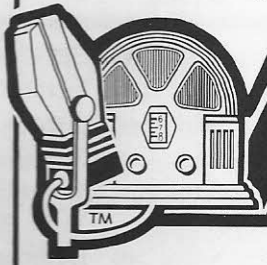


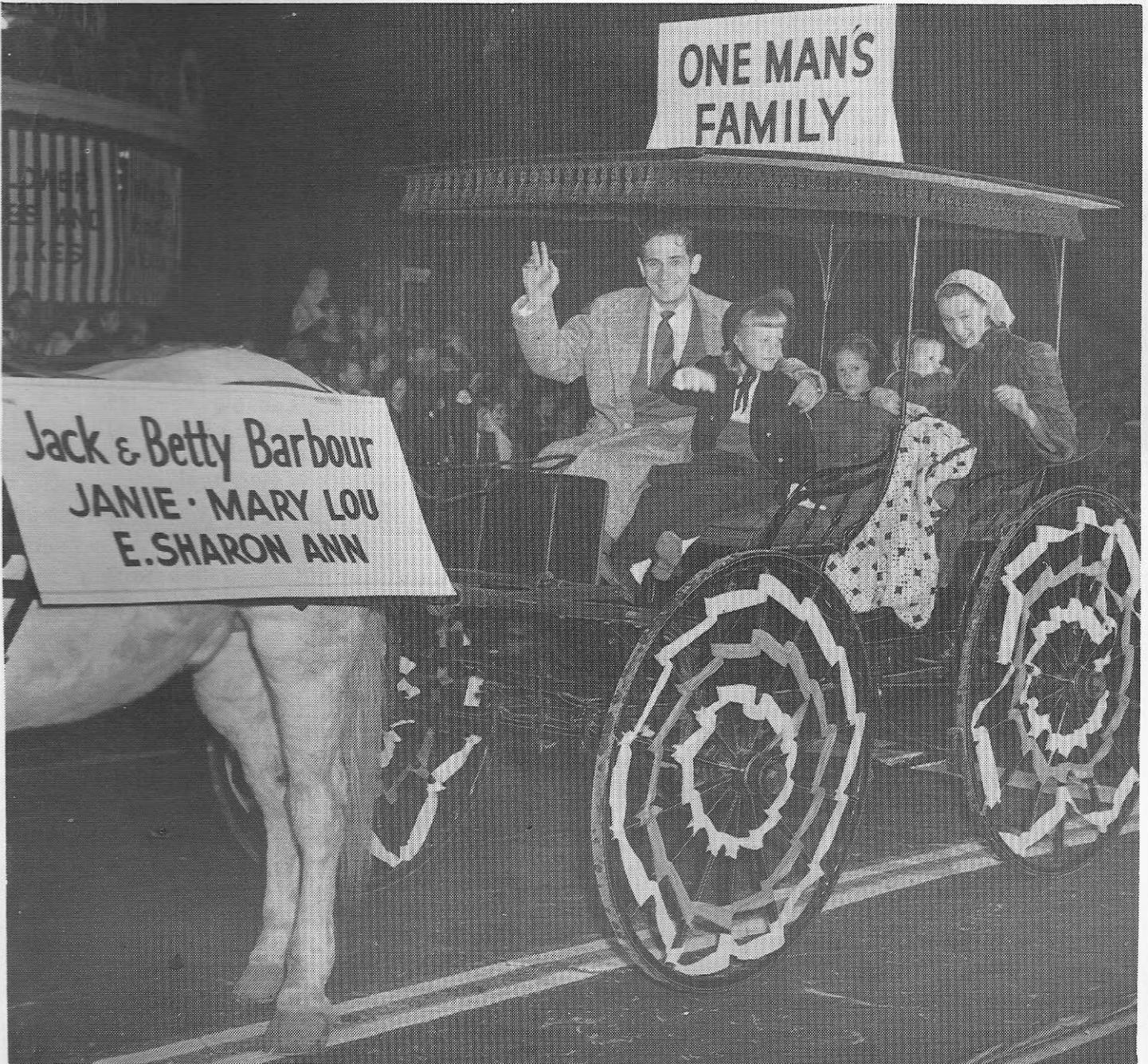
General Library
catalog pages
187-188 enclosed
with this issue.
If your copy is
missing, send a
SASE to Editor
Dan!



SPERDVAC

RADIOGRAM

Volume 19, No. 8 The Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy August 1993



Page Gilman (Jack Barbour) and Jean Rouverol (Jack's radio wife Betty) were part of the annual Hollywood Christmas Parade in the late forties. The three girls aren't really radio performers. Two of them are Rouverol's own daughters, drafted for the occasion by their mother. See page 8 for feature article on Gilman.

PHOTO COURTESY JEAN ROUVEROL

MEMOS FOR MEMBERS

CREDIT DEPARTMENT: Board member Glenda Kelly has been working regularly in SPERDVAC's storage facility to help prepare scripts we will add to the Printed Materials Library. Carrolyn Rawski has been there to help, too, when she can, and Editor Dan has

been wandering around there too, organizing scripts, discs and tapes. They can always use some help! If you're available to travel to Whittier on a Saturday or Sunday, please let us know.

BRENT MARTIN is interested in forming a new OTR group. If you're interested, contact him at 540 N. Holly, Medford, OR 97501. Phone: (503) 664-6504.

REMEMBER WHEN we told you our Printed Materials librarian would soon be leaving

us? No one expressed interest in running the library. . . And we still need a Southern California volunteer to distribute catalogs to new members.

RADIO-CARTOON VOICE pro June Foray will guest on *Same Time, Same Station* Sunday, Aug. 22. The show airs at 5 p.m. on KPCC-FM (89.3), Pasadena.

THE BROTHERS Gassman are looking for audio and video interview recordings with

Carlton Morse and cast members of his programs. They plan to use the material in a Morse workshop they are presenting at the Friends of Old Time Radio Convention in October. Please contact them at the address/phone in the SPERDVAC Directory if you can assist.



SPERDVAC FRIENDS

Parley Baer

(In memory of Mary Lansing & Howard McNear)

Phil Cohan

(In memory of Andre Baruch & Elvia Allman)

Naomi Lewis

(In memory of Dick Mack)

Dorothy Geiger

(In memory of Milton Geiger)

Hy Averback

(In memory of Bob Sweeney and Jerry Hausner)

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(In memory of Lou Krugman)

Herb Ellis

(In memory of Bob Sweeney & Lou Krugman)

Tim Behrens & Amzie Strickland

(In memory of Frank Behrens)

Norman Corwin

(In memory of Byron Kane, Fletcher Markle &

John McIntire)

Elliott Reid

(In memory of Howard Duff & John McIntire)

Bill Cook

(In memory of Bob Crosby)

Glenhall Taylor

(In memory of Jerry Hausner)

Jean Gillespie

(In memory of Byron Kane, Howard Duff & Jerry Hausner)

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(In memory of Bob Jensen & Lenore Kingston)

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Jack Brown

Lucia Silvestri

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Seaman Jacobs

John Wisley

June Foray

David Richardson

Tom Seslar

Bob LeMond

Ivan Cury

Mary Jane Croft Lewis

Joan Banks Lovejoy

Charles Isaacs & Doris Singleton

SPERDVAC is very grateful to these individuals who have contributed \$50 or more to our organization during the past twelve months. Donations, made payable to SPERDVAC, should be mailed to membership chair Carrolyn Rawski. (See SPERDVAC Directory.)

Himan Brown will direct radio production

SPERDVAC convention features Jeanette Nolan, Burgess Meredith, Herb Ellis

Himan Brown will direct a production of his upcoming radio series **We, the Living** Nov. 13 at SPERDVAC's annual old-time radio convention. The program will star Jeanette Nolan and Burgess Meredith.

Charles Flynn, star of **Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy**, will re-create his original role in a Saturday afternoon performance of the popular children's show.

Veteran actor Herb Ellis will again present a radio program re-creation. Friday night he will direct a program highlighting the work of radio's female performers.

Workshops and panel discussions are also being arranged for SPERDVAC's convention. We will also provide a dealers' room for those who wish to sell radio-related items.

The convention is set for the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, 5985 W. Century Blvd., Los Angeles. Free shuttle service is available to the Holiday Inn from Los Angeles International Airport.

A convention flier, specifying times and prices, is enclosed with

this issue of the *Radiogram*. We guarantee seating and meal availability for those who choose to plan to attend. We cannot pay at the door.

Costs: a few words of explanation

by *Larry Gassman*
Convention chair

Those of you who regularly attend SPERDVAC's conventions are aware of the workshops, dealers' room and re-creations of radio shows with many of the original stars we feature.

Each year we are proud to invite our honorary members to share a meal with the many fans from across the U.S. We average 60 to 70 radio stars per year. In 1992 we paid for over 100 meals during that weekend. Invitations will again be sent to our honorary members for the 1993 convention.

Having them with us is always a highlight for all who attend.

The increase in attendance by our honorary members plus our escalating meal costs have made it necessary for SPERDVAC to raise the registration costs. (Please see

the registration form in this newsletter.) Although our costs are about even with the Friends of Old Time Radio convention in Newark, certainly they are much lower than other nostalgia-oriented conventions by \$50 to \$100.

Our registration price for 1992 was \$95. After expenses, we owed the hotel about \$100 per person. Despite building cushions in last year's budget, we still lost money. With rising food and hotel costs it has become more and more expensive to hold a yearly convention.

This year the cost for attending the entire convention is \$115.

We invite members' ideas and suggestions concerning any aspect of the convention. Please contact: Larry Gassman, Box 1163, Whittier, CA 90603. Phone: (310) 947-9800.

Maxwell and Lynn guest August 14

The husband and wife acting team Frank Maxwell and Rita Lynn will be SPERDVAC's special guests when we meet Saturday, Aug. 14.

Maxwell was a dramatic actor on radio in the forties. He worked on many of the top dramatic programs originating from New York, including **Gangbusters**.

His wife, Rita Lynn, began her radio career in Hollywood in 1947. She also worked in New York beginning in 1950.

The meeting begins at 12 noon. Please see the meeting schedule for the correct location. The meeting is open free to the public.

SPERDVAC meetings

Held the second Saturday of the month at 12 noon.

Aug. 14- St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, 15520 Sherman Way, Van Nuys

Sept. 11- St. Andrew's Lutheran Church 15520 Sherman Way, Van Nuys

Oct. 9- South Pasadena Public Library 1115 El Centro, South Pasadena

Catalog Indexes Available

Send 98 cents in
postage to

Carrolyn Rawski

Her address is in the
SPERDVAC Directory



by Barbara J. Watkins

Member Ray Barfield is working on a book describing radio's home and workplace audiences between 1920 and 1950 and he would like your input. If you listened to radio during those years he would like to hear from you. He is looking for brief reminiscences (a paragraph or two) about your favorite programs from that era and the circumstances in which you most often heard them:

Did the family gather in the kitchen to listen to **The Chase and Sanborn Hour** while the Sunday dishes were being washed and put away? Was it **The Shadow** heard from a mahogany floor-model in a dark Midwest living room, or was it **I Love a Mystery** or **Lights Out** heard stealthily after official schoolnight bedtime?

Recollections will be especially useful if they include relevant details of year, season or hour, program title, and a word-picture of the accustomed listening place. Please send your remembrances to Ray Barfield, 102 Ft. Rutledge Rd., Clemson, SC 29631.

Renewal Time?

The final two numbers of your membership number indicates your renewal month
If your number ends with -08 your membership expires this month. . . Look for a renewal notice from Carolyn Rawski!

Book will view early radio audiences; Tom Corbett re-creation set for Oct.

Last month's comments about **Escape From** on NBC brought an inquiry from Dixon Chandler about some programs on AFRS, such as **Mystery Playhouse** and **Frontline Theater**.

Mystery Playhouse was the title used by AFRS for a series made up of various network mystery shows such as **Molle Mystery Theater**, **Inner Sanctum**, **Nero Wolfe**, **Big Town**, **Mr. and Mrs. North**, **Big Story**, **Ellery Queen**, **Dark Venture**, **Adventures of the Thin Man**, **Philo Vance** and others. Peter Lorre hosted the series, and Howard Duff was heard as Sergeant X.

Each broadcast ended with a visit to the "green room" for a preview of the next show on **Mystery Playhouse**. The familiar (and commercial) openings of the domestic shows had to be cut and the **Mystery Playhouse** format provided the fill to make up for the time originally filled with commercials and sponsor identification.

It just wouldn't do to have Nick and Nora Charles cooing about "thirty-three fine brews" or Dan Seymour promoting the "smooth, smooth, slick, slick shave you get with M-O-L-L-E!" on the Armed Forces Radio Service. **Frontline Theater** also carried shows from **Mr. and Mrs. North**, **The Thin Man**, etc. but also aired comedy and drama shows. It was hosted by announcer Ken Niles.

Does anyone know if any **Frontline Theater** shows were original productions for AFRS or were they all repackaged, too?

This month marks the tenth anniversary of "Thirty Minutes to Curtain," a group of radio aficionados

who have been presenting new radio productions of comedy, drama, science fiction, fantasy and westerns which air over KCSN 88.5 FM in Northridge, California on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. Many original scripts have been produced, along with re-creations of such notable writers as Norman Corwin, Milton Geiger, Arthur Miller, Steve Allen and Dylan Thomas.

To commemorate the first broadcast on August 31, 1983, special programming has been planned for all five Sundays in August, ending on the 29th with a new production of "Murder in Studio One," written by Norman Corwin and originally produced as the twenty-third of **Twenty-Six by Corwin** on Oct. 12, 1941. The program will air at 2:30 p.m.

Maybe it's because so many SPERDVAC members are on vacations this summer, but only two items for our McGee's Closet column arrived this month. Members and honorary members are welcome to use that column to help find trading partners, specific radio programs or to trade or sell radio-related items. Here are the ones received recently:

WANTED: Cassette copies of the astrologer Evangeline Adams' 1930-31 radio broadcasts, or any interviews. Will buy. Contact: Karen Christino, P.O. Box 3095, Brooklyn, NY 11202.

WANTED: Tapes, records or information sources on **Seth Parker**, the Phillips H. Lord radio series of 1929-1939. Northeast Films is planning a Phillips Lord exhibit. The program setting was Jonesport and Lord lived in Ellsworth, Maine. Contact: Norman Gallant, 385 Western

Continued on next page

Information, Please *conclusion*

Avenue, Augusta, ME 04330. Phone: (207) 622-2219.

Where are they now?

Have you seen SPERDVAC honorary member Parley Baer on TV's "The Young and the Restless" yet? Parley now has an on-going role on the daytime drama. He's been the voice of one of the elves on the Keebler Cookie commercials, too.

Jan Merlin shares with us the good news that the entire original cast of **Tom Corbett, Space Cadet** will be reunited for a re-creation of the show at the Friends of Old Time Radio convention, held at the Holiday Inn North, Newark International Airport, Oct. 21 - 24.

Jan played troublemaker Roger Manning on the series, which starred Frankie Thomas in the title role. Besides them, also re-creating their original roles will be Al Markin as Cadet Astro and Ed Bryce as Captain Strong.

Merlin and Thomas starred in SPERDVAC's re-creation of the show at the 1990 SPERDVAC convention, generating requests from other parts of the country for more. In August of last year the two traveled to the Memphis Film Festival where they did another re-creation. This October will be the first time that the entire cast is united for a **Tom Corbett** re-creation. Be there!

Merlin reports that they are looking forward to seeing lots of their old New York friends there, plus any of you who will want to catch the show. He regrets that the original director Drexel Hines and original sound man Keene Crockett are no longer with us, but is grateful to have the same space crew available.

Send your questions, comments and news 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! (Especially appropriate this time, huh!)

SPERDVAC transcriptions available

Over the years SPERDVAC has received, mixed in with radio show transcriptions, 16" and 12" discs of musical selections. Many of them have just one or two songs recorded during rehearsals or actual broadcasts. They range from classical music to popular tunes of the period. Some are on glass. We'd love to swap them for radio-related material. Contact Editor Dan if you're interested.

We'll be selling 16" transcriptions of our *duplicate* copies of **Air Castle**, a children's show syndicated in 1930. The discs have very colorful, decorative labels. They can be framed and put on your wall. The price is \$5.00. See us at a meeting or at the SPERDVAC convention in November if you'd like to acquire one or more.

SPERDVAC Directory

All articles and artwork © 1993 by SPERDVAC unless otherwise indicated. Published monthly except December by the **Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy**, a California non-profit public benefit corporation. Membership is open to all U.S. residents. Dues are \$25 for the first year and \$15 for renewals. Annual subscriptions to the **Radiogram** ONLY are \$15 in the U.S., Canada and Mexico and \$20 to other countries.

SPERDVAC INFORMATION AND OFFICIAL BUSINESS: P. O. Box 7177, Van Nuys, CA 91409-9712. (310) 947-9800.

MEMBERSHIP AND RADIOGRAM SUBSCRIPTIONS, CATALOG PAGES AND LIBRARY ORDER FORMS: Carolyn Rawski, 7430 Gaviota Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91406-3041.

RADIOGRAM EDITOR: Dan Haefele, 4366-D 136th St., Hawthorne, CA 90250-7108 (310) 973-5060.

LIBRARIES:

GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 1-500: Bob Steinmetz, P. O. Box 669, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266-0669.

GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 501-1000: Gene Ward, Box 635, Tujunga, CA 91043-0635.

GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 1001+: George Lovas, P. O. Box 3757, Crestline, CA 92325-3757

GENERAL LIBRARY - Open reels 1-500: Don Keith, Box 5861, Glendale, CA 91221-5861.

GENERAL LIBRARY - Open reels 501 +: Jim Allen, Box 500, N. Hollywood, CA 91603-0500.

ARCHIVES LIBRARY - Cassettes 1-500: Richard Karman, 2515 NE 37th Ave., Portland, OR 97212-2916.

ARCHIVES LIBRARY - Cassettes 501-1000: Gary Mollica, 135 N. Meredith Ave., Pasadena, CA 91106-2207.

ARCHIVES LIBRARY - Cassettes 1001-1500: Bruce Miller, 1616 Harper Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278-2725.

ARCHIVES LIBRARY - Cassettes 1501+: Bruce Miller, 1616 Harper Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278-2725.

ARCHIVES LIBRARY - Open reels 1-1000: CLOSED

ARCHIVES LIBRARY - Open reels 1001+: Barbara Watkins, Box 628, S. Pasadena, CA 91031-0628.

HOLLYWOOD MUSEUM LIBRARY - Cassettes only: Glenda Kelly, 2323 Ralston Lane, Redondo Beach, CA 90278-5219.

PRINTED MATERIALS LIBRARY: Jon Hughes, 7119 Owensmouth Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91303-2094.

AUDIO RADIOGRAM: 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 Ave., Port Orchard, WA 98366-3321 (206) 876-5850. (For blind members only.)

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

ACQUISITIONS: (Discs, tapes & printed materials): John Gassman, Box 1163, Whittier, CA 90603. (310) 947-9800 for both General and Archives Libraries.

Radio's adventures in science fiction

by Jim Widner

"The introduction of '2,000 Plus' may turn out to be the forerunner of a radio program trend in science fiction drama, which could eventually rival in number the detective and mystery shows."

—New York Times, March 15, 1950

The launching of **2,000 Plus** that night by the Mutual network began a trend over the next several months which would provide listeners with the first true adult science fiction drama series on radio. What followed over the next decade were several series providing some of the best science fiction available to anyone who was willing to give them a listen.

Following **2,000 Plus** by only a couple of weeks were NBC Radio's entry, **Dimension X**, on April 8, 1950 and CBS Radio's **Beyond Tomorrow** on April 5.

Beyond Tomorrow only lasted

for a few shows and is generally considered to be a collection of auditions, rather than an actual series entry. In the March 16, 1950 edition of the *New York Times* the following appeared: "Mitchell Greyson has been selected by CBS to produce and direct a new science fiction series entitled 'Beyond Tomorrow.' The show, intended for the radio, will have an audition within two weeks, it was said."

It appears the CBS' entry never actually got off the ground. Under the series title only three episodes are known: "Requiem," the Robert Heinlein story (April 5), "Incident at Switchpath," based on the Theodore Sturgeon story "The Sky was Full of Ships" (April 11), and Graham Doar's tale "The Outer Limit" (April 13) which was a repeat of a broadcast from the previous February under the program title **Beyond This World**.

For a while, it appeared that the series would be a summer replacement for CBS' **The FBI in Peace and War** as mentioned in the *New York Times* on May 14, 1950. But another program was chosen instead. Consequently, CBS would not produce a science fiction series on radio until 1953, when **Tales of Tomorrow** would move from ABC.

2,000 Plus was a production of Sherman H. Dryer, who brought us **Exploring the Unknown**, a series about scientific ideas, in the mid-forties. (Dryer would later be connected with ABC's **Theatre Five** in the sixties.) Broadcast over the Mutual network, **2,000 Plus** dealt "with interplanetary activities, scientific developments on the earth in the next millennium and living conditions and standards in the twenty-first century," according to the *New York Times* (March 15, 1950).

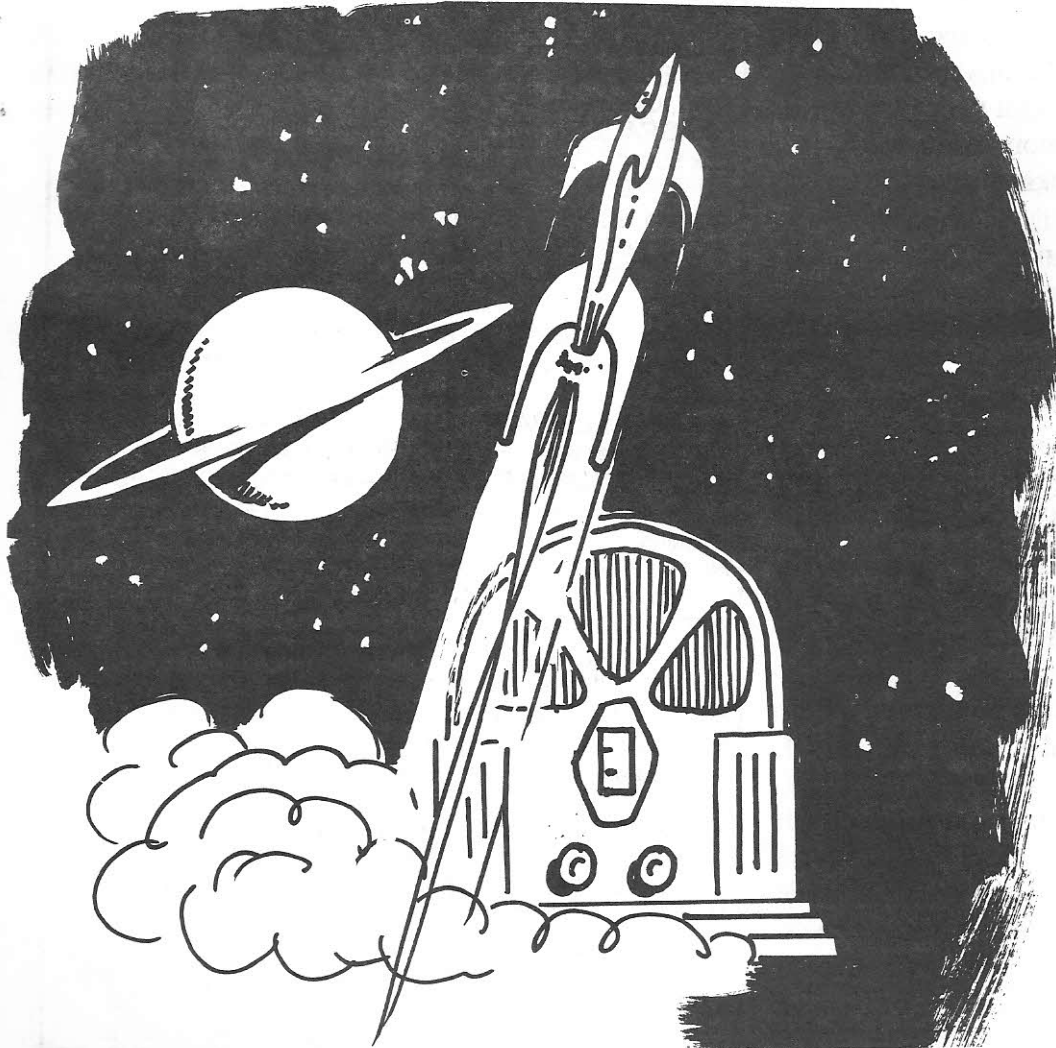
Following in the steps of **2,000 Plus** was NBC Radio's entry, **Dimension X**, which would soon establish itself as the finest science fiction series on radio at the time. This was probably because the series used adaptations of existing stories by the cream of science fiction writers. However, even this could not have been successful were it not for the brilliant scripting of George Lefferts and Ernest Kinoy. These two men were part of the script department at NBC Radio in New York under the management of Van Woodward, who became the first producer of **Dimension X**.

Woodward writes:

"We went the 'adaptation route' simply because that's where the best stories are. Bright ideas for science fiction tales don't come on order; they're usually the product of a moment's inspiration, by a writer who's steeped in the field."

Originally titled **Out of This World**, the series was renamed **Dimension X** when title rights came into conflict prior to the series' premier. Despite a

Continued on next page



Radio's adventures in science fiction *continued*

low budget, the program ran for three seasons. According to Van Woodward, the budget was under one thousand dollars a week, compared to **Theatre Guild on the Air**, which had a weekly budget of \$16,000. **Dimension X** had a sponsor, Wheaties, during one season, but for most of its run, the series was sustained.

NBC had been developing a science fiction series for several months. Besides **Dimension X**, there is mention in the *New York Times* of a series that apparently never got off the ground. From the Feb. 23, 1950 edition is this paragraph:

"A new weekly radio series featuring science fiction stories is being prepared by NBC under the title of 'Conflict.' With the premier expected within a few weeks, the show will be produced by Joel Hammil and directed by Harry Junkin."

There appears to be no indication that the series was ever broadcast. Instead, about five weeks later, **Dimension X**

premiered.

The series' relationship with Street and Smith as with a later series, **X Minus One**, was a tie-in only as an advertising exchange. The radio series had a small advertisement in editions of *Astounding Science Fiction* and later *Galaxy*, in exchange for the opening announcement that the series was a co-operative effort. Stories adapted for the series originated in the Street and Smith publications.

By the time **Dimension X** and **2,000 Plus** left the air, ABC introduced a new radio science fiction series called **Tales of Tomorrow**. First airing in 1953, the series had a tie-in to *Galaxy Magazine* and adapted stories from that source as well as developing some original plays. Within two months ABC made plans to drop the series but CBS agreed to pick it up, finally entering the field. But once again, even that fell through as the series only lasted for about six weeks on CBS.

With the demise of **Tales of Tomorrow**, radio listeners were not to hear another science fiction series until NBC entered the field again with **X Minus One**. Television could only partly be blamed for this, as radio was already in its decline as a dramatic art form. But even television was not doing much science fiction during this period. Despite a growing interest by the public in science fiction tales, the broadcast medium remained unmoved. This was to change, however, in April 1955.

X Minus One was NBC Radio's re-entry into adult science fiction. The show was closely related to NBC's predecessor, **Dimension X**, as far as its personnel were concerned. Once again Lefferts and Kinoy did the scripting, Woodward produced, and many of the same radio actors starred. The first 35 stories were remakes of scripts from **Dimension X**, with some exceptions.

Continued on page 16

RADIO SOUND EFFECTS

is...

...the Who's Who of radio sound effects! Over 100 never-before-seen pictures! Fibber McGee's closet crash! Gangbusters! Suspense! And the stars: Jimmy Stewart, Joan Crawford, Burt Lancaster, Bette Davis—there's even one of a young Marilyn Monroe trying her hand at sound effects—and a whole chapter devoted to Captain Kangaroo! Plus hilarious anecdotes revealing what it was really like working during the Golden Age of broadcasting! If you are a fan of early live broadcasting, this is the one book you must own!

But don't just take my word for it—read Dan Haefele's review in the June Radiogram!

Here's how to get your autographed copy!

The publisher charges \$39.95 plus tax plus \$3.00 postage. But while my supply lasts, my special price for an autographed copy to fellow SPERDVACians is \$35.00 ...total! But please, to avoid disappointment, send your check or money order along with a note stating how you want your book autographed and mail it to:

Robert Mott

Box 1173

Arroyo Grande, CA 93420-1173

The dual careers of

Page Gilman

Radio's Jack Barbour was a child star known as Billy Page in the late 20's; He is also a 4th generation newspaper man

by Dan Haefele

Page Gilman will go down in broadcasting history as Jack, the youngest son of the fictional Barbour Family on **One Man's Family**. Fewer know of his other radio credits and his second, unrelated career.

Gilman's father, Don Gilman, became NBC Radio's first West Coast vice president in the summer of 1927. Wilda Wilson Church, who was directing dramas on KRE, Berkeley as early as 1924, asked if the younger Gilman could read well enough to do radio shows. That led to his first radio performance, in 1927.

"I started using scripts that came from New York," he said. Many of NBC's earliest shows were performed live from New York, then sent to San Francisco where they were performed for West Coast audiences.

"The show was called **Great Moments in History**. It had a boy and a girl. I was the boy and my

sister was played by an adult," he recalled.

Another of Gilman's early radio appearances was on **Ship of Joy**, a health and exercise program sponsored by Shell Oil and hosted by Capt. Hugh Barrett Dobbs during the 1924-31 era. Gilman was on the show during its final months.

"The **Shell Ship of Joy** was a big thing in those days," he said. "In its time...it was really phenomenal and very pioneering. Today it's all but forgotten."

Dobbs, a chiropractor, offered his services to KPO, San Francisco, to lead an exercise program for morning listeners. "Perhaps he was looking for patients—I'm not sure," Gilman added.

Gilman, as a child actor, used the stage name Billy Page from 1927 until 1932. His first radio role was on a 1927 broadcast with Bernice Berwin, who would several years later become Hazel Barbour on **One Man's Family**.

He was still Billy Page when he appeared on **Memory Lane**, another of early West Coast radio's programs. The show's stories took place in Indiana in the

1890s. The dramas revolved around the fictional Smithers Family, and Gilman portrayed their son Billy.

Gilman says it was his *Continued on next page*



Publicity picture of Billy Page as Billy Smithers on **Memory Lane** in 1928. COURTESY PAGE GILMAN

Page Gilman: Radio's Jack Barbour

first big role in radio. "I continued on that even after **One Man's Family** started," he said.

"It was kind of a homespun program," he added. "I think today it would be called corny. It had the same kind of humor — and pathos maybe — that you found in shows like **Penrod and Sam**."

The program used what Gilman calls "rather simple jokes" to entertain listeners. "I won't say they were clumsy jokes, just simple jokes that homespun people would appreciate more than sophisticated city people."

Once, for publicity purposes, young Billy Page distributed photos of himself as Billy Smithers in the lobby of the *Oregonian*, the major newspaper in Portland. "The *Oregonian* owned the local NBC outlet," Gilman explained.

"In about an hour I gave away all the pictures I had — about three hundred," he recalls. "There was a mob in that lobby. This was not because they loved me, but they were so enamored of our program."

"So many people out here came from the Midwest that a program that commemorated the 1890s Midwest was dearly beloved," he added.

The young actor was Penrod on **Penrod and Sam**, a 1931 radio series. Sam was played by Jack Cowden, who would later become an executive at CBS.



Penrod and Sam stars were Jack Cowden (left) as Sam and Billy Page (Page Gilman) as Penrod. The series aired from NBC's San Francisco studios in 1931.

PHOTO COURTESY PAGE GILMAN

It was during those early days of network radio that the young actor was occasionally hired to play parts on shows written by a newcomer named Carlton E. Morse. "Carlton got his best reputation early writing mystery shows," Gilman said. "He called them mysteries but they were mostly action shows."

"In those days if you had an action show...you put it on late at night so kids couldn't hear it. I had worked on a couple of those early Carlton Morse shows, but I wasn't allowed to listen to them if I wasn't on them," he explained.

Gilman was 14 when Morse brought **One Man's**

Family to the airwaves. "It was largely built around the people he knew, and most were the cast members," Gilman added.

"Carlton had a brother-in-law named Jack Pattison. He was partly the model for Jack Barbour," Gilman revealed. "Many of the (character's) activities were those of myself."

Gilman attended Stanford University and was able to arrange his work and schooling schedules around each other. The first script read-through was held on Friday afternoons and the rehearsals and West Coast broadcast were on Sunday nights. Gilman returned to San Francisco each

Wednesday for the East Coast broadcast.

Later, when the program moved to Hollywood in 1938, Gilman completed his college course work at UCLA.

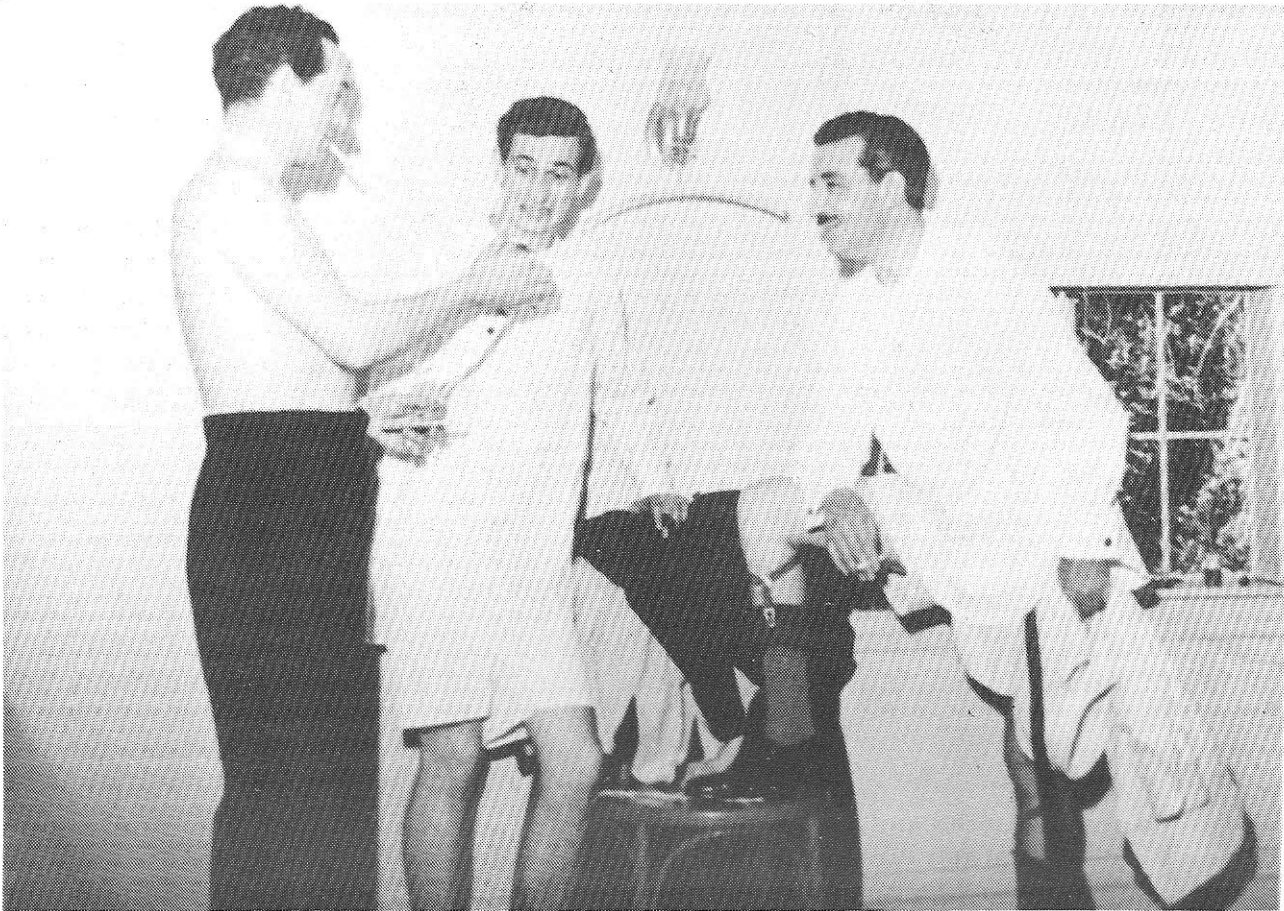
"We had at least two rehearsals before we went on the air," he recalled. "Later on we had just one rehearsal and at the very end (of the program's run), when network radio was being killed off rapidly, we often started recording without any rehearsal at all. The actors had to be skilled enough not to need a rehearsal. We had to do ten shows in two days."

Gilman remembers well the promotional giveaways issued to fans of **One Man's Family** over the years. "The sponsor would pay for them," he explained.

Many of the them were booklets filled with publicity photos — often taken at the Carlton E. Morse home. Among the titles of those published during Standard Brand's sponsorship were "Teddy Barbour's Diary" (1937); "One Man's Family Looks at Life" (1938); and "Fanny Barbour's Memory Book" (1940).

One of the generally unknown behind the scenes stories involving OMF cast members is the failed marriage of Barton Yarborough and Barbara Jo Allen. Miss Allen, best known as the comedy character Vera Vague, began

Continued on next page

Page Gilman's careers *continued*

The art of cigarette smoking was taught to little brother Jack by elder brothers Clifford and Paul. Barton Yarborough, Page Gilman and Michael Raffetto were caught fooling around during a publicity photo shooting session.

her career as a dramatic actress. Early in the series she played Beth Holly, a love interest of Paul Barbour's.

She was still on the show after her marriage to Yarborough ended. "You never see them in a (publicity) picture together without him staring at her. He never gave up his love for Barbara Jo," Gilman said.

He remembers well a sequence in the latter days of **One Man's Family** when the story line had Paul Barbour off in Europe, where he met and married his second wife. Her character was never heard on the air and, in the story, she died shortly after their wedding.

"I was the one who took the telephone call from Paul and it had to be delicately done," he recalled, adding that as an actor he had to display "grief on my part, but not too much grief"

when he revealed news of the character's death.

Gilman credits Virginia Gregg, the second actress to play his wife Betty, with the behind the scenes assistance he needed to do the emotional scene correctly.

"It was so nice to have a really skilled actress at my elbow to help coach me," he said. "I can't praise Virginia enough. She was highly skilled and she sure helped me."

Gilman was occasionally a performer on **I Love a Mystery**, too. "Carlton felt that he really should give the actors and himself the opportunity to do something different. Since we were on an exclusive contract and were bound to keep going with **One Man's Family**, he suggested something like the mystery shows he had begun his radio career

COURTESY PAGE GILMAN with," he explained.

One Man's Family, particularly because it was on the air for so many years, had to make allowances for the major events in performer's lives when those events affected their ability to appear before the microphone. Writer Carlton Morse's biggest challenges were the occasions of the unexpected deaths of actors Walter Patterson and Barton Yarborough.

But other cast members had to leave the show, sometimes temporarily, and Morse was obliged to provide an explanation for their absences.

Once, however, he had an explanation *before* the event presented itself. "Carlton had a rational excuse (prepared) for every male in the cast in case we were drafted," he said. "It

Continued on next page

Page Gilman's careers *continued*



One Man's Family portrait in 1947. Barton Yarborough (Clifford) is seated at left. In back row are Henry Blair (Andy), Page Gilman (Jack), Mary Lou Harrington (Joan), Barbara Fuller (Claudia), Tom Collins (Nicky), Wally Maher (Dan Murray), Winifred Wolfe (Teddy), Michael Raffetto (Paul); On couch: Jean Rouverol (Betty), J. Anthony Smythe (Henry), Minetta Ellen (Fanny), Bernice Berwin (Hazel); In front: Anne Whitfield (Penny), Dawn Bender (Margaret) and Conrad Binyon (Hank).

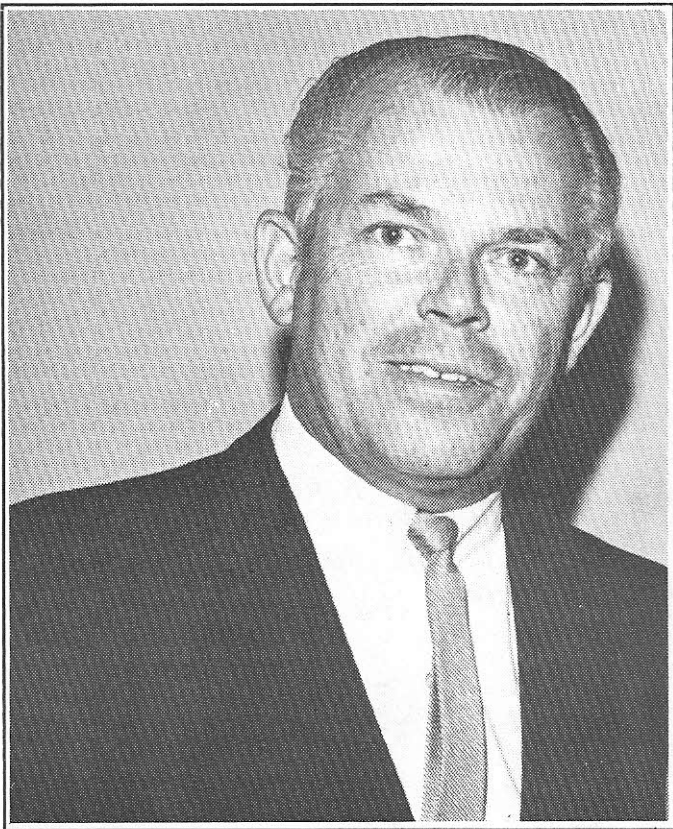
PHOTO COURTESY BARBARA FULLER



At right, publicity photo with Page Gilman as Jack and Jean Rouverol as his wife Betty.

PHOTO COURTESY JEAN ROUVEROL

Marty Hill, associate producer of Linkletter shows, dies



Marty Hill in 1948.

by Dan Haefele

Marty Hill, long associated with Art Linkletter and John Guedel, died June 16.

Hill was a sports writer for his college newspaper and yearbook. After graduation, he began doing public address announcing of local sporting events in Northern California. Later, employed by an advertising agency, he announced community and Stanford sporting events.

He auditioned for an announcer's position at KFRC, San Francisco. "You're just like a poor man's Henry Aldrich," he was told. His voice was considered too high for the job.

His sports announcing career began in 1936 and ended when he became a naval officer. During World War II he "did some service on PT boats" and

produced training films.

In San Francisco he met a football commentator named Art Linkletter. A few years later Linkletter introduced him to John Guedel, who hired Hill to work on Linkletter's **House Party** radio show.

Hill did much of the writing for the show and served as associate producer.

"It was probably more of a title than a job (description)," he said. "I did everything on the show that needed to be done. I lined up the guests and coached them if they were to do something special." He arranged prizes and gifts given on the program, too.

"I wrote all the introductions and tags for the segments and spots we were doing each day," Hill told SPERDVAC in a 1987 *Continued on next page*

Page Gilman's radio and newspaper careers

happens that I'm the only one who went into the service.

"We had, during the war years, what they called allocations," Gilman explained. Allocations were on-the-air announcements and endorsements which promoted "various governmental activities, like selling bonds or recruiting for the Marine Corps."

The term allocation, he said, meant "you'd better."

"Carlton responded to one of those allocations by having Jack sign up in the Marine Corps," radio's Jack Barbour recalled. "When it came time for his actor — me — to go into the service, I went into the Army. Jack

went into the Marine Corps!

"But subtly, almost unnoticeably, Jack came out of the Army," he added.

Page Gilman served in the United States Army, forcing him to leave his beloved acting job behind. Many of his letters to Morse, however, were incorporated into the program.

"Carlton was very, very helpful," he said. "Every time I came home on leave Carlton would quickly write me into the program, which I appreciated very much."

Gilman said he turned down an offer to be stationed at the air base in Santa Ana, California, where many other show business people had the

opportunity to serve their time without facing the dangers of battle. "I just felt it was wrong to take a favored position because of what I'd been doing in civilian life," he said. "I let myself be drafted and exposed to combat, but I came home whole."

"My favorite radio actor, of all radio actors, is Clarence Hartzell. He was Uncle Fletcher on **Vic and Sade**," he said. "That man just had to open his mouth and we all fell to the floor laughing. He was funny to the tips of his fingers."

Hartzell used the same voice he employed as Uncle Fletcher on **Vic and Sade** when he portrayed Cousin

Judith on Morse's evening program.

"I can think of no program that excited the entire radio community as **Vic and Sade**," he added.

The major players on **One Man's Family** had exclusive contracts which kept them from appearing on programs not associated with Morse. That agreement ended in the late forties.

Gilman auditioned for other radio jobs and did some voice work.

"To me, one of the disagreeable parts of being an actor is that you must spend so much of your time selling yourself," he said. "Even *Continued on next page*

Page Gilman's careers *conclusion*

people like John McIntire, Jeanette Nolan and Marvin Miller had to go around and butter up people who would hire them. Well, I'm just not built that way so I got a job as a linotype operator."

That was in 1946, after his return from the service.

Gilman worked as a linotype operator for the *Malibu Times*. He began there as an advertising salesman, then offered to take linotype courses when the paper's management decided to purchase their own printing equipment.

"The (printing) press was run by the publisher's wife and I ran the linotype," he said.

There was a 13 year overlap of his two careers. "I was a national advertising manager for a daily newspaper at the time **One Man's Family** closed," he said. By that time the cast was recording ten shows every other weekend.

In 1955 Gilman, a fourth generation newspaper man, moved on to a newspaper in Ventura County, California, where he

remained until 1970. Then he was transferred to the Northern California city of Watsonville. There he served as general manager of a paper.

"My grandfather was a linotype operator who switched to the front office, my father was a linotype operator who switched to the front office and I was a linotype operator who switched to the front office," he said.

Gilman retired to Oregon in 1985. He lives there now with his wife Jenny and two of their sons.

Marty Hill

From page 12
interview.

"In the radio days, Art always wanted to meet the guest," he explained. "He would meet with them for just two or three minutes and make notes. Then he would type those (notes) on his hand cards."

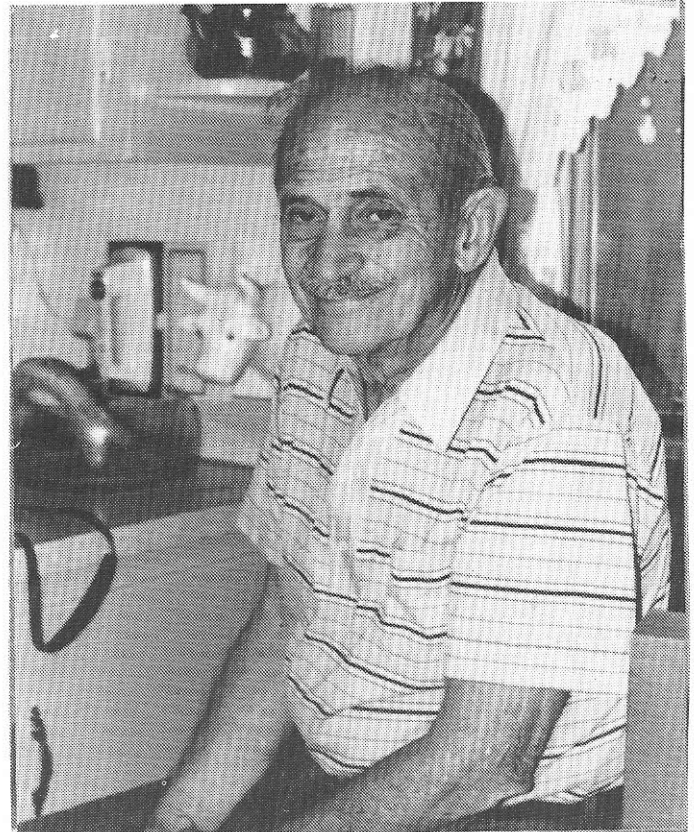
Hill did similar work for the **People Are Funny** radio-tv series.

He was eventually made producer of **House Party** and director of the radio version.

Mr. Hill is survived by his wife of nearly 63 years, Wanda, two sons and six grandchildren.



Page Gilman in the late forties.



Gilman at home in 1992.

Traveling this summer? Make cassette copies of SPERDVAC's tapes and enjoy them on the road!

Lum 'n Abner group salutes Waterman

by Donnie Pitchford

National Lum 'n Abner Society

Mena, Arkansas, the hometown of Chet (Lum) Lauck and "Tuffy" (Abner) Goff, was again the site of the annual National Lum and Abner Society Convention. The June 26 meeting was the organization's 9th, featuring special guest star Willard Waterman, the gifted actor who stepped into the role of **The Great Gildersleeve** in 1950, following a contract mishap that took the character from its originator, Harold Peary.

Mr. Waterman, whose voice was nearly identical to that of Peary, rode out the final days of classic radio as **The Great Gildersleeve** continued for almost a decade. In addition, he performed the part in a short-lived television series, and enjoyed a healthy career on Broadway as well.

This year's NLAS convention was three-fold. Members and local residents celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Lum and Abner film, *Two Weeks to Live*, in a big-screen 16mm film showing that included a war bond short and an interesting cartoon, in which Bugs Bunny meets the Great Gildersleeve—sort of. The film is *Hare-Conditioned*, and Bugs is menaced by a department store employee with a Gildy-type voice! "You sound just like dat guy on da radio," Bugs observes, "da Great Gilder-sneeze!"

The evening program paid like tribute to the 1943 L&A feature, *So This Is Washington*, adding the Warner Brothers cartoon *Malibu Beach Party* (in which numerous radio and motion picture celebrities



Willard "Gildersleeve" Waterman receives the Lum and Abner Memorial Award from Donnie Pitchford, right. At left is Scott Lauck, grandson of Chet "Lum" Lauck.

PHOTO COURTESY DONNIE PITCHFORD

are spoofed—notably Jack "Bunny") and the short subject *All-Star Bond Rally*, with radio greats Bob Hope, Fibber McGee and Molly, Bing Crosby and others.

The highlight of the day, of course, was the personal appearance by Willard Waterman. Mr. Waterman made several appearances on the 1948-50 half-hour **Lum & Abner** series. Following a fascinating question-and-answer session, Mr. Waterman recreated the character of Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve in a performance of a new script created especially for him by the National Lum and Abner Society. As executive secretary Tim Hollis put it, "this script, *Lum and Abner Meet the Great Gildersleeve*, stars one-third of the original cast."

Co-written by Hollis and NLAS president Donnie Pitchford, the script leads Gildy into Pine Ridge, Arkansas, where he is nearly swindled by Squire Skimp, before being rescued by characters Dick Huddleston, Cedric Weehunt, and of course, Lum and Abner.

The supporting characters were

impersonated by NLAS vice-president Sam Brown, Hollis and Pitchford. Wendell Niles served as announcer via prerecorded tape, and a very special "commercial" was performed by Joan and Les Tremayne, who were joined by radio's favorite "cry baby," Jerry Hausner. Jerry's baby cry as well as some dialogue was lifted from a 1987 NLAS performance and made to fit the edited commercial.

The commercial was presented to the NLAS audience, much to their delight, as a tribute to the late actor's talents, and the "L&A Meet Gildy" script was dedicated to Hausner's memory. During the afternoon show, SPERDVAC's Ted Theodore was presented an original 1938 *Lum and Abner Almanac* for having traveled the longest distance to attend.

Following his delightful Gildersleeve performance, Mr. Waterman was presented with the 1993 Lum and Abner Memorial Award. A special surprise for Willard and Mary Anna Waterman took place at the conclusion of the evening's

Continued on next page

General Library adds 96 hours of OTR

SPERDVAC has 96 more hours of old time radio broadcasts available beginning this month.

We are enclosing General Library catalog pages 187-188. It includes the detective series **Whitehall 1212** and **Adventures of Phillip Marlowe**, comedy with Willard Waterman on **The Great Gildersleeve**, and action/adventure via **Voyage of the Scarlet Queen** and **Night Beat**.

Acquisitions chair John Gassman prepared many of the tapes. A lot of the recording was done for us by member Bud Schwab. Editor Dan did some recording, too.

The tapes are recorded of three hour open reels and on C-60 cassettes.

Listed below are additional **Night Beat** programs which we could not fit on the enclosed catalog page. They are also available from General cassette librarian George Lovas and General open reel librarian Jim Allen. (Their addresses are in the SPERDVAC Directory.)

Tape 1492 NIGHT BEAT

- Tong War 4-17-1950
- The Girl in the Park 4-23-1950
- Am I My Brother's Keeper? 4-30-1950
- Mentallo the Mental Marvel 5-1-1950
- The Elevator Caper 5-28-1950
- The Night Watchman 5-15-1950

Tape 1493 NIGHT BEAT

- I Wish You Were Dead 5-22-1950
- Harlan Mathews, Stamp Dealer 5-29-1950
- The Girl from Kansas 6-5-1950
- The Football Player and the Syndicate 6-12-1950
- Vincent and the Painter 6-19-1950
- Gus Reed and his Brother Jimmy 6-26-1950

Tape 1494 NIGHT BEAT

- Lorraine Adams and the Execution 7-3-1950
- Old King Max 7-10-1950
- Molly Keller 7-17-1950
- The Devil's Bible 7-24-1950
- A Gun for a Violin 8-7-1950
- Gunner's Last Fight 8-14-1950

Tape 1495 NIGHT BEAT

- The Doctor's Secret 8-21-1950
- Old Home Week 9-4-1950
- The Hunted Becomes the Hunted 9-11-1950
- A Case of Butter 9-25-1950
- Kenny Day, Amnesia Victim 10-6-1950
- Einar Peerce and the Family 10-13-1950

Tape 1496 NIGHT BEAT

- Judge Arnold's Daughter 10-20-1950
- The Slasher 11-10-1950 Final show of the first series.

c. Big John McMasters 3-4-1951 First show of the second series.

d. Julie the Jukebox Girl 5-18-1951

e. Bill Perrin's Amnesia 7-6-1951

f. Anton's Return 7-13-1951

Tape 1497 NIGHT BEAT

- A Reporter Becomes a Father 12-28-1951
- Pay Up or Die 5-1-1952
- Long Live the Clown 5-8-1952
- Randy Stone, Target of the Week 5-22-1952
- Ben and Kenny Clark 5-29-1952
- Railroaded 6-19-1952

Tape 1498 NIGHT BEAT

- The Reformer 6-26-1952
- The Old Itch 7-3-1952
- The Taste of Peaches 7-17-1952
- Flight from Fear 7-31-1952
- Somebody Stop Anne
- His Name Was Luke 8-14-1952

Tape 1499 NIGHT BEAT

- John and Mary 8-21-1952
- Bomb on the Denver Plane 9-4-1952
- Dancing Understudy Larry Wilson 9-11-1952
- Policy Wheel Racket 9-18-1952
- The Firbug Killings 9-25-1952 Final program of the series.
- The Elevator Caper 1949 audition starring Edmond O'Brien as Hank Mitchell.

Lum 'n Abner conclusion

activities, when the couple was presented with a cake, honoring their 56th wedding anniversary.

For those interested in joining the NLAS, the annual dues are \$8.00, which includes six issues of *The Jot 'Em Down Journal*, a publication which is beginning its tenth year. The August issue features an in-depth review of the 1993 convention, plus information on an exciting new series of reasonably priced books which publish newly discovered *Lum and Abner* scripts of the early 1930s (for which recordings are not known to exist).

Send dues (or a S.A.S.E. for more information) to Tim Hollis, The National Lum and Abner Society, #81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, AL 35062.

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Initially the show had no tie-in to Street and Smith, but after a trial run of seven shows demonstrated to NBC that there was indeed an audience, the Street and Smith publication *Galaxy Magazine* was mentioned in subsequent productions. According to Van Woodward, *Galaxy* provided rights to their stories at fifty dollars each. This was because of the program's low budget.

In addition, actors were paid minimum scale and the production utilized recorded music instead of live musicians. This was all a reflection of radio's decreased revenues from advertising.

Despite all of this the series lasted three years, remaining true to its level of excellence. The primary difference between *X Minus One* and *Dimension X* was its increased use of humorous science fiction stories. Overall, *X Minus One* was lighter in tone.

Only five weeks before the end of *X Minus One*, the final series of science fiction made its debut. The series came from the Mutual network and was entitled *Exploring Tomorrow*. It featured John W. Campbell Jr., editor of *Astounding Science Fiction* as narrator introducing plays based on stories by writers whose works were published in the magazine.

Despite the continuing decline in radio drama, the series had three sponsors and ran a full 25 minutes. Some of the plays from this series have been identified as *X Minus One* productions, due mostly to unscrupulous dubbing of openings and closings taken from the NBC program. The series lasted about six months, leaving the air forever in June, just five months after the demise of *X Minus One*.

Despite brief revivals in the sixties and seventies, there was never again a network sponsored science fiction series since the conclusion of the 1950s. With the end of the decade, radio lost something special when the last adult science fiction series left the air.

(Sources: *Science Fiction on Radio* by Meade Frierson, 1972; the *New York Times*.)