

SPERDVAC

RADIOGRAM

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With Fred Allen in a visit to Allen's Alley are Kenny Delmar as Senator Claghorn, Minerva Pious as Mrs. Nussbaum, Peter Donald as Ajax Cassidy and Parker Fennelly as Tidus Moody. See feature on page four regarding Kenny Delmar's radio work.
(Photo courtesy Charles Stumpf)

Hugh's Hues for September

By Hugh Anderson

As World War II ended, the home communications industry began to produce equipment for AM, FM and TV receivers. In December 1946, the Radio Manufacturers Association estimated that 20% to 25% of all radio set production in 1947 would be FM receivers.

An amendment in 1952 to the Communications Act was a result of an action by NBC involving an FCC chairman in 1947. Writer Eric Barnouw gives us the background. In 1945 the FCC decided to move FM's spectrum allocation to a higher mhz. RCA-NBC had strongly pushed for this change and rejoiced when it occurred. This opened the door for TV channels and applications. RCA promised TV sets for mid 1946.

Meanwhile, CBS was caught half napping. It had counseled its affiliates not to pursue TV licenses on the premise of unresolved color television, but to obtain FM licenses. Prior to 1947 the FCC was still to rule on the type of color system which would be used for TV. CBS urged its color wheel which gave stable, brilliant color but could not be used with the existing black and white system.

David Sarnoff promised the FCC that NBC would have a color system that was compatible with the existing B & W system. It did get the B & W TV sets on the market in mid 1946 and it did produce a crude, unstable "compatible" electronic color system in the fall of 1946.

Barnouw writes: "In March, 1947, the FCC shunted the CBS system aside and decreed a go-ahead under the existing system. RCA was exuberant. CBS had suffered a major defeat. In October of that year FCC chairman Charles Denny, who had presided over these pro-RCA decisions, resigned from the FCC to become NBC vice president and general counsel.

"The move, like earlier metamorphoses of this sort, caused a hue and cry. When had the subject of a network executive berth first been hinted? Such protests brought an amendment to the Communications Act, adopted in 1952, barring any commissioner from representing a client before the commission for a full year after resigning."

On March 26, 1947, the Continental Radio Network (owned by Dr. Edwin Armstrong) broadcast the first program on an exclusive FM network. By September the network had 27 stations but only one commercial sponsor. Dr. Armstrong had organized the second FM network in American as the American FM Network. (The first was the Yankee Network's FM Broadcasting System.) The American Network was originally made up of Armstrong's Alpine station, G.E.'s Albany-Schenectady station, Franklin Doolittle's Hartford station WDRC and other stations in the New York, New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania triangle. In 1947, the American became the Continental FM Network and was enthusiastically linking together as many as 41 FM stations north of Washington D.C. in chain broadcasts.

The end of 1947 saw 238 FM stations on the air, 680 more authorized and 431 applications pending. Judge Roy Hofheinz, Texas FM station owner and president of the FM Broadcasters Association, proclaimed 1947 the

"FM year."

By the end of 1947, 14,000 American households were receiving the signals of 12 television stations. The average cost of a black and white TV set was \$274.00. In 1948 Armstrong's FM network expanded further into the eastern and midwestern markets. An FM rural radio network was planned by a group of farm cooperatives. Transit Radio began broadcasting FM radio on busses in Cincinnati. Transit FM was well fitted for small businesses because of its captive audiences and low rates. By the end of 1948, FM radio was broadcast into public transportation vehicles in Wilkesbarre-Scranton, Pa.; Worcester, Mass.; Huntington, W.Va.; Cincinnati; Houston and St. Louis. There were 326 new FM stations broadcasting by the end of the year.

In October, 1948, Emerson Radio introduced an FM receiver set that would bring FM to the masses. It was called "The Conqueror" and sold for \$29.95.

But 1948 was the year television eclipsed FM. By the end of the year 50 TV stations were broadcasting. "The Original Amateur Hour" with Ted Mack began on January 18th for Dumont. June 8th was the debut of "Texaco Star Theater," NBC. Uncle Miltie became the permanent host in September and became the No. 1 TV show in America for years. His show had an unbelievable Hooper rating of 80.7 and brought a whole generation to TV. June 20th was the first broadcast date of Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town." It became No. 2 with a Hooperation of 50.8. June also hosted the first regularly scheduled TV-AM radio simulcast, "We the People", for Gulf Oil, on CBS. Another TV-AM simulcast, which began in October was "Break the Bank" on ABC.

The top fifteen evening AM radio network shows were (in order): **Walter Winchell, Lux Radio Theater, Fibber McGee and Molly, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, My Friend Irma, Duffy's Tavern, Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts, Fred Allen, Phil Harris-Alice Faye** (a season premiere), **Crime Photographer, Bob Hawk, Mr. District Attorney, Charlie McCarthy**, and (tied for 15th) **People Are Funny and Burns and Allen**.

1948 was the year that Dr. Armstrong made a decision about RCA and General David Sarnoff. *Broadcasting Magazine* reported, "Patent problems surfaced in July when Edwin Armstrong sued RCA and NBC for alleged infringements of five of his basic FM patents. Armstrong charged that RCA and NBC 'deliberately set out to oppose (the growth and development of FM). . . and impair the value thereof by delaying the commercial development and public use of said inventions and to compel plaintiff to sell and transfer control of such patents to RCA. . . ' In addition, Armstrong argued that RCA and NBC tried to influence the FCC to allocate to FM 'so small a number of usable radio frequencies as to make its development and use on a national basis impossible.' "

Eric Barnouw adds, "Edwin Armstrong felt outmaneuvered. FM had been hamstrung by its move in the spectrum. It had received another blow when the FCC approved duplication of programming on AM-FM combination stations. The incentive to purchase FM sets

Continued on page 11

SPERDVAC CONVENTION NOVEMBER 9 & 10

SPERDVAC is working on plans for our annual convention, slated for Friday, Nov. 9 and Saturday, Nov. 10. We will salute radio's Golden Era at the Viscount Hotel in Los Angeles.

Following the 2 pm registration on Friday, SPERDVAC will present a collectors' workshop at 2:30 and a salute to Mel Blanc at 4 pm.

A no host bar will open at 6:30 that evening with dinner at 7:30. The evening banquet will feature a recreation of **Tom Corbett, Space Cadet** starring Frank Thomas, star of the radio series. We expect the banquet to end at about 10:30 pm.

Saturday's daytime workshops will include a "Spike Jones on the Radio" panel featuring City Slickers Eddie Brandt and Joe Siracusa. At another Saturday session SPERDVAC will present "Readings by Olmsted" with radio storyteller Nelson Olmsted.

Saturday evening's activities will begin with a no host bar open at 6:30 pm followed by dinner and another radio show recreation beginning at 7:30 pm.

Members able to volunteer an hour or two during the convention are welcome to contact Larry Gassman at the SPERDVAC phone line, (213)947-9800.

The cost of the complete convention is \$70 for those paying in advance and \$75 at the door. Rates for those unable to attend the entire convention are specified on the convention flier enclosed with this edition of the *Radiogram*.

The Viscount Hotel is located at 9750 Airport Blvd., Los Angeles. Information on their shuttle service from Los Angeles International Airport and room reservations can also be found on our convention flier.

Amzie Strickland Guests Sept. 15

Radio actress Amzie Strickland will guest at the Sept. 16 SPERDVAC meeting. We will meet at 12 noon at the Buena Park Library, 7150 La Palma Ave., Buena Park.

Our guest appeared before the SPERDVAC microphone at our 1986 convention when we presented a recreation of **The Shadow**. At that time she spoke briefly about her over fifty appearances on the well remembered radio drama.

Her radio credits include **The Fat Man, Call the Police** (a summer series with George Petrie), **Romance of Helen Trent, Marriage for Two** (on which she played the lead), **When a Girl Marries, Jones and I** (in which she co-starred with Mason Adams), **Gangbusters, Our Gal Sunday** (for three years) and **Counterspy**.

The SPERDVAC meeting is free and open to the public.

MEMOS FOR MEMBERS

Radio/TV musician Muzzy Marcellino was slated to be our guest at the Aug. 11 SPERDVAC meeting. Unfortunately, he became ill and was hospitalized the day of our meeting with a heart ailment. Muzzy returned home Aug. 24. We hope to reschedule him for an upcoming SPERDVAC event.

Many thanks to radio rebroadcaster Chuck Schaden for the nice publicity he provided SPERDVAC recently when he interviewed President Gassman on his program at WBBM, Chicago. We received a record number of inquiries about our organization from his listeners. In fact, there seems to be so much interest in early radio in that part of the nation we are wondering why there is no similar OTR group in Chicago.

We have also received some nice publicity through the efforts of Joe and Susan Crawford. They have appeared frequently on the *Paul Wallach Show* at KIEV, Glendale, CA.

John Gassman is the new man in charge of printed materials acquisitions. He's taking charge of the department following Jerry William's departure for Northern California. (In an unrelated development, John wants your editor to figure out some way to give another free plug to the Jack Benny Radio Log he helped assemble. But Dan Haefele stood up to him and told him to take out a paid ad to push the log he's making available for \$15 through P.O. Box 1163, Whittier, CA 90603.)

SPERDVAC has learned of the death of member John Brown of Anaheim. A few months ago John helped SPERDVAC obtain a donation of thirty used metal filing cabinets which we are using for storage of scripts. John died July 21.

Public station KAVT in Austin, Minnesota is looking for programmers to supply old radio on their airwaves. They have been carrying OTR nine hours a day, seven days a week. Members interested in assisting should contact Steve Oman at (507)433-0352.

Member Steve Weeks sent us this item from the "Peach Buzz" column by Norman Arey and Martha Woodham in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* of July 10: "Later, alligator - Dante Stephensen's 40-year-old crocodile, **Throckmorton**, has uh, bitten the dust. But he's not forgotten. Dante had his old friend, who patrolled many a dinner in Dante's Down the Hatch restaurant across from Lennox Square, buried on the grounds of the restaurant. The grave is marked by a tombstone and cross. Evidently Throckmorton was a Christian crocodile. **Throckmorton II** will be delivered this week, with police escort. The new Yacare caiman is 20 years old and 5 feet long, weighing in at 50."

Lately we've had difficulties because several members have failed to return tapes to our libraries on time. When a member has overdue tapes and/or fails to pay a late fee, ALL librarians and membership chair Carrolyn Rawski are promptly notified. No librarian will loan tapes to a member who fails to return tapes to another librarian. Please keep in mind that there are NOT duplicate loan copies available for most of our tapes and failure to return them on time is very unfair to other, more cooperative library patrons.

KENNY DELMAR, 'SENATOR CLAGHORN', THAT IS

By Charles Stumpf



Sen. Claghorn puts the pressure on CBS.

Kenny Delmar is mostly remembered for his wonderful comedy impersonation of 'Senator Claghorn' on the **Fred Allen Show**. The man hiding behind that clever characterization was one of many talents. Delmar's long list of credits includes performances on the stage, both in comedy-variety acts, as well as straight dramatic roles as a child actor. In his youth Delmar racked up some credits on the silent screen and followed through into the talkies. Radio listeners knew him as an actor, comedian, dramatic performer and announcer.

He was born Kenneth Frederick Fay Howard in Boston on September 5, 1911. His teenaged mother, Evelyn Delmar, was on the vaudeville stage. She had been born in England of Greek parents, the family name being Efstradiadis. Young Kenny toured the country with his mother and an aunt. The boy was introduced to show business as a child prodigy doing blackface comedy and straight drama. Among the variety acts with which he was associated were 'The Seven Rosebuds', 'Kenneth & the Kay Sisters', and 'Stars of Tomorrow.' He also appeared on the legitimate stage in dramas such as 'The Prince and the Pauper.'

Delmar entered films at an early age and appeared on the silent screen in epics such as 'Messenger of Mars' and in D.W. Griffith's 1921 production, 'The Orphans of the Storm' starring the Gish sisters. Between shows, he was educated at the Professional Children's School in New York.

The Depression drove him off the stage and he joined his stepfather's olive-importing business. Being of an independent nature, Kenny opened a ballet school. He later married one of his dancing instructors, Alice Victoria Cochran.

Adept at dialects, Delmar entered radio in 1935 and began on a local New York station at \$5 per week. He soon graduated to major network programs doing character roles. He was heard on shows such as **March of Time**, **Columbia Workshop** and **News of Youth**. He was also heard on adventure series such as **Jungle Jim** and for a short time he played Commissioner Weston on **The Shadow**.

On October 30, 1938 Kenny joined Orson Welles on his famous **Mercury Theater "War of the Worlds"** broadcast, playing several bit parts as the Secretary of the Interior and the captain of the National Guards who collapsed of fright when confronted by the invading Martians. Using an impressive FDR imitation when he read the Secretary of Interior's lines, he helped frighten many who tuned in late during the historic broadcast.

Delmar was chosen over 36 other applicants as the emcee for the **Lucky Strike Hit Parade** musical program. He was also heard on the **Hollywood Jackpot** quiz show with Bill Cullen. As an announcer he was known for his smooth delivery and casual manner. Kenny served as announcer for comedians Fred Allen, Jack Benny and Eddie Cantor and also acted on Danny Kaye's program. Another of his varied radio assignments found him serving as a swing music expert opposite classical music expert Deems Taylor on **The Battle of Music** program sponsored by RCA Victor.

Senator Beauregard Claghorn was introduced on the **Fred Allen Show** on October 7, 1945. It was actress Minerva Pious, famous for her role as Mrs. Nussbaum, who brought Kenny's special talent of mimicking a Southern senator to Fred Allen's attention.

The first lines drawled by the actor on Allen's show were: "Senator Claghorn's the name. *Senator Claghorn*, that is. . . Ah'm from the South. From the deep South." It was a line uttered during the Senator's second performance the following week that made him and the expression 'That's a joke, son', a national catch-phrase. His voice and mannerisms became instantly familiar to 20,000,000 listeners from coast to coast, and many mimicked him. Senator Claghorn became the most quoted man in the nation. "That's a joke, son" swept the country.

The bumptious jokster had a penchant for puns, as well as unlimited prejudices against the North. For instance, the Senator from the South refused to wear a Union suit and the only kind of hat he wore was a derby - a Kentucky derby, that is. Claghorn drank only from Dixie cups and refused to attend games at Yankee Stadium, even if a southpaw was pitching. Furthermore he would

Cont. on page 10 . . .

WAKE UP AMERICA! Information PLEASE

by Barbara
J. Watkins

August marked the 7th anniversary of the KCSN Radio Repertory Players who have been producing new radio shows twice a month under the title of "Thirty Minutes to Curtain." The programs are currently broadcast on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month from 2:30 to 3 pm over the public radio station located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, KCSN, 88.5 FM. As you might suspect, many in the group are SPERDVAC members also. The group is currently in great need of a broadcast engineer who would be interested in hands-on experience in the production of radio drama. If you are interested in engineering, please contact Stuart Lubin (213)653-2548 or Randy Thompson (818)716-6630.

Another newsletter has just appeared on the scene to keep us informed about the various happenings in the nostalgia arena. It is titled "Past Times", the Nostalgia Entertainment Newsletter, and contains articles and reviews about the music, movies and radio programs of the 1920s, '30s, '40s and early '50s. Managing Editor is SPERDVAC member Randy Skretvedt. Subscribe now and receive four issues for \$6.00 Send payment to: Past Times, 7308 Fillmore Drive, Buena Park, CA 90620

CALLING ALL CLUBS: Another organization "dedicated to keeping old time radio alive" is the *Metro Washington Old Time Radio Club*. Membership is open to all who are interested in old time radio. Membership is \$15.00 yearly and benefits include receiving the newsletter six times a year, access to the club's reel-to-reel and cassette libraries and also to a video cassette library related to radio. Meetings are held monthly in Alexandria, Virginia. For further information, contact Jack French, 5137 Richardson Drive, Fairfax, VA 22041.

The *Radio Collectors of America (RCA)* is a group organized for the purchase of radio shows from dealers and for mutual enjoyment of the tapes. It was started in November 1970 and now has a collection of over 1500 reel-to-reel tapes available to members who pay back dues. New members are welcome but must live in the area since tapes must be picked up at meetings held in the Quincy area, south of Boston. They decided not to have a lending library by mail. President Bernard Feitelberg invites all of you who may be in the Boston area or passing through to attend one of their meetings. For further information please write Radio Collectors of America, 8 Ardsely Circle, Brockton, MA 02402. The club also has a newsletter which keeps members informed, and perhaps just as important, amused.

Back in April, Seattle member Bob Herman asked about radio drama in and around the Seattle area. Thanks to Misty Dawn Lane for sending along some information for Bob and all of us who may be in the area. Radio fans there have a very informative publication titled *The Greater Seattle Radio Guide*. The June issue (#7) is 32 pages of station listings, feature stories, daily highlights and much more. The publication is distributed free at many public

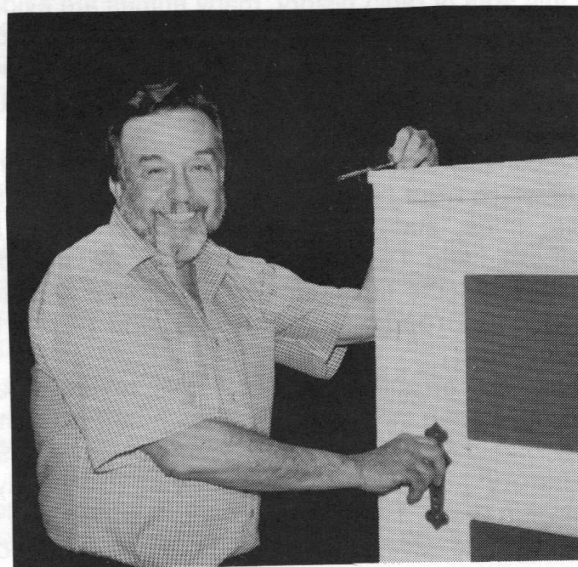
places, or you may subscribe for 12 monthly issues, first class mail, for \$7.80. Write to The Radio Guide, 811 NE 45th, Seattle, WA 98105.

KUOW (94.9 FM) carries **Radio Reader** Monday through Friday at 10 pm, **NPR Playhouse** follows at 10:30 pm. KBCS (91.3 FM) runs **Radio Visions** on Mondays at 7 pm and Tuesdays at 9 am, and other programs of note. Check the guide for further details.

Misty reports that KIRO (710 AM) has just started to broadcast **KIRO Mystery Playhouse** on Sunday nights at 10 pm. These are Jim French's **Crisis** programs repackaged into an hour format and hosted by Jim French. **Crisis** was a Seattle-produced program in the 1970's. See SPERDVAC General Library reels 577 and 578 for examples of this series.

Please send comments, questions and suggestions for this column to INFORMATION PLEASE, c/o Barbara J. Watkins, P.O. Box 561, South Pasadena, CA 91031. Til next time, spaceman's luck!

DOOVID BARSKIN DIES



Doovid Barskin, a network radio sound effects man in the forties, died of cancer Aug. 5. Mr. Barskin also worked as an agent for several radio performers. He is pictured above doing sound for *This is Your FBI* recreation at SPERDVAC in 1986.

Renewal Time???

The last two digits of your membership number indicate your **Renewal Month**. Renewals are just \$15. See Directory for Carrolyn Rawski's Address.

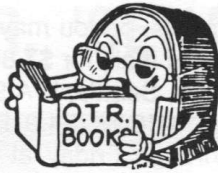
1990 SPERDVAC MEETINGS

Regular Meetings: 12:00 NOON

September 15 - Buena Park Public Library
October 13 - South Pasadena Public Library
November 9 & 10 - SPERDVAC Convention
(See Enclosed Flier for Additional Details)

Radio in Review

By Chris Lembesis



MASS MEDIA BIBLIOGRAPHY: An Annotated Guide to Books and Journals for Research and Reference. Compiled by Eleanor Blum and Frances Goins Wilhoit. University of Illinois Press, 54 East Gregory Drive, Champaign, IL 61820. 1990. Clothbound. \$49.95.

For those who wish to research the vast amount of written material, past and present, of radio history, a reference volume would be the solution. But until one is compiled covering this subject, this volume comes closest. First published in 1972 and later revised in 1980, this third edition explores the entire field of publications concerning mass media. Books, magazines, newspapers, film, and broadcasting are covered within this subject area.

In this area of radio history, many entries are evident, and each one is described as to its content, including commentary, where appropriate. Many of the titles are out of print, which requires the researcher or scholar visit his local library.

The compilers point out that there are 1,947 entries, most of which were published between 1980 and 1987. Familiar titles, such as **Radio Comedy, The Big Broadcast, and Tune In Yesterday** are included, along with obscure titles such as **The Soap Opera, A Directory of Broadcast Archives I, and Radio Research, 1941.**

There are omissions of items this reviewer feels should have been included. Titles such as **Performing Arts** by Harold & Marjorie Sharp (Scarecrow Press, 1973) and **History in Sound** by Milo Ryan (University of Washington Press, 1963) fall into the category of this volume and should have been included. But taking into consideration the importance of this work looking at the total picture of radio history, whether nostalgic or technical, this volume is still highly recommended. Perhaps when a fourth edition is issued, any omissions will be rectified and the latest releases will be included.

THE AMERICAN RADIO INDUSTRY AND ITS LATIN AMERICAN ACTIVITIES, 1900-1939. By James Schwoch. University of Illinois Press, 54 East Gregory Drive, Champaign, IL 61820. 1990. Clothbound. \$29.95.

From the same publisher, here is an interesting look at the influence that early broadcasting had on Latin America. The book starts out with a look at the roots of U.S. broadcasting history, then examines how that influence reached Latin America. Those who were involved in establishing stations and networks are profiled.

Though it is NOT a work of nostalgic interest to our readers, it is still important to remember that radio was more than the old shows and its stars, and that radio history is an examination of the total picture. In this work, the author chose the years 1900 to 1939 as the formative

years in the development of broadcasting to that part of the world.

It would have been interesting to include the World War II period to show how radio was used as a propaganda tool to keep all Latin America from joining the Axis powers. As a work of historical importance, this is well recommended. Thanks to Mary Adams, Publicity Manager at the University of Illinois Press for these titles, as well as **Hollywood and Broadcasting**, reviewed last time.

COPYRIGHT AND HOME COPYING: TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES THE LAW. Office of Technology assessment, Congressional Board of the 101st Congress, Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman, John H. Gibbons, Director. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-9325. 1989. Softbound. \$13.00. Please use the GPO stock number when ordering: 052-003-01169-7.

Some of the most interesting and informative publications on radio history have been published by the world's largest printer, the U.S. Government Printing Office. In fact, one work **RADIO BROADCASTS IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, 1924-1941**, released in 1982, has long been out of print. Here is another work, though not about radio history, as important as any book written about it.

The field of home audio taping is a large one, encompassing more than the old shows many of us exchange amongst ourselves, or from lending libraries of many clubs, such as SPERDVAC. Taping off records and radio, especially in the areas of rock and classical music, are pastime activities many of us enjoy, and rightly so.

This publication reviews the boom in home audio taping, along with a summary of the Copyright Act of 1976. In this Act, SPERDVAC falls into Title 17, United States code, Section 108: reproduction by libraries and archives; and Section 110: non profit educational use. Even old radio shows are covered and protected by this Act.

The subject areas of this work are numerous AND important. A reevaluation of the Copyright Act is discussed. Other topics include the rights and reasons many of us tape, upcoming recording formats we should be aware of, digital, CD and DAT are discussed, rights and royalties, an overview of the U.S. recording industry and economic perspectives on home copying. This publication also features an important questionnaire that makes up the appendix of the book. This should be required reading because ALL of us in one way or another are involved in some aspect of recording.

Highly recommended as an important guide. It most likely will be updated as the Copyright Act and the various types of available recording formats change. Thanks to Charles McKeown, Director of Marketing, at the U.S. Govt. Printing Office, for this most informative work all of us will refer to periodically.

THE AUTHORIZED GUIDE TO DICK TRACY COLLECTIBLES. By William Crouch, Jr. & Lawrence Doucet. Wallace-Homestead Book Company, Radnor, PA 19089-0230. 1990. Softbound. \$12.95.

Stand back . . . Warren Beatty, Madonna, and Al Paci-

Radio in Review Cont.

no! Even though Dick Tracy was one of this summer's hottest movies, here is a new release that should be even hotter. For those of us who have eagerly searched for, or religiously possess some of the rarest of all gems: the radio DICK TRACY premiums, this new work is an invaluable guide in your search to complete your collection and to verify the values of what you already possess, in a well organized volume.

Each item is described with an accompanying photograph, along with a comment concerning that item's scarcity. Remember the Secret Ring of Osiris, the Wing Bracelet, and the Junior Detective Kit? All are there and more. Perhaps two of the rarest Tracy books are **Dick Tracy and the Invisible Man**, and **Dick Tracy's Ghost Ship**. Both are Quaker premiums from 1939 and are radio scripts!

For Tracy fans who collect beyond the related radio shows, this book also includes every collectible imaginable from the past, including movie, original artwork, comic books and newspaper dailys and Sunday color strips to toys, give aways and TV tie-ins. That's a Crime stopper, which translates to good reading! Thanks to Nancy Waters Ellis, Manager of Publicity/Promotions of Chilton Book Company, who so kindly sent an advanced set of galley proofs for this review.

SOUND EFFECTS: RADIO, TV, AND FILM.

By Robert Mott. Focal Press, 80 Montvale Avenue, Stoneham, MA 02180. 1990. Hardbound. \$29.95.

Here is a wonderful new book about sound effects, written by a SPERDVAC member and former radio sound effects artist at CBS in New York. The Golden Age of Radio once again comes alive as the author takes us behind the scenes to show us how he performed his craft.

Mott's book is full of fascinating photos, many never before published, which tell a story themselves. Two of my favorites are the cast of GANGBUSTERS listening to a transcribed playback of their just completed production, and the use of REAL jewelry, \$100,000 worth, for realism, in a play. By the way, two Pinkerton guards came with it and are in the photo. And there are other photos just as interesting as these.

Other areas of interest the author shares with us include a history of sound effects, what it is, categories, creating it, a look at radio, TV, and film sound effects, and a glossary of terms used in this profession. The author's roots ARE in radio, and it shows by the acknowledgments to those who contributed to this art form. Script samples, diagrams and charts are also included, and even though it is a textbook, it does not read like one! For a real appreciation of the programs we enjoy, this book is a winner.

FIXING UP NICE OLD RADIOS! By Ed Romney. Box 96, Emlenton, PA 16373. 1990. Spiral bound. Price not indicated on the book.

For those who like to tinker with the old radios and get them operating again, but do not understand the technical know-how in repairing, here is a new work that may be of interest. The author, in simple language, aided by over 300 drawings and photos, shows how to go about restoring early radios to operating condition.

The author emphasizes tools, test instruments, and safety right from the beginning. Basic radio theory is discussed, and then the actual parts of the early receiving sets are reviewed: resistors, coils, condensers and transformers. Radio before tubes and early vacuum tubes are explained. Examples of how to repair units such as the Radiola III, RCA 28-P, and the Atwater Kent Model 55 are shown.

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At this month's SPERDVAC meeting, an author who wrote three informative and enjoyable books about radio collecting and restoration will be joining us. If you have a copy of VINTAGE RADIO, A FLICK OF THE SWITCH, or RADIO COLLECTOR'S GUIDE, join us and say hello to Morgan McMahon. If any of these volumes are not a part of your collection, you may want to add them. The author looks forward to meeting you and autographing your copy.

Three recent publications have devoted feature articles about radio history that may be of interest. The February 1988 issue of *American Heritage Magazine*, featured an in depth article about Fred Allen. "Forgotten Laughter: The Fred Allen Story," written by Neil Grauer, assesses the contributions of the Allen's comedy to radio and our culture. There are plenty of copies of this issue still available, and more information will be forthcoming in the next issue of the Radio gram.

From *American History Illustrated*, the October 1988 issue showcased two in-depth articles about radio. "The Night of the Martians," by Edward Oxford, is a 50th anniversary look back at the famous **Mercury Theater** production of *The War of the Worlds*. "Those Thrilling Days of Yesteryear," by John Wukovits, is a look at WXYZ and the memorable programs that station gave us: **The Lone Ranger**, **The Green Hornet**, and **Sgt. Preston of the Yukon**. As an added feature, a list of OTR clubs, including ours, is listed, for those who want to explore further enjoyment of the early programs of radio. The sad news is only 20 copies of this issue are available.

For fans of stage and screen star Jean Arthur, a new book has been written about her by Arthur Pierce and Douglas Swarthout. It is a part of the continuing Bio-Bibliography series by Greenwood Press. Though Miss Arthur was primarily a screen star, she did perform in 26 radio productions, including **Lux Radio Theater**, **Hollywood Hotel**, **Ford Theater Cavalcade of America**, **Theater Guild**, and other programs. We are acknowledged by the authors for our assistance in verifying Jean Arthur's radio work. If interested, the cost is \$39.95. Order from Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881.

HOLLYWOOD AND BROADCASTING, reviewed last month, is available to SPERDVAC members for \$20.00, instead of publication price of \$24.95. Copies will be available at this month's meeting. For those ordering by mail, please include an additional \$2.00 for shipping and handling.

Until next time, as always, Good Luck and Good Reading!

MEMORIES OF RADIO WITH FRANK BARTON

By Dan Haefele

Frank Barton worked in several orchestras throughout California before he began his radio announcing career. "I got out of college in 1931 and couldn't get a job doing anything," he explained at SPERDVAC's August 11 meeting. "I played in bands in my college days so I continued to do that, then ultimately went into the brokerage business and hated it. . . so I continued with my music.

"I played with Anson Weeks at the Mark Hopkins in 1931 and I played with Horace Heidt at a theatre in Oakland," he continued.

Introduction to Radio

"My introduction to radio was caused by a band I played with in Denver, Colorado in 1932," Mr. Barton explained. Playing at Pa Schroder's, a cafeteria, he was part of a band whose performances were regularly aired by a local radio station. The band leader did the announcing, but was too verbose to satisfy station management. Barton was selected to be the new on-the-air voice of the band.

"I played trumpet and sat in the back row of the orchestra, so after every selection I'd have to run to the front of the band, announce the tune, run back and pick up my horn to start the tune," he recalled. "One night. . . I scrambled back to my seat and promptly sat on my trumpet. I had to play the rest of the night on an E flat malaphone."

Junior Announcer in San Francisco

In 1936, actor Barton Yarborough introduced him to Bill Andrews, then NBC's chief announcer in San Francisco. He took the standard announcers' test and was given the common "Don't call us, we'll call you" response. Weeks later, already moved to Los Angeles where he had a musical engagement, he was offered a junior announcer's position at NBC's San Francisco headquarters for



FRANK BARTON

\$100 a month.

"At that time I was making \$120 a week," he said. "I said, 'if I go home and think about this I'll turn it down.' so, without thinking, I answered the wire immediately and went up to San Francisco to become a junior announcer.

"Fortunately, they let me have Friday and Saturday nights off and I was playing in bands around there, making more money those two nights than I did for the whole month," he added.

It was there he met another junior announcer, Bob Dwan, years before the latter became associated with the **You Bet Your Life** series. Hal Gibney was another of his peers there, as were Eddy King and Larry Keating. Keating, he recalls, hosted **Professor Puzzlewit**, one of San Francisco radio's earliest quiz programs.

"After a year as a junior announcer, I became a senior announcer," he continued, "And that was \$185 a month. I gave up the trumpet and playing in the bands about 1938.

Moves to NBC in Hollywood

"When I first came to Hollywood to work at NBC, we did everything. We did sports, special events, we did pro-

Cont. on next page . . .

SPERDVAC

Friends



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We are so grateful to the many Friends of SPERDVAC who have contributed \$50 or more to help defray costs of the society. The above members have donated funds during the past year.

grams," he recalled. "Some of the commercial programs were handled by freelance people. I did a summer show with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, then I did **A Date with Judy.**"

NBC, at that time, was transferring many of its San Francisco announcers to Hollywood, where the new network headquarters was being built. "San Francisco people thought it wouldn't last. They thought we'd all come back to San Francisco," the veteran announcer explained. "That was silly because, after all, Hollywood is the entertainment capital of the world."

His new Hollywood peers included Ken Carpenter, Buddy Twist, Bruce Anson, Hal Gibney and John Storm. "Our announcing chores were mainly for the network," he said, instead of for the local NBC stations.

One Man's Family Announcer

The Carlton E. Morse nighttime drama **One Man's Family** was originally announced from San Francisco by Bill Andrews, the man who hired Barton. When the program was moved to Hollywood, Ken Carpenter became the announcer until the show lost its sponsor, then Barton announced the program for its final twelve years.

Barton's first association with **One Man's Family** came in 1939 when he was hired to introduce Minetta Ellen and J. Anthony Smythe, Mother and Father Barbour, to visitors at the World's Fair in 1939. "Tender Leaf Tea had an exhibit at the Fair," he said. "And they invited Father and Mother Barbour to come up there and meet people who wanted to meet them and have their autograph. It was my duty to introduce them a couple times a day. That's the first time I ever met them."



Two of Frank Barton's San Francisco co-workers were Eddy King and Hal Gibney. (Courtesy Eddy King)

"Tony Smythe was quite a character," Barton said, recalling some of the actor's humorous sayings. "Positive thinking is great when things are going right," he quoted the fictional family patriarch.

"Tony had high blood pressure," the announcer continued. "and he was told not to drink or smoke. He said, 'I don't know why I can't do both. After all, alcohol enlarges the arteries, tobacco shrinks them. Why not take both and everything will be all right?'"

Bristol Meyers hired him to work as announcer on **A Date With Judy.** "The reason I got the job is that I tried to emulate Harry Von Zell as best as I could when I took the audition," he said. "Evidently it worked.

"It was a summer replacement," he continued, "for the **Fred Allen Show.**"

Sobering Frank Morgan

"I worked the **Maxwell Coffee Program** in radio days," Mr. Barton recalled. "We did the first show at 4:30 and we did the second show at 8 o'clock for the West Coast. Frank Morgan was on the show and the William Morris Agency assigned one man to keep him sober between shows.

"That was quite a chore. The script was on cardboard sheets so it wouldn't make a lot of noise in front of the microphone," he added, noting that the comedian's script was also in large type.

SPERDVAC has made a recording of the veteran announcer's interview at last month's meeting and it will be added to our tape library.

SILVER THEATRE

*Below, writer Grover Jones, director True Boardman and actress Ginger Rogers look over a script from the afternoon drama, **Silver Theatre.** Recordings from the series are now in SPERDVAC's Archives library and available for members' entertainment. Archives cassette librarian Bruce Miller says that since some of the program's stories aired in two or three parts and are continued onto two or three tapes, he's sending the continuing stories to library patrons only in appropriate groups. These cassettes should be rented together: 1304-1305-1306; 1309-1310; 1311-1312-1313; 1314-1315; 1318-1319; and 1322-1323.*



not drive through the Lincoln Tunnel. When the Senator announced the platform for his re-election campaign he promised "A chicken in every pot. A Southern fried chicken, that is."

Claghorn fancied himself a patron of the arts. His favorite classical musical group was the Nashville Philharmonic, conducted by Arturo Tosca-loosa, playing 'The Poet and the Sharecropper.'

Delmar based the boisterous bombastic character on a real-life Texas cattle rancher he met by accident when he was a teenager hitch-hiking his way to California. The longwinded Texan picked him up in a flashy Model T, and during the trip west he kept quoting himself: "Ah own 500 acres. . . five hundred acres, that is." Everything the Texan said, he bellowed, and everything he bellowed, he repeated. Kenny made mental notes of the character and filed it away until the right opportunity to use it came along.

The characterization was first used on the **Alan Young Show** in 1944 where he was called 'Counselor Cartonbranch.'

After his appearance on the Allen show as the Senator, Delmar was deluged with fan mail. Many listeners thought the blustery, bogus Senator was real. Southerners wrote to thank him for his ardent references to Robert E. Lee. Novelty manufacturers got on the bandwagon and flooded the market with Claghorn dolls, Claghorn hats, and the best gimmick of all, the Claghorn compass that pointed only South.

Delmar's popularity grew in leaps and bounds. On March 18, 1946, *LIFE* magazine ran a five page article about him. Reportedly the cartoon character 'Foghorn Leghorn' for which Mel Blanc supplied the southern drawl, was based on Senator Claghorn. Delmar made two popular recordings: "I Love You, That Is" and "That's a Joke, Son." In 1945 he appeared with Fred Allen and other members of the goofy gallery of characters from Allen's Alley in the feature film, "It's In the Bag." In 1947 he was starred in the feature, "It's a Joke, Son." Another of Delmar's film appearances was in the 1962 feature, "Strangers in the City."

On November 25, 1949, Kenny returned to the Broadway stage for a leading role in the musical "Texas, Li'l Darlin'" in which he played a rustic character very much like the full-blown windbag Claghorn. The stage character, Hominy Smith, was a presidential candidate from the state of Texas.

During 1949/50 Delmar was heard on the **Henry Morgan Show** on NBC. In later years he wrote, produced and supplied voice audios for both radio and television commercials.

In real life the 5'10" actor was as quiet and retiring as Senator Claghorn was bombastic and bumptious. As a hobby he collected coins.

Kenny Delmar, the immortal Senator Claghorn, passed away at the age of 73 on July 14, 1984.

SPERDVAC DIRECTORY

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LIBRARIES:

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AUDIO RADIOGRAMS: Send C-90 cassette in returnable mailer to Stuart Lubin, 627 N. Fuller Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036, (213)653-2548 (for Blind Members only)

AUDIO SPERDVAC CATALOGS: Contact Bob Herman, 1329 Garrison St., Port Orchard, WA 98366 (206)876-4809 (for Blind Members only)

MEMBERSHIP BADGES: Send \$5.00 each to Don Keith, Box 5861, Glendale, CA 91221

ACQUISITIONS: (*Discs, Tapes and printed materials*): John Gassman, Box 1163, Whittier, CA 90603, (213)947-9800 for both the General and Archives Libraries.

CATALOG PAGE & LIBRARY ORDER FORMS: Carolyn Rawski, 7430 Gaviota Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91406

Live Radio Play Airs Sept. 16

Members of the California Artists' Radio Theatre will perform George Bernard Shaw's "Getting Married" before a live theatre and radio audience Sunday, September 16. The repertory company's production will originate at *The Little Theatre* located on the campus of Pasadena City College.

The radio production of Shaw's play will star Leslie Easterbrook, Les Tremayne, Ian Whitcomb (who is also providing the music), Kathleen Freeman, Linda Kaye Henning, Parley Baer plus Kay Kuter, Bairbre Dowling, Colum Meany, John Bliss, Sean McClory and Peggy Webber. Miss Webber will also direct the 90 minute comedy.

Dan O'Herlihy is the permanent program host and John Harlan is the announcer. SPERDVAC honorary member Marty Halprin will engineer the broadcast.

The Little Theatre is located in the downstairs portion of Pasadena Community College's Building C. Seating is limited to 99 and reservations may be made by calling KPCC-FM during regular business hours at (818)578-7231. An optional \$5.00 donation is suggested for those attending the broadcast.

KPCC will air the radio play live Sept. 16 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. The station is located at 89.3 FM and can be heard throughout most of Southern California.

HUGH'S HUES CONTINUED

had been lessened.

"He had another problem. Although RCA had used FM in its TV as well as FM sets, it had never paid a cent of royalty. FM royalties had been paid to Armstrong by General Electric, Stromberg-Carlson, Westinghouse, Zenith and others. RCA had paid nothing.

"RCA had at times offered to negotiate a settlement - a million dollars had been mentioned. But this raised a question of fairness to those who had always paid royalties based on sales. Zenith had paid more than a million.

"In 1948 Armstrong made his decision. He brought suit against the mammoth RCA. He had spent most of his royalty earnings on the battle for FM. This added to his determination to press the lawsuit.

"RCA had a policy of cash settlements in preference to royalty payments. It did not pay royalties; it collected them. Perhaps Armstrong was encouraged by the one exception it had made - for Philo Farnsworth. RCA had so badly needed the Farnsworth television patents that it had settled with him on a royalty basis."

The stage had been set. The story lines drawn. David was still fighting Goliath. This time it appeared to be for all the marbles. But who was this fellow Armstrong? What was his background? How did he really fit into this picture? Armstrong was responsible for most of the basic developments in modern radio as well as FM which is why he and Sarnoff squared off. To understand this, we'll need to return to the early 1900's and the beginning of radio, when Hugh's Hues continues next month. Same Time, Same Station.

McGee's Closet

(c/o Barbara J. Watkins, Box 561, S. Pasadena, CA 91031)

WANTED: FATHER COUGHLIN and ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT (The Town Crier) shows or related material. contact: Christopher Snowden, P.O. Box 1181, Ramona, CA 92065.

FOR SALE: I have two books for sale. The first is a hard cover copy of *Three Phases of Eve* by Eve Arden for \$10.00. The second is a soft cover copy of *Tune in Yesterday* by John Dunning. I will take the best offer for the Dunning book. Both books are in mint condition. Contact: Jim Daley, 936 Horner St., Brackenridge, PA 15014.

WANTED: Episodes of CBS RADIO MYSTERY THEATER. Have a few to trade or will purchase. contact: Gerry Thomas, 3635 Chastain Way, Pensacola, FL 32504.

WANTED: 1) I am looking for a couple of reel-to-reel tape recorders, preferably with a slow speed of 1 7/8 ips on it. A mono tape recorder is fine. 2) I would like the following radio shows on cassette: LUX RADIO THEATER "I Wanted Wings" 3-30-42 with Veronica Lake; STAGE-DOOR CANTEEN 10-22-42 with Edmond Gwenn and Veronica Lake; LUX RADIO THEATER "Gulliver's Travels" with Veronica Lake; BURNS AND ALLEN 2-16-43 with guest Veronica Lake. Contact Ron Rek, 11012 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604.

WANTED: SHERLOCK HOLMES "The Final Problem" from '33 with Richard Gordon & Leigh Lovell. Also any SHERLOCK HOLMES radio programs other than with Rathbone & Bruce or Gielgud & Richardson. Plus, I need ELLERY QUEEN "The Foul Tip" 7-13-44. Will trade copies of SHERLOCK HOLMES or ELLERY QUEEN shows I have. Contact: Lawrence Nepodahl, 1230 Vienna Blvd., Dekalb, IL 60115.

WANTED: Does anyone have exact date of broadcast of MAIL CALL from 1943 with Lucille Ball as host and Laurel & Hardy as guests on which they do a wedding routine with Patsy Kelly and Edgar Kennedy? Contact: C. Huck, 4 S. 230 River Road, Warrenville, IL 60555.

WANTED: For a study of radio's audiences, 1920-1950, I would appreciate copies of (or references to) cartoons, ads, fictional works, films, or any other items that show people listening to and responding to radio in their homes, workplaces, or other settings. Contact: Ray Barfield, 102 Ft. Rutledge Road, Clemson, SC 29631.

WANTED: Last (final) END OF THE ROAD show with Tom Bodett. Contact: Ted Theodore, 1175 Brockton Street, El Cajon, CA 92020, (619) 448-4444.

FOR TRADE: "The Curse of the Whale's Tooth" episode of CAPE COD RADIO MYSTERY THEATER. Will consider all offers. Contact: Steve Weeks, 121 Toles Road, N.E., Rome, GA 30161.

WANTED: Elgin Watch Christmas and Thanksgiving shows broadcast during the 1940's. I am particularly interested in a Thanksgiving program on which Elsie Janis was one of the guests. Contact: Robert Garland, 10500 Riverside Drive, Toluca Lake, North Hollywood, CA 91602.

SPERDVAC



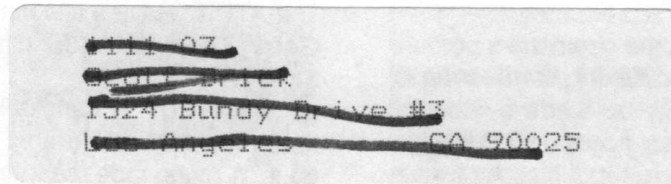
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DEADLINE
OCT ISSUE
Sept 20, 1990

WHAT IS AN ORCA? *By Larry Gassman*

The Old Time Radio Show Collectors Association of Canada is based in Canada but boasts of members from the United States and England as well. The founders are its current president, Reg Hubert and the vice president and newsletter editor: Frank Parrick.

ORCA began because, according to Reg Hubert, "We were paying \$11 for one radio show on an eight track. So we said that there had to be a better way." Hubert soon began making contacts on a radio phone-in show in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. He mentioned that he had some radio shows and offered to trade anyone interested. As a result Frank Parrick phoned and said that he had 300 shows in bad sound. They put their collections together and began making additional contacts within the hobby.

ORCA currently has a library on cassette. The library features both American and Canadian shows.

SPERDVAC has begun trading tapes with ORCA for inclusion in the libraries of each organization. We trust that in this way we can learn about the culture of Canada and add some fine drama and comedy to our General Library.

ORCA publishes a newsletter four times a year. The membership is \$6 per year, which entitles members to the newsletter. Their tape library is also accessible to their members.

For more information about ORCA, write to Reg Hubert at 45 Barry Street, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada P3B 3H6.

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