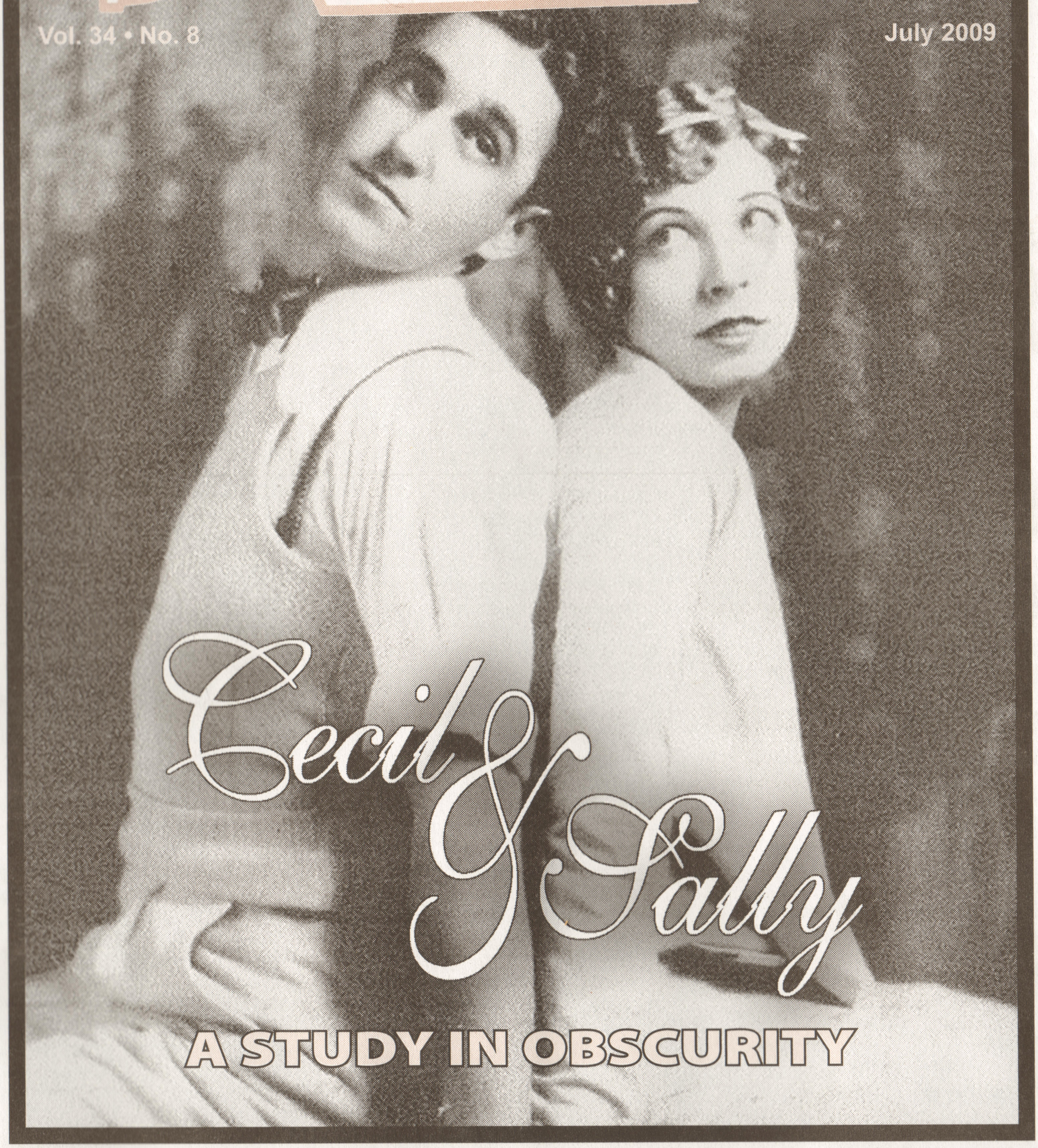
EVELYN SIBLEY LAMPMAN • SIXTY YEARS AGO THIS MONTH • BOOK REVIEW • THE MYSTERY OF THE FRIDAY FROLIC

sperdvac

RADIOGRAM

Vol. 34 • No. 8 July 2009



Cecil & Sally

A STUDY IN OBSCURITY

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RADIOGRAM

Volume 34 • Number 7 • June 2009

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RADIOGRAM

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The Mysterious Traveler

Of Mikes and Men and Children's Books

I suppose most of us had a favorite author when we were youngsters—someone whose imagination was magically in sync with our own. Mine was a remarkably insightful lady named Evelyn Sibley Lampman. If you grew up in the 1950s, likely you ran into at least a few of her novels: *Rusty's Spaceship*, *Captain Apple's Ghost*, *The Shy Stegosaurus of Cricket Creek*, *The City Under the Back Steps*. Because we were both born and raised in the same small town in Oregon, albeit in different decades, it seemed that I was forever stumbling across evidence of Mrs. Lampman's trail as I went about the business of growing up. Evelyn Lampman's background in radio, to my way of thinking, helps explain the appeal and hold she had over my imagination in those long-ago days.

In June 1929, Evelyn Sibley graduated from Oregon State College with a degree in education. The ink on her diploma was still wet when the Great Depression hit. Instead of entering the classroom, Evelyn secured a job writing continuity for Portland radio station KEX. Some forty years ago, I happened to stumble across a hilarious first-hand fictionalized account of the early days in Portland radio. The book was called *Of Mikes and Men* by Jane Woodfin. It was years later before I discovered that "Jane Woodfin" was merely a pseudonym for Evelyn Sibley Lampman and that, apparently, *Of Mikes and Men* contained far more truth than fiction, even if the writer preferred a measure of ambiguity.

Evelyn had spotted an ad in the newspaper seeking an experienced continuity writer. Although she had no experience, had no inkling what "continuity" meant and had never even seen a radio microphone, she applied for the job and was hired. From 1929 to 1934 Evelyn learned the craft of writing for radio. She quickly earned that "continuity" was everything the announcer said. But not only was Evelyn expected to write continuity she was also expected to conduct a half-hour daily cooking show. The problem was she didn't know how to cook. "In all those weeks I was on the air," she later explained, "I was never at ease, nor did the microphone and I ever get to be other than formal acquaintances." Mercifully, after a few weeks, the letters of complaint from listeners brought an end to Evelyn's on-air career. Her stint as a continuity writer continued. During her radio days Evelyn wrote continuity for personalities including Mel Blanc, Chet Huntley and Dallas McKinnon.

In 1934, Evelyn married Herb Lampman, a Portland journalist. Acceding to her husband's wishes, Evelyn gave up her job in radio. But after eight years of marriage, she found herself suddenly a widow with two small daughters to raise and so it was back to radio. This next facet of her radio career found Evelyn filling the role of educational director for Portland station KGW. KGW in those days was in the habit of producing and broadcasting six dramatized programs each week for broadcast to Portland area schools. Recordings of the broadcasts were reportedly used well into the 1960s. "We covered everything from history to hygiene, and they were lots of fun to write and produce," she confirmed years later. Evelyn frequently checked her broadcasts with young listeners for feedback in an on-going effort to keep the programs interesting as well as educational.

At least a few of Mrs. Lampman's radio plays seemed to find their way into my own classroom. I still have vivid memories of my grade-school teachers plugging in an old wood-case portable radio, waiting for the machine to warm up and then a sudden burst of static as the kilocycle dial was tuned to the correct position. Then we were admonished to settle down and pay attention to a play about the Lewis and Clark Expedition or maybe a story of the fur trade or the search for the Northwest Passage.

It was during this time that Evelyn began

Continued Page 14

Adapted verbatim from the July 10, 1949 edition of the Lincoln (NE) Sunday Journal and Star.

CBS Airs Documentary Tonight; Gladys Warthout is NBC Soloist

CBS' LATEST DOCUMENTARY, "Citizen of the World," will be heard over KFAB tonight at 9:00. The hour-long program will present words—and in some cases, voices—of world citizens ranging all the way from Socrates to Count Bernadotte. Lee J. Cobb, star of "Death of a Salesman," will be narrator. Norman Corwin wrote the script.

• • •

MOZART'S SYMPHONY in G Minor, No. 40, and Rimsky Korsakoff's "Capriccio Espagnol" will be presented on the CBS Symphony program today at 2:00—KAFB, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt will be interviewed during the intermission.

• • •

MUTUAL PREMIERES a new "crime" program this evening with its first broadcast of "The Saint,"—KOLN, 6:30. Vincent Price, distinguished stage and screen actor, plays the title role.

• • •

GLADYS SWARTHOUT, mezzo-soprano, is guest soloist tonight with the NBC Symphony under the direction of Arthur Fiedler—WOW, 7:30. She will sing two arias from Bizet's "Carmen," "Younger Than Springtime" from "South Pacific," and Bolm's "Calm As The Night."

• • •

THE LIFE AND SONGS of Jimmy McHugh will be presented over the "Railroad Hour," Monday night at 7:00—KFOR. McHugh wrote such old favorites as "I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby," "Sunny Side of The Street," "I Got Lucky In The Rain," etc. Gordon MacRae is host.

• • •

ABE BURROWS, song-writing comedian, will hold a Brooklyn-type literary tea Monday evening when he has Clifton Fadiman, wry wit of belles lettres, on his new show—KFAB, 8:30. Burrows writes, directs and produces the program, incidentally.

• • •

GEORGE O'HANLON of film shorts "Behind the Eight Ball" fame will be starred in a new situation comedy show, "Me and Janie," to be aired for the first time Tuesday night at 7:30—WOW. He replaces the Alan Young show.

• • •

THE FIRST FOREIGN broadcast of "America's Town Meeting" will be heard Tuesday night—KFOR, 7:30. The question, "Does the Socialist State Tend to Destroy Individual Initiative," will be argued. The broadcast will originate from Caxton Hall in London.

• • •

WEDNESDAY NIGHT, Schubert's Symphony No. 5 and portion of Wagner's "Die Meistersinger" will be presented on CBS' new 90-minute program "Stadium Concerts"—KFAB, 8:00. Frances Magnes, violinist, will play Chausson's "Poeme" and Ravel's "Tzigane." Sir Adrian Boult will conduct.

Winchell Regains Hooperating Lead

Walter Winchell once more stood atop Hooper's program rating chart as the month of June came to a close.

CBS' Monday night Radio Theatre, in the lead for the past few weeks, dropped to second. Arthur Godfrey and his talent scouts placed third. The latter two programs are now vacationing.

"Our Miss Brooks," starring comedienne Eve Arden made the select group for the first time this season, finishing 15th. The list, as usual, was dominated by programs of the cop and robbers variety.

The "First Fifteen:"

1. Walter Winchell	15.5
2. Radio Theatre	13.1
3. Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts	12.2
4. Suspense	12.1
5. My Friend Irma	11.9
6. Crime Photographer	11.7
7. Mr. District Attorney	11.6
8. Louella Parsons	11.3
9. Curtain Time	9.8
10. Big Story	9.8
11. Mr. Keen	9.4
12. Judy Canova	9.2
13. Stop The Music	9.1
14. Dennis Day	9.1
15. Our Miss Brooks	8.8

APROPOS OF THE WEATHER—Susan Thorne, lovely radio actress lead on Mutual's Sunday afternoon "House of Mystery" broadcasts, has the answer to everybody's current problem—the heat.

Radio in Review

BY REX L. CRIBBLE

RADIO officials, offering the heaviest summer programming schedule in many a year, seem to be trying to pull rabbits out of their fedoras.

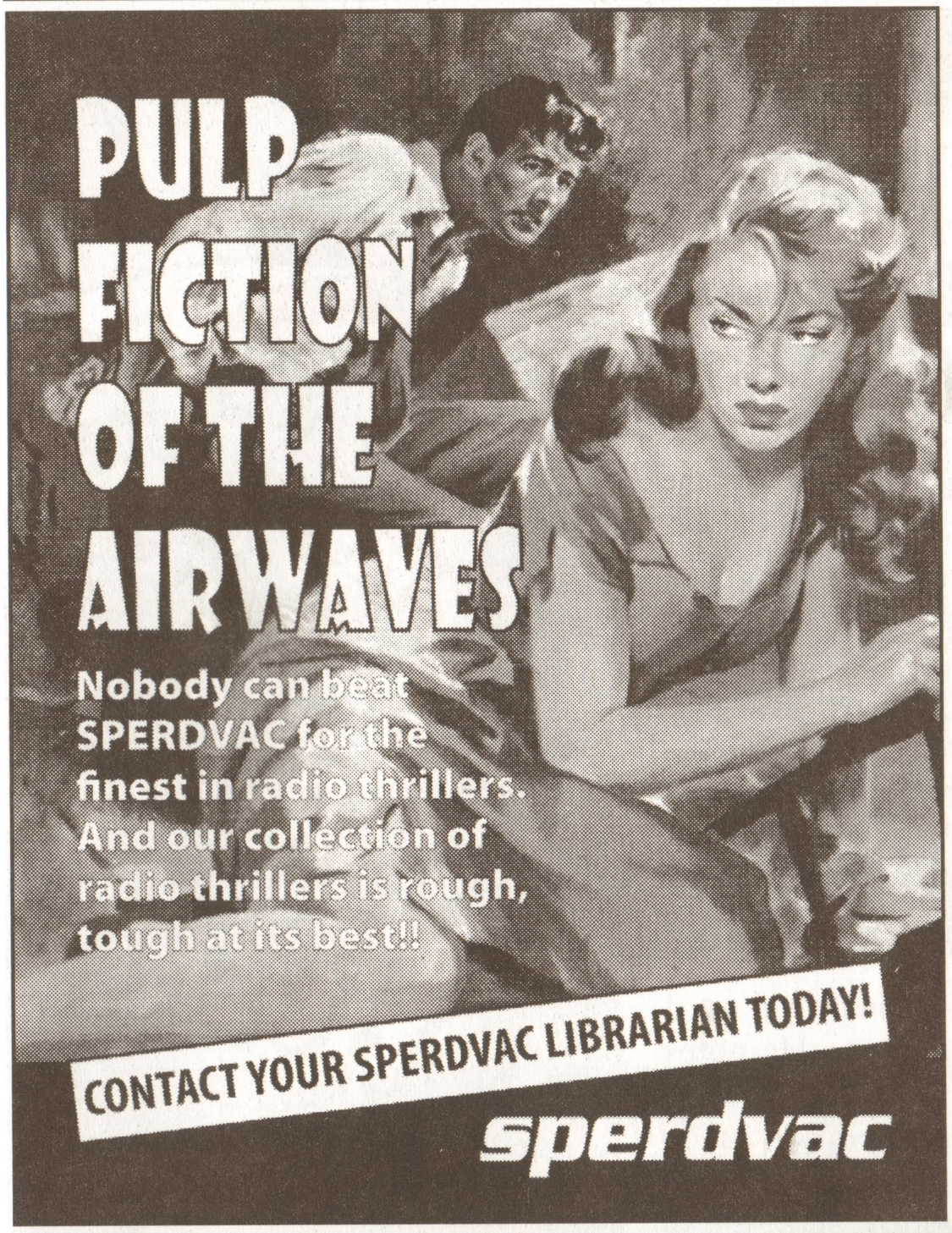
They are waging a triple-faceted campaign against each other, television, and the seasonal lull occurring every summer. In other words, the fight for listeners is on.

The four major networks have always operated on a competitive basis. The advent of television, however, has intensified this competition since it is believed in many quarters that all four hookups cannot survive in the face of the new medium. Hence, we have the "survival of the fittest" theme to the fore.

The second aspect of the intramural war is directed against television. This new field has made serious inroads into radio's life-blood, the advertising dollar. Radio, of course, is not taking it lying down.

But it is the third side of the fight that involves magic. Radio random is just not disposed to remain glued to its loudspeak-

Continued Page 14



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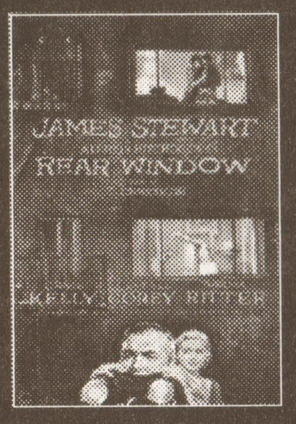

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BOOKMARKS

Massive Tome Offers 9375 Television Series in 1700 pages

by Jim Cox

IT will be a while before anybody tops Vincent Terrace's latest volume on the TV industry. McFarland & Company has recently released a four-volume set under the topic *Encyclopedia of Television Shows, 1925 through 2007*. With 9,375 entries spread over 1,700 pages, its inclusiveness is truly mind-boggling. The four-column index of names alone is spread over another 139 pages. Let's play "Can You Top This?" and see if anybody can!

Terrace most likely will be recalled by vintage radio connoisseurs as the author of a similar volume released a decade ago from the same publisher bearing the less glorified title *Radio Programs, 1924-1984: A Catalog of Over 1800 Shows*. That one became one of the standards in the treasury of "what's out there"—a handful of tomes with comparable objectives that went about their far-reaching programming listings differently. If you liked that book, you'll probably like the new softcover TV encyclopedia as both follow the same style.

The author of more than 30 volumes on broadcasting which lean heavily toward television, Terrace identifies each series by genre in the new release. He notes whether a series was on a network or in syndication, includes seasons on the air and names major cast members while providing a pithy synopsis of premise, plot or features. In lots of ways it's a nostalgic return to "the good old days" when television actually entertained and informed unlike its bent toward fill-time repetitiveness now. Many of the shows we have long forgotten are brought to life again in Terrace's fact-filled, easy-to-read summations. And because there are so many, you can readily find stopping points. Or just turn to those you're interested in. There is plenty here worth recalling.

Encyclopedia of Television Shows, 1925 through 2007, may be ordered at 800-253-2187 and www.mcfarlandpub.com. While its $145 tab may seem steep for the four-volume set, that works out to about a penny-and-a-half per entry. That seems a bargain for that much detail, especially with the scholarship and time investment behind it. It's recommended for researchers, media historians and nostalgia buffs, too.

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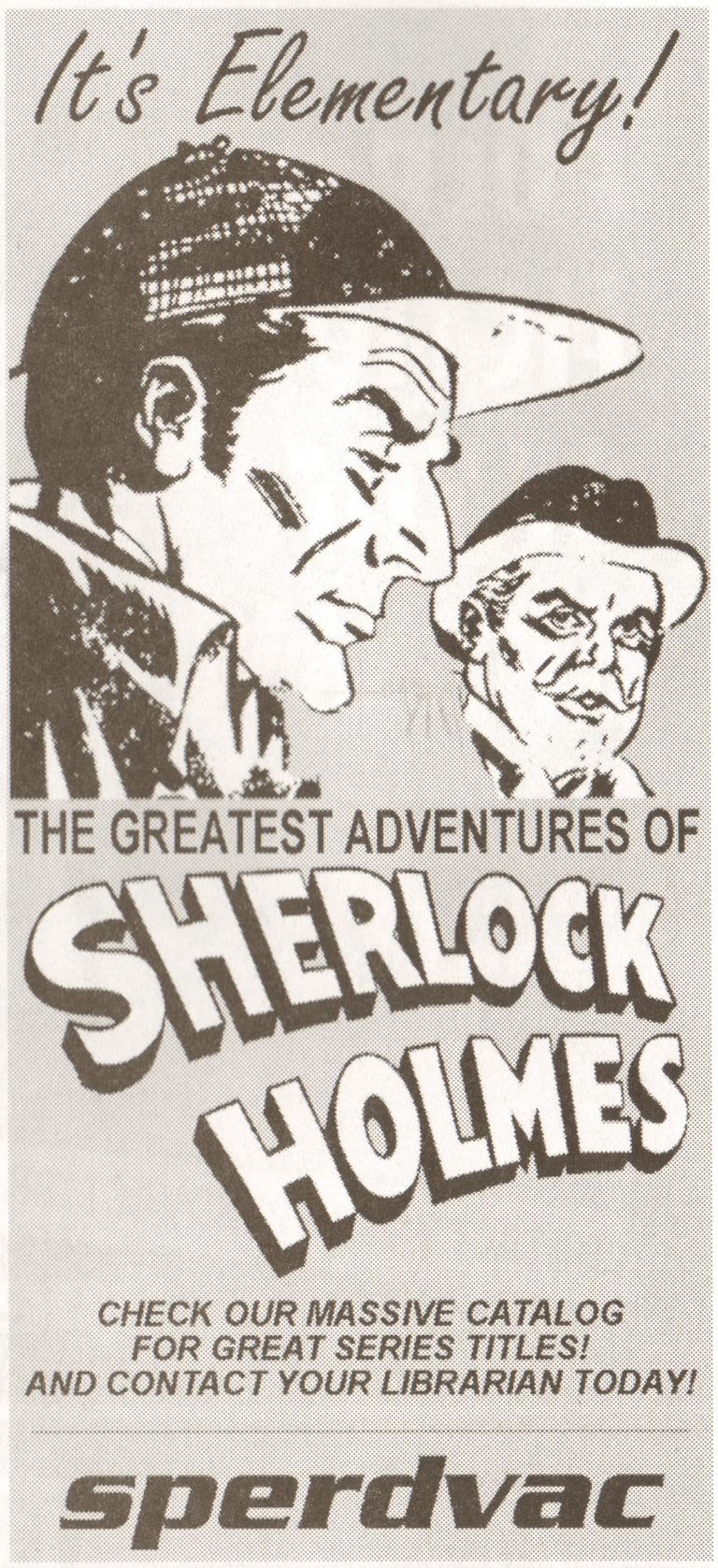

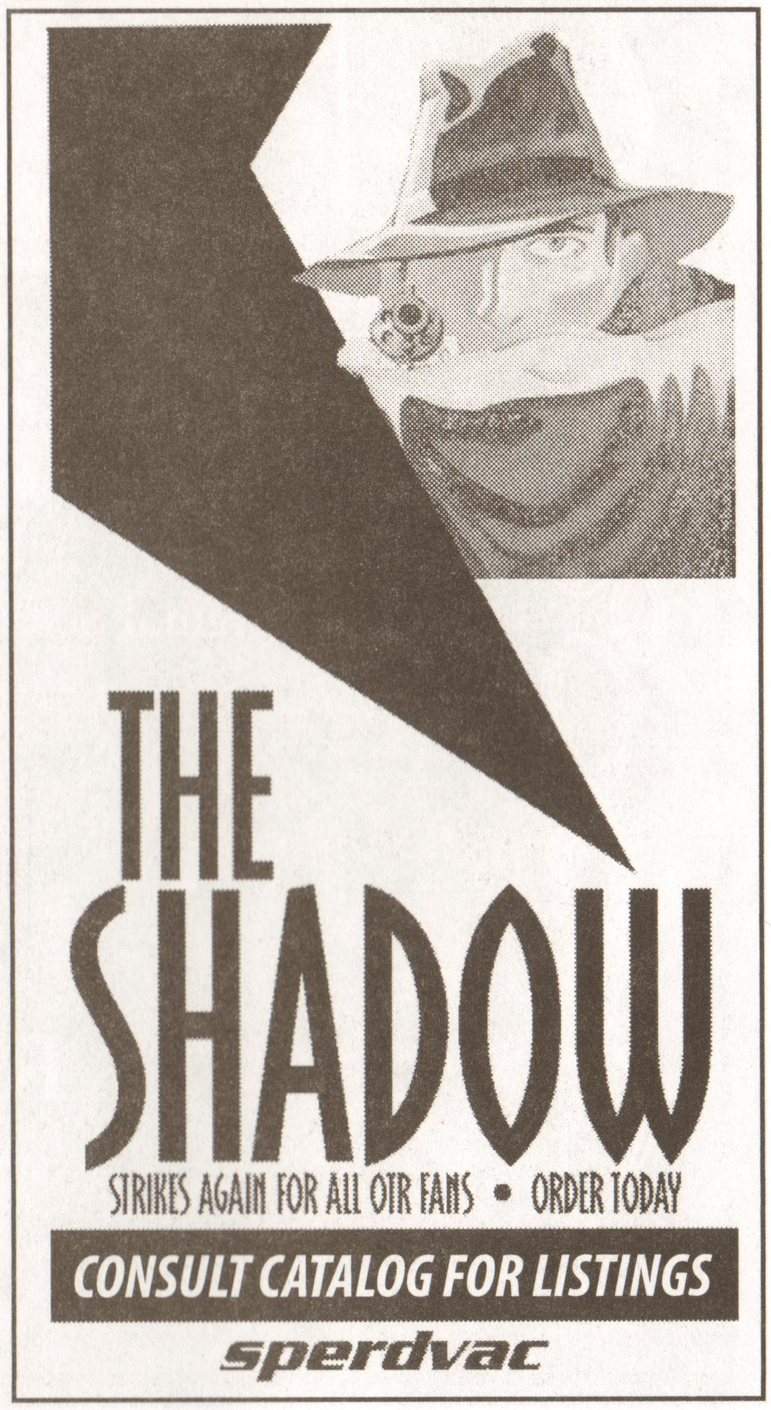

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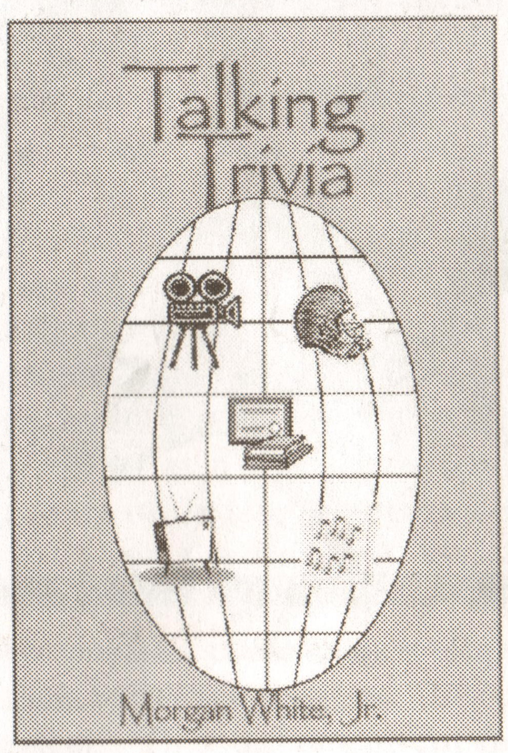

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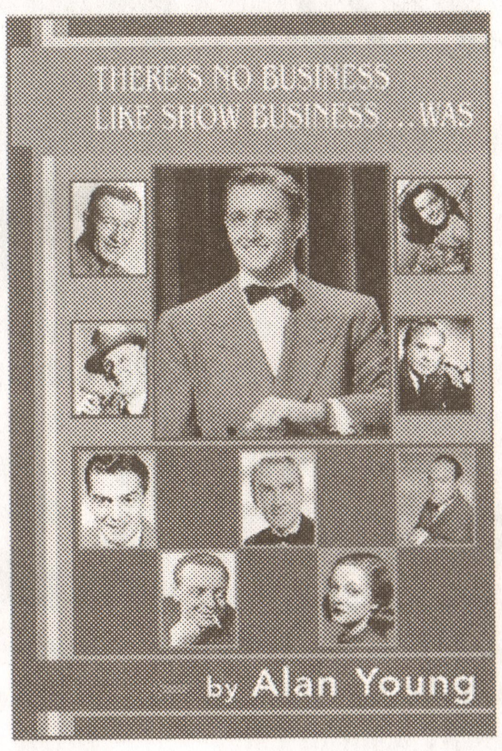

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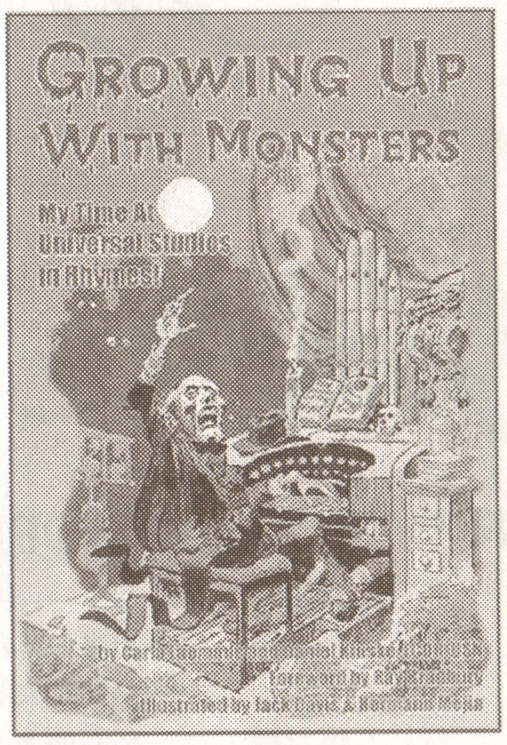

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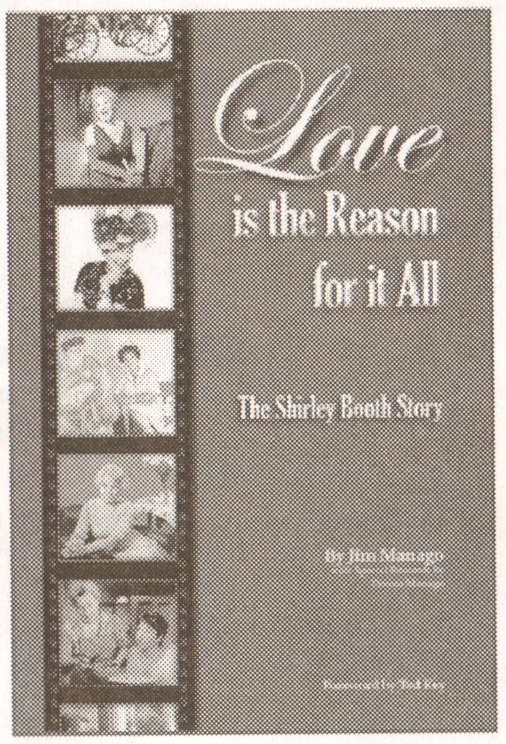

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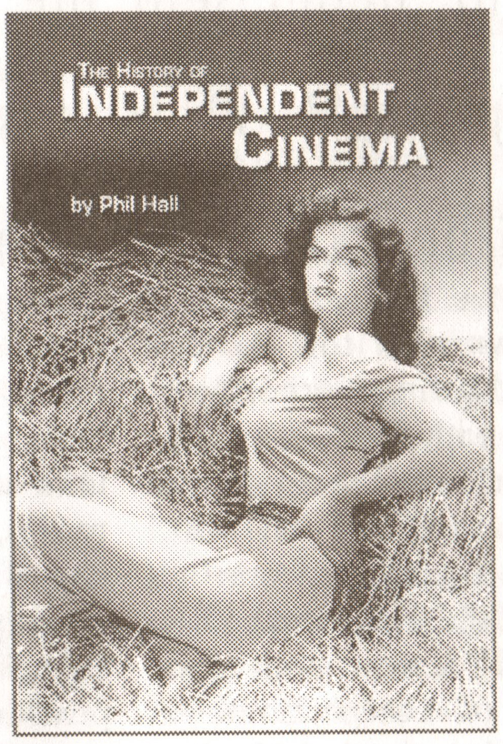

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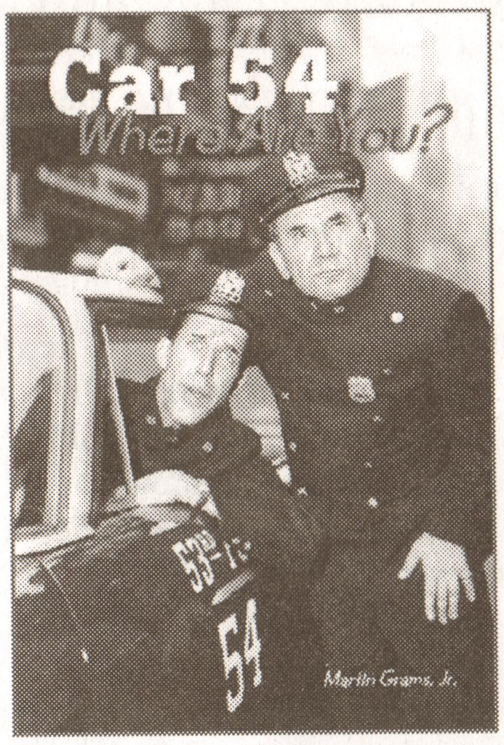

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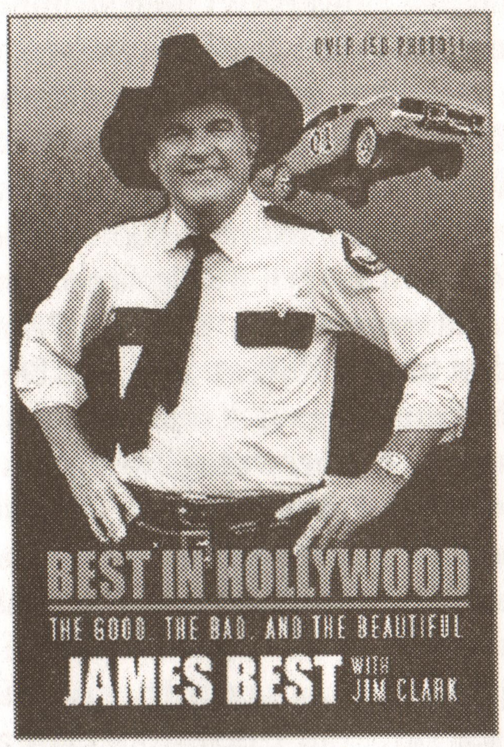

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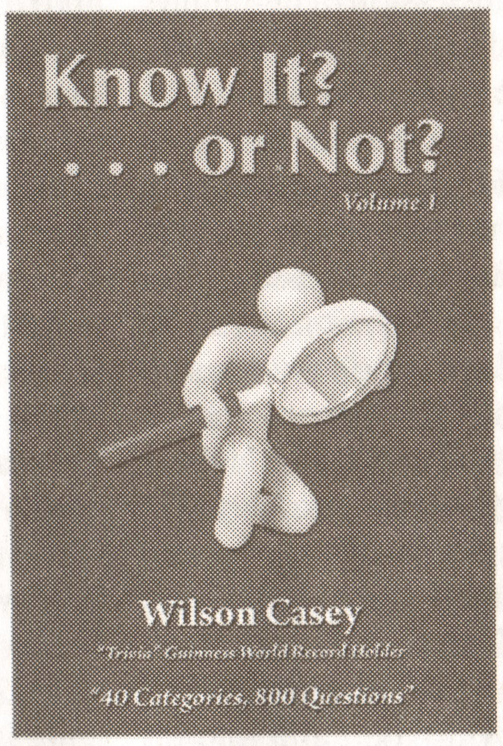

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Cecil & Sally

A STUDY IN OBSCURITY BY DOUG HOPKINSON

About two years ago a friend named David Siegel sent me an audio CD with two episodes of a radio show called *Cecil and Sally* circa 1930. My first thought was, what the heck is this? Probably some dusty old soap opera I'm not going to want to listen to.

When I played the CD what I heard was a couple of teenage kids having silly conversations with each other. The two episodes I had were not sequential. The show was extremely simplistic in nature. It also sounded as if the recording was made too fast. The girl's voice and giggles were really what made it sound too fast to me. The boy sounded like Arthur Lake (Dagwood Bumstead). I was convinced that it was him until I began to research the show. Once I started digging, I found that *Cecil and Sally* was not an obscure radio show at all but rather a forgotten gem that wooed the nation and succeeded. It was one of the earliest radio shows to be distributed via electrical transcription, just on the heels of *Amos 'n' Andy*. Tracing the history of the this radio show and its two main actors revealed many other intertwined stories. I found myself going off on different tangents several times and collecting information on other subjects when they intersected with the *Cecil and Sally* story.

In January 2009 I was very lucky to make the acquaintance of a gentleman by the name of Wayne Eberhart, who sold me a number of transcription discs of *Cecil and Sally*. Wayne happens to be the grandson of Vincent Kraft (right), who owned and founded radio station KJR in Seattle in 1922. He was also

co-owner of the Pacific Broadcasting Corporation along with Frederick Clift. Pacific owned radio station KYA in San Francisco, which broadcast from the top of the Clift Hotel. KJR and KYA were both later sold and became part of Adolph Linden's failed ABC network. My point here is that the transcription discs were owned by Vincent Kraft and stayed in the possession of his family all these years. Wayne discovered the discs in his grandfather's house as a youth. He even broadcast them to the public from his high school's radio station. He also recorded two episodes onto 45 rpm records, which he still sells to this day on his eBay store. Incidentally, those two episodes are the same ones that I was given which started me off on my quest.

In real life, Cecil and Sally were Johnnie—sometimes Johnny—Patrick and Helen Troy. John Patrick Goggan was born May 17, 1905 in Louisville, KY. As always, the more research you do the more seemingly conflicting information you will uncover. Depending on the source Johnnie was: A) abandoned by his parents and raised by his aunt and uncle, or B) abandoned by his parents and raised in various foster homes and boarding schools, or C) raised in a military family which frequently moved around from military base to military base, or D) traveled a lot with his family until he was made an orphan—whatever that means, or E) born and reared in the island city of Galveston, TX. The most complete biography I found listed his parents as John Francis and Myrtle (Osborn) Goggan. It also provided a list of schools he attended. They were, Holy Cross College, St. Edward's College, St. Mary's Seminary, Harvard University and Columbia University. Quite an impressive list but no details are given as to when or how long he attended any of them. One source claims that he had a delinquent youth. A 1932 article in the *Galveston Daily News* named Johnnie as the grandson of Thomas Goggan who was a well known music store owner in that city. All sources agree that in 1924 or 1925 he decided to strike off on his own. Depending on the source again, it is said Johnnie was hired as an announcer at radio station KPO or as a switchboard operator at radio station KYA. Both were San Francisco radio stations; KYA was not established until December of 1926 while KPO was in operation since April of 1922. Both accounts could be true but one thing is for sure, our Cecil, Johnnie Patrick, met his Sally, Helen Troy, at radio station KYA in 1928.

Helen Troy was born December 23, 1903 in San Francisco. She was educated in Traverse City, MI, at Sacred Heart Convent. After graduation she studied music, piano and organ in Chicago. She went back to Traverse City for two years then to Detroit and finally to San Francisco, always employed as a theatre organist. In 1928 she was hired as a staff organist at radio station KYA. This is where Sally met Cecil.

Helen made her stage debut beside her uncle at the age of five on what was then known as the Keith Circuit, which was a very dominant entertainment chain that was owned and operated by two not so nice men named Benjamin Keith and Edward Albee. They originally made a fortune by staging unauthorized productions of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. They used their money to build a chain of theaters across the country. They borrowed the variety entertainment concept from the originator, Tony Pastor, and used it to produce continuous multiple daily performances in their theatres. They called it "vaudeville." They did not invent the word but they were certainly responsible for making it a familiar term in the U.S. and Canada. Incidentally, some of you may be familiar with the motion picture company RKO-Radio Pictures. The "K" in RKO stands for Keith as in Benjamin Keith, but I digress.

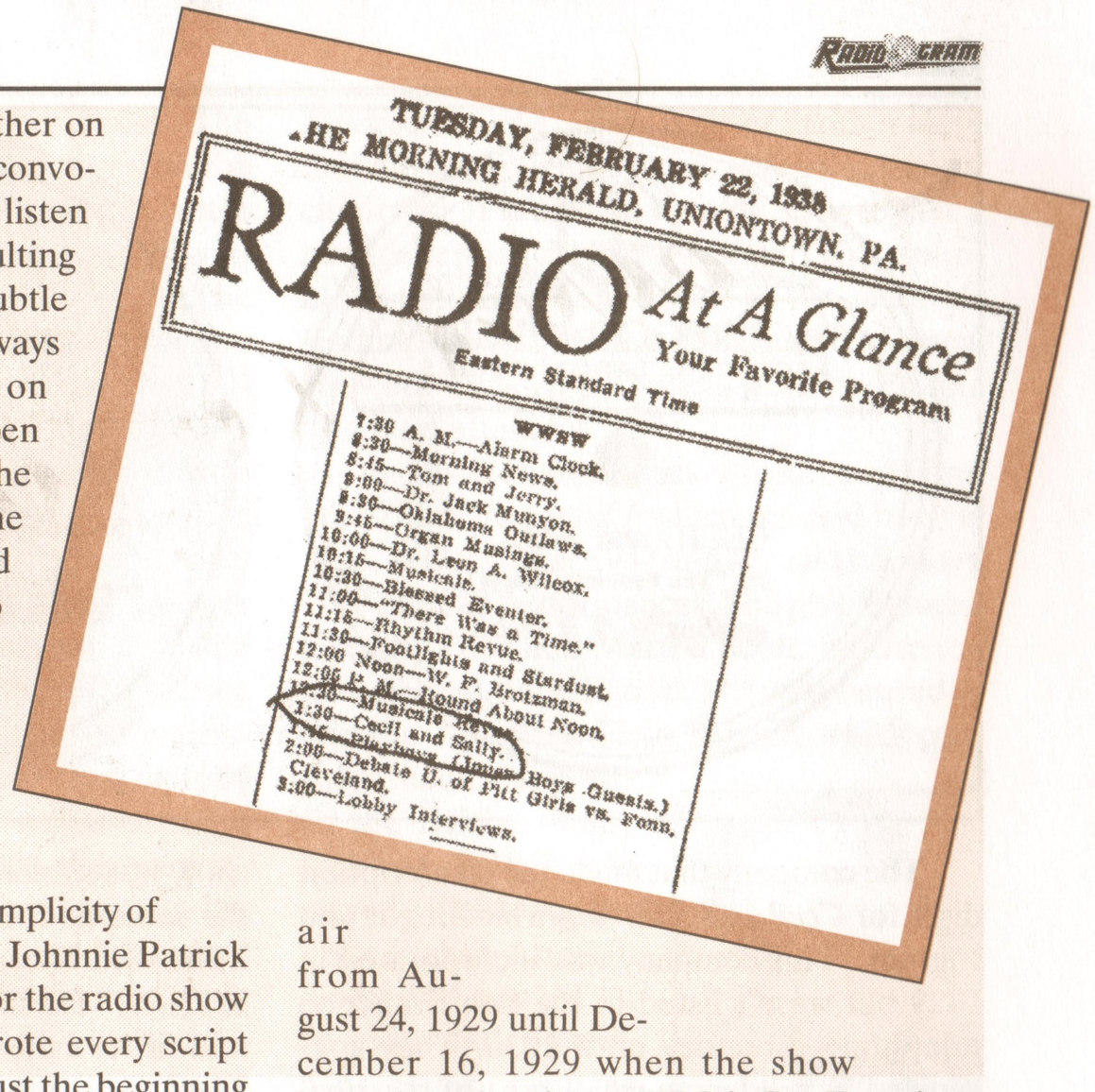
Helen would pick up her mail at the switchboard that Johnnie worked. They became friends and developed a regular routine where Johnnie would do Milt Gross characterizations and Helen would respond in baby talk. Milt Gross was a popular cartoonist and author of the day who was famous for his Yiddish dialect humor. They eventually worked up a couple skits, and one day a regularly scheduled show had to cancel at the last minute and somehow Johnnie and Helen got to fill-in. One source says that after filling in for three weeks they were taken out of the schedule only to be put right back in after the station received many calls and letters wanting more Cecil and Sally. And that is how it all began.

The show itself was titled *The Funniest Things* and in the beginning that is how it was listed in the radio schedules. This quickly changed to being listed as *Cecil and Sally*. It was often referred to in newspapers as "The Comic Strip of the Air." It began as a three day per week show but soon became a six day a week show in most places where it was broadcast. Some stations even played it twice a day. It was popular with children, college students, housewives and just about everyone else. The appeal of the show was its simplicity. It all revolved around a very average pair of American teenagers who always managed to find themselves in a predicament. The dialogue between Cecil and Sally was often entertaining. Sally could blather on and on following her own convoluted logic while Cecil would listen and interject contrary or insulting comments which were very subtle at times. The plots were always fairly believable centering on things that could easily happen to a pair of young teens. The show was "chapterized" in the sense that a storyline could run anywhere from four to 20 shows to conclude. Over the years *Cecil and Sally* lost money, found money, got arrested several times, solved crimes, went to college and eventually got married to each other. The simplicity of the writing was the genius of Johnnie Patrick and the formula to success for the radio show as well as his future. He wrote every script himself. *Cecil and Sally* was just the beginning of his long and successful writing career.

The Funniest Things was first broadcast in 1928 on KYA. The earliest published date of broadcast so far is April 10, 1929, but *The Funniest Things* is listed to air the next day on KYA.

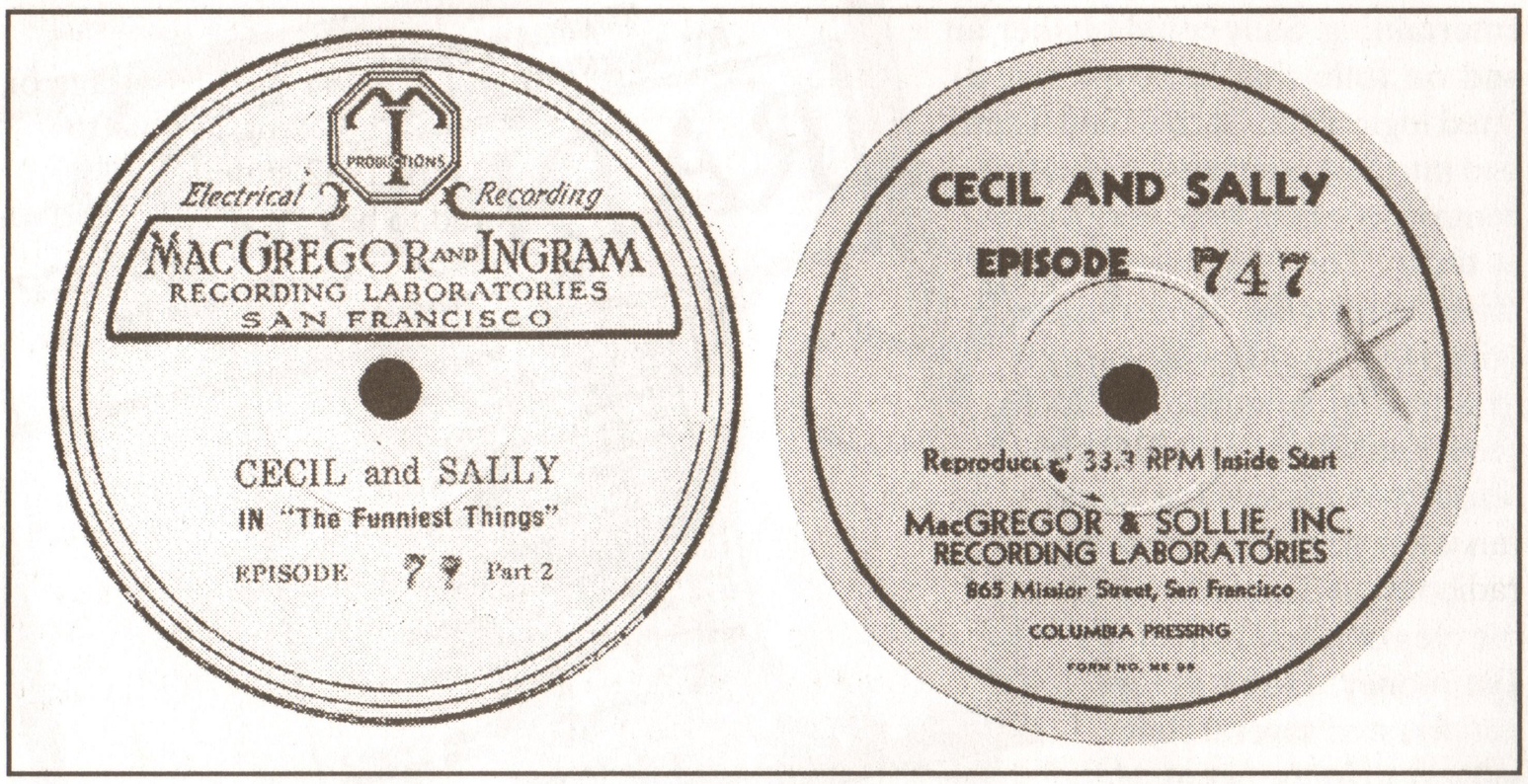
In November 1928, KYA was sold to the new ABC network, which began as a string of radio stations running up the West Coast from Los Angeles to Spokane with its flagship station being KJR in Seattle. The president and owner of ABC was Adolph Linden (right), who quickly expanded his network into Salt Lake City and Denver. By July 1929 Linden had pushed into the Midwest market with radio stations in Lincoln NE, Muscatine IA, and St Louis, Chicago, and Minneapolis. There were already plans and deals set for the East Coast but they came to a screeching halt on August 23 when Linden announced all operations at ABC were suspended. The company filed for bankruptcy the same day. At the time of its demise the ABC network consisted of 20 different radio stations. As the story unfolded a scandal was revealed and fingers were pointed and arrests were made. Adolph Linden was the central figure and on March 28, 1933, after four years of litigation, he was finally sent away to Walla Walla State Penitentiary in Washington state on charges of grand larceny where he spent the next five years until his parole on March 19, 1938. This is a story in itself and I find myself digressing yet again.

The point is that the ABC network greatly expanded the exposure of *Cecil and Sally* to the radio audience. With the failing of the ABC network, however, *Cecil and Sally* were off the air from August 24, 1929 until December 16, 1929 when the show began broadcasting on KPO in San Francisco. Johnnie and Helen quickly made a decision to move to electrical transcriptions.


TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1938
THE MORNING HERALD, UNIONTOWN, PA.
RADIO At A Glance
Your Favorite Program
Eastern Standard Time
WWSW
7:30 A. M.—Alarm Clock.
8:30—Morning News.
8:45—Tom and Jerry.
9:00—Dr. Jack Munyon.
9:30—Oklahoma Outlaws.
9:45—Organ Musings.
10:00—Dr. Leon A. Wilcox.
10:15—Musicals.
10:30—Blessed Eventer.
11:00—"There Was a Time."
11:15—Rhythm Revue.
11:30—Footlights and Stardust.
12:00 Noon—W. P. Brotzman.
12:06 P. M.—Round About Noon.
1:30—Musicale Revue.
1:45—Cecil and Sally.
2:00—Debate U. of Pitt Girls vs. Penn, Cleveland.
3:00—Lobby Interviews.

Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll as Amos and Andy had already proven the effectiveness of syndication via electrical transcriptions not much more than a year prior. If a network of radio stations could increase a fan base, a syndicated release via electrical transcription would increase a fan base exponentially and that is exactly what happened. By 1930 it was estimated that *Cecil and Sally* had over 15 million fans. Their show was broadcast on 53 radio stations in 27 states, 5 Canadian provinces, the Hawaiian Islands, Australia and New Zealand. This is not the description of an obscure show.

A 1930 article gives credit in part to Dick Haller for the success of *Cecil and Sally*. He was vice-president and general manager of Patrick and Company, which handled the business interests of *Cecil and Sally*. Haller was previously involved with a very popular radio show in Portland, OR called *The Hoot Owls*. This show had had a rather talented young performer by the name of Mel Blanc who would soon move on to Hollywood to bigger and better things. Dick Haller had also been production manager for the failed ABC network. One could draw the conclusion that Haller helped guide the young Mr. Patrick to the pathway of success via the electrical transcription.



The company that made the transcription discs for *Cecil and Sally* was MacGregor and Ingram. This company was incorporated in 1929 but wasn't listed in the San Francisco telephone directory until 1930. They specialized in producing small runs of personal recordings for musicians and nonprofessionals. In 1932 the company changed its name to MacGregor and Sollie, also located in San Francisco. This company lasted until 1937 when it became CP MacGregor Studios and eventually moved to Hollywood.

The MacGregor in these companies was C.P. "Chip" MacGregor (right). Prior to starting these transcription companies he was manager of the San Francisco territory for Brunswick Records. Going into the transcription business was a natural transition for him, and he made a name for himself in the transcription business. He not only produced them but he also distributed them. The list of radio shows he produced as syndicated electrical transcriptions is impressive. The list includes *The Shadow*, Cecil and Sally, Sambo and Ed, *Proudly We Hail*, *Al Jolson*, *Jubilee*, *Lux Radio Theatre*, *Hollywood Theatre*, and *Eb and Zeb* as well as musicians such as Leadbelly, Charlie Parker, Stan Kenton, Peggy Lee and many others. Many people felt that transcription discs were not equal to a live performance and took something away from a radio program. MacGregor countered this by maintaining that transcriptions allowed for a flawless performance and that losing the excitement of a live performance was a small price to pay. In 1941, he began producing for Skippy peanut butter *Hollywood Theatre*. He was also the host of the show. It became one of the most successful syndicated radio shows ever. It had all the commercials built-in. It ran for eight years and made Skippy a household name. Due to the fact that the format of the show was similar to *Lux* and C.P.'s role was the same as that of "C.B.'s"—Cecil B DeMille—he became known as "The DeMille of Discs." He had his own radio show in the mid-fifties called *The C.P. MacGregor Show*. There are two circulating shows that are both AFRTS broadcasts (circa 1957) of *The C.P. MacGregor Show*. MacGregor was on the radio as late as 1965 hosting *Heartbeat Theatre*.

Cecil and Sally were at the height of their popularity between 1930 and 1932. On Jan 21, 1933 KPO announced that *Cecil and Sally* was coming to an end as far as live appearances behind the microphone went. The article in the newspaper claimed that Johnnie and Helen had exclusively been broadcasting live on KPO while everywhere else they were heard via electrical transcription. This is contrary to every other article I have found. Within a week the newspapers reported that there was a rumor that *Cecil and Sally* might be touring as a stage show, and on February 18, 1933 an official announcement came out that there was a three-act play entitled *Cecil and Sally* starring Johnnie Patrick and Helen Troy that would open in Oakland, CA on February 26th. By March 20, 1933 *Cecil and Sally* were back on the radio in San Francisco but not live. KYA picked up their transcriptions and announced the show would continue right where it left off in January on KPO.

The touring stage play began in Oakland on February 26, 1933 as a three-act comedy sketch. It was written by Johnnie Patrick, using scripts he had previously written for the radio show. Aside from *Cecil and Sally* the play featured six other characters from the radio show; Uncle Thomas, Aunt Bess, the Widow Mason, Gregory Gilliwater, Dr. Morgan and Mamie.

It is unclear if any of these supporting characters were portrayed by the original cast members from the radio show. By May 1933 the tour was in Fresno and was billed as a two-act sketch. The tour progressed Eastward, and in January 1934 they were in Lincoln, NE. In February they were in Cedar Rapids, IA with the next stop scheduled for Albert Lea, MN.

In March 1934 they played at The Strand in Oshkosh. I have been unable to find any stops beyond Oshkosh. Every review was favorable and the tour was considered a success. The actor that portrayed Gregory Gilliwater was singled out by one reviewer as being particularly good. His name was Ralph Bell. If this was indeed the same Ralph Bell we all know from *Barry Craig* and *CBS Radio Mystery Theatre* and many other radio shows then my math indicates that he would have

been 17 or 18 years-old at that time. Then again it could be just coincidence.

Helen Troy returned to San Francisco and to the radio in June 1934. She became a cast member of a show called *Carefree Carnival* which was broadcast on radio station KGO, an NBC station. Her first appearance was on June 9th. There are two shows known to be in circulation. Luckily one of them has Miss Troy in it, and interestingly she portrayed a telephone operator in this show, a role that was to have a profound affect on her future.

Upon his return from the tour, Johnnie Patrick was less visible to the public until September 18, 1934 when it was reported in newspapers that he had filed for bankruptcy. Listed as one of his creditors was Helen Troy in the amount of $120.00. Research shows that Patrick must have devoted his time to writing. His first play titled *Hell Freezes Over* opened in New York in December 1935 and closed in January 1936 after 25 performances. It featured George Tobias, a character actor known most for his much later television role as Abner Kravitz on *Bewitched* although he had appeared in many Broadway performances as well as films and television shows. In 1936 Patrick was hired on by 20th Century-Fox as a screenwriter where he was credited with 17 films between 1936 and 1938.

Helen Troy, on the other hand, was making her debut in front of the camera. In April 1936 she picked up a small role in *Song and Dance Man*, a George M. Cohan story which starred Claire Trevor. Ironically, her character's name in the film was Sally. She played a telephone operator, a role that she was most likely specifically chosen for from her work on *Carefree Carnival*. She did so well that she became typecast for it for the remainder of her rather brief career. At the end of April she had already landed a term contract for Claire Trevor's next movie *Human Cargo*.

In 1937 she joined the cast of Eddie Cantor's radio show, *Texaco Town*. Her character was naturally that of a telephone operator. Eddie always referred to her as "operator" until a naming contest was announced. Listeners were asked to send in their choice of a name and the reason for the name. The judges of the contest were Rupert Hughes, Walt Disney, George Burns and Gracie Allen. On the night of the April 18, 1937 show Eddie Cantor told the audience that there were more than 250,000 letters submitted. Of these, five had the same name that the judges chose. The winner of the contest was then chosen on the basis of the reason given for the name. Cantor neglected to reveal that reason but the winning name chosen was Saymore Saymore. The winner of the contest was Miss Susie McKee of Valdosta, GA who received a trip to Hollywood for two as a prize.

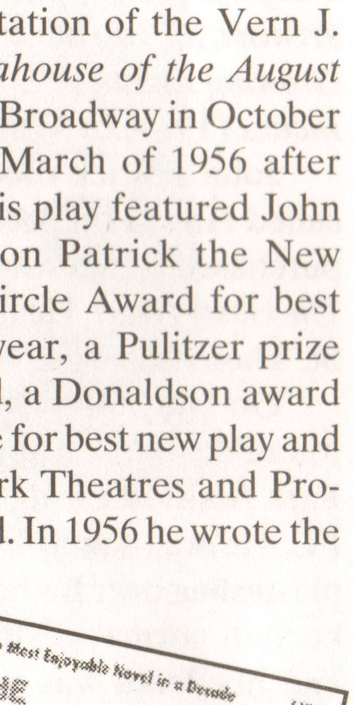
Meanwhile, Johnnie Patrick is said to have contributed to the NBC show *Streamlined Shakespeare* in 1937. He was also reportedly linked to writing for Helen Hayes and her radio show. If this is true, she could very well have helped open doors for his play writing career that was yet to blossom. He continued his work with 20th Century-Fox in 1938 until December 11th when it was announced that he was let go. After 1938 there are no screen writing credits to his name for the next ten years. As Johnnie Patrick's career was slowly gaining speed, Helen Troy's was quickly winding down.

Helen's last known radio appearance was on *Texaco Town* on Sept 29, 1937, which was the opening night of the second season. She was in six films in 1937 and one film each in 1938 and 1939. She was in two films in 1940 before retiring due to an undisclosed illness. Sadly, Helen Troy passed away on November 1, 1942 at the age of 38. She was survived by her husband of many years, Dr. Alton Edward Horton, and her two children, Kathryn Jane (15) and Troy Thomas (18).

Interesting is the fact that during the *Cecil and Sally* years there was never any mention of Helen being married and having a family. Newspaper and magazine articles portrayed her as a young single woman although in their defense they never stated it as a fact. Newspapers even played upon this by noting that Helen received at least one marriage proposal a week in her fan mail that she personally responded to every time, kindly turning down the offers.

The math involved would indicate that Helen was married and already had a four year-old son and a one year-old daughter by the time she was hired at KYA. The same media portrayal was applied to Johnnie Patrick as well. All the articles stated that he was a roadster-driving, eligible young bachelor living in his Golden Gate, ocean-view high-rise apartment. His biography indicates that he was married in 1925 to a woman named Mildred LeGaye. There is never another mention anywhere about divorce, re-marriage or children. It is also interesting to note that a newspaper article in 1932 stated that Johnnie Patrick aspired to be one of the country's leading playwrights and that those who knew his work and temperament were predicting he would attain his goal.

In 1942, John Patrick wrote his second play *The Willow and I* which opened in New York in December 1942 and closed in January 1943 after 28 performances. The play featured Gregory Peck and Martha Scott. Before the play opened, John Patrick had volunteered to join the American Field Service, which provided medical support to the British Army fighting WWII. He served with Montgomery's Eighth Army in Egypt and saw action in India and Burma. This experience was the foundation for his next play, which he finished writing on a ship-ride home after his tour of duty in 1944. The play was titled *The Hasty Heart* that opened in New York in January 1945 and closed in June 1945 after 204 performances. This play featured Richard Basehart. The play's successful run led to a film adaptation in 1949 starring Ronald Reagan and then a television movie in 1983.



It was in 1953 that John Patrick reached the pinnacle of his long career as a writer. He wrote a stage adaptation of the Vern J. Sneider novel, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* which opened on Broadway in October of 1953 and closed in March of 1956 after 1027 performances. This play featured John Forsythe. Teahouse won Patrick the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for best American play of the year, a Pulitzer prize in drama, a Tony award, a Donaldson award from *Billboard* magazine for best new play and the League of New York Theatres and Producers Aegis Club award. In 1956 he wrote the screenplay for the movie adaptation that starred Marlon Brando and Glenn

"It was in 1953 that John Patrick reached the pinnacle of his long career as a writer. He wrote a stage adaptation of the Vern J. Sneider novel, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* which opened on Broadway in October of 1953 and closed in March of 1956 after 1027 performances."

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Ford; also in the cast were Eddie Albert and Harry Morgan. John Patrick went on to write at least 48 more plays over the following 39 years including a musical adaptation of *Teahouse* (1970), under the title *Lovely Ladies, Kind Gentlemen*. None of his other plays had the same acclaim as *Teahouse* although many are still being performed in schools and small theatres to this day. As for screenwriting, John Patrick was responsible for several that resulted in prominent movies. Among them were *Three Coins in a Fountain* (1954), *Love is a Many Splendored Thing* (1955), *High Society* (1956), *Les Girls* (1957), *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and *Gigot* (1962). He also won two awards in 1957 for his screenwriting of *Les Girls*, the Screenwriters Guild award and the Foreign Correspondents award.

Unlike Helen Troy, John Patrick never got in front of a movie camera although a few Internet sites erroneously credit him with several film appearances. Patrick also liked to compose poetry and dabble in art. He did the artwork for two book covers in the 1990s: *The Growing Light* (1993) by Martha Conley and *Inches* (1994) by William Marshall.

John Patrick owned a 65-acre estate he called Hasty Hill, located in Suffern, NY. He purchased it following the success of his play *The Hasty Heart*. He also lived in retirement in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands for many years.

On November 7, 1995 John Patrick was found dead in his apartment at the Heritage Park Assisted Living facility in Delray Beach, FL. He was found by a housekeeper with a plastic bag over his head. He was said to have been in normal health for a 90 year-old man and his death was ruled a suicide. The last thing John Patrick wrote was a poem he left behind. It was titled "A Suicide Note" and it read in part that "... I won't dispute my right to die. I'll only give the reasons why. You reach a certain point in time. When life has lost reason and rhyme..."

Although in the end he wasn't remembered for having written *Cecil and Sally*, it isn't surprising.

Many years had gone by and radio shows were and are ancient history to a modern society. This illustrates how short the memory of our culture has become and perhaps has always been. A few generations go by and memories pass on with the people that held them. In its day, *Cecil and Sally* was well known to millions of people. Today, very few people are even aware of this old radio show.

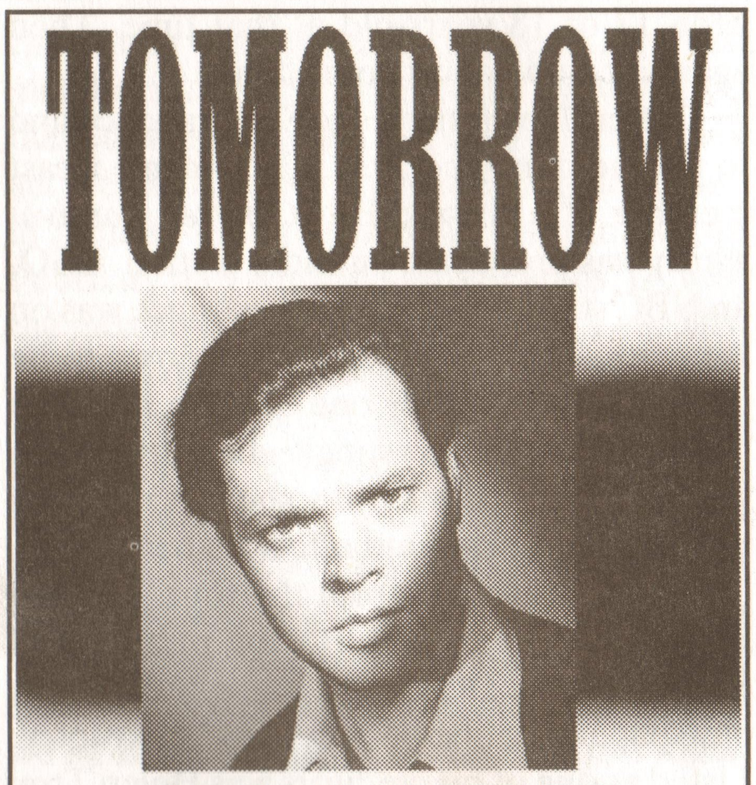
Cecil and Sally enjoyed a nice run on the airwaves. My suspicions are that no more transcriptions of the show were made after January 1933 as Johnnie Patrick and Helen Troy were preparing to go on tour and after that they went off to establish themselves individually. They were finished as a team.

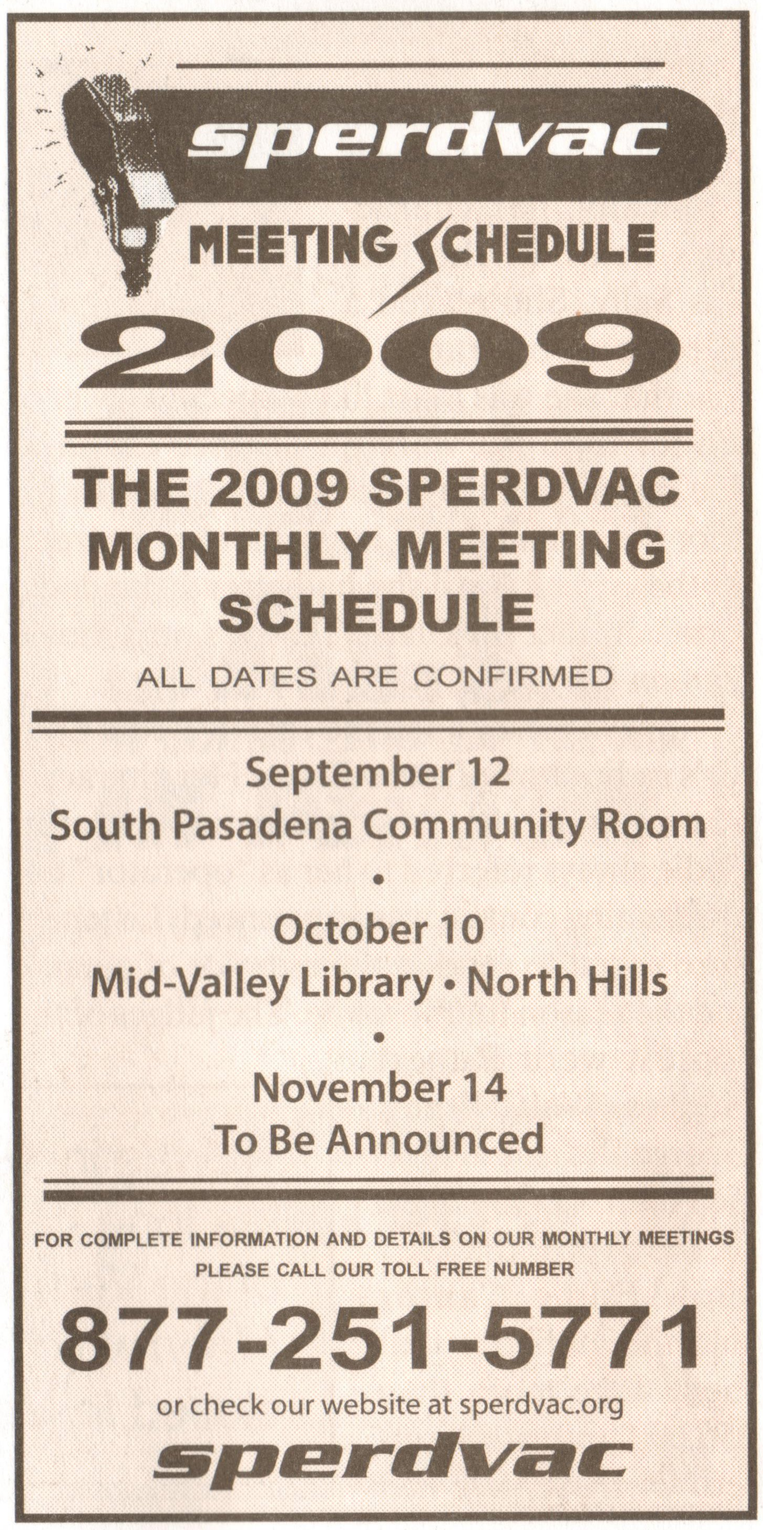
The radio show itself, however, was not quite finished. Electrical transcriptions made sure of that. Many cities enjoyed the show for years afterwards.

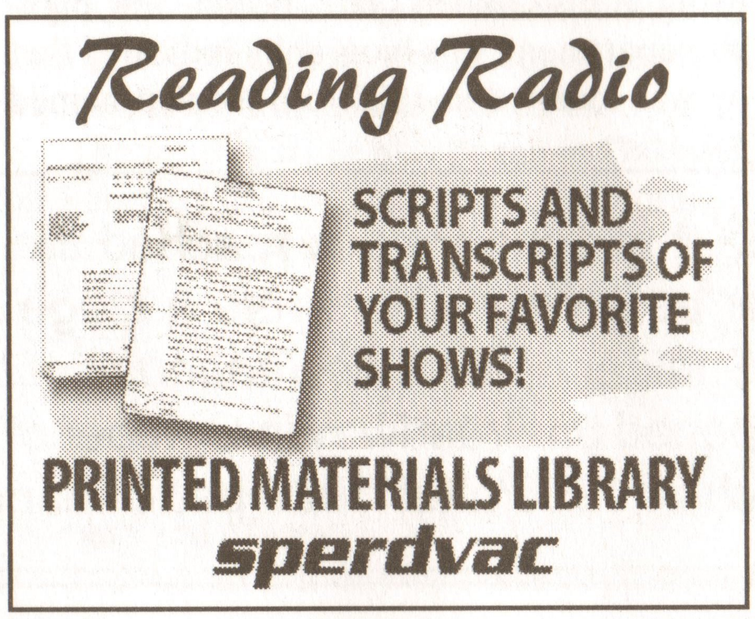
The exact number of shows in the *Cecil and Sally* series is not known but an article in the *Avalanche Journal* from Lubbock, TX on June 20, 1937 noted that the *Cecil and Sally* show was leaving the air on KYFO radio after 1392 broadcasts. The latest published date of broadcast in the U.S. that I found was February 22, 1938 in Uniontown, PA on radio station WWSW.

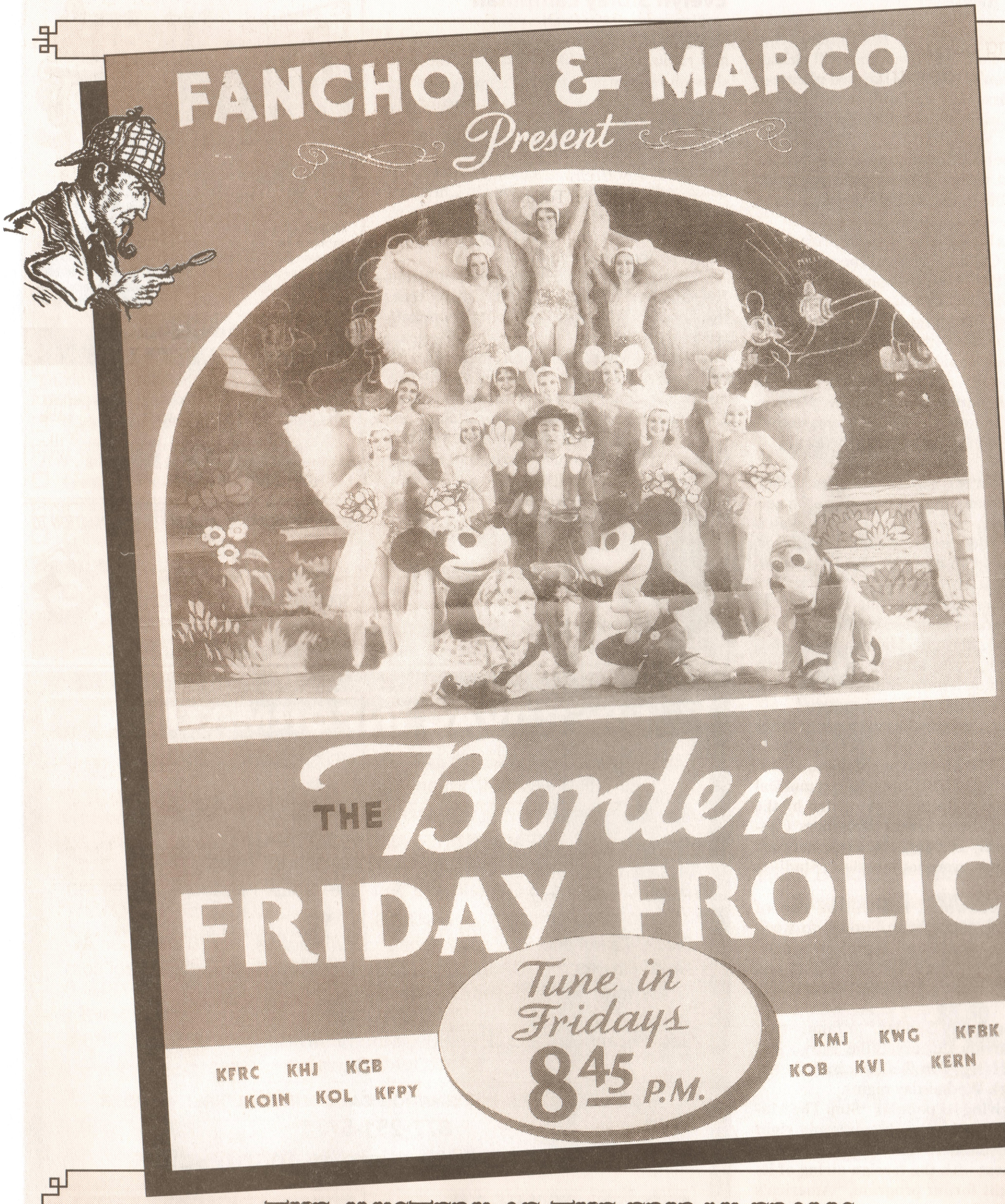
Cecil and Sally, a 15-minute West Coast radio show that through a series of fortunate events, timing, writing and foresight, captured the imagination and attention of millions of listeners nationwide for an entire decade. A 15-minute show that launched the short career of Helen Troy, the long career of Johnnie Patrick and rubbed shoulders along the way with some very interesting and influential people associated with the radio industry. A 15-minute show that time has relegated to obscurity. A 15-minute show that deserves to be remembered in radio history.

Illustrations courtesy of the author.









THE MYSTERY OF THE FRIDAY FROLIC

Larry Holian of Sunnyvale, CA has sent this poster circa 1935 of a radio program apparently called *The Borden Friday Frolic* that featured Disney characters—Mickey and Minnie Mouse and their dog Pluto are prominently displayed—including chorus girls equipped with pre-mouseketeer ears. Larry has identified the stations as KFRC-San Francisco, KHJ-Los Angeles, KGB-San Diego, KMJ-Fresno, KWG-Stockton, KFBK-Sacramento, KERN-Bakersfiled, KOB-Albuquerque, KOIN-Portland, KOL-Seattle, KFPY-Spokane, KVI-Tacoma. Anyone with info about this obscurity then please let us know.

Radio in Review

ers during hot weather. It's unlikely that better-than-usual programming will change this—for want of a less hackneyed phrase—state of affairs. So it may well be nothing but a fight for scraps, at least during the summer months.

Nevertheless, 24 new programs hit the air lanes last week. Several of them should be comparable to the best the regular season has to offer.

NBC has brought on its super prize show, "Hollywood Calling." It should be in the same class with CBS' "Sing It Again," and ABC's "Stop The Music." This Sunday evening program is being inaugurated now in readiness for winter combat with Jack Benny.

"Who Said That?" popular new quiz with Robert Trout as moderator is now listed on NBC's Sunday afternoon schedule. "Voices and Events," another new NBC show, sounds much like Mutual's evening "Newsreel" program.

CBS has devised a Monday night schedule that will bear watching. "Young Love," a new college comedy series starring Janet Waldo and Jimmy Lydon, is followed by Joan Davis, one-time queen of comedy, who show is entitled "Leave It To Joan."

Next comes comedian Abe Burrows. In previous programs, Burrows confined the cast to one person, himself. His new show finds him surrounded with all sorts of characters. He will be more entertaining with his new format.

"Strawhat Concerts," a new musical series featuring light concert and operetta music, rounds out CBS' Monday night lineup.

Tuesday night, CBS broadcasts a musical program, "Dress Parade," presented by the Army Ground Forces band and Soldiers' Chorus, Wednesday evening, the same network airs a 90-minute symphonic series, "Stadium Concerts."

NBC, meanwhile, has shifted two of its comedy programs from Sunday to week nights. Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, newcomers, are now heard Tuesday nights and the irascible Henry Morgan, Wednesday evenings.

"Chicken Every Sunday," a family-type program starring fluttery Billie Burke and announcer Harry Von Zell, is aired on the same network Wednesday nights.

ABC is giving its popular "Stop The Music" no rest, continuing the giveaway right through the summer. The network is given a further boost with the foreign airing of its Tuesday night forum program, "America's Town Meeting."

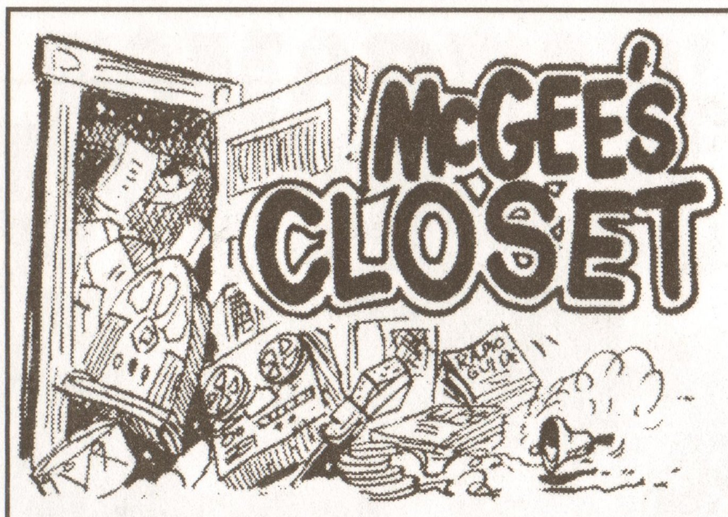
Mutual premiered a new detective series last Sunday, "Mystery Hall," and comes up with another one today, entitled "The Saint."

These programs are just a few of the many making initial broadcasts within the past two weeks. Radio's biggest summer season is underway.

Evelyn Sibley Lampman

to extend her reach as a writer. The *Dr. Christian* radio program billed itself as "the only show in radio where the audience writes the script." Evelyn took the show at its word and offered a script called "To All Men" which was selected to kick off the program's tenth season on November 6, 1946. The play was described as "a fantasy in which Dr. Christian, while seriously ill from over-work, goes to heaven, is taken on a tour by St. Peter, and meets Hippocrates and Pasteur."

Two years later, Doubleday published Evelyn's first children's novel, *Crazy Creek*, the story of a young girl who drifts in a rickety old boat down Crazy Creek, seventy-five years into the past where she happily meets up with her ancestors. Evelyn was soon writing two novels a year; her radio days were now behind her. Another 50 books followed before her passing in 1980. It was always her background in radio, which she would credit with helping her find her way as an author.



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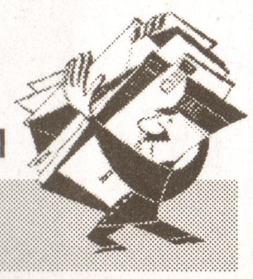

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