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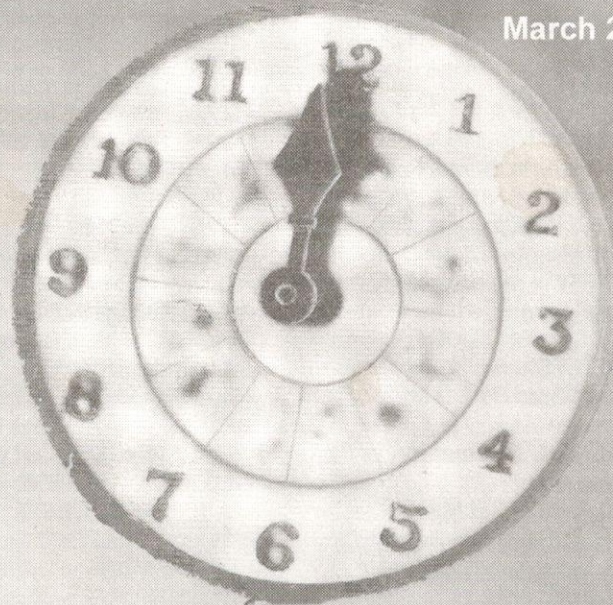
sperdvac



RADIOGRAM

Vol. 34 • No. 4

March 2009



IN THE ZONE

RADIO'S INFLUENCE ON ROD SERLING • PART TWO OF RADIO ROD



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Volume 34 • Number 4 • March 2009



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In its heyday, radio accommodated a menagerie of eclectic personalities who would never pass muster today now that political correctness has become a debilitating disease. One such figure was Clyde Beatty, the celebrated animal trainer who, by the 1930s, had become a household name.

While still in his teens, Beatty began training domestic animals in his backyard in Bainbridge, OH, and before long he left home to join the circus, then the dream of countless American youngsters, and eventually became an animal trainer extraordinaire even to the point of setting the iconic image of animal trainers. Beatty's white uniform, boots, pith helmet, gun strapped at his side, whip and chair in hand were duplicated countless times in films and circuses across the world. Beatty's "fighting act" defined animal training in much the same way that Houdini had defined magic. Skill plus deft self-promotion placed Beatty in the top ranks of the nation's celebrities. As circus performer, as circus owner, as a popular author and as a film star, Beatty commanded the spotlight, and it seemed only a matter of time before Beatty would step before the radio microphone in a show of his own.

It was left to a fledgling radio syndication company called Commodore Productions and Artists, Inc. to put *The Clyde Beatty Show* on the air. Commodore Productions was basically the husband and wife effort of Walter White, Jr. and Shirley Thomas. In 1948, Commodore had achieved success when it began airing *Hopalong Cassidy*, and a couple of years later Shirley Thomas had the idea of showcasing Clyde Beatty on radio. Beatty was amenable but likely because of his heavy schedule Beatty appeared on the show by proxy. To fill the radio role of Clyde Beatty the Whites turned to a radio stalwart, Vic Perrin. Eve

McVeagh took the part of Beatty's real-life spouse, Harriet Beatty. Perrin and McVeagh played their parts without on-air credit. As far as most of the public was concerned, the voices they heard each week purporting to be Clyde and Harriet Beatty were the genuine articles. Shirley Thomas received on-air credit as producer of the series. Various writers contributed to the show including Frank Hart Taussig, Robert T. Smith, Roy Williams and Gibson Scott Fox. Albert Glasser composed and conducted music for the program.



The Clyde Beatty Show began running in various markets in March 1950. Initially, a rather lengthy opening signature set the premise for listeners:

As the series progressed, the opening signature was trimmed somewhat. *The Clyde Beatty Show* soon proved sufficiently popular to attract the attention of a major sponsor. Kellogg's began to sponsor the series on a Monday - Wednesday - Friday schedule each week over the Mutual Network. Kellogg's backed *The Clyde Beatty Show* from December 11, 1950 until

January 18, 1952. The show then reverted to syndication as a once a week offering until the summer of 1953 when it left the air. Commodore's success with *The Clyde Beatty Show* inspired the company to produce a motion picture, *Perils of the Jungle* (1953), starring Clyde Beatty. *Perils of the Jungle* could easily be viewed as a visual extension of the radio series. Not only did Commodore Productions produce the picture, but Frank Hart Taussig and Robert T. Smith, who had authored many of the radio plays, also wrote the film.

One thing was certain about Clyde Beatty; whether he was before a camera, under the big top or behind a microphone, he was always in the spotlight.☛

RADIO ROD FINDING A VOICE • PART TWO

IN THE ZONE

by MARTIN GRAMS, JR.

SERLING was a frequent listener of a number of radio programs, especially of the fantasy and horror genre. Arch Oboler and Norman Corwin were among the many playwrights whose craft Serling admired (he even named the protagonist of "Night of the Meek" after Corwin). Many of Serling's *Twilight Zone* episodes resembled plots from radio thrillers, of which he was an ardent listener, suggesting yet another link to radio dramas as being an influence for this television series.

In "Escape Clause," a man signs his soul to the devil in exchange for immortality. After a few weeks, he becomes bored with life. Poison tastes like lemonade and the thrill of jumping in front of the subway trains only secures him payments from the insurance companies. After going to trial for the murder of his wife, hoping to give the electric chair a whirl, he discovers that his sentence is life imprisonment.

The premise of a man becoming immortal and then being sentenced to life imprisonment was done previous on *Inner Sanctum Mystery*, a radio crime thriller broadcast from 1941 to 1952. On the evening of February 12, 1946, a script by Emile C. Tepperman titled "Elixir Number Four" was dramatized with Richard Widmark as a young man who murders a brilliant chemist so he can steal and drink an experimental elixir that grants immortality. His plan goes afoul, however, when the murder is uncovered, and the young man is sentenced to life imprisonment.

In "The Hitch-Hiker," a woman driving cross-country is terrorized by the sight of a little man who continues to appear off the side of the road in front of her. Days without sleep come to a conclusion when she discovers that she is dead—the result of a blowout on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. And the mysterious figure that continues to haunt her is Death himself.

The original radio script, as chilling as the *Twilight Zone* screen adaptation, was dramatized on three separate occasions with Orson Welles playing the lead for each performance. The first time was on a summer filler called *Suspense*, broadcast on September 2, 1942.

The popularity of that particular *Suspense* broadcast demanded a repeat performance, so Welles obliged a month later on *The Philip Morris Playhouse*, on October 15, 1942. Four years later, Orson Welles restaged the same radio play for *The Mercury Summer Theater on the Air* on June 21, 1946.

It is not clear which of the broadcasts exposed Rod Serling to the chilling story, but he certainly remembered it and wanted to adapt it for *The Twilight Zone*. Lucille Fletcher was represented by the William Morris office, so Buck Houghton made arrangements to negotiate the price.

"In view of the prominence of this particular play, I think it unlikely that we will get it for under \$1,000," Houghton wrote. "May I suggest that we start at \$750 and move to \$1,000, if we must."

One week later, the offer was rejected and Houghton wrote to Rod Serling, asking how desperate he wanted the story. "Lucille Fletcher has turned down \$2,000 for 'The Hitch-Hiker,' when Alfred Hitchcock offered it," Houghton explained. "I don't know how much further we would have to go to get the property, but I think it is too high for us to explore." Leo Lefcourt, the attorney for Canyuga Productions, however, was able to secure a firm price for the story through the William Morris Agency, and completed the purchase for *The Twilight Zone*. The price was \$2,000 and a standard W.G.A. percentage rerun pattern based on \$1100. The story had not been done on television, either live or on film, giving *The Twilight Zone* an exclusive.

The main protagonist of the radio play was a man, but Serling changed the sex to a woman, "because it's pertinent and it's dramatic to make it a woman," he explained. "Nan" was a nickname of one of his daughters, Anne. If a press release from early January 1960 is accurate, Serling wrote the teleplay under six hours.

When Richard Matheson submitted the story proposal for "The Last Flight," a tale of a WWI fighter pilot who lands on a modern-day airfield and finds himself displaced out of time. When Serling learned of Matheson's proposal, he brought to light a radio anthol-



ogy titled

Quiet, Please, scripted by Wyllis Cooper. On November 21, 1948, the program offered a similar story titled "One for the Book," about an Air Force major who hit Mach 12 in an experimental rocket plane in 1957 and found himself as an Air Force sergeant in 1937. Serling remarked that Matheson's story "was down-the-line almost a twin," and the two considered tracking down Wyllis Cooper to purchase the rights and cover their bases, but unable to do so, the teleplay went into production without further consideration.

The fact was the stories were similar, but not exactly the same. But to purchase the rights of Cooper's script was to prevent a possible infringement. No rights were ever purchased and no lawsuit ever came from the broadcast.

In "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street," a mysterious power outage causes the folks of a friendly neighborhood to turn into a murderous frenzy. The cause of the power outage was a scientific experiment conducted by visitors from outer space, studying the effects of human nature and how, after taking away some of the modern conveniences, resort to self-preservation at the destruction of others. The discussion exchanged between the outer space visitors is similar to the conclusion of a 1951 science-fiction radio script Serling wrote titled "The Button Pushers."

Set in a future Earth, 1970. Huge television screens substituted for advertising billboards in Times Square, air-way rocket trains carried commuters overhead, and the fear of rival nations separated by a large ocean covered the front page headlines. A blood-

continued page 12

SPERDVAC

Frequent Contributor

**Writer-historian Martin Grams, Jr.
Set for SPERDAVC Convention 2009**

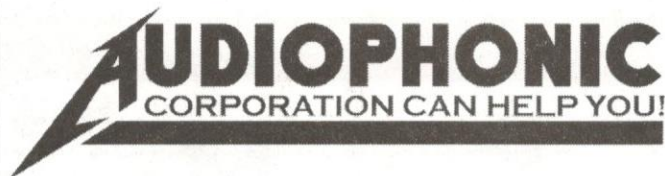
Celebrated radio-TV historian and writer Martin Grams Jr. will appear at SPERDAVC's 2009 convention at the Beverly Garland Holiday Inn in North Hollywood May 1, 2, and 3.

Martin, who is a frequent contributor to *Radiogram* and whose part two of a comprehensive history of Rod Serling's radio career appears in this issue, is the author of over 20 books dealing with diverse broadcasting history. He is also a monthly regular on Walden Hughes' old-time radio program.



Michelle and Martin Grams

A limited quantity of books will be available for purchase at the convention, and Martin assures everyone that he'll sign each copy for free. The following is a list of some of his books, many of which will be available at the convention: *Suspense: Twenty Years of Thrills and Chills* (1998), *The History of the Cavalcade of America* (1999), *The CBS Radio Mystery Theater* (2000), *Radio Drama* (2000), *The Alfred Hitchcock Presents Companion* (2001), *The Sound of Detection: Ellery Queen's Adventures in Radio* (2002), *Inner Sanctum Mysteries: Behind the Creaking Door* (2002), *I Love A Mystery Companion* (2003), *Information Please* (2003), *Gang Busters: The Crime Fighters of American Broadcasting* (2004), *The Railroad Hour* (2006), *The Radio Adventures of Sam Spade* (2007), *I Led Three Lives: The True Story of Herbert A. Philbrick's Television Program* (2007), *The Twilight Zone: Unlocking the Door to a Television Classic* (2008) and coming in 2010 *The Green Hornet*.



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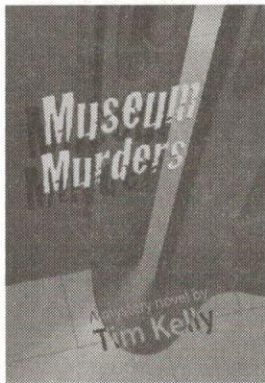


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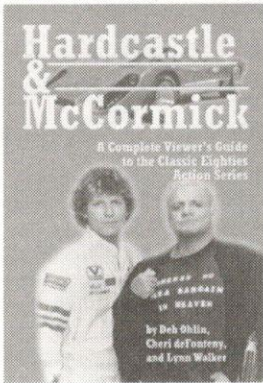
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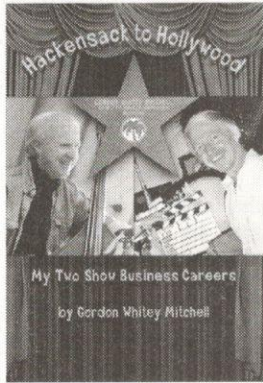
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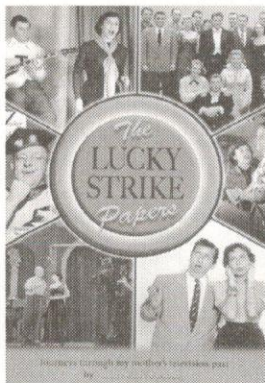
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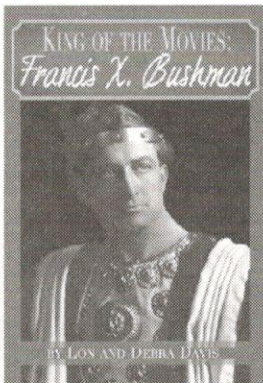
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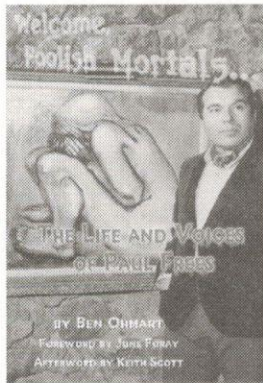
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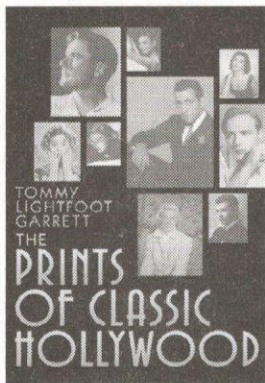
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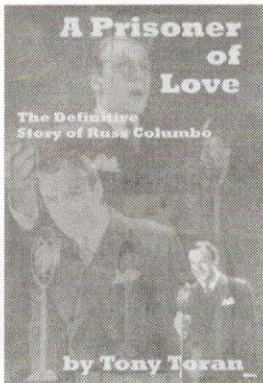
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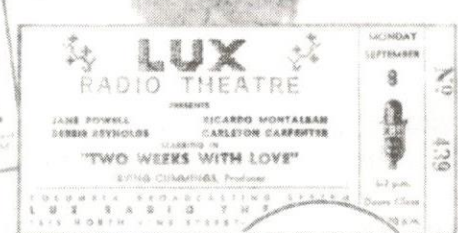
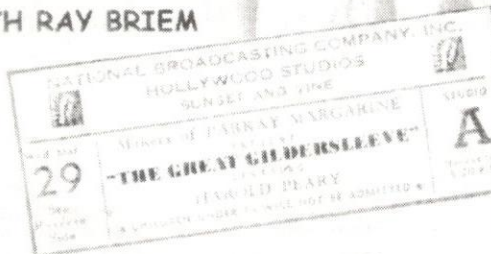
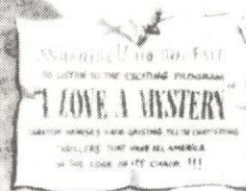
- BURNS AND ALLEN WITH JACK BENNY
- THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE
- I LOVE A MYSTERY
- BOBBY BENSON
- BABY SNOOKS SHOW
- LUX RADIO THEATRE
- "CASABLANCA"

PANELS

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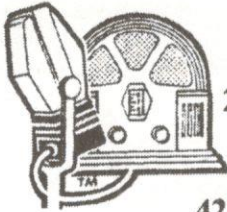
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 Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn
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RESERVATION FORM
 Cancellation Deadline is April 22, 2009

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NOTE: If you wish to be seated with your friends, please send reservation forms and fees together. Convention tickets will be held at the Registration Desk. This is not a fundraiser and the full cost of tickets goes to cover costs. Therefore no part of the ticket price is considered a tax deductible contribution.

CONVENTION RATES DEADLINE APRIL 15, 2009
CHECKS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THIS DATE FOR DISCOUNTED PRICE
 AFTER April 15, 2009 - TOTAL COST: \$175 (DAILY COSTS REMAIN THE SAME)

(Prices are per person; "Member" price applies to a member & guests on the same order form)

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G-2357 Radio Drama

- a. **Hollywood Star Time** "Shock" 2-3-1946. Stars Vincent Price, Lynn Barri, Michael Dunn, Lurene Tuttle, Joseph Kearns and Fred Howard. Adapted by Milton Geiger.
- b. **Hollywood Star Time** "Hangover Square" 4-7-1946. Stars Vincent Price, Linda Darnell, Faye Marlowe, Joe Kearns, Carlton Young, John Brown, Herbert Rawlinson and Jerry Farber.
- c. **Hollywood Star Time** "Song of Bernadette" 4-21-46. Stars Lee J. Cobb, Vincent Price, Vanessa Brown, Pedro de Corbada and Joe Kearns.
- d. **Hollywood Star Time** "The Letter" 2-8-1947. Stars Ann Todd, Vincent Price and Herbert Marshall.
- e. **Screen Guild Players** "On Borrowed Time" 4-1-1946. Stars Lionel Barrymore, Vincent Price, Ted Donaldson and Agnes Moorehead.
- f. **Jeff Regan, Investigator** "The Man With a Key" 10-2-1948. Stars Jack Webb.

G-2358 Radio Drama

- a. **Radio City Playhouse** "Duet" 10-16-1949. Two short stories: "The Lake" by Ray Bradbury and "Collector's Item" by Roald Dahl. Announcer Fred Collins stars with Bernard Grant, Leon Janney, Bryna Raeburn, Connie Lempke, Bill Lipton and Butch Cavell.
- b. **Radio City Playhouse** "The Wind" by Ray Bradbury 10-30-1949. Stars Lyle Sudrow and Bryna Raeburn with James Monks.
- c. **MGM Theater of the Air** "Love is a Headache" Program #76. Stars Joan Bennett and Les Tremayne. (one hour)
- d. **Ford Theatre** "The Informer" 3-28-1948 (NBC). Stars Paul Douglas with John Larkin, Ruth York, Una O'Connor and Neal Fitzgerald with Matt Crowley, Walter Burke, Bill Smith, Ian Martin, Horace Graham, Audry Eagen, Brian Herbert, Walter Kinsella and Frank Saunders. Howard Lindsey hosts. From 78 rpm copy records. (one hour)

G-2359 GOOD NEWS OF 1938 and SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS

- a. **Good News of 1938** 12-23-1937. Salute to the film "Rosalie." Hosted by Robert Taylor and James Stewart. (one hour)
- b. **Screen Guild Players** "We Were Dancing" 10-29-1939. Stars Adolphe Menjou, Binnie Barnes, Hedda Hopper and Robert Montgomery.
- c. **Screen Guild Players** "Going My Way" 10-29-1939. Stars Edward Arnold, James Stewart and Loretta Young.
- d. **Screen Guild Players** "The Beachcomber" 11-12-1939. Stars Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester and Jean Hersholt.
- e. **Screen Guild Players** "The Enchanted Cottage" 11-26-1939. Stars Helen Hayes and Fredric March.

G-2360 SCREEN GUILD THEATRE

- a. "Private Worlds" 1-28-1940. Stars Claudette Colbert, Charles Boyer and Isabel Jewell.
- b. "I Met Him in Paris" 2-4-1940. Stars Melvin Douglas, Ann Sothern and Robert Young.

1/09

- c. "Single Crossing" 2-11-1940. Stars Myrna Loy and Jimmy Stewart. Some sound defects.
- d. "Next Time We Live" 2-18-1940. Stars James Cagney, Olivia de Havilland and Jeffrey Lynn. Some sound defects.
- e. "Blind Alley" 2-25-1940. Stars Edward G. Robinson, Isabel Jewell and Joseph Calliela.
- f. "Winter in Paris" 3-3-1940. Stars Don Ameche, Maureen O'Sullivan and Warren William.

G-2361 COUNTERSPY

- a. "Washington Woman Spy" 6-8-1942.
- b. "German Spies" 12-14-1942.
- c. "Washington Woman Spy" 6-13-1945. (A somewhat altered version of the 1942 script.)
- d. "Case of the Dog of Dynamite" 6-25-1945.
- e. "Stolen Car Racketeers" rehearsal recorded 7-28-1946.
- f. "Mexican Rancho" 2-22-1949.

G-2362 COUNTERSPY

- a. "Case of the Poison Peddler" 2-24-1949.
- b. "Case of the Blackmailed Hijacker" 8-9-1949.
- c. "Case of the Genuine Counterfeit" 10-6-1949.
- d. "Case of the Society Swindler" 10-11-1949.
- e. "Case of the High Class Hijacker" 10-13-1949.
- f. "Case of the Photograph Furrier" 10-18-1949.

G-2363 PROUDLY WE HAIL

- a. "Zone of Decision" 10-31-1954. Program #317.
- b. "The Call of Courage" 11-7-1954. Program #318.
- c. "A Guy Named Scott" 11-14-1954. Program #319.
- d. "Mountain Holiday" 11-21-1954. Program #320.
- e. "Operation Flashburn" 11-28-1954. Program #321.
- f. "Storm Approach" 12-5-1954. Program #322.

G-2364 DON McNEILL'S BREAKFAST CLUB and BILL GOODWIN SHOW

Don McNeill's Breakfast Club (1958 AFRTS rebroadcasts)

- a. Beauty operators in the audience. #808.
- b. Model mother for painting is selected #809.
- c. The cast is back from Florida. Bob Murphy is substitute host. #826.
- d. Aunt Fanny (Fran Allison) visits #827.
- Bill Goodwin Show** (Edited by AFRTS from 55 minute NBC broadcasts)
- e. Guest is Bruce Randall of Acme Tuxedo and Costume Rental Company 4-18-1958.
- f. Guest is Henry Nordlinger, Cecil B. DeMille's research expert 5-16-1958.

G-2365 IT PAYS TO BE IGNORANT plus one KATE SMITH SHOW (AFRS rebroadcasts)

- a. "In the song 'I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas,' what is the color the dreamer is dreaming about?" Kate Smith and Ted Collins guest. 12-8-1944 AFRS #28.
- b. **Kate Smith Show** Ed Gardner appears as Archie the Manager (AFRS #5).
- c. "Who was the William Tell Overture named for?" 9-21-1945.

- d. "What is meant by the word proxy?" 11-16-1945 AFRS #83.
- e. "What branch of the Armed Forces is Navy Day in honor of?" 12-3-1945 AFRS #81.
- f. "How many shoes are there in a pair?" 12-10-1945.

G-2366 HOLLYWOOD BY-LINE, HOLLYWOOD CALLING (3 minutes each) and **GEORGE FISHER INTERVIEWS** (3 minutes each)

- a. **Hollywood By-Line** Lucille Ball interview (unedited) 1-4-1950. Runs 49:55.
- b. **Hollywood Calling** Jack Benny guests. Program #25.
- c. **Hollywood Calling** Ronald Colman guests. Prog. #26.
- d. **Hollywood Calling** Edmund O'Brien guests. Prog. #27.
- e. **Hollywood Calling** Jack Carson guests. Program #28.
- f. **Hollywood By-Line** Celeste Holm guests 3-22-1950 (unedited recording) Runs 46:55.
- g. **George Fisher Interviews** Al Jolson guests. Prog. #34.
- h. **George Fisher Interviews** Florence George guests. Program #35.
- i. **George Fisher Interviews** Jane Russell guests. Program #36.
- j. **George Fisher Interviews** Millard Mitchell guests. Program #157.
- k. **Hollywood By-Line** Betty Hutton interview 4-27-1950 (unedited) Runs 43:32.
- l. **George Fisher Interviews** Jean Peters guests. Program #158.
- m. **George Fisher Interviews** Bette Davis guests. Program #159.
- n. **George Fisher Interviews** Rhonda Flemming guests. Program #160.
- o. **Hot From Hollywood** "Silver Queen" Bob Richardson hosts. Program #11. (5 minutes)

G-2367 ARMY HOUR

- a. Report on Pakistan. Program T-5.
- b. Report on Taiwan; Joe Brooks and his adopted children. Program T-6.
- c. Army Secretary William M. Bruckner rewards some civilian employees. Program T-11.
- d. "Soldiers Sing of Christmas" Program T-12.
- e. Army Horse Soldier Program T-13.
- f. "Rolling Along of 1959" Program T-14.

G-2368 EDDIE CANTOR SHOW and AMOS 'N ANDY

- a. Eddie receives a threatening letter 11-6-1947.
- b. Eddie hires bodyguards 11-13-1947.
- c. Eddie tries to borrow money from Jack Benny 11-20-47.
- d. Hildegard wants to become a radio singer 11-27-1947.
- e. Babyface Mohr goes straight 12-4-1947.
- f. **Amos 'n Andy** Kingfish wants to swindle Andy out of reward money 5-4-1948.

G-2369 JUST JAZZ, JUBILEE and THIS IS JAZZ

- a. Woody Herman's Orchestra plays "Tiny's Blues" AFRS #54.
- b. Charlie Ventura Band concert from the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. AFRS #65.

- c. Eddie Miller and the Bobcats open with "Who's Sorry Now" AFRS #66.
- d. Coleman Hawkins and His All-Stars AFRS #68.
- e. **Jubilee** Features the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra plus The Gingersnaps. Eddie Green guests. Brief sound loss during one song. AFRS #159.
- f. **This is Jazz** Louis Armstrong guests 4-26-1947 (Mutual Radio).

G-2370 Musical programs

- a. **Steamboat Jamboree** Audition program starring Lanny Ross, whose opening song is "Smiles." Runs 27:16
- b. **Lyn Murray Show** Audition program with guest Earl Reisen. Runs 27:06.
- c. **Bob Crosby Show** (15 minutes each) First song is "Magnolia Street Parade" Program #1.
- d. **Bob Crosby Show** First song: "Hors D'oeuvres" Program #2.
- e. **Bob Crosby Show** First song: "Here in My Heart" Program #3.
- f. **Bob Crosby Show** First song: "Hands Across the Sea" Program #4.
- g. **Bob Crosby Show** First song: "Rose Room" Connie Haines guests Program #5.
- h. **Bob Crosby Show** First song: "Paducca Street Parade" Monica Lewis guests. Program #6.
- i. **Eddie Duchin Show** First song: "Shine on Harvest Moon" The singer known as Evette is Eddie's guest. Program #9.
- j. **Eddie Duchin Show** First song: "Lady Be Good" Eugenie Baird guests. Program #10.

G-2371 News events and specials (most run 15 minutes)

- a. **NBC Special** First Jewish religious service broadcast from formerly Nazi-occupied territory (Rome) 7-23-1944.
- b. **NBC Special** First Jewish religious service in Germany since the Hitler era (via short wave) 10-9-1944.
- c. **Robert St. John** 10-30-1944. Bombings at Manila.
- d. **Robert St. John** 12-20-1944. Progress of the German counter-offensive on the Western Front. NBC.
- e. **ABC News Special** 2-19-1946 Cardinal Francis Spellman's speech from Rome (via short wave transmission) after being appointed Cardinal by Pope Pius XII.
- f. **News of Tomorrow** 5-27-1947 (ABC). Former Boston mayor wants a presidential pardon.
- g. **NBC News of the World** 7-23-1947. Big Three powers make agreements on Germany. Features Morgan Beatty.
- h. **NBC News of the World** 8-1-1947. Global discord. Alex Drier reports.
- i. **Let Truth Be Known** 12-10-1947 (ABC). Special on democracy and "the power of free information." Stars Van Heflin. (30 minutes)
- j. **Post Office Auction** 6-20-1948. Promotion for auction of items in the dead letter office in San Francisco.
- k. **Town to Town** 1-27-1949. "Litchfield to Litchfield" An exchange of information on a city in Connecticut and another city of the same name in England. From the BBC for broadcast on WTHT, Hartford.

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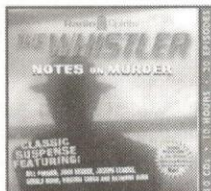
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Hit and Run 01-07-51, Trademark 01-28-51, High Death 03-11-51, Kind Thought 04-22-51, The Clayton Affair 04-29-51, The Man in the Trench Coat 06-17-51, The House on Hainsley Boulevard 07-01-51, Autumn Song 07-22-51, Design for Murder 08-05-51, A Matter of Patience 09-16-51, Two Smart People 09-30-51, Three Minus One Equals Murder 11-11-51, The Clay Tree 11-25-51, Curiosity Killed the Cat 12-16-51, A Matter of Odds 05-11-52, Night Flight 06-29-52, You Can't Trust A Stranger 07-27-52, Dark Island 08-03-52, Final Papers 08-24-52, Secret of Chalk Point 09-07-52



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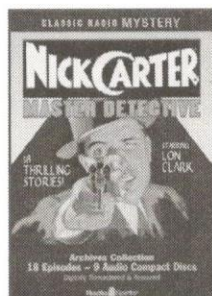
Evening Primrose 08-25-49, The Vanishing Lady 01-10-50, The Sure Thing 01-17-50, Outer Limits 02-07-50, Macao 07-18-51, Man Who Stole the Bible 08-30-51, Gringo 10-12-52, The Derelict 04-26-53, The Vessel of Wrath 05-10-53, A Good Thing 05-31-53, The Thirteenth Truck 08-16-53, The Man from Tomorrow 08-23-53, The Train from Olbefeledo 09-06-53, The Elementals 10-11-53, The Coward 08-14-54, Two and Two Make Four 08-21-54, The King of Owanatu 08-28-54, The Boiling Sea 09-04-54, The Target 09-18-54, The Heart of Kali 09-25-54



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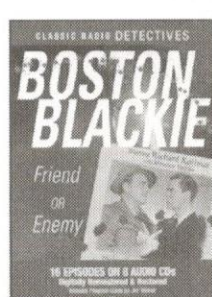
Over the Bounding Main 09-14-50, The Crowd 9-21-50, Fly by Night 09-28-50, The Rose Garden 10-05-50, Too Hot to Live 10-26-50, Going, Going Gone 11-23-50, A Killing in Abilene 12-14-50, Christmas for Carol 12-21-50, The Windy City Six 02-08-51, The Death Parade 02-15-51, The Gift of Jumbo Brannigan 03-01-51, A Vision of Death 03-08-51, Three Lethal Words 03-22-51, Death on My Hands 05-10-51, The Case for Dr. Singer 06-28-51, The Report of the Jolly Dead Riders 08-27-51, The Evil of Adelaide Winters 09-10-51, The Hunting of Bob Lee 10-29-51, Rogue Male 12-31-51, Lady Pamela 03-31-52



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Flying Duck Murders 10-04-43, An Angle on Murder 10-25-43, Body on the Slab 11-03-43, Double Disguise 01-01-44, Corpse in the Cab 02-05-44, Missing, Harold Ascort 02-12-44, Death After Dark 02-19-44, Murder Goes to College 12-24-44, Murder in a Decanter 12-31-44, Monkey Sees Murder 01-07-45, Murder by Fire 01-14-45, Death by Ricochet 01-21-45, Eye For an Eye 01-28-45, Webs of Murder 03-11-45, The Case of the Sunken Dollar 06-29-47, The Case of the Candidate's Corpse 09-26-48, The Case of the Bull and the Bear 10-24-48, The Case of the Forgetful Killer 11-07-48



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Days before the episode went before the cameras, he wrote to Ed Wynn, explaining they were doing a show called "Static," which involved the use of famous radio programs of the past.



thirsty general urges a brilliant scientist to complete the development of a new weapon, best described as a "doomsday bomb." The enemy overseas, reportedly, has already developed a similar weapon. The general asks the scientist to complete the weapon so that it could be fired with the push of a single button—no secondary protocols required. The scientist, fearing his weapon could start a war that would erase the existence of mankind on the entire planet, contemplated the centuries of progress—ancient civilizations that built the pyramids, the deserted Mayan temples and the skyscrapers of today. After 15 minutes contemplating the beauty and wonder Earth had to offer, he completes the weapon and the Army takes over. Against his warnings, the button is pushed. The enemy does the same, and the countdown for contact begins.

The ending featured a series of explosions on the surface of planet Earth, and two aliens on another planet across the universe start the following discussion:

VOICE 1: Ah, Verus . . . Have you see the little planet – Earth?

VOICE 2: Why no . . . come to think of it, Felovius I haven't seen it . . . In a few hundred light years. Seems to have just disappeared all of a sudden.

VOICE 1: Ah . . . Then I win my bet.

VOICE 2: Bet?

VOICE 1: Yes, I bet the keeper of the North Star that the little Earth would destroy itself before the next billion years had gone by . . . and she has. She seems to have just blown herself up . . . disintegrated. . . she no longer exists. Tch, tch . . . Pity . . . she was a lovely little planet.

Wonder what caused it?

VOICE 2: That is a question . . .

VOICE 1: Oh, what am I thinking of . . . I know what destroyed it. It had human beings on it. I'd forgotten.

VOICE 2: Well then, that explains it . . . Those pesky little things can't live side by side very long.

Shall we go back and tell the others?

VOICE 1: Why take the trouble? As if anyone cared about tiny Earth . . . So unimportant a speck. . . so insignificant a dot in the universe. Who cares?

VOICE 2: I guess you're right. (sighs) Nice night . . . So quiet . . . So uneventful.

In "A Passage for Trumpet," a trumpet player named Joey drowns his sorrows with a bottle, and commits suicide when he fails to get a job playing the trumpet. Soon discovering that he is in limbo, between life and death,

it takes a bit of spiritual guidance to intervene and reveal just what Joey has been missing in life. The script was an adaptation of a number of teleplays, which in turn were revisions of a 1949 radio script titled "The Local is a Very Slow Train." Serling submitted the idea to the producers of the radio anthology, *Grand Central Station*, who purchased the script and retitled it "Hop Off the Express and Grab a Local." The story concerned two young men of the slums, Joey and Steve, who get involved in a murder. Joey comments not once, but twice, about how depressed he became when he was reminded of the social group in which he grew up, having been raised in the slums of the big city. The episode was broadcast over the CBS Radio Network on September 10, 1949.

In 1950, Serling wrote a radio script titled "The Dust By Any Other Name," concerning a character named Abner Bodner, who attempts to build a chemical plant that would produce a magic dust. When breathed, the dust would make mortal enemies forget their hatred. As a result of his efforts, Bodner has an accident that costs him his life, proving to everyone in town that a man who dies in his belief of peace leaves a larger mark on society. He believed in his dream—not the dust. The radio script was rejected weeks after being submitted to the *Dr. Christian* radio program.

On June 19, 1958, CBS presented an episode of *Playhouse 90* titled "A Town Has Turned to Dust," scripted by Serling. This version told the story of the lynching of a 19-year-old Mexican boy by a mob spurred on by a young merchant, whose hatred of the victim stemmed both from his wife accepting the affection of the doomed boy and from a deep-rooted prejudice against Mexicans. It was also the story of the town sheriff, who gives in feebly to the lynching mob, but stands firm when it comes to hanging the victim's brother after he defies the Jim Crow standards of the town. The brother is saved by the sheriff who, after killing the merchant and also is dying from the merchant's bullet, tells of the time, years ago, when he had led a mob in the ugly lawless murder of another man.

In July of 1960, Serling took the *Playhouse 90* script and shortened the length (and the title), making a number of revisions. In combining both the *Dr. Christian* and *Playhouse 90* scripts, he explored the motivation of the mob and eliminated any reference to a prior hanging for an episode of *The Twilight Zone* titled "Dust."

The plot of a man going back in time to

1865 and given the opportunity to prevent the course of events leading to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln has been explored not once but twice on radio. The first attempt was on Mutual's *The Mysterious Traveler*. On the evening of February 7, 1950, "The Man Who Tried to Save Lincoln" dramatized the story of a scientist who figures how to transfer a man's thoughts back into time and occupy another man's body. In this version, the time traveler finds himself in the body of John Wilkes Booth. Booth, managing to get the better of the voice in his head, makes a successful effort to assassinate Lincoln. This same script was dramatized again years later for *Suspense*. This same theme was explored on *The Twilight Zone* in the episode, "Back There."

In "Static," Ed Lindsay, one of the tenants at Vinnie's boarding house, longs for the days when radio was a medium of entertainment. He tires of watching everyone else stay fixated to the television programs that insult his intelligence. Digging out the old radio from the basement, Vinnie carries the unit up to his room and plugs it in. He soon discovers that broadcasts of the past are coming through the speakers. Every time he tries to get someone else to listen with him, however, all that comes through the speakers is static. Vinnie, his old flame, believes Ed is getting sentimental for the past, during their romantic days. But 20 years later, they apparently missed their chance. Avoiding the rest of the tenants, Ed retires every day to the radio to listen to *Let's Pretend* and Kay Kyser, but is heartbroken when he returns from the grocery store one afternoon to find the radio had been sold to a junk dealer. Ed sets out to find the radio and buy it back. He succeeds and, returning the radio to his bedroom and turning it on, finds himself transported back to 1940 where he is 20 years younger—and so is Vinnie.

While not a Serling script, this *Twilight Zone* episode was the brain child of Ocee Ritch and his short story, "Tune in Yesterday." The story certainly appealed to Serling, who was responsible for the final decision regarding story selection, and felt the nostalgic chance to go back to the by-gone days was perfect hunting ground for *The Twilight Zone*. Days before the episode went before the cameras, he wrote to Ed Wynn, explaining they were doing a show called "Static," which involved the use of famous radio programs of the past. "Since 'The Fire Chief' is an integral as well as beloved part of the memorabilia of the time, it is essential that it be included. So in addition to your permission, I wonder if you could give us or tell us where we might obtain records or transcriptions of any of your old radio shows."

Wynn replied by phone, explaining to Serling that while he had no problem of *The Twilight Zone* featuring sound clips from existing recordings, he himself had none in his possession. He recommended Serling contact Texaco, the sponsor of the series. Buck Houghton, upon learning the sad news, explained to Serling that time was of the es-

sence, and instead, used a recording of *The Fred Allen Show* in its place. The F.D.R. address to the nation, heard in the soundtrack of this episode, was a recording from his fireside chat of April 28, 1935. *The Fred Allen Show* segment with Fred and Portland arriving at "Allen's Alley," was a broadcast from January 6, 1946. Radio Station WPDA, heard over the radio from one of the recordings was referencing radio station WPDA in Cedarburg, New Jersey.

For custom recordings for this production, the role of the real estate salesman on the television set is played by Eddie Marr, a veteran of numerous radio broadcasts from the 40s and 50s. According to a production report dated November 18, the voice of the radio disc jockey is that of Bob Crane, who would later play the starring role of television's *Hogan's Heroes*. Though Crane is heard and not seen, this episode technically marks his television debut. Crane was a local morning disc jockey on a Los Angeles radio station at the time, and he was offered the proposal of supplying the voice needed in the soundtrack.

The episode "The Obsolete Man" explored a future society in which the State regulated the occupations of man and those deemed unworthy of advancement are classified "obsolete" and promptly executed. When a librarian faces off against the Chancellor regarding the usefulness of books (banned by the State as nonsense), he devises a way to reveal to the State just who should the judge—God himself.

This episode of *The Twilight Zone* may just have been Serling's attempt to dramatize the foolishness of a state under dictatorship. The script was a combination of two previously written scripts. The earliest dates back to the early 1950s, when Serling was writing scripts for radio station WLW in Ohio, where he proposed an anthology series titled *It Happens to You*, featuring stories the radio listeners would become engrossed in, whimsical tales not too dissimilar to *The Twilight Zone*. Episode 7 titled "Law Nine Concerning Christmas" explored the notion of a future society in which an unnamed town had a law passed which abolished Christmas, a law against Christ. The church was declared off-limits to the entire village. The mayor, acting much like the chancellor in this *Twilight Zone* episode, tries to explain why such a law has been put into effect. The state did not recognize any such deity, and therefore, neither should the people. Yet, he faced resistance when a crowd gathered at the front door of the church for midnight mass on Christmas Eve. After judging them each for their crimes against the State, he attempts to pass sentence—until a little girl named Pat reminds the mayor that Christ died for a principle, too. "Well, Rod and I were residents of Ohio. We both wrote for the *Dr. Christian* program and when I left a job in Cincinnati, he took the position," recalled Earl Hamner. "Years later, I went to Hollywood and Rod introduced me at a party once as the man who gave him his first

job. [laughs]

That really wasn't how it was, but I let it go at that. He had success with *The Twilight Zone* and I had a problem getting into television," recalled Hamner. "I had written for radio, I had written for live television, and I wrote a few novels. But I could not sell anything for television."

In a 1977 issue of *Writer's Yearbook* with columnist and interviewer Ted Allrich, Hamner remembered, "I had known Rod Serling slightly in New York. One day I called Rod and said I would like to submit some stories for his *Twilight Zone* series. He said that it was an awfully hard market to crack, but to give it a try. He promised that all the right people would read my ideas. His producer called back a few days after I submitted some, a nice guy named Buck Houghton. Buck had read the stories and liked them. But he also said, 'I understand you don't write film. Would you like to write these up as little plays?' I said, 'No. I'd like to write them up as little television shows.' And I did, and I have not been out of work since."

In the *Twilight Zone* episode "In Praise of Pip," a dying man strikes a deal with God—to exchange his life for that of his son, who was dying from wounds inflicted in Vietnam. On December 24, 1950, Serling's radio script, "Choose One Gift," was broadcast over radio station WLW in Ohio and explored the same theme later used for "In Praise of Pip." The holiday story concerned a soldier named Rierden, who suffered life-threatening wounds while stationed overseas during the Korean War. The doctors and nurses do not have much hope for the soldier, but their primary concern is the number of wounded that continues to grow every day. Their emotions are stretched to the breaking point, and they pray to God for relief. Towards the end of the drama, it appears a little Divine intervention prevails as the wounded soldier recovers and brings them a most welcome gift for Christmas—the gift of hope.

What the Devil?

On June 11, 1963, Arch Oboler wrote a teleplay for the fifth season of *Twilight Zone* titled, "What the Devil?" Millie and Frank, driving a Jaguar across the desert, witness a hellish hit-and-run that kills the driver of one of the vehicles. In shock, the two start to suspect the fleeing driver may have seen them and now set his sights on the witnesses. Their suspicions are confirmed when, further down the road, the huge truck takes chase. The words "Danger, High Explosives" are on the side of the vehicle, but the driver misses

his mark and the couple manages to get away. Frank tells Millie he caught a glimpse of the driver, and she laughs when he tells her it was the Devil. In a game of cat and mouse, they manage to switch vehicles, hoping the driver is looking for the Jaguar and not a station wagon. Millie, meanwhile, discovers that Frank committed a brutal act before leaving on the trip, and the driver may be a form of conscience. Ultimately, the truck catches up and once again, gives chase, hits-and-runs, this time taking the lives of Millie and Frank. The police arrive on the scene to find the car flattened. One of the officers is puzzled when he points out to his partner the hoof prints burned in the pavement, "like something walked around watching them burn!"

From 1942 to 1943, Oboler scripted a total of 52 episodes for a horror program titled *Lights Out!*, sponsored by Ironized Yeast and broadcast over the CBS. The premiere episode, aired on October 6, 1942, was a radio play titled "What the Devil?" and this *Twilight Zone* teleplay was a faithful adaptation of the radio version. Gloria Blondell and Wally Maher played the leads for the radio version. Serling insisted the script be purchased from Oboler, and Bert Granet went along with Serling's decision. (A letter dated October 2, 1963, from Granet to Serling, suggests that this arrangement was a fiasco, and Granet disliked the idea from the start, keeping silent to please Serling for a decision that ultimately never went before the cameras).

Assigned a production number on June 11, 1963, the television script was clearly intended to be filmed for the fifth season of *The Twilight Zone*. The attempt was short-lived. An M-G-M work order dated August 13, 1963 announced the cancellation of this production, and most of the copies of the scripts were returned to Oboler. Serling retained at least two copies for his records, and donated one to UCLA. According to tax paperwork and financial records, secretarial and other expenses cost Cayuga Productions a total of \$420.47. No paperwork has been found to verify how much Arch Oboler was paid (if he was paid at all) for his teleplay, which would have been an additional expense to Cayuga.

The Twilight Zone Radio Dramas

On March 4, 1965, a variation of the *Twilight Zone* episode, "A Nice Place to Visit," aired on the radio program, *Theater Five*. "The Land of Milk and Honey" was an almost mirrored copy of the same story, right down to the final surprise ending. In March of 1974, Rod Serling was in Houston, in association with Mutual Broadcasting

The premiere episode, aired on October 6, 1942, was a radio play titled "What the Devil?" and this *Twilight Zone* teleplay was a faithful adaptation of the radio version.

System, during the National Association of Broadcasters Convention. He was promoting his new radio program, *Zero Hour*, which he was heavily involved with. This short-run program was Serling's attempt at another anthology program—and possibly his chance to retain control of his own program without the interference of both the network and the movie studios.

The December 21, 1960 issue of *The Hollywood Reporter* reported Serling's sale of a radio program to CBS, suggesting the network wanted to broadcast a radio series adapted from television scripts of *The Twilight Zone*. This is not a farfetched notion as some might ponder, because the television series *Have Gun – Will Travel* had been adapted to radio two years previous on the CBS Radio Network. This concept never fleshed into radio dramas until four decades later when producer Carl Amari decided to present new dramatizations based on this classic program. A lifelong fan of old-time radio, Amari decided to revive the series not as a nostalgic recreation of radio as it once was. Instead, Amari commissioned fresh radio adaptations based on the original 156 teleplays along with new story ideas never seen or heard on *The Twilight Zone*. Among the prolific writers responsible for adapting the teleplays into 160 History of *The Twilight Zone* feasible radio scripts are World Fantasy Award-winning writer Dennis Etchison. Recorded in digital stereo, narrated by Stacy Keach and starring a remarkable cast of actors, these exciting productions take the art of audio drama to an audience that may not have seen *The Twilight Zone* productions when they were first

telecast from 1959 – 1964.

Among the radio dramas are adaptations of teleplays written by Charles Beaumont and Jerry Sohl that were commissioned but never produced, such as "Free Dirt" and "Who Am I?" The program has been syndicated across the country on XM and Sirius Satellite Radio, as well as a number of local radio stations. They can also be presently heard over the Yesterday USA Network on the internet, and CD box sets are available commercially. ♪

Special thanks to: Terry Salomonson, Earl Hamner, Bill Bragg, Walden Hughes and Carl Amari for their assistance with this article.



Well, folks, we're long on adverts, convention news, and catalog pages this month, but we'll be back to normal next month. Coming in future issues of *Radiogram* are features on *Box 13* and *The Cavalcade of America* plus an account of radio and the telescope on Mt. Palomar. We're learn a little more about Bob Hope, and get ready for famous radio fluffs. Plus OTR news and views and your letters. Be patient. It'll be worth the wait. Happy St. Pat's Day!



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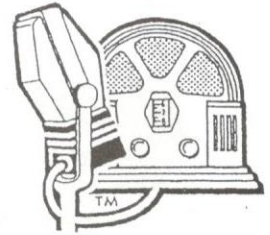
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