses and actors who were the stars, but rather, the characters that they portrayed."

For those who want every personality represented in a book (and it's not a bad idea!), perhaps some day such a work will be compiled. But, in the meantime, this is the next best book to have. There are 239 photos of exceptional quality and it makes a great gift book to an OTR friend. Well recommended! Thanks to Grace Houghton, President and Paula Peters of Vestal Press for informing us of these titles.

**THE ONE MAN'S FAMILY ALBUM: An Inside Look at Radio's Longest Running Show.** By Carlton E. Morse. Seven Stones Press. 1988. \$8.95 Softbound. (Star Route Box 50, Woodside, CA 94062).

Radio was a wonderful medium of dramatic expression because of the believability of the performers playing various parts. **GUNSMOKE** is an excellent example where the chemistry of the cast, writing and sound effects all come together. Another program, of course, was **ONE MAN'S FAMILY**, one of the most popular of all time.

The famous night time drama's story and memories have been compiled for us by its creator, Carlton E. Morse. We go behind the scenes and find out how the program was created, set against the backdrop of emerging field of radio drama. We meet the performers who played the roles we all remember... J. Anthony Smythe as Henry Barbour, Minetta Ellen as Fanny Barbour, Michael Raffetto as Paul Barbour, Bernice Berwin as Hazel Barbour, Barton Yarborough as Clifford Barbour, Kathleen Wilson as Claudia Barbour, and Page Gilman as Jack Barbour, all from the original cast.

Mr. Morse also presents four complete scripts (including the first program!) to give us a feel of what the program was all about. The sponsors and promotions are given their own chapter and the book is summarized with the whereabouts of the cast members and the meaning of the program to the author.

I like this book and commend the author for

sharing the story of **ONE MAN'S FAMILY** with us. Unfortunately, you will wish there were more. With 27 wonderful years on NBC (April 29, 1932 to May 8, 1959) **ONE MAN'S FAMILY** holds its place as one of the most honored programs in radio history.

To best summarize this book, let us go back to April 12, 1932 and the first reading rehearsal for **ONE MAN'S FAMILY**. At the close, the reaction of the cast was mixed. Morse recalls: "As I remember, Minetta Ellen, Bernice Berwin and Kathleen Wilson were greatly intrigued with the first script. Actually, I don't think any of us saw twenty-seven years of work ahead. I remember Bart Yarborough slapped his script across his knees after the first reading and said, 'Well, there it is folks, take it or leave it - no bang bangs! Nobody dead, nobody saved in the nick of time! It's either a flop or a sleeper!!' Tony Smythe was the only one who expressed enthusiasm. As we left the rehearsal studio he slipped his hand under my arm, squeezed and said, 'Carlton, I think you've done it. It's what radio has been waiting to hear'".

**THAT'S NOT ALL FOLKS! My Life in the Golden Age of Cartoons and Radio.** By Mel Blanc and Philip Bashe. Warner Books. 1988. \$17.95 Clothbound. (666 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10103).

This book has a lot to say about how wonderful radio was by a man who has meant so much to all of us. This is Mel's autobiography and he shares with us those wonderful days of doing cartoon voices at Warner Brothers and working on radio. We go behind the scenes of the various shows he worked on, reading like a Who's Who of radio: **THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE**, **BABY SNOOKS**, **BLONDIE**, **THE CISCO KID**, **BURNS & ALLEN**, **JUDY CANOVA**, **POINT SUBLIME**, **ABBOTT & COSTELLO**, **AMOS 'N' ANDY**, and, of course, **THE JACK BENNY PROGRAM**. All those voices ... wonderful sounds from Radio's Golden Age relived in this fascinating work.

Blanc's anecdotes, reminisces, warm tributes to his supporting cast, recollections of what it was like being a sound man, and of the fun it was doing a radio show makes this a work highly recommended. It is also a touching account of how truly these performers were "family."

When Harry Lang, who played Pancho on **THE CISCO KID** suffered a major heart attack, Mel was asked to be his substitute. Mel did, but only after insisting his wages be sent to Lang. Mel played Pancho for several years and, throughout Lang's convalescence, never took a penny.

In a chapter entitled "*Me 'n' Jack*," Mel recounts how he became an integral part of the Jack Benny cast, along with all the famous catch sayings he was associated with and stories of how they came about. Yes, Jack Benny had the greatest impact on Mel's life and counted him as one of his closest friends.

Radio, as we knew it, may be gone and the Golden Age of Cartoons may have passed on to that great drawing board in the sky, but Mel Blanc, and his son Noel, continue to be active today operating Blanc Communications Corp.

Until next time, when we take another visit to the OTR Bookshelf ... good luck and good reading!

REEL	SHOW	TITLE	DATE
G 464	21ST PRECINCT	13 YEAR OLD BOY DIES, A	
G 476	21ST PRECINCT	COPPERHEAD SNAKE LOOSE IN N.Y.C.	
G 464	21ST PRECINCT	EVA WELD SHOTS HER HUSBAND	
G 464	21ST PRECINCT	LENWIG FAMILY FUED	
G 464	21ST PRECINCT	MERCHANDISE GIVE AWAY	
G 464	21ST PRECINCT	MRS. WHITNEY'S BOXER DOG	
G 464	21ST PRECINCT	PHIL BOLNEY DEATH	
G 476	21ST PRECINCT	PIGEON DROP SCHEME	
G 783	ABBOTT AND COSTELLO SHOW	PETER LORRE - COSTELLO HAS A COLD	1943
G 1111	ABBOTT AND COSTELLO SHOW	THEY DISCUSS WOMEN (AFRS)	
G 783	ABBOTT AND COSTELLO SHOW	VISIT TO ANDREWS SISTERS' RANCH	04/05/45
L 20	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	(LOG)	
G 105	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	ARISE MY LOVE	06/01/46
G 106	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	BRIEF ENCOUNTER	11/20/46
G 106	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	DEVIL AND MISS. JONES, THE	10/23/46
G 382	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	GUEST IN THE HOUSE	09/25/46
G 105	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	HOLD BACK THE DAWN	07/31/46
G 106	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	KEYS OF THE KINGDOM	08/21/46
G 105	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	KITTY FOYLE	04/06/46
G 106	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	MY MAN GODFREY	10/02/46
G 105	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	NIGHT TRAIN	11/13/46
G 106	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	PORTRAIT OF JENNY	12/04/46
G 105	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	SHADOW OF A DOUBT	09/11/46
G 106	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	SNOW WHITE	04/27/46
G 105	ACADEMY AWARD THEATER	SUSPICION	10/30/46
A 170	ACADEMY AWARDS PROGRAM	AWARDS FOR 1943	03/02/44
G 1065	ACROSS THE BOARD	(AFRS)	06/22/53
G 981	ADVENTURE AHEAD	1 SHOW TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST	C 1942
G 981	ADVENTURE AHEAD	GREEN MANTLE, THE	C 1942
G 981	ADVENTURE AHEAD	INSIDE THE FBI	C 1942
G 981	ADVENTURE AHEAD	ROBINSON CRUSOE	C 1942
G 981	ADVENTURE AHEAD	TOOTH FOR PAUL REVERE, A	C 1942
G 1087	ADVENTURE INC.	PAPPY BOYINGTON	07/12/48
G 283	ADVENTURE THEATER	GOOD SHIP JANE, THE	
G 283	ADVENTURE THEATER	QUESTION OF IDENTITY, A	
G 283	ADVENTURE THEATER	WHOLE TOWN SLEEPING, THE	
G 283	ADVENTURE THEATER	ZERO HOUR	
G 1087	ADVENTURE TRAILS	AUDITION - MINE OF THE PARROT	
A 54	ADVENTURE TRAILS	AUDITION PROGRAM	03/22/46
G 1087	ADVENTURE TRAILS	TEST - MINE OF THE PARROT	
A 362	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	CITY OF THE DEAD CHAPTER 1 - 2	
A 363	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	CITY OF THE DEAD CHAPTER 3 - 4	
A 364	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	CITY OF THE DEAD CHAPTER 5 - 6	
A 365	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	CITY OF THE DEAD CHAPTER 7 - 8	
A 366	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	CITY OF THE DEAD CHAPTER 9 - 10	
G 669	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	CITY OF THE DEAD, THE CH 1 - 6	
G 670	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	CITY OF THE DEAD, THE CH 7 - 10	
A 368	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	COBRA KING STRIKES BACK CH 1	
A 369	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	COBRA KING STRIKES BACK CH 2 - 3	
A 370	ADVENTURES BY MORSE	COBRA KING STRIKES BACK CH 4 - 5	

This is a sample page of the new SPERDVAC Library Index prepared for us by Chester Allen. For details, see page four of the Library Users' Guide in this newsletter.

A=ARCHIVES, G=GENERAL, HM=HOLLYWOOD MUSEUM, L=LOGS, S=SCRIPTS



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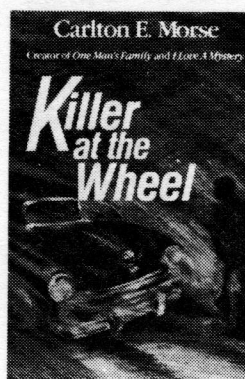
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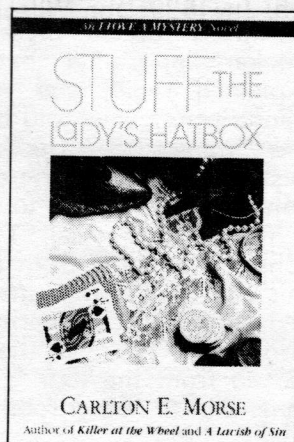
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SPERDVAC RADIOGRAM - 9

# From Under the Green Eyeshade

This is still not my maiden issue (forget the editorial "we") as your editor. Dan Haefle again did most of the work on this one as I am booked through September. I did do some "overlooking" of the curmudgeon DH so will take the rap for any omissions or commissions. By January '89 will be in the swing of it.

Meanwhile, am endeavoring to get more involved. Having been a member since soon after SPERDVAC's origin, I have nevertheless been an irregular attendee, sneaking into meetings with a different woman nearly each time. They, when invited, not knowing what they WERE getting into and, when leaving, not knowing what they HAD gotten into.

So, as I get to know who is who in the org, I'll be able to be of some service. Apropos, some of the notes sent to me may not have gotten sent on to the proper person. This may be especially true of persons who sent a change of address. Please send them to the Membership Chairman. If you still miss this issue (but see a friend's), please send in change once again — we don't want to miss you. Send money for membership to same. Send any donation for *Radiogram* to Editor (to be duly noted and passed on). Send items for McGee's Closet to Barbara J. Watkins (pardon me's to BJW for running items I received; there just wasn't enough time to get 'em to you and back again.) Lastly, send any suggestions and/or writings to Ed. Hope to hear from you.

Read you next time, ciao,  
Ye Ed, RMK

## STANLEY AND SWEENEY

(Additional paragraphs accidentally omitted)

Doing a live network program without rehearsal presented difficulties with more than figuring proper timing. Performers were deprived of the opportunity to determine how a character should be portrayed.

Added Sweeney, "The facility that radio actors had was quite remarkable. They could 'hit' a character very quickly and they could sustain that character for twenty pages and not know where they were going for the next eight or ten.

The radio comic also discussed the motion picture industry's attitude toward audio performers. "Almost no radio actors could get jobs in feature films. They were regarded as some sort of an alien, bastard kind of acting and had no respect from anybody who did any casting or produced or directed. The first radio actor that I recall having any (motion picture) success was Ira Grosell (Jeff Chandler), who got under contract at Universal."

Mr. Sweeney recalled some of the performers he worked with in radio, including Hans Conried and Edgar Bergen.

The meeting will soon be added to SPERDVAC's General Library.

10- SPERDVAC RADIOGRAM

# GENE KRUPA AUTOGRAPHED MY MENU

by Jim Cooper

I was only thirteen but I indeed looked like I was older, much older . . . My sister was working in a Navy fighter plane factory in Trenton, New Jersey the summer of 1945. Her husband (my brother-in-law) was fighting with Patton in Germany, defeating Hitler - as were all of the comic-book and radio heroes of that time. Visiting as I would usually do for the summer months, my older sisters who had moved away from our West Virginia farm in Clarksburg (right in the middle of this mountain state) ... Mary, who herself was only in her early twenties, also knew what a fan I was of Gene Krupa. Not only did I have all of his records and any magazine in which he appeared, I also wanted to play the drums. And, the most famous "drumming man" at the time was indeed Gene Krupa whose great band was appearing a few miles away at New York's Astor Hotel. How many remember those band remote dates of the name bands, "*And from the roof of the Hotel Astor in little old New York City, comes the music of* ..."

A July weekend on a Saturday early morning, an Air Force bomber lost its way and came winging down Broadway off course, searching for an airfield in Jersey, and smacked right into the Empire State Building (then the tallest building in the world). People were hurt, some lost their lives. It was a nightmare for those caught in the structure's speeding elevators. Gasoline washed into and over the outside of the 42nd floor when the plane hit, causing an inferno.

## Summer in New York

As my sister and I walked along looking up at the building we could see the area patched up and boarded over. We were in New York the first weekend of August 1945. And, we had reservations that night for the Hotel Astor. I can remember how absolutely beside myself I was. We visited the Ruckerfeller Center that afternoon. The tour guide explained radio, and we were shown large glass transcriptions and told that every live show on NBC was "transcribed" (recorded) so that if there were mistakes they could be corrected later (to this day I don't know why they told us that!).

They had a small TV screen on the top of a console, reflected from a mirror. We were told that this was the coming "medium" after the war. The set had a sign on it indicating it was the TV that was on display by NBC at the 1939 World's Fair. I was picked from the tour group and put in front of the camera in the other room. Those, including my sister,

saw me live on black and white television. I could barely make myself out on the monitor a few feet away from me, the lights were so bright it was hard to even keep my eyes open (little did I know that I would earn a living some many years later working at

Contd. Next Page

two pioneer television stations in West Virginia; and as a station manager at a radio station and as an on-the-air play-by-play sports announcer, etc.).

That evening we arrived at the beautiful Hotel Astor ballroom on the roof. I had wondered, but this "roof" HAD a roof. It was not like I suspected - if it rained, I wouldn't have to worry. The Krupa band was in top form. Our dinner of fish filet was taken back and warmed at least twice (true). My sister and I danced everytime the band played. We kept close to the stage. We were there from start to finish. We heard it and saw it all that night. I will never forget it.

Only when the 15-minute band remotes were broadcast did most of the dancers simply stand close to the bandstand and watch - moving only their arms and hips but NEVER their FEET - applauding after each song, whistling and cheering. The network announcer would make the announcement that we were "now going to be part of a national broadcast, would everyone please come down to the bandstand." There were four such broadcasts that night. Network radio broadcasts were very valuable to the bands. NBC, CBS and Mutual were perfect outlets for fans across the nation to hear their favorite bands. Many bands played low-paying jobs for weeks just so they could be heard nationwide through the agreements made by the nets and hotels or spots. Who can forget Frank Dailey's Meadowbrook, the Glen Island Casino, or the Rustic Cabin in New Jersey, just to name a few. The amount of publicity and exposure to listeners provided by radio broadcasting was hard to top.

This night, on each radio broadcast, it was announced that the "Gene Krupa Jazz Trio" would do a number. Gene would get up from his usual position behind the mother of pearl set of drums and come down to the front of the bandstand to another, smaller set.

### Krupa on Drums---Live!

On the last remote that night I was standing directly in front of him. I watched as he chewed his gum to the rhythm of the drum beats. I noted that he was seemingly humming and speaking syllables, in that, indeed, his drumming was not just drum beats, but very plainly, music, because each beat was "different" as it actually was supposed to be. Krupa watched me during all of the "Dark Eyes" jazz trio number. He stared directly into my eyes, chewing his gum and humming. After it was over, those around the bandstand applauded wildly. I felt I had personally had much to do with it. After all, I had Gene's constant attention for the entire four minutes that were going out "live" to thousands listening to the NBC radio network..

Tenor saxist Charlie Ventura, trumpeter Roy "little jazz" Eldridge, pianist Teddy Napoleon, and singers Anita O'Day and Buddy Stewart were all there. Yes, it was after Gene had been arrested for taking "reefers" as the newspapers said. Those in the crowd that night remarked, "Krupa really was arrested for swinging the National Anthem." One could almost believe that. The very last number was not his "Star Burst" theme song. But, the lights went

# GREEN HORNET

## BUZZES AGAIN

Dick Osgood sends us some exciting news from Michigan. On Sunday, April 24th, the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments at the University of Michigan sponsored "An Afternoon with the Green Hornet," with a re-enactment of an actual episode plus a discussion on how the show was produced. Mr. Osgood, a former writer, actor, announcer, and studio manager of WXYZ, also autographed copies of his book *WYXIE Wonderland (An Unauthorized 50-Year Diary of WXYZ Detroit)*, a must-have book for radio fans published in 1981. What does the Stearns Collection have to do with *The Green Hornet*? It is believed that the theremin (one of the first electronic instruments, and the sound of *The Green Hornet*) in their collection is the very instrument used for the WXYZ broadcasts of *The Green Hornet*.

### MISCELLANEA ON THE MEDIUM

About a month ago, Jane Powell was on Larry Mantle's "Air Talk," a one hour talk-with-guest, call-in show from KPCC-FM, Pasadena, CA. It was an interesting hour with the gracious and charming actress/wife/mother. She said radio acting was her greatest thrill, the best medium for acting; she misses it.

Ah, but, surprise! John Gassman called in to chat and offer her tapes of some shows she had done. Having no copies, she gratefully accepted.

Also, we note here the passing of Uncle Ken, who had built up quite a following on his late night KPCC show, *Uncle Ken's Nickelodeon*. He had an original patter to go with his playing of vintage jazz. March in with the saints, Ken.

---

out except for two baby spots in front of Gene that threw two large shadows on the back wall behind him and, in a flurry of drumming, with electric fans at his feet waving small flags, "Oh, Say Can You See ..." never sounded better.

His jacket wringing wet, Krupa walked to the front of the bandstand where the fans had gathered to say "goodnight" to him. He walked directly to me and took the menu I held out, autographed it, and asked, "Are you a drummer?" I immediately answered, "I sure am!" He asked again, "Did you enjoy yourself tonight?" I again answered quickly, "I sure did and I'll never forget it!"

I still have that autographed menu and the memory of seeing and hearing one of the great bands of the 1940's as well as the best drummer of all time! Also, attending a live radio remote (all four of them) and, after all these years, I can still see and hear that unforgettable night in my mind. But, isn't that just like radio? Exactly!

*John Cooper earned a living in radio and television and still does free-lance work in broadcasting on a part time basis.*



# SPERDVAC

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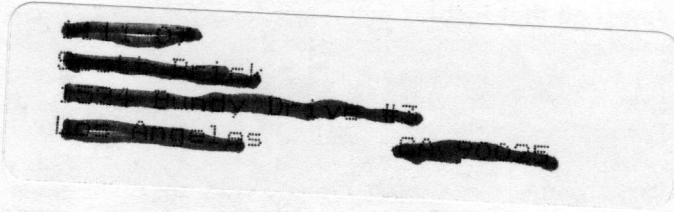
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### RENEWAL TIME?

If your membership numbers end in 09, it's time to renew! See SPERDVAC Directory for membership address.

**Renewals are just \$15.00!!**



## Boardroom Banter Builds Betterment

Present at the August Board meeting in Thousand Oaks were: Michael Plett, Larry Gassman, Don McCrosky, Barbara Watkins, Stuart Lubin, Bobb Lynes. Guests present were: Richard Glasband, John Gassman, Chester Allen, Chris Lembesis and Rex Quinn.

Chester Allen, Treasurer, asked the Board to decide what to charge for the following items: 1) Printed Index (6-0 to sell for \$45); Special runs (agreed without motion, \$1 per page); 3) Disk form (no motion, no decision, \$30 suggested); 4) Tractor Feed (6-0, \$67.75 additional expenditure). \$915.00 has been collected as of this date for November Convention and a motion passed (6-0) to open a 91-day account at Southern California Savings & Loan Association to earn a higher interest rate.

**Membership Report:** SPERDVAC has a total of 1677 members: 1327 active paying members, 208 honorary members, 133 public relations listed members, 18 *Radiogram* subscriptions.

**Acquisitions Report:** John Gassman reported that SPERDVAC just became the beneficiary of a donation on a permanent loan basis of 150 more reels of the *Wild Bill Hickok* shows.

**Library Report:** Bob Steinmetz, the new Librarian for General Open-Reel 1-499 may be reached at Post Office Box 669, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

**Newsletter, SPERDVAC Magazine, Misc:** Don McCrosky moved and Stuart Lubin seconded the motion (approved 6-0) that Marty Kallenberger be appointed full-time Editor of the *Radiogram*. He may be reached at 11782 Lorealen Street, Garden Grove, CA 92641 - (714) 539-6616.

Issue No. 9 of the SPERDVAC Magazine will not

be produced this year (motion passed 6-0).

Barbara Watkins read a letter from Royal Promotions requesting that one of their circulars promoting the sale of Old Time Radio Digest mugs be sent out with the *Radiogram* and displayed at meetings. The Board approved.

**Ad Department:** A motion passed 6-0 for SPERDVAC to purchase a full-page ad in Golden Radio Buffs of Maryland "*Galaxy of Radio Stars*" Banquet advertising supplement at a cost of \$60.00.

**Old Business:** Shelly Herman offered to come in at the convention and do both re-creations and the workshops. He will bring his board and speakers ... he'll "do everything" for \$300.00.

Michael Plett moved and Larry Gassman seconded the motion to employ Shelly Herman to do the SPERDVAC convention. The Board was assured that there wouldn't be any other expenses. Passed 4-0 with two abstentions.

The honorary membership letter (read by Barbara Watkins) is an invitation to attend the banquet at the 1988 SPERDVAC Convention. The honorary member may attend as SPERDVAC's guest either Friday or Saturday night and may bring a spouse or friend for \$25.00 (Friday) or \$30.00 (Saturday). Convention flyers go out with the honorary member invitation letter.

SPERDVAC is considering a March dinner meeting at the Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Hotel near the International Airport.

**New Business:** SPERDVAC is looking for a new meeting place in the San Fernando Valley.

The next Board and Membership meetings will be September 17, 1988 at the Buena Park Library in Buena Park. The guest will be Jean Carson.