

NOSTALGIA DIGEST ^{AND} RADIO GUIDE



ELLIOTT LEWIS

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NOSTALGIA DIGEST[©]

BOOK THIRTEEN CHAPTER TWO

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HELLO, OUT THERE IN RADIOLAND!!

Things are really happening with the new Museum of Broadcast Communications.

A permanent site for the Museum has been selected and construction is under way. The Museum will be part of the River City complex at 800 S. Wells in Chicago. That's just south of Congress Parkway and what a special place that's going to be for all of us who have a special interest in the good old days of broadcasting.

It appears that the Museum will be open to the public this spring, probably around May 1st. That's when the great heritage of radio, television and broadcast advertising will come alive in a setting we've dreamed about for a long time.

There will be the Kraft Television Theatre where broadcast-related programming will be presented, including seminars, lectures, special retrospectives and opportunities to meet personalities and see and hear their work.

The A. C. Nielsen Research Center will provide an opportunity to see and hear tapes of great radio and TV performances.

Decade Rooms will depict bygone eras, giving visitors a chance to hear the Green Hornet in a 1940s living room, to see I Love Lucy on a 1950s Zenith and watch the Brady Bunch in a 1960s den.

There will be a television newsroom and a radio broadcast studio.

That radio studio, incidentally, will be the Pierre Andre Studio being moved from WGN to the Museum. It will be the place where we'll soon broadcast every Saturday afternoon Those Were The Days program on WNIB.

We hope you will be part of the new Museum of Broadcast Communications. If you would like more details, call 565-1950 and leave your name and address. An attractive brochure and membership information will be sent promptly.

Share the experience!

—Chuck Schaden

SPEAKING OF RADIO



Chuck Schaden's Conversation with

ELLIOTT LEWIS



Some time ago we had the opportunity to visit with Elliott Lewis who starred on the Phil Harris-Alice Faye Show as Frankie Remley and did so much other work in radio during the 1940s and 50s. He was working on some special writing projects at the Paramount Pictures lot in Hollywood, California. We took advantage of the occasion to tell him what we had thought for a long time: that Remley and Harris were to radio what Laurel and Hardy were to movies and Kramden and Norton were to television.

Well, thank you. I remember those days with the utmost fondness. I don't know when in my life I have so enjoyed a job. It was just an absolutely marvelous job. When I realize that we did that for nine years, Phil and Alice and I, and Walter Tetley and Sheldon Leonard. It was just fun, wonderfully refreshing . . . the two characters and the way it played and the relationships.

The rapport that you guys had was marvelous.

Well, you know, Jack Benny was my teacher, really. I was here in Los Angeles when I was still going to school. I was going to junior college, and right across the street is the KHJ building. When I was eighteen I worked over in that building, which was then NBC. It had just been built and I worked in that building for Jack Benny, and then on and off for him for all those years.

You mean on the air?

On the air, as an actor, never playing Remley, always another character, because Remley never appeared until he appeared on the Harris show. But Jack was always fond of Phil and me and of what we were doing and was most helpful and kind of guided us and gave us suggestions. I remember sitting down with him one day and I said,

"Please explain something to me. I know that when Phil and I work that it's funny and the jokes are funny, but I don't understand why the laughs are so big. What are we doing?" He said, "You've found a wonderful thing in the relationship that you two have. The two of you say and do what everybody in the audience would like to say and do in a similar situation if they had the nerve. But nobody has the kind of nerve you two guys have, and that's what people are laughing at. They're just delighted." It always surprised me, you know. We'd say something like, "You stick Tetley in the oven" and he says, "Let me out! Let me out!" and you just wait and say, "What do you think?" And the whole audience is screaming! It is, if you think about it, ridiculous. You don't leave somebody in an oven, but that we would even consider it and think about it and stand there and say, "Well, I don't know" and to talk about it, and this poor soul is in the oven, screaming and yelling and banging on the oven door!

There was one show where Phil and Remley were marching down the street behind an elephant, on Hollywood Boulevard. They wouldn't think about doing that on television.

No! We did one, I remember, that Dick Chevillat and Ray Singer wrote, where they buy a race horse and the description of the race horse was so hilarious . . . and of course, you couldn't do it on television. You can't get a horse as running slowly or more quickly because his stomach is dragging on the ground! But, you know, these men would buy this and then consider it. You know, they're talking about it, saying, "Does it look right to you?" No! He thinks there's something wrong—a horse shouldn't look like that. A marvelous, marvelous relationship, very well written by Ray Singer and Dick Chevillat.

They wrote the whole series?

They didn't write the first twenty-six weeks or so.

It started on the Fitch Bandwagon, didn't it?

Right. And I wasn't on it at first. I was doing something else. And Remley, the real Frank Remley, was a left-handed guitar player who worked with Phil's band and on the Benny show. He was a dear, dear, marvelous man. Well, they decided when Phil and Alice had their own show to use Phil's best friend, Frankie. So they wrote it in and they said to Remley, "Here you go." And he got up and he couldn't read it. He was a guitar player, not an actor. So, I had worked with all of them for a long time on the Benny show and we all knew each other and were close friends. I was doing a show down the hall and Phil came in—they did the first show without me, they cut the Remley thing—and he said, "We're going to write Remley in on the second show. The script is ready and we have to establish the relationship. Could you come in and do it? It'll take you a couple of hours and that will be the end of it." And I came in and did it and we got the kind of laughs that I've been



FILICIA LEWIS

describing to you—which neither of us understood—and we did it every week for nine years.

That's how it happened. I think Bill Moser and Bob Connolly wrote the first twenty-six shows. Then Ray and Dick wrote it until, possibly, the last year, when they were off on something else. I have a memory of Marvin Fisher and Jack Douglas working on the show, 'cause I remember Jack wrote some wild, wild material. But Singer and Chevillat were responsible for the show.

The show started under the sponsorship of Fitch Shampoo and then Rexall came in there.

Right, and then RCA had it in the last couple of years. We were working for the dog, His Master's Voice.

The Phil Harris-Alice Faye Show was one of the greatest, funniest comedy shows on radio, with a story line, with the variety, the singing of Phil and

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*Alice, the continuity of characters.
Walter Tetley was Julius . . .*

. . . Julius, the deliberate one. Sheldon was all kind of things, in and out as a friend of Phil's and Frankie's that Alice couldn't bear because he was so obviously conning everybody, the way Lennie does.

I have to ask you this. On the Benny show, whenever they referred to Frankie Remley, he was, of course, a lush, a drunkard. Now, was he really—

Oh, no! No. He was a very sweet, nice, quiet man, a really dear man. He passed away some time ago—fifteen years or more—but he was a dear man, a very nice man.

It's interesting how they made a fictional character out of a real person.

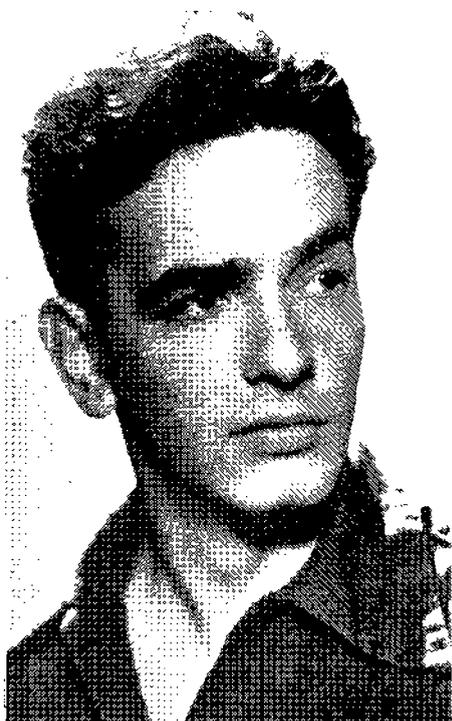
Yes, Well, that's the secret of Jack Benny, who was the comedy genius of all time and who taught us all. That was his theory, that you made jokes out of nothing. They would make a joke out of something that started at the beginning of the half hour show and by the end of the show you're laughing hysterically! Nothing funny, really; there wasn't a joke, just the gas man, and the car, and all of the things. The train to Cucamonga and . . .

I remember a routine we did on the Benny show where every year Jack and the group go to New York and therefore is the scene in the railway station. And Frank Nelson is saying, "Yeeees." He's selling tickets and Jack's in line and Mel Blanc is on the speaker going ". . . and Cu—cumonga" and, you know, every year we did this. And I was always the man in line in front of Jack. And Jack is trying to get a ticket to New York. The first routine that we did, the reason that we then continued it, was that we took the lyric of Glocca Morra and all I did was read the lyric.

Jack was very nervous about it and he said, "I don't know. You got to be crazy! Is that going to be funny?" and I said, "I don't know. It just seems to me that it's funny if I just ask Frank Nelson these questions: "How are things in Glocca Morra?" And he said, "Fine." And I say, "Is that little brook still rippling there?" And he said, "Oh, yes." Well, you could imagine! We're doing this, Frank and I talking, and Jack Benny is standing behind me, just staring at the audience with that look, you know, he did with the elbow! Well, what *is* funny about it? I don't know, but it just was funny. It was funny stuff.

Indeed.

Jack would create these characters and he would create them in the image of Phil and, therefore, in the image of Remley. He created Phil and Remley—image and characters—for them so strong that Phil and I and Alice and their real little girls were in a Santa Claus Lane Parade on Thanksgiving down Hollywood Boulevard one year. It was freezing cold and, without thinking, we each took a mug of coffee, hot coffee. The girls were all bundled up warm, and one of the kids sat on my lap and the other kid was on Phil's lap. And we stopped at one place and I reached to get the coffee. I was really shivering, I was so cold, and I picked it up and Phil, without seeing what I was doing, did the same thing. We had stopped and there were crowds on either side on the street and they started to laugh. They thought we were drinking booze! They thought we were stoned! And you don't know what to do 'cause you've got a little kid on your lap and the audience is laughing 'cause they think you're drinking whiskey, which we weren't. Hot coffee! But that's how firmly the Benny show created those characters, established those characters.



I remember doing one show Jack created for those characters. They were musicians who hadn't the faintest idea what they were doing. They knew no more about the music business—had no more right to be musicians—this was so firmly established that on Phil's show, years later, we did a scene, that I still recall, of a music rehearsal that Phil is conducting. Remley is playing guitar and Phil stops and says to Remley, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. That doesn't sound right. What have you got there?" And Remley says, "I've got a black dot and then another black dot" and the audience started to laugh. You'd figure they'd have to be musicians to know. They didn't, but they just knew that we hadn't had the vaguest idea what we were talking about. Phil says, "I think there's supposed to be three black dots." I said, "No, there's one here that's a white dot." And he said, "Where is it?" And I said, "No, that's

a fly." All those music jokes! But people were laughing because the characters had been established by Jack.

I remember the biggest laugh we ever got. To show how little I know about what I'm doing, I had no idea we'd get this kind of laugh and it made me kind of nervous. The story, very simply, was that Alice says to Phil, "Remley is not your friend. He doesn't really care about you. He's a terrible, vile person who is looking to take advantage of you and you've got to be very careful." And Phil keeps saying, "No, no, no. That's not true." They keep arguing until finally Phil says, "Alright, I'll tell you what. When Remley comes to the door this morning, you tell him I just died of a heart attack. And then you'll see what a friend I've got." Well, I thought, "My goodness, are we really going to do that? But, we play the scene in front of the audience. Door bell. Alice goes to the door. She's crying and Remley says, "What's the matter? What is it Alice?" And she says, "Phil just died of a heart attack." There was a long pause and then I said, "Alice, will you marry me?" Well, I tell you we could not stop the people from laughing! The studio was shaking! This explosion of laughter! That he had the gall . . . didn't even wait . . . didn't say, "Gee, I'm sorry." Nothing! Couldn't wait to get his hands on that money! And I thought, "No, we really can't do that." Ray and Dick said, "It's funny, do it. Just do it." Phil said, "Don't worry about it." Well, they were right.

Did you have to do a lot of rehearsing for the Harris show?

No. As a matter of fact, by the time we were in our seventh, eighth and ninth year, we were on tape, the show was no longer live. And we would record—we would tape the show on Friday for Sunday broadcast. We would meet at

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around noon or eleven o'clock in the morning on Friday and read the script around the table and make some cuts and changes, go get our lunch and come back and read it again on mike to balance it, make additional cuts and changes. I was producing and directing over at CBS, so Phil would go and do his business and Alice would do whatever she had to do. I'd go over and work on scripts for Suspense or On Stage or Broadway's My Beat or one of the shows I was doing at CBS, and then come back, dressed to do a show in front of an audience, at 5:30. The audience would come in at 5:30 or 6 and we'd do a little warm-up and do the show from 6:30 to 7. And Phil and Alice got on the train and go back to Palm Springs and I went home and that was it. So we would devote most of a Friday to it. But that was about all.

Of course by that time the characters had been so finely refined and keenly developed . . .

That's right. And you're able to do in radio, especially in radio, comedy in radio, the kind of humor that you cannot do anywhere else. And once it is set up, the characters are set up and a situation is set up, and you have the kind of writing that we were getting from Ray Singer and Dick Chevillat, there are no problems. Everybody knows what they are doing or they wouldn't be there. And if it wasn't a good show and the audience didn't like it, it wouldn't be on the air. You know, you find out very quickly whether it's working or not. And as always in almost anything, but especially in show business, if it's going easily it's usually on the right track. It's not hard to have a hit, it's hard to have a failure, because it's rough. You know, you keep trying to fix something that you should just throw away. When it's going well, when all of the elements are

together, wow! It's no problem, it just runs.

You mentioned producing and directing Suspense. Did you do some of the writing, too?

Yes. I did writing and editing and produced and directed the radio Suspense for about five years, I guess. And then, while I was married to Cathy Lewis, we did On Stage for a couple of years, and I wrote the openings and the closings and did the editing on it. And E. Jack Neuman, with whom I'm working here at Paramount, contributed I would guess half of the scripts during the two years we worked on that show. Also wrote goodness knows how many of the Suspense shows.

As a matter of fact, there was a thing we would do together that was kind of fun because it was kind of a challenge in the mystery sense. I recall, driving to work one day, I had seen a scene in my mind which was a marvelous first act curtain. So I said to Jack, "Somebody's chasing a man and he's in a fun house at an amusement park and he knows he can't get out the front door so he tries to get out, to find another exit. And at the back of this building there's an enormous animated figure, a great big, jolly kind of animated stuffed thing, and its arms are at its side and it goes 'Hohohoho' and as it's doing 'Hohohoho' the arms raise over its head and then the arms go down and the man describes this in the narrative." And I said because what he does is, he times it and the guys are chasing him and so he waits and the figure goes, "HO HO HO HO HO" and the arms are up and he's going to make a dash. And so he waits and he times it and it goes "HO HO HO HO HO" and he starts to dash and as he starts, the arms go BANG and cut him off. There's a door behind him when the arms raise

and as he heads for the door and the arms come down and from inside the figure a voice says, "You didn't really think I was gonna let you get out, did you?" So I said to Jack, "I don't know who he is or how he got there or how it ends." Jack says, "Great idea, you really scared me." It was called "Giant of Thermopylae". It was marvelous suspense.

And it was on Suspense.

Yes. That was what we did on Suspense. We did a lot of them that way.

This was in the later forties and early 1950s.

Yes. Before World War Two I had been on Suspense, working with Bill Spier as an actor and a rewrite man and also writing originals. Then I was in the service, working for Army radio, Armed Forces Radio. I was in charge of what they called "Commercial Denaturing" which was a division with Howie Duff. We supplied 476 radio stations, Howie and I and three other guys, with 120 programs a week, which we took off the air, edited, took the commercials out, took out anything that dated the show. By editing, I mean anything that would be considered information that you didn't want broadcast worldwide. These were then placed on acetate discs and sent to the short wave stations. Then masters were made, printed and shipped all over the world, to these 476 stations. So, I was busy doing that.

Then, when the war was over I went back to Suspense. Bill Spier, who was doing Sam Spade and Suspense, wanted to do a picture in Europe with his wife, at that time June Havoc, and with James and Pamela Mason. Bill would produce and direct the film, so he wanted to get out of his deal and he suggested to CBS that I had done so much work on it—and since I was producing and directing another radio



show for them at the time, called Broadway's My Beat—that I should produce and direct Suspense. They were agreeable and so that's when I picked up on Suspense. I think I did some of the Sam Spades for him, too.

On the show, The Casebook of Gregory Hood, you were Gregory Hood.

Yes, Anthony Boucher's character.

Before you took over the role of Gregory Hood, it was played by Gale Gordon.

Yes. Gale and I had known each other for years and, in the true manner of show business, I was called one day to the Young and Rubicam Advertising Agency and they said, "We have a property called Gregory Hood. Have you ever heard it?" And I said, "Well, it's on the air, isn't it?" And they said, "Yes, but it's not working out the way we want and we would like you to be the star." And I said, "What happened to Gale?" And they said, "Well, we've told him and he agrees and you know, no hard feelings or anything. We're trying it, so come to rehearsal Monday and you're Gregory Hood." I said,

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"Fine." I walked into the studio and there sat Gale. Nobody had said a word to him. So I said, "Gale, why don't we go outside and have a cup of coffee and have a little talk," 'cause we were old friends. It was supposed to have been arranged, but I was the one who said to Gale, "I'm doing Gregory Hood now. I guess you're not." It didn't matter, of course.

Well, he had to scratch for work through the rest of his career, didn't he?

Yes! Well, he really was desperately looking here and there trying to find something to do. And then, when I was producing the Lucy Show on television, there we were, working together again. When we started the television series, The Lucy Show, that I produced, Lucy came back from New York and she and Desi had been divorced. We were sitting around with the writers and we said, "Gee, we need somebody—the Mr. Mooney character. Let's get Gale."

You followed him again on another series, Junior Miss. You played Judy Graves' father.

I think he may have followed me, because I remember doing that one with Shirley Temple. I played her father. And I played her father the week I was drafted! So, I was like twenty-two! I was playing Shirley Temple's father and I did the Junior Miss show on a Thursday or something, waved bye-bye and Friday went into the Army. So, I think Gale followed me on that show, and then I think Shirley dropped out and they did another version of it later on.

How busy were you at your busiest?

I think I counted in one week I did twenty shows, in one capacity or

another. Finally, in the late or middle fifties, I guess, I was involved in the production, directing, acting, whatever on five weekly series. My desk at CBS looked like a joke! I was doing the Harris show as an actor, I was producing and directing Suspense, I was producing, directing, editing, writing openings and closings, and co-starring in On Stage. I was producing and directing Broadway's My Beat and I was producing, directing and writing the openings and closings and editing Crime Classics. And one point CBS had three of those shows on back to back on Wednesday night. And, by taping parts of this one and sections of that one, because you couldn't record the music—music had to be live and put in when you went on the air—and having adjoining studios—Studios 1 and 2 at the old CBS—I was able to do it. I had a show on the air from 5:30 to 6, and a show on the air from 6 to 6:30, and a show on the air from 6:30 to 7.

It was Elliott Lewis night on CBS!

Yeah, it was ridiculous! There was no reason for that, it was just silly. But that's the way scheduling happened.

I'd like to back up to your army career for a moment or so. You were working on editing and dubbing all those radio shows. Did you start that? Were you the first one to get involved with that?

I think Howie and I were, yes. Duff, when I say Howie. We were both in the service at different places and were called here by Colonel Tom Lewis, who we had known when Tom was head of Young and Rubicam. And he needed people who knew radio and he had this thing starting and he needed people to take over the job that had been handled by Don Sharp, who had been an agent and a producer. At that point I believe Don was working for the Office of War Information and they were trying this but nobody had



done anything with it yet. So, Duff and I were there and were called in and they said, "Now, here's what we want to do . . ."

As a matter of fact, some of the things we developed . . . well, I won't be bashful, some of the things we developed worked so well that I was given the Legion of Merit for developing new techniques in recording and broadcasting . . . only because there was no other way to do it. We had three civilian crews working seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day to reassemble these shows by the techniques that we developed—cut this, pick up here, and so forth. And this is before they had tape. We were doing this editing off of acetate. We got so that we could look at the turntable playing at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ speed and drop the head on a word or on a spot. You

look at the grooves and the right line and you'd know exactly where you are and what you're doing!

You picked up the shows as they were being broadcast, more or less right off the broadcast line?

Off the line at Radio Recorders. They were taken off the broadcast line. Howard and I would pick them up in an army vehicle which was given to us occasionally. The rest of the time we were to use our own car and our own gasoline and were never reimbursed for it. And we had to be very careful because we had a stack. These were not aluminum-based acetates, they were glass-based. And we had one guy cut in front of us on the way to the studio one night and we lost two hours of programming because the records just slid and that was it! Nothing you could do about it . . . they were gone. They were glass-based acetates that we took off the air. We picked them up and what we tried to do with the immediate show is that we would make worksheets on a typewriter as the show was on the air, so when we picked it up and delivered that acetate to McGregor's or to Universal or to the other part of the division of Radio Recorders, they had the worksheet and the crew knew exactly what they were going to do with it. And by the following morning that show would be ready to be broadcast short wave. We were watching a clock, timing, so that when a commercial began, this would be taken out, or a new opening would be put in, what fill material was to make up for what we deleted.

You always had to pad it back to thirty minutes again, right?

Right. Twenty nine thirty. And it got to be quite a thing. As I think about it now, I don't know how in heaven's name we did it. Because as we were

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typing, we were listening to a show and watching a clock!

What you fellas did there, and you really didn't realize you were doing it, but you were really preserving the sounds of radio from the 1940s, because the networks never wanted to keep it. They just did it live and they didn't copy it.

Right. What we did, if we didn't have enough material coming off the line to make fifty-two weeks of something, we invented. So, we invented the Mystery Theatre. Now, the Mystery Theatre had to have a host because sometimes it would be Mr. and Mrs. North or sometimes it would be Inner Sanctum or whatever was on the air that was a mystery show that we could use. So we had our own opening and our own closing. Now, whichever of us went down with the record, with the transcription, to make the show, also recorded an opening and a closing for that show. So, we had to invent characters, because it was not the same person. There was Corporal X and there was Sergeant Y, and we did all these things. Whoever went down. It was Howard, or Jerry Hausner or it was me or it was Jimmy Lyons, who was part of our group and now runs the Monterey Jazz Festival.

But we all fell into patterns. Alan Hewitt loved opera and symphony, so he would edit opera and symphony. Jimmy Lyons, now doing Monterey, loved jazz and knew all those people, so he did that kind of music. Howie and I did the dramatic things and the comedy things. Hausner did all of those and also fifteen and thirty-minute original shows for everybody. But we were kind of a lost group. We were in a side corner because the big shows the Armed Forces Radio Service was doing were Command Performance and things like that. They did one

Command Performance show a week while we were doing 120 shows and nobody even knew we were there, you know, we were just off in the back somewhere.

Did you ever meet G. I. Jill? Her little fifteen-minute show—

Oh, sure, Marty Wilkerson, Mort Warner's wife. Mort Warner is, was, the head man at NBC television for I don't know how long. And G. I. Jill was Marty, his wife. And Mort, who at that time was a G.I. with the rest of us, Corporal Warner, was kind of producing and directing his wife's little show.

I've heard lots of those G.I. Jive shows with G. I. Jill. What did she look like?

Marty's a very lovely looking young woman. She's a very attractive older woman now. They have grown children. Just a marvelous looking woman, warm, very attractive. To me, she always looked like what she sounded like.

She had to be every girl next door for every G.I. around the world.

But Marty primarily was a writer when she wasn't doing that. She wrote, has written many, many television things. She wrote the Robert Montgomery Show, wrote original material for it.

Let's return to civilian life. You were the lead in another version of the First Nighter program called Knickerbocker Playhouse.

Yes. They called me to go to Chicago in '39. I knew nothing about this program. I was working as an actor on a lot of shows here and one of the shows I was working on was called Silver Theatre, which was a Sunday afternoon drama. I was under contract to them. The AFRA contract stated that you could pay people, if you signed them to a thirteen-week deal, scale less

ten per cent. So, I was under contract to Silver Theatre . . . and Big Town. Now, on Silver Theatre, some weeks I had four lines and some weeks I was the leading man opposite whoever the leading woman was. One time, they had heard me as a leading man opposite Ginger Rogers or somebody, and they were out here. I knew nothing about this and my agent called me and said, "There are some people here from Chicago and they would like you to audition for them. There's some kind of radio show that they're going to be doing from Chicago and they're over across the hall and would you go over and read something for them?"

Now, I'm in the middle of a Silver Theatre rehearsal playing the lead opposite Rosalind Russell, a darling, lovely, gifted, talented lady. So I came in and must have looked puzzled and she said, "What's the matter?" And I told her and she said, "Well, we'll stop rehearsing for a little bit and go over and do it. It could be a big job for you." I said, "I don't know what to read." she said, "Let's read what we're doing." I said, "We?" She said, "Sure, don't tell them who I am. We'll go over there and read. I'll read with you."

We went across the street to this other studio and went in and I still don't think they knew who she was. She said, "Tell them I'm Miss Brown." So I said, "This is Miss Brown, she's going to read with me." And they said, "Fine, how are ya." And we read the scene which we had been rehearsing for two days. They said, "Thank you very much" and I said "Thank you" and Roz and I went back and did our work. The following day I got a call from my agent and he said, "They want you. The show is called Knickerbocker Playhouse and it's going to come from Chicago and they want you to be the star. Do you want to go to Chicago this summer? It's a firm thir-

teen." And I said, "Well, I've never been to Chicago. That sounds like it'd be a lot of fun, I'll drive to Chicago."

And I did. They said to bring a tuxedo 'cause they get all dressed up. I checked into the Medinah Club, which was across the street from the Wrigley Building where they do the show. Then I got an apartment on Wabash. And the woman to whom I have been married for seventeen years, Mary Jane Croft, was coming through town on her way to New York. She had been working in Cincinnati and that's when we met one another. Then she married somebody else and I married somebody else and she divorced and I was divorced and we've been married for seventeen years. We met in Chicago in 1939. 720 N. Wabash.

You've had an interesting career.

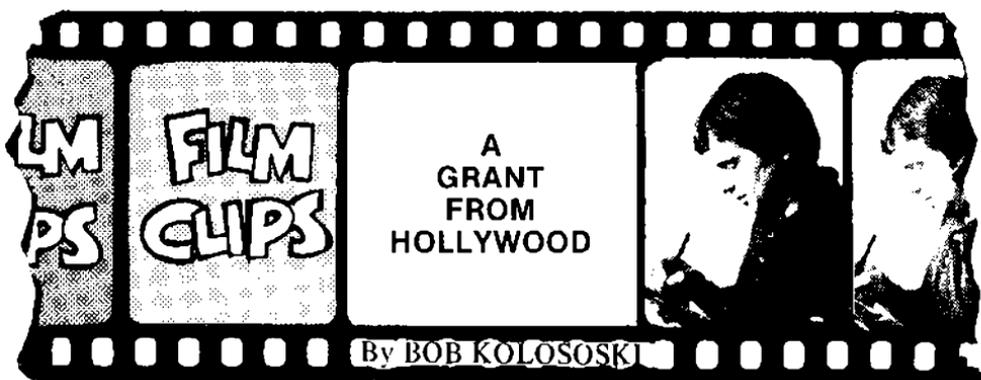
When you talked about Phil Harris . . . I saw Phil maybe a couple of years ago. He called, he was coming to town and wanted to know if I wanted to have breakfast with him 'cause he's an early riser. He was in the band business so long, the two things he hates are staying up late and wearing a tuxedo. And his idea of heaven is if you go to bed early and you get up at 5:30 and you wander around and see a sunrise fresh, not just as you're ready to go to sleep. So we met and had breakfast and chatted and it's like—we hadn't seen each other in five or six years—just picking up where we left off.

I wish you guys could pick up where you left off. It would be great to hear Frankie and Phil again. They were good, great shows.

Yes, and a great time.

Thank you very much for doing them and for chatting with us.

*Thank you! This was a lot of fun. I appreciated it.



Last October Cary Grant made a one night personal appearance at the Rialto Square Theatre in Elgin. I learned of that appearance late and was unable to attend. However, I also learned that Grant made approximately six of these appearances yearly and I relieved my frustration by reasoning that I would see him next year. This anticipation piqued my interest in Grant's long career and I began to do research for this article. When he died at the age of 82 on November 30, 1986, I felt saddened at having missed the last opportunity to see one of the truly legendary stars of Hollywood's Golden Age.

Although Hollywood has created dozens of male stars traditionally classified as "leading men," few have emerged as masters of comedy, adventure and drama. Cary Grant was such an actor. His urban sophistication was his trademark but he could expertly "let his hair down" in comedies such as "Monkey Business" and "I Was a Male War Bride". One minute he was the superbly handsome leading man; the next minute he was catching audiences off guard with a ridiculous "whinny" noise in films such as "His Girl Friday". In that same movie he poked fun at himself by ad-libbing "The last person to say that to me was Archie Leach just before he cut his throat". Archie Leach—Grant's real name—served him well during his early

years with Bob Pender's troupe in his native England. Grant joined the troupe (made up of about a dozen teen-aged boys who did acrobatics, dancing and singing in the British music hall circuit) at the age of 15 and learned and perfected his comedy timing while with the Pender boys.

In 1920 the troupe toured the U.S. and young Mr. Leach decided America was where he would make his fortune. During the decade known as the Roaring Twenties Archie Leach toured in vaudeville and did stage work on Broadway. He appeared in the Otto Harbach-Oscar Hammerstein II operetta "Golden Dawn" in 1927 and in 1929 co-starred with Jeanette McDonald in the Shubert production of "Boom Boom". That decade of one night stands and experimenting gave Archie Leach the confidence to buy a ticket for Hollywood where he wanted to try his luck in the movies.

Leach's arrival in the Movie Capitol was unheralded and in spite of a disastrous film test made at the Astor studios in New Jersey he signed a contract with Paramount for \$450 per week. His named changed from Archie Leach to Cary Grant by taking the first name from the character he played in the play "Nikki" (Cary Lockwood) and a studio list of employees' last names. Thus on that sunny California afternoon in 1932 a movie legend—



"Cary Grant"—was conceived. Paramount now had a handsome contract player but wasn't sure what he could do. Grant was cast in seven movies in his first year with the studio and in all played a well-dressed good-looking character. Indeed Grant was more noted by the critics for his impeccable appearance than for any acting ability. This hurt Grant's pride but he maintained the elegant dressing style throughout his career.

Grant's big break in the movies came when Mae West personally asked for him to be in her film "She Done Him Wrong" in 1933. The film was so successful with both the male and female audiences that "I'm No Angel" soon followed. Again West and Grant looked great together and both emerged as box office stars.

Grant's career at Paramount was progressing slowly and he refused to sign again with the studio in 1936. He began to free-lance, but did sign joint contracts with RKO and Columbia to alternate between studios in movies he approved. Grant was the first major star to follow a free-lancing career and although he did well financially his judgement on films was not always wise and he allowed himself to be in several "clinkers". For example, in

1937 he appeared in three films—"Topper", "The Awful Truth" and "The Toast of New York". The first two are classic comedies, were huge hits when released and are late night movie regulars today. The latter was a boring drama that went to the RKO studio vaults almost immediately after release.

In fact, Grant's career had as many downs as ups, but it's to his credit that he managed to survive them unscathed and bounce back again and again. He was constantly sought after by the best Hollywood directors and worked with Howard Hawks five times, Alfred Hitchcock four times and three times each with George Stevens, Leo McCarey and George Cukor. He received two Academy Award nominations for best actor; one in 1941 for "Penny Serenade" and the other in 1944 for "None But the Lonely Heart". He won neither but received a special Oscar in 1970 for being Cary Grant. That award was very appropriate because he was Cary Grant in every movie he made. The natural mannerisms, the voice and the man were all welded into the character we came to know and love as Cary Grant.

As I was researching this article and reading about all the great movies Cary Grant had made, I became enthusiastic thinking maybe he would come out of retirement and appear in another film. When I thought of all his films I loved to watch—"Gunga Din", "The Talk of the Town", "The Philadelphia Story", "Destination Tokyo", "North by Northwest" and dozens of others, I began to hope for one more Cary Grant film. Now, of course, with his passing, my hope has been dashed but his films live on and for his legion of fans that is his legacy to us all.

(Editor's Note—Bob Kolososki will join Chuck Schaden for a four-hour Those Were The Days tribute to Cary Grant in April.

GUESS WHO

READERS SAY IT'S SPENCER TRACY

And they were right, too! Our Guess Who from the December-January issue of the *Nostalgia Digest* was Spencer Tracy who co-starred with Katharine Hepburn in nine films over a 25-year period: *Woman of the Year* (1942), *Keeper of the Flame* (1942), *Without Love* (1945), *The Sea of Grass* (1947), *State of the Union* (1948), *Adam's Rib* (1949), *Pat and Mike* (1952), *Desk Set* (1957), and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967).

The rules of the contest call for a drawing from all the correct entries to choose a winner. And we did:

BARBARA LOESS

Berwyn, Illinois

Our winner gets a \$25 Gift Certificate from Metro Golden Memories in Chicago and a half-dozen old time radio cassette tapes from the Half Closet.

And we send our thanks to everyone who entered.

Now, have some fun with a Crossword Puzzle on page 32 of this issue.



My guess is Oliver Hardy of Laurel and Hardy fame. Although Oliver Hardy's proportions might have changed through the years, his expressive eyes and mouth never changed. They spoke volumes. Thank you for the many hours of listening pleasure and company your WBBM radio theatre gives both my father and I. *Nostalgia Digest* is our favorite publication.

—ARLENE BLUM, Buffalo Grove, IL

This time I got it: Spencer Tracy! Right?

—IRMA KISSACK, Chicago Heights, IL

Those ears must be attached to Bing Crosby.

—FR. ROBERT A. L'HOMME, Kankakee, IL

I think your Guess Who man has to be Bud Abbott.

—JIM WILLIAMS, Marietta, GA

My guess is the late and great Spencer Tracy, who was a true superstar. I enjoy your Guess Who and Add-A-Caption contests. Keep them

I was going to say that picture reminds me of Dick Tracy when he was a boy. But the more I think of it, I'll have to say that the picture is that of his brother, Spencer Tracy.

—GEORGE W. PIETERS, Whiting, IN

The eyes, the angle of the mouth, the ears and even the stance leads to no other choice but Spencer Tracy. The years were good to him as he did not change that much.

—PHILIP L. BRANSKY, Chicago Heights, IL



coming. I bring them to work and everyone has a good time.

—**GEORGE C. MELCHIORRE, Chicago.**

Spencer Tracy is my guess of the person pictured in your latest Guess Who. I have been a long-time listener of your program, going back as far as WLTD on Saturdays and every morning while you were on that station.

—**MARY BARTHOLD, Park Ridge, IL**

My guess is William Powell.

—**SIMFON & CAROL KOSBERG, Skokie**

My guess for the young man would be Alfred Lunt.

—**GERTRUDE M. CALEY, Niles, IL**

The boy in your Guess Who contest is Pat O'Brien who starred with James Cagney in nine films.

—**CHAS. BEAVIS, Chicago**

My guess is Spencer Tracy. It's really more than a guess. As soon as I saw the picture, I thought of Spencer Tracy. Then I looked in the book, *Tracy and Hepburn*, and saw that he grew up in Milwaukee and went to Ripon College. I'm sure it's him. I have been listening to your programs since December of 1975 when I received a subscription to the *Nostalgia Digest* as a Christmas gift. Back then the *Digest* was called *Nostalgia Newsletter and Radio Guide*. I have kept all of my issues since then, and I certainly enjoy all of your programs.

—**PAM BIELAK, Downers Grove, IL**

Of all the places to find your mystery man. I discovered Spencer Tracy mentioned in the Ripon College catalog.

—**PAMELA GINDL, Dolton, IL**

That's Spencer Tracy. I don't know that many other famous "grads" from Ripon; just Al Jarreau, Harrison Ford, and me.

—**BILL MUELLER, Downers Grove, IL**

The shoes have certainly changed, but the haircut gives away the man whose name is synonymous with "dancer," Fred Astaire (or as Popeye once called him, "Fred Upstairs")!

—**BRUCE B. BOLENBAUGH, Chicago**

How about Harry Lillis Crosby—or Bing. I really enjoy you when I can, especially enjoy Saturdays. I'm in and out of my car 'cause I'm the "Welcome Neighbor" lady for Mt. Prospect and listen to you when I go from home to home of newly moved-in people. You really do keep me company and I'm thankful for that.

—**JUNE BRECKWOOD, Arlington Heights, IL**

My guess is Kirk Douglas.

—**FRANK HERMAN, Chicago**

Even in this early photo he was honest, tough and not overstated. Spencer Tracy.

—**ANDY SIMONS, Chicago**

My wife thinks that your Guess Who (is Coming to Dinner) mystery picture, and it would be a Bad Day at Black Rock if I wouldn't agree, is Kate Hepburn's favorite co-star Spencer Tracy—reaaally it is darling!

—**ROY AND JULIE FREDRICHSON, Joliet, IL**

It's Spencer Tracy—just look at that mouth! I thoroughly enjoyed the November 8th Salute to NBC! Truly a trip down Memory Lane, since I grew up listening to the stars of radio on NBC stations.

—**PATRICIA BAUGNIET, Big Bend, WI**

Your Guess Who personality is Spencer Tracy. As a lad, Tracy spent time in Freeport, Illinois. His uncle, the town banker, was instrumental in arranging for the Illinois premiere of Captains Courageous as a fund raiser for the Junior High School. The year, 1937.

—**GERALDINE TRANDEL, Skokie, IL**

I thought he was either Bob Hope or Bing Crosby. My wife says, "try Spencer Tracy." I think she's right.

—**PAUL MERLO, Akron, OH**

Looks (and sounds) like Spencer Tracy to me.

—**ROBERT BERGHAUS, Milwaukee, WI**

My Guess Who answer:

Flirts with Ginger
Real talent is his specialty
Ease with every movement
Dancer of the first class

Always graceful
Sang songs beautifully
Taps on his shoes
Adele was an early dance partner
Immaculate dresser
Radio and TV he also appeared on
Easter Parade star.

—**NICK NARDELLA, Chicago**

FEBRUARY

RADIO CLASSICS – WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| 2 Challenge of the Yukon Six Shooter | 3 Lone Ranger Green Hornet | 4 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 5 Dragnet Gunsmoke | 6 Jack Benny Black Museum |
| 9 Green Hornet Have Gun, Will Travel | 10 Black Museum Challenge of the Yukon | 11 Six Shooter This is Your FBI | 12 Dragnet Lone Ranger | 13 Burns and Allen Jack Benny |
| 16 Black Museum Dragnet | 17 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 18 Challenge of the Yukon Burns and Allen | 19 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 20 Lone Ranger Green Hornet |
| 23 Jack Benny Black Museum | 24 Dragnet This is Your FBI | 25 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 26 Challenge of the Yukon Lone Ranger | 27 Green Hornet This is Your FBI |

PLEASE NOTE — All of the programs we present on *Radio Classics* are syndicated rebroadcasts. We regret that we are not able to obtain advance information about the storylines of these shows so that we might include more details in our *Radio Guide*. However, each show we present is slightly less than 30 minutes in length and this new easy-to-read schedule lists the programs in the order we will broadcast them on WBBM-AM. The first show listed will play at approximately 8 p.m. and the second will be presented at about 8:30 p.m. Programs on *Radio Classics* are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. Thanks for listening.

MARCH

RADIO CLASSICS – WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 2 Lone Ranger Dragnet | 3 This is Your FBI Green Hornet | 4 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 5 Challenge of the Yukon Black Museum | 6 Gunsmoke Jack Benny |
| 9 Burns and Allen Lone Ranger | 10 Dragnet Have Gun, Will Travel | 11 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 12 Green Hornet This is Your FBI | 13 Six Shooter Challenge of the Yukon |
| 16 Jack Benny Black Museum | 17 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 18 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 19 Dragnet Lone Ranger | 20 This is Your FBI Green Hornet |
| 23 Challenge of the Yukon Burns and Allen | 24 Lone Ranger Six Shooter | 25 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 26 This is Your FBI Jack Benny | 27 Black Museum Dragnet |
| 30 Six Shooter This is Your FBI | 31 Dragnet Lone Ranger | | | |

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1 - 5 P.M.

FEBRUARY

PLEASE NOTE: The numerals following each program listing for Those Were The Days represents timing information for each particular show. (9:45; 11:20; 8:50) means that we will broadcast the show in three segments: 9 minutes and 45 seconds; 11 minutes and 20 seconds; 8 minutes and 50 seconds. If you add the times of these segments together, you'll have the total length of the show (29:55 for our example). This is of help to those who are taping the broadcasts for their own collection.

February is Jack Benny Month!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7th

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (5-31-42) Last show of the season and the last show for Jell-O. Jack and the gang present "A Cavalcade of Eight Years with Jell-O" presenting bits and pieces from previous shows: How Jack met Rochester; Buck Benny Rides Again; the Benny-Allen feud; Dennis Day's first appearance; "Lost Horizon" sketch; Carmichael the Polar Bear; New Year's Eve play. Mary Livingstone, Phil Harris, Dennis Day, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Verna Felton, Sam (Schlepperman) Hearn, Andy Devine; Frank Nelson, Elliott Lewis, Don Wilson, Jell-O, NBC. (14:30; 14:15)

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT! (7-4-48) Host Garry Moore helps contestants win \$64 in this original radio quiz program. Ken Niles, Cookie Fairchild and the orchestra. Eversharp, NBC. (12:45; 11:25; 6:50)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-12-42) Remote broadcast from Camp Haan, Riverside, California. In a spoof of "Take It or Leave It," Jack presents his own radio quiz show, "Try and Get It!" with Jack as Quizmaster, giving away money! Jell-O, NBC. (11:10; 7:00; 9:40)

SUSPENSE (11-18-48) "Sorry Wrong Number" star-

ring Agnes Moorehead in an "encore presentation" of Lucille Fletcher's famous story. An invalid woman overhears a telephone conversation plotting a murder. Because of the tense drama of this story, the sponsor does not interrupt for a commercial. Neither will we. AutoLite, CBS. (28:48)

COMMAND PERFORMANCE #209 (1940s) Robert Young is emcee with guests Jack Benny, Lena Romay, Chico Marx, Sara Berner, Mel Blanc, David Rose and the orchestra. Jack Benny presents his version of the radio suspense drama, "Sorry Wrong Number." AFRS. (13:41; 15:45)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (2-23-47) Jack and Mary are late for the broadcast and Phil is doing the show while Rochester drives them to the studio in the Maxwell. The Sportsmen do the commercial and drive Jack crazy, so Jack fires them! Artie Auerback as Mr. Kitzel, Frank Nelson as photographer from Down Beat magazine. First of five consecutive and related broadcasts. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (14:05; 12:25)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14th

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (2-17-46) Remote broadcast from Palm Springs, California. Jack's birthday was last Thursday. Phil is late for the show so Jack has to read his lines! Don has hired an Indian writer to do the commercial. Jack takes a violin lesson from Professor LeBlanc. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (15:20; 13:20)

TOWN HALL TONIGHT (5-25-38) Fred Allen stars with Portland Hoffa, John Brown, Minerva Pious, Alan Reed, announcer Andre Baruch, the Merry Macs, Peter Van Steeden and the orchestra. Fred interviews an organ grinder and his monkey. The Mighty Allen Art Players present a One Long Pan mystery sketch as the famous Chinese detective searches for the famous racehorse, Dog Biscuit Ipana, Sai Hepatica, NBC. (16:00; 15:05; 12:10; 15:55)



THE SPORTSMEN QUARTET



JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-5-36) An early Benny show from New York. Jack and the gang present their version of Fred Allen's show entitled "Clown Hall Tonight." Jell-O, NBC-BLUE. (13:15; 16:20)

SUSPENSE (4-5-51) "Murder in G-Flat" starring Jack Benny with Bea Benadaret. Joe Kearns, Larry Thor, Jack Krushen, Paul Frees. A piano tuner mistakenly switches handbags on the subway and comes away with a bag with \$25,000 in it. AutoLite, CBS. (16:44; 12:15)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-2-47) After Jack fired the Sportsmen Quartet last week, the sponsor called and told him to get them back. Jack tries to find a replacement. Second show in the "Sportsmen" sequence. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (16:00; 10:25)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21st

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-23-50) Jack and Mary go to the school auditorium where his friends The Beavers are presenting their version of the Benny Show, with the kids playing the parts of Jack, Mary, Phil, Dennis and Rochester, and doing many of the standard Benny gags! Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (9:25; 18:35)

QUIZ KIDS (6-6-48) Quizmaster Joe Kelly tries to stump the young panelists: Joel Kupperman, Lonny Lunde, David Friefelder, Mark Moen, Helen Jasper. Announcer is Bob Murphy. Alka Seltzer, NBC. (7:20; 7:40; 13:30)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-6-41) Anticipating an upcoming appearance on the Quiz Kids radio show, Jack

invites some of them to his show to battle the "Jell-O Kids" with Jack as Quizmaster. Guests are Quiz Kids Richard Williams, Claude Brenner, Joan Bishop, Gerard Darrow. Jell-O, NBC-RED.

THE WHISTLER (7-16-45) "A Pattern for Terror" is the Whistler's strange story, set at Midnight, December 10, 1944. Signal Oil Co., CBS. (10:25; 19:45)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (10-20-46) Jack spoofs Fred Allen's style of topical comedy, then presents his version of "The Whistler" called "The Fiddler." Mary, Dennis, Rochester, Phil, Don, Sara Berner, Bea Benadaret. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (15:25; 11:00)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-9-47) The sponsor tells Jack to get a replacement for the Sportsmen Quartet by next week or he'll replace Jack with Al Pearce! Jack goes to a talent agency to audition several groups. Frank Nelson is a talent agent, Mel Blanc is a talking dog. Third show in the "Sportsmen" sequence. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (11:40; 15:00)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28th

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-16-47) Don Wilson has hired a new quartet to replace the Sportsmen, but Jack is worried about the cost of this group: Andy Russell, Dick Haymes, Bing Crosby, Dennis Day. Fourth show in the "Sportsmen" sequence. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (9:15; 17:30)

INFORMATION PLEASE (9-18-42) Clifton Fadiman hosts this intellectual quiz show with panelists Franklin P. Adams, John Keiran and guests Christopher Morley and Orson Welles. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (14:15; 12:15)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (1-17-43) Guest Oscar Levant joins the regulars as Jack convinces Oscar, often a panelist on Information Please, to take part in the Benny spoof of that popular radio show. The program is broadcast from New York City, "playing before an audience of servicemen on leave." Abe Lyman is guest conductor. Grape Nuts, NBC. (12:00; 7:15; 8:30)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (5-25-47) The last show of the 1946-47 season, from New York. Jack's guests are Fred Allen and Jack Paar. Jack offers his version of Allen's Alley, then introduces his summer replacement, Jack Paar. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (7:25; 12:00; 8:00)

JACK PAAR SHOW (7-9-49) Cast includes Frank Nelson, Hans Conried, Jane Morgan, Carol Richards, Jud Conlon Rhythmairs. In a sketch, Jack is Buster Brownie, Crime Photographer. Sustaining, NBC. (11:45; 7:20; 12:10)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (3-23-47) As the show opens, Jack is trying to write a letter to the Sportsmen to get them back. Mary and Dennis suggest that Jack go to see their agent (Elliott Lewis) Cast includes Phil, Rochester, Don, Mel Blanc, Artie Auerbach. Fifth and last show in the "Sportsmen" sequence. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (12:00; 14:30)

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1 - 5 P.M.

MARCH

We Remember Them Well . . .

SATURDAY, MARCH 7th

SUSPENSE (1-4-45) "I Had An Alibi" starring Keenan Wynn. A former police reporter dictates his novel of murder and how he married a young woman with lots of money and only six months to live. Roma Wines, CBS. (7:57; 20:54) *With this broadcast we remember Keenan Wynn who died Oct. 14, 1986 at the age of 70.*

DUFFY'S TAVERN (9-22-44) Ed Gardner is Archie the manager, Florence Halop is Miss Duffy and Charlie Cantor is Finnegan. Guest is Gene Tierney, the object of Archie's affections. AFRS Rebroadcast. (11:07; 7:05; 6:50) *With this broadcast we remember Florence Halop who died July 15, 1986 at the age of 63.*

LUX RADIO THEATRE (3-10-47) "It's A Wonderful Life" starring James Stewart, Donna Reed and Victor Moore in the radio version of Frank Capra's 1946 film. An Angel from Heaven proves that no man is a failure if he has friends. Lux Soap, CBS. (21:05; 16:25; 21:10) *With this broadcast we remember Donna Reed who died Jan. 14, 1986 at the age of 64.*

CUSTOM CASSETTE SERVICE

A custom cassette tape recording of any of the old time radio programs broadcast on THOSE WERE THE DAYS currently or anytime in the past — is available for a recording fee of \$65C per half hour.

You will get a custom recording prepared just for you on top quality Radio-Tape, copied directly from our broadcast master. Simply provide the original broadcast date, the date of our rebroadcast, and any other specific information that will help us find the show you want.

Send your requests to:

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If you have any questions,
please call: (312) 965-7763

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA (2-2-42) "Captains of the Clouds" starring James Cagney, Dennis Morgan and Alan Hale in their original screen roles in a radio version of the 1942 film, "about to open in New York, Ottawa, Cairo and London." Yankee "hotshot" pilots try to join the Royal Canadian Air Force. DuPont, NBC. (15:45; 12:45) *With this broadcast we remember James Cagney who died March 30, 1986 at the age of 86.*

SUSPENSE (8-3-54) "Goodnight, Mrs. Russell" starring Virginia Gregg as a woman who discovers that the smallest of arguments with a young restaurant owner could cause death. Sustaining, CBS. (11:01; 18:17) *With this broadcast we remember Virginia Gregg who died Sept. 15, 1986 at the age of 70.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 14th

I LOVE LUCY (2-27-52) Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz co-star with Vivian Vance and William Frawley in a radio spin-off of their popular TV show. Lucy and Ricky try to break their lease with the Mertzes. Phillip Morris Cigarettes, CBS. (15:30; 11:55) *With this broadcast we remember Desi Arnaz who died Dec. 2, 1986 at the age of 69.*

THEATRE OF ROMANCE (10-23-45) "Forty-Second Street" starring Robert Alda and Janice Paige in a streamlined version of the 1933 film. A director puts his all into the show when his leading lady breaks her leg. An unknown gets her big chance! Colgate Tooth Powder, Halo Shampoo, CBS. (8:05; 14:10) *With this broadcast we remember Robert Alda who died May 3, 1986 at the age of 72.*

SUSPENSE (12-6-55) "When the Bough Breaks" starring Lureen Tuttle with Stacy Harris, Barney Phillips. A newlywed couple murder the bride's grandfather for his money. Sustaining, CBS. (11:36; 16:41) *With this broadcast we remember Lureen Tuttle who died May 28, 1986 at the age of 79.*

KATE SMITH SPEAKS (6-28-46) Kate and Ted Collins chat about many subjects, including Alaskans, new gadgets and the value of wishing. Post Cereals, CBS. (14:25) *With this broadcast we remember Kate Smith who died June 17, 1986 at the age of 79.*

LUX RADIO THEATRE (3-1-40) "My Son, My Son" starring Brian Aherne, Madeline Carroll, Louis Hayward and Josephine Hutchinson in their original screen

roles in this radio version of the 1940 film. A man who rose from rags to riches spoils his son and lives to regret it. Cecil B. DeMille hosts. Lux Soap, CBS. (23:35; 17:30; 17:45) *With this broadcast we remember Brian Aherne who died Feb. 10, 1986 at the age of 83.*

BENNY GOODMAN (10-13-37) Remote broadcast from the Madhattan Room of the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City with Teddy Wilson, Martha Tilton, Gene Krupa, Lionel Hampton, Sustaining, CBS. (11:58; 17:55) *With this broadcast we remember Benny Goodman who died June 13, 1986 at the age of 77 and Teddy Wilson who died July 31, 1986 at the age of 73.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 21st

BOB HOPE SHOW (5-22-45) Broadcasting from the Naval Training Center in Samson, New York, it's Bob and all the regulars: Professor Jerry Colonna, Frances Langford, Vera Vague, Skinny Ennis and the orchestra. Hope and Langford star in a mini-sketch as Ma and Pa Country; Colonna sings "Bell Bottom Trousers." AFRS Rebroadcast. (5:30; 8:35; 13:45) *With this broadcast we remember Jerry Colonna who died Nov. 21, 1986 at the age of 82.*

LUX RADIO THEATRE (1-29-45) "Lady in the Dark" starring Ginger Rogers and Ray Milland, recreating their screen roles in a radio version of the 1944 film. A hard-nosed lady magazine editor learns to be a woman again. Lionel Barrymore subs for Cecil B. DeMille as host. Lux Soap, CBS. (18:55; 12:25; 28:55) *With this broadcast we remember Ray Milland who died March 10, 1986 at the age of 81.*

RAILROAD HOUR (1-23-50) "The Merry Widow" stars Gordon MacRae, Dorothy Kirsten and Jack Kirkwood with the Norman Luboff Choir and Carmen Dragon and the orchestra. Association of American Railroads, NBC. (20:28; 10:37) *With this broadcast we remember Gordon MacRae who died Jan. 24, 1986 at the age of 64.*

SUSPENSE (4-12-54) "Parole to Panic" starring Broderick Crawford as an ex-con who finds the gang he testified against is now out to kill him. Cast includes Joe Kearns, Paula Winslowe, Hy Averback, Barney Phillips. AutoLite, CBS. (14:16; 13:40) *With this broadcast we remember Broderick Crawford who died April 26, 1986 at the age of 74.*

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (1-23-55) Before Jack can go to the races with Mary, he must visit his vault to get some money. Sheldon Leonard is the toul. Frank Nelson is the waiter. Mel Blanc is the track announcer, Benny Rubin is at the information desk. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (11:50; 14:20) *With this broadcast we remember Frank Nelson who died Sept. 12, 1986 at the age of 75 and Benny Rubin who died July 15, 1986 at the age of 87.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 28th

LUX RADIO THEATRE (9-22-47) "Two Years Before the Mast" starring Alan Ladd, Howard DaSilva, MacDonald Carey and Wanda Hendrix in a radio version of the 1946 film. A ruthless captain bent on breaking a record drives his crew to the point of mutiny. Cast includes Ira Gossel (Jeff Chandler), Bill Johnstone and Louis Van Rosten. William Keighley, host. Lux Soap, CBS. *With this broadcast we remember Howard DaSilva who died Feb. 16, 1986 at the age of 76.*

RUDY VALLEE AND HIS CONNECTICUT YANKEES (6-2-36) Remote broadcast from the Astor Roof, Hotel Astor, New York. Rudy sings "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World." Sustaining, NBC. (9:50; 11:20) *With this broadcast we remember Rudy Vallee who died July 3, 1986 at the age of 84.*

SUSPENSE (11-3-42) "Devil in the Summer House" stars Martin Gable as a man who receives an anonymous letter claiming to give a clue to a murder which happened twenty-five years earlier. Sustaining, CBS. (16:37; 13:13) *With this broadcast we remember Martin Gable who died May 22, 1986 at the age of 73.*

A NIGHT WITH HORACE HEIDT (5-23-48) It's the Youth Opportunity Show broadcast from Chicago with talented contestants competing for honors. Phillip Morris Cigarettes, NBC. (7:45; 8:35; 9:10) *With this broadcast we remember Horace Heidt who died Dec. 1, 1986 at the age of 85.*

LORENZO JONES (9-1-48) An isolated episode in the long-running daytime series featuring Karl Swenson as Lorenzo and Lucille Wall as his wife Belle. Bayer Aspirin, NBC. (14:45) *With this broadcast we remember Lucille Wall who died July 11, 1986 at the age of 87.*

SUSPENSE (11-16-50) "On A Country Road" starring Cary Grant and Cathy Lewis in the classic suspense drama about a husband and wife, stuck in their car in a storm as an escaped lunatic armed with a meat cleaver prowls the area. AutoLite, CBS. (13:15; 11:20) *With this broadcast we remember Cary Grant who died Nov. 29, 1986 at the age of 82.*

NOSTALGIA DIGEST BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

A limited number of back issues of the *Nostalgia Digest* and *Radio Guide* are available for \$2 each. For a complete list, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

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I REMEMBER IT WELL...

Confessions of a Juvenile Don Juan...
By Dan McGuire

February presents an opportunity for even the most reticent of us to express our feelings for the guys and gals we hold special. For those with a nostalgic bent, Valentine's Day also may trigger some warm recollections of early loves.

I lost my heart for the first time in (fittingly enough) the first grade at James Giles Elementary School. At the door of Room 101 I realized that my mother—she with whom I would entrust my life; even my Lone Ranger whistle ring—really was going to leave me with this mob of unknown children. Along with three other youngsters, I began to shed tears of desperation and betrayal.

The 32 other kids were taking opening day in stride. They probably viewed us as babies. Not so Miss Taylor, the first grade teacher. She gathered us around her in a semi-circle and spoke soothingly of the fun things we would do in school. As mothers tip-toed out behind us, she patted our cheeks and brushed tears away with Camay soft hands.

Miss Taylor won my confidence that morning. Within a month she had won my heart as well.

She was the youngest teacher at Giles, probably fresh out of college. She was the most beautiful grown-up lady I'd ever met. When she called on me in class, her smile told me that I was

special to her. Gradually I realized that one day she would take me aside and say, "Danny, this must be our secret. I love you more than anyone in the world. I can barely wait until you are grown so we can be married!"

Somehow the opportunity to make that revelation never arose. At the end of the school year, Miss Taylor marched my class across the hall to meet our teacher for second grade. When she glanced my way and I could not catch her eye, I knew that she was as heart-sick as I over our missed rendezvous.

I vowed to grow up quickly and fulfill our destiny, Miss Taylor's and mine. For a week I was listless, withdrawn. (Mom thought I had a summer cold.) Then the lure of vacation activities engulfed me. Somewhat guiltily, I felt my heart healing.

When school resumed, I sometimes met Miss Taylor on the playground at recess. We exchanged hellos and she, too, seemed to have recovered from her heartbreak. Later I learned that she had become engaged during the summer. That hurt a little. It was good that she had accepted the impossibility of our romance. Yet such a swift and complete recovery seemed a bit callous.

Perhaps that episode hardened me against women for a time. For I was ten before Cupid succeeded in zapping me again.

Patsy sat across the aisle from me in fourth grade. She laughed at my jokes and exchanged answers with me on homework assignments. After school,

we walked together for the distance that our paths overlapped. (Walking her all the way home would have resulted in certain ridicule by my male peers.) Our conversations revealed many shared interests: movie serials, radio programs, bike riding, Big Little Books.

We lived several blocks apart and had different playmates. But I met some of her friends when she invited me to her next birthday party. Thereafter, if things got dull on my block, I wandered by Patsy's house and often could join a game already in progress.

Bike riding enabled us to pop in on each other. If she found me alone on my porch, we might shoot marbles or play soldiers. I could barely beat her at marbles. (She may even have tossed a few games.) With my metal soldiers, she became as engrossed as I did in setting up elaborate battles in our backyard rock garden. But at some point the war went on cease fire as a nurse and a wounded private fell in love.

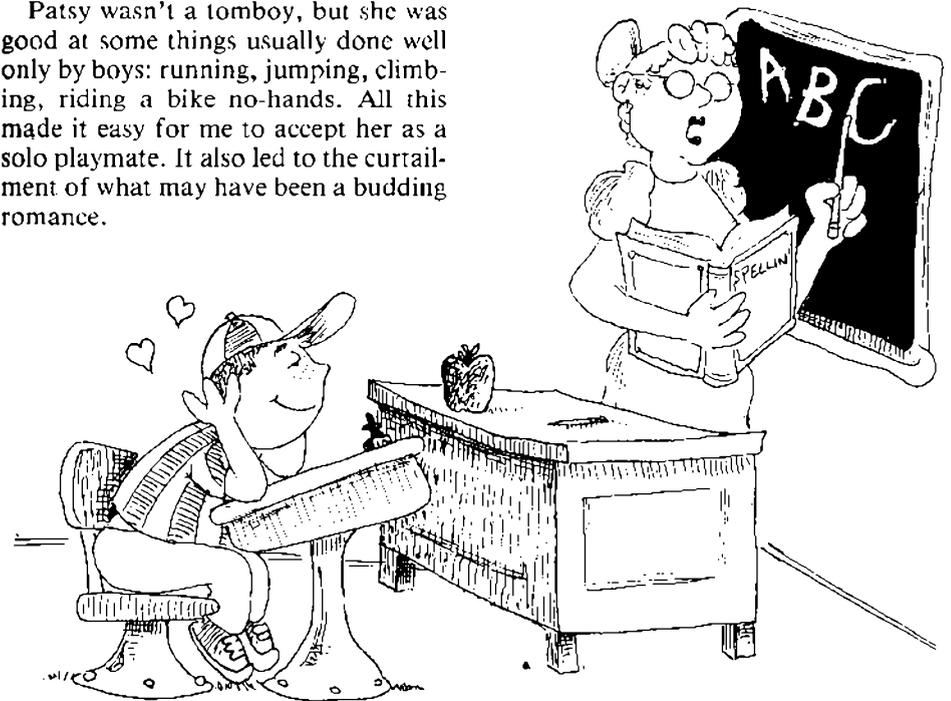
Patsy wasn't a tomboy, but she was good at some things usually done well only by boys: running, jumping, climbing, riding a bike no-hands. All this made it easy for me to accept her as a solo playmate. It also led to the curtailment of what may have been a budding romance.

One afternoon our backyard game prompted some playful pushing. The pushing gave way to wrestling that began with laughter but escalated to an earnest contest. It ended with Patsy sitting on me, pinning my arms and demanding, "Give up?" When my struggles did not unseat her, I was forced to mumble, "I give."

Our play resumed with Patsy apparently putting the incident behind her; but my pride had taken a blow. I was thankful none of my boy friends were around to see. I took a closer look at Patsy and found that she was pretty but also rather . . . well . . . husky.

Her boyish behavior had attracted me, but it now represented a threat. Women's lib was a quarter century down the road. I dared not fall in love with a girl who could out-wrestle me.

After that day, I remained friendly with Patsy but minimized our contact and avoided one-on-one play alto-



Cartoon illustrations by Brian Johnson

I REMEMBER IT WELL

gether. She persisted for awhile but gradually got the message. She may never have realized what short circuited our relationship, though.

Hindsight proved my decision wise. Patsy grew heavier each year. I remained a 98-pound weakling well into high school.

Most of my boyhood crushes were hampered by a tendency to become enamored of older women. Wayne's sister, Shirley, was a high school freshman while we were still in sixth grade. She befriended a gal named Meg who came by to visit frequently. I found Meg irresistible, possessed of a bubbly personality and the wholesome beauty of a farmer's daughter.

In her presence, I strained to appear older and more sophisticated than my years. I broke off from games with Wayne to involve myself in the girls' conversation. Meg was polite and friendly. Shirl appeared puzzled. Wayne was disgusted. Privately he told me, "She's got three boy friends and she's almost engaged to one of them."

Even so, I persuaded myself that Meg was waiting for me to close the age gap. At night I dreamed us into scenes from Errol Flynn movies. She was the princess captured by pirates. I was the bold adventurer boarding their ship with my men to rescue her with dazzling swordsmanship.

At least three baby sitters broke my heart. Martha, in particular, left it in pieces. She was sixteen and in the advanced stage of what adults referred to as "blossoming." She had long silky brunet tresses and was allowed to wear a trace of light red lip rouge.

There was an upright piano in our living room. When Martha sat with my brothers and me (really just Alan and Dick, because I didn't need a sitter), she would entertain us by playing our favorite songs. Sometimes we sang.

Sometimes we just listened, as when she flawlessly rendered "Malaguena" or "Bumble Boogie."

I stayed up later than my brothers, and Martha taught me to play ducts like "Chop Sticks" and "Hearts and Flowers." As we played, seated close together on the piano bench, she sometimes put her arm around my shoulder. A casual gesture, no doubt (just a practical place to hang a loose limb), but to me a signal that this lovely creature, barely four years my senior, responded to my adoration. Yet when she asked what I'd like to hear, and I picked the most romantic tunes in our Golden Book of Songs, Martha never took the hint.

Lopsided love wasn't always the problem, though. Even my well balanced matches had a Romeo/Juliet quality to them.

Betsy and I hit it off pretty good in seventh grade, but her parents prohibited dating until high school. To see a movie together, we plotted to meet at the Patio Theatre. She would tag along with her older sister and some friends. We would meet "by chance" in the lobby and she'd tell her sister, "My friend is alone. I'm going to sit with him." I couldn't buy her ticket, but I'd treat her to a soda and popcorn.

We had worked out all the details—except the part where her sister gets sick and they both stay home. I paced the lobby and caught only snatches of the two cartoons, previews and Chapter 12 of "The Monster and the Ape." The Abbott and Costello feature wasn't as funny as it should have been.

During my twelfth summer I attended a church camp. I knew there was a God when a gorgeous female of my own age and faith took to me as spontaneously as I to her. For two weeks we were as inseparable as camp restrictions permitted. Our parting was one of epic poignancy, but we exchanged phone numbers and vowed to reunite.



Then geography reared its ugly head. She lived on the far south side of Chicago and I on the northwest fringe. Much too far by bicycle. Even the streetcar would require two hours and multiple transfers each way.

We kept in touch by phone and letter. We resigned ourselves to meeting again at camp. But absence does not always make the heart grow fonder. In spring, we met at a downtown youth rally. A few hours together made it clear the spark was gone. We parted friends. I attended a different camp that summer.

In those years when all emotions are felt most keenly, I perhaps thought I had cornered the market on unrequited love. Now, I realize that many of my pals were afflicted as badly as I.

Kurt nursed a barely acknowledged love for Wanda through 7th and 8th grades. He frequently recruited me to go bike riding with him and steered us down her block. If Wanda was sitting on her front porch or playing out front with a girl friend, we would make repeated circles around the block. Each time we passed Wanda's house, Kurt would perform some daredevil trick

for her benefit and holler: "Hey, Danny, watch this!"

Wanda usually appeared to not even notice us. But on rare occasions when Kurt embarrassed himself by sprawling in the street, she and her friends would first gasp and then cover their mouths to muffle giggles as he dusted himself off.

When we advanced from grammar school, Wanda selected a different high school than Kurt. Only then was he convinced that his affections were not returned in kind. To his credit, he recovered admirably and became quite a ladies' man in high school.

Between 6th and 8th grades, Roger used a generous allowance to treat almost every girl in our class to sodas, carnival rides and movies. At graduation, we had a class outing to River-view. Roger blew a wad trying to get every girl on the Bobs, the water slide, the Mill on the Floss, the parachute ride—anything that offered an opportunity to put an arm around them and maybe steal a kiss.

Roger was neither an athlete nor a Mr. Personality. The girls mostly tolerated him and took advantage of his efforts to buy their affections. I confess I joined most of the guys in snickering behind his back.

Ol' Rog eventually triumphed, however. In junior college he met a plain but nice gal from a well-off family. After C.P.A. school, he married her. They adore each other and her father set up his egghead son-in-law in a very profitable business.

So, call it puppy love if you will. Those painful childhood crushes helped prepare us for the more tempestuous affairs of the heart in our teenage and young adult years. At least when we were kids we could depend on that original sweetheart who spent a third of her life in our kitchen. When every other female spurned us, Mom was always thrilled to be our valentine.

The Home Front

"Junk Will Win The War!"

By Todd Nebel



From mid 1942 to 1945, those left behind on the American home front of World War II slowly lost their fear of sudden enemy attack. Civil defense became less immediate as we eventually began winning battles. The Office of Civilian Defense (which made us feel safer following Pearl Harbor) soon began introducing programs which became greatly important as the war went on. These other programs could have been under the heading "civilian offense" as the OCD introduced ways we could help our armies as well as ourselves. Hoping to boost morale and help America's war machine, the OCD now appealed for individual cooperation from inside our homes. The dark days of asking Americans to form civilian armies of cooperation was now giving way to scrap drives, victory gardens and conservation.

One feature of radio's "Fibber McGee and Molly Show" was Fibber McGee's overstuffed hall closet. The hall closet which never should be opened, was an accurate symbol of one of Americas greatest resources—junk, trash and scrap. And of first priority in mid 1942 following the introduction of the scrap drive program, was the recycling of scrap to produce weapons. Soon every community was having scrap drives which included such lowly disposables as bacon grease (used in the manufacture of ammunition) and nylon and silk stockings (used to make powder bags for naval guns).

Ted Giddings, the city editor of the Berkshire Eagle in Pittsfield, Massachusetts during the war said, "I think the war affected our community the way it did most. It was rallying around the flag so to speak. We went in pretty big for salvage drives. During the war a reenactment of General Knox's march down from Fort Ticonderoga was staged, picking up some old salvage materials—old cannons. A lot of the towns donated cannons that had been in front of town halls for years—practically back to the Civil War. They were then all lugged off to Boston and shipped out to be used for scrap iron at some ordinance factory somewhere."

Numbering ten million strong by 1942, civilian defense officials ingeniously promoted the uses of scrap metal when pushing an upcoming drive. For example, it was pointed out that the iron in one old shovel was enough to produce four hand grenades. And a poster used the variation on a popular wartime song when it showed an old jalopy at a collection depot with the exclamation, "Praise the Lord! I'll soon be ammunition!" In fact, the scrap drives became so successful that three weeks after the government called for scrap drives, enthusiastic Americans had given over five million tons of discarded car bumpers, pots and pans and other metal objects. By the end of the war,

half of the tin needed for weapons and much of the steel came from America's own recycled scrap.

A similar morale booster promoted by civilian defense officials was the planting of victory gardens to promote conservation. The effect was that in 1943, 20.5 million vegetable gardens were grown in America, accounting for one-third of all the vegetables consumed that year. American eating habits changed as housewives discovered kohlrabi, swiss chard, as well as good nutritional habits while watching ration points. And besides popping up in backyards across the country, larger scale victory gardens sprang forth in places like Arlington Park Race Track, a zoo in Portland, Oregon and a downtown parking lot in New Orleans.

With war bond purchases and victory gardens usually occupying much of their spare time, grown-ups tended to lose some of their enthusiasm for scrap drives now and then. But, picking up the slack, American children came to the rescue to help unceasingly with the war effort. Their enthusiasm never gave out as they picked clean their neighborhoods of scrap metal, paper, tin foil and old rubber.

American kids quickly found out what it meant to grow up in a war atmosphere on the home front. Many children grew up knowing their fathers were "killed in the war" or if still alive, knowing them only from their picture atop the bedroom bureau. Sometimes they were even more seriously affected by the fact that their mothers might be gone for long stretches working in defense plants or other war-related jobs. It could be said that the children of the United States in the 1980's may have much in common with children of working mothers during World War II. Despite their situations during the war, most children felt the effects of shortages; from doll carriages to rubber balls.

All children were indelibly touched by the war.

Perhaps because of the war's immediate impact on them, youngsters seemed to be everywhere and anywhere. They pestered neighbors for old rubber boots and useless tools and clamoring for the little bits of tin foil on gum wrappers and cigarette packages to form cylindrical balls garnering fifty cents each. The American youth effort brought headlines to daily newspapers from coast to coast.

Never questioned by children was the need for scrap paper, which was less apparent than that of tin foil or tin cans. All a kid knew was that it was the easiest junk to come by. One youngster in Maywood, Illinois, was able to collect over 100 tons of it during the war! And a paper drive carried out by the Boy Scouts in 1942, so glutted the pulp mills that the drive had to be temporarily stopped. The real need for the scrap paper was for packaging armaments to be shipped overseas, but rumor was that the tremendous amount of paperwork in Washington was to blame. Truth was the shortage was caused by the lack of manpower in the lumber camps, but all children in Chicago cared about was that in one four-month period, they collected 18,000 tons of newspaper. It may be said that in the back of their minds all the while they heard Father Bing singing . . .

Junk ain't Junk no more . . .

Cause Junk can win the war . . .

What's Junk to you has a job to do . . .

'Cause Junk ain't Junk no more . . .

Pots and Pans, old garbage cans . . .

The kettle that doesn't pour . . .

Collect today for the USA . . .

Cause Junk can win the war!!



NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

Count Basie and his Music

By KARL PEARSON

In the 1930's, it was radio that helped to build the popularity of many of the big bands. However, in Count Basie's case it was the medium through which he was first discovered!

In 1936 the Count was leading a small nine-piece band at the Reno Club in Kansas City. Basie referred to it as his "Three, Three and Three" band, consisting of three trumpets, three saxes and three rhythm. The Basie band played mostly "head" arrangement; tunes made up on the stand as the band was playing. The Count would start playing a little figure and the band would pick up and improvise. The job was a steady one, although the hours were long. A local experimental radio station, W9XBY, began broadcasting Basie's swinging little band live from the Reno Club. Although W9XBY was a small experimental station, its signal was heard throughout much of the midwest.

It was while the band was on the one night from the Reno Club that a tune that would become synonymous with Count Basie was born. The announcer asked Count what he was going to play next. Basie started out the tune in D-flat, and, looking up to see what time it was, noticed that it was about ten minutes to one o'clock in the morning. So he said to the announcer, "Call it the 'One O'Clock Jump.'" It was as simple as that.

Enter John Hammond. John was from a well-to-do New York family and was a jazz enthusiast who did as

much as possible to encourage jazz artists such as Billie Holiday and Benny Goodman, through both his personal support and his magazine articles. It was while on a trip to Chicago that he first heard the Basie band on the radio. John was in town to see Benny Goodman who was playing at the Congress Hotel. After leaving the Congress, Hammond drove off in his car to a local vacant parking lot where he knew he could find good reception for his car radio. While twisting the dials, he came across Basie and the band from the Reno Club. As he later stated, "I'd never heard such a great sound in my life. They were absolutely electrifying."

Hammond began doing whatever he could for Basie, first by writing many fine articles about him in *Down Beat* and then encouraging Willard Alexander of the MCA booking agency to listen to the band. Willard agreed, and signed Count Basie and his Orchestra with MCA. In the meantime John tried to secure a recording contract for the band with the American Record Corporation, with which he had ties. He felt that they would give the Basie band its best exposure. But in the meantime, Decca records found out about the Count and signed him up for a two-year, low paying contract with absolutely no royalties! When Hammond found out, he knew that Basie had been conned. Unfortunately, there was little he could do, as the contract was legal and valid.

One of the provisions of the Decca



contract was that the band be enlarged to twelve or thirteen pieces, so Basie began looking for more men. With these additions and with the original members the Basie band in the next year would include such great musicians as trombonists Benny Morton and Eddie Durham (who doubled on electric guitar), trumpeter Buck Clayton, saxists Herschel Evans, Lester Young, bassist Walter Page and drummer Jo Jones.

But at the start things were rough. The band relied mostly on those head arrangements, and had very little written music. The Basie library was so small at this time that the members each took turns carrying it in their music cases! Fellow leader Fletcher Henderson came through and gave Basie a number of charts from his library, including "King Porter Stomp." About this time the band opened at Chicago's Grand Terrace where it didn't do so well. The band's first New York engagement followed shortly thereafter at the Rosland Ballroom. *Metronome Magazine* critic George Simon reviewed the band, writing "That sax section is invariably out of tune. And if you think the sax section is out of tune, catch the brass! And if you think the brass section is

out of tune, catch the intonation of the band as a whole!"

There was some truth the *Metronome* review. This was a band that had gone from nine to thirteen pieces overnight, a band that originally played "heads" and then orchestrated scores. And there was personnel turnover. Things began to smooth out in the next few months, with the addition of lead saxist Earle Warren, guitarist Freddy Green and Eddie Durham, who also arranged.

The sole vocalist at the time was Jimmy Rushing, the great blues singer who had been with the band since its Kansas City days and had been with Basie in the Bennie Moten band. However at this time John Hammond brought the great Billie Holiday into the band (she would remain for several months) and in that way added another great vocalist to the Basie band. Unfortunately, Billie couldn't record with the Basie band; Basie still had his contract with Decca, and Billie had an exclusive contract with the American Record Corporation (it was later bought by CBS and became Columbia Records). But Billie still appeared with the band and made many broadcasts with it.

The great breakthrough for Count Basie came in 1938. John Hammond and Willard Alexander had found a little club on New York's 52nd Street called *The Famous Door*. It was a small place that could probably hold only fifty or sixty customers at a time. But Hammond came through with his contacts at CBS and arranged for a radio wire from "The Door", which meant the band would be heard coast-to-coast by much more than fifty people. The band gained national popularity while at "The Door" through its nightly broadcasts. And the Count adopted as his signature tune the number which had been with him since those first days at Reno Club. The title? Of course it was "The One O'Clock Jump".

CICERO, IL — Every night at work my co-worker and I listen to your station and we enjoy listening especially to *Radio Classics*. I'm 44 and my partner is 62 and this brings back some wonderful memories of the golden days of radio. When I was a little kid I especially enjoyed listening to Dragnet and the Jack Benny Show. On Saturday morning at 10:00 there was a space science fiction show on called Space Cadet or something like that. It was the only such show on Saturday mornings.

I'm presently taping these shows (I hope it's legal) so I can listen to them later on at home. Things get a bit hectic at work and it's not always possible to really listen real good under such circumstances. Could you possibly play more of the Jack Benny shows? He has got to be the funniest comedian of all time! Years ago my Dad took me to the great Chicago Theatre and we saw one of the Jack Benny Shows. People were literally rolling in the aisle from laughter and trying to keep from injuring themselves from laughing so hard. Jack would just stand on stage with a straight face — no smile, no nothing. That made it just that much funnier. — LARRY K. GUY

HARVARD, IL — It is hard to find the words to describe how much I enjoy the old time radio programs. I wish they could be on from 8 til 10 instead

WE GET LETTERS

of one hour 8 to 9. You do a very good job of presenting the programs, and the programs I like best are Lone Ranger, Sgt. Preston and his dog King and Gunsmoke. I listen and enjoy WBBM-AM radio a lot. Keep up the good work and hope WBBM will devote more time to old time radio.

— EDWIN KASTEN

(P. S. Hello, Chuck Schaden. I am writing this letter for my husband Ed because he is totally blind. He doesn't admit to his handicap often, but you have opened a part of his world for him. I work nights and you have helped Ed with his time with old time radio programs. He talks to me and all of his friends about the programs. Thanks again.)

WHEATON, IL—*Radio Classics* is my most favorite prime time show. I am only 38 years old and your programming is brand new, fresh and exciting. It has never before been heard by the newer generations. I especially like the newest programs because of their high quality recordings. I discovered *Radio Classics* this past summer while experimenting with a tuned

radio frequency high fidelity receiver while working with my electronics hobby. I was always amazed as a kid at what high fidelity could be heard on a crystal set. A TRF receiver can be designed to maintain that full fidelity which is not achievable by the modern day Superhetrodyne receivers which are commonly available in automobiles, portable radios and stereos. A standard AM radio does not do justice to the fine quality of *Radio Classics* broadcasts.

—PHILIP J. ANDRESIV

GLENVIEW, IL—1921 was my birth year so I remember the early radio with great affection. Uncle Walt was one of my early recollections. He read us the funnies and on our birthdays he sent up a shooting star (you could hear it). Sure enough, I saw my star when I rushed to the window. A child's imagination did wonders with the hearing of radio. Grandpa had a crystal set with headphones. When he touched the cat's whiskers to the crystal I could hear the "little people" in the ear phones: Uncle Ezra, Lulubelle and Scotty, the WLS Farm Show. When we got our first radio with an aerial, "boy, what a deal!" I remember hearing about Lindberg's landing in Paris, 1927. I was old enough to wonder about airplanes and lands far away.

—ROY M. BURNHAM

LANSING, IL—Enjoying my first issue of *Nostalgia Digest*. I've been a radio bug practically all my life. My first memories of radio were of my Dad hunched over a monstrosity with three or four inch dials, wearing ear-phones and trying to tune in Cleveland or some other distant place. If there was something special, like a John McCormack concert coming on, he'd hook up a separate speaker so the whole family could gather around and hear it. Later on I learned to make my own crystal sets, winding my own coils on a large match box with waxed paper and paraffin between layers, and wire and crystals from junk radios. With luck, we could pick up station WIND which was in Hammond, Indiana at that time. Our favorite program was Amos 'n' Andy at 10 p.m., but Dad listened to the Globetrotter, a news broadcast on at that time. So my brother and I used to take a headset apart and put an earphone in each of our pillows. When Mom came in to check on us, we'd play like we were asleep but often listened far into the night. I've caught your programs over different stations, but because of crazy work hours I'd lose track for a while, but catch up with you again while spinning the dials. It's a shame the newspapers quit printing the radio listings like they used to. But *Nostalgia Digest* will help correct that.

—MIKE NEE

BELOIT, WI—I love the *Nostalgia Digest*. It's like having tons of fascinating information in a compact booklet. How did Jim Jordan's 90th birthday go?

—MATT HANSON

(ED. NOTE—Jim "Fibber McGee" Jordan had a

wonderful birthday on November 16th when he reached the big 90. More than 150 of our readers and listeners took the time to send him a card or letter and all those greetings were delivered to him "in a bright red shopping bag" at his home on his big day. Jim called us to say how much he appreciated hearing from so many of his fans in the midwest; and said that he especially enjoyed reading all the personal comments from those who said that they had enjoyed Fibber McGee and Molly when they were youngsters and how much they still enjoy listening to the tapes and broadcasts of his old shows.)

STICKNEY, IL—Love your shows. You just don't have enough time on radio to play all the shows like you used to. Six hours a day, every day (six days a week) would be great. I think 1 to 7 p.m. would be great. From 8 to 9 p.m.—you're just getting started. More people should write in. I wish you had eight hours a day: four hours in the morning, four hours in the evening.

—BILL MALECEK

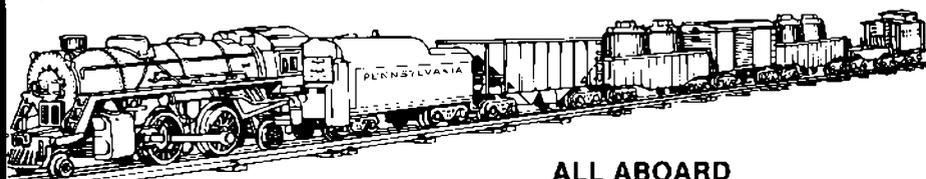
(ED. NOTE—Glad to hear that you want more time for old time radio, but if we were to follow your suggestions, you would soon be tuning in to the "We Remember Him Well" Memorial Program for your old time radio host!)

SKOKIE, IL—Enclosed please find a check for another two year subscription; it's worth every penny! The Saturday broadcast is better than the weeknight show because the original commercials are included and the flow of the program is not interrupted. Even so, let us listeners know if there is anything we can do about getting your weeknight program lengthened to two hours or more. Seems like I just get settled in to listen and the show is over!

—JULIE LA BARBARA

(ED. NOTE—About the best hope for expanding the WBBM show is to let the station know you're listening and would like more of the *Radio Classics*. Thanks.)

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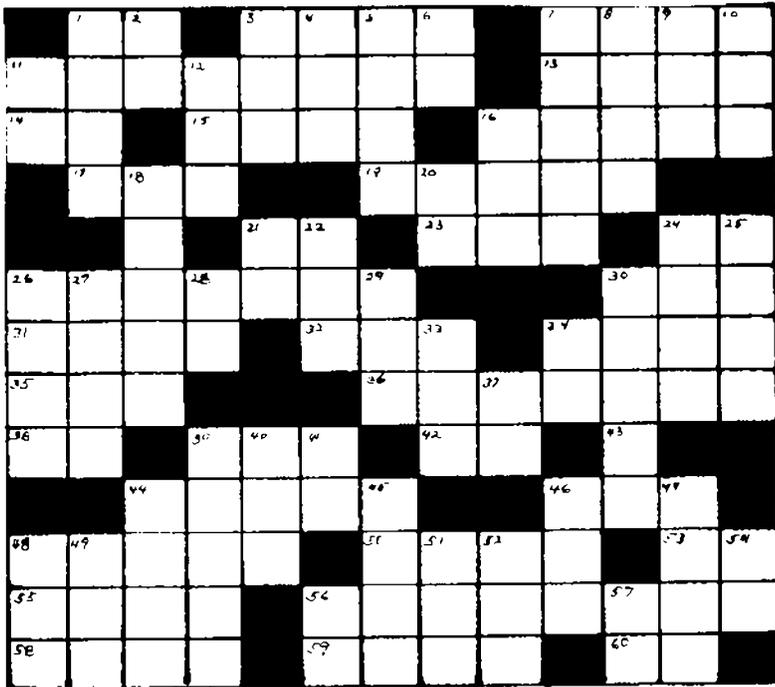
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CROSS TALK SOLUTION

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | S | C | | G | A | A | L | | S | A | B | E |
| W | A | R | B | U | C | K | S | | L | P | C | N |
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| S | A | R | T | | C | C | D | Y | | E | T | |

CROSS TALK by Ed Thomas



Solution to Puzzle on Page 31.

ACROSS

1. -- Big, Edna Ferber novel.
3. Jail, archaic form.
7. Vic & ----.
11. Daddy -----.
13. Once ---- a time.
14. -- Wynn the Fire chief.
15. Not ashore.
16. On edge, 2 words.
17. Hen fruit.
19. Tales.
21. "Is zat --?"
23. Dennis ---.
24. initials, early NBC head.
26. Ma -----.
30. ----man, Robin's hero.
31. The ---- of Night.
32. Essential to hear.
34. The Casa ---- Orch.
35. Lemon---
36. The ----- Light.
38. A state.
39. Breakfast Club's Brennenman.
42. K. Kyser vocalist-initials.
44. Speak.
46. "Did you say --- cents?"
48. Our Gal Sunday's Red -----Valley.

50. The ---- Book of Gregory Hood.
53. Each, abrv.
55. Scene of first Hanky-Panky.
56. Bachelor's -----.
58. Missile.
59. Buffalo Bill ----.
60. Call home.

DOWN

1. Marquis de ----.
2. Evangelist's initials.
3. -- Edwards.
4. Goodman ---.
5. Word of agreement.
6. --, MFT; cigarette commercial.
7. Not cloudy,
8. Tarzan's immediate family.
9. -- Winslow of the Navy.
10. "30" or FINIS.
11. -- the People.
12. Sack.
13. Spanish gold.
18. Pretty deep rut.
20. -- lib
21. --; Sy; So

22. -- Man's Family.
24. Not as nice as darn.
25. Discriminating party.
26. Pike's ----.
27. Nelson or Arnold.
28. Howard --el
29. Droop.
30. Town in Idaho.
33. Cuban beverage.
34. Actress: Lorraine ---, initials.
37. Ego's partner.
39. Romance of Helen ----.
40. Paddle.
41. Singer's initials, Mel ----.
44. WW1 song. ---- There.
45. Hearing yourself
46. -- Weems.
47. Hair Remover
48. -- Grange, Barber, et al.
49. Cantor's favorite.
51. Help.
52. Foxy.
54. Article.
56. Former President's initials
57. Truth or Consequences host

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FEBRUARY

BELA LUGOSI

The Doctor Prescribed Death

An exciting SUSPENSE story. Bela Lugosi plays a psychologist with a unique theory . . . an individual intending to commit suicide can be persuaded to commit murder instead. He can prove his theory . . . and that is exactly what he intends to do! Broadcast February 2, 1943.

PETER LORRE

EDGAR ALLEN POE'S CLASSIC

The Black Cat

A MYSTERY IN THE AIR radio presentation. A man is driven to madness and murder by the evils of drink . . . and is foiled by a black cat. Sponsored by Camel cigarettes. Broadcast September 18, 1947.

GREAT RADIO VOICES

(Selected Broadcasts)

WALTER WINCHELL

"Good evening, Mr. & Mrs. North and South America and all the ships and clippers at sea. Let's go to press!" The 5/18/41 edition of the Jurgen's Journal (with lotions of love).

LOUELLA PARSONS

"Hello, to all of you from Hollywood!" In this 11/9/47 program her guest is Joan Crawford. Woodbury Soap ("for the skin you love to touch").

BILL STERN

October 20, 1950, the 12th anniversary of the Colgate Sports Newsreel. An all-star cast of famous voices from prior years - Joe Lewis, Babe Ruth, Eleanor Roosevelt, Joe DiMaggio, Eddie Cantor, Jim Stewart, etc.

GABRIEL HEATTER

"There's good news tonight!" August 13, 1945, news of Japan's offer to surrender, possible civil strife and the tone of expectancy in the U.S.

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MARCH

ESCAPE

Orient Express

Ever dream of romantic adventure in a far off land? Want to get away from it all? We offer you . . . Escape! You are aboard the Orient Express, rushing through the European night to Istanbul. An action packed story with the complete mystique of the famous train itself. Stars William Conrad and Hans Conrard. 2/19/49.

Shipment of Mute Fate

A ship voyage starts from Venezuela carrying a cargo of death . . . a 12 foot deadly Bushmaster snake! The crew and passengers live in a state of terror when the snake escapes and cannot be found. This story has a feeling of apprehension combined with anticipation. 3/28/48

GREAT SOAP OPERAS

(Selected Episodes)

MA PERKINS

America's Mother of the Air tries to get to the bottom of a family problem. Oxydol's Own Ma Perkins talks with Willy and Evey.

BACKSTAGE WIFE

The story of a little Iowa girl who fell in love with and married a Broadway matinee idol, Larry Noble . . . the story of Mary Noble and what it means to be the wife of a famous star!

JUST PLAIN BILL

The story of Bill Davidson, barber of Hartville, who in this episode attends the reading of a girl's last will and is disturbed at the thought that one of the beneficiaries may be her murderer.

THE GOLDBERGS

Yoo Hoo . . . is anybody? The warm hearted story of Gertrude Berg as Molly Goldberg and her family and friends.

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Here's a Photo for your Radio Scrapbook: **JACKSON BECK**

He was known by two generations of kids as the radio announcer who shouted, "Kell-ogg's Pep—the SUPERdelicious cereal—presents THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN!!!"

But Jackson Beck did more than sell cereal for the sponsor of Superman (beginning in 1940), Mark Trail (beginning in 1950) and Tom Corbett, Space Cadet (beginning in 1952).

He starred as radio's first Cisco Kid when the series premiered in 1942 and in 1948 he was the celebrated detective Philo Vance.

Jackson Beck's voice may still be heard on countless radio and television commercials and animated TV shows. He's the voice of Bluto on the Popeye the Sailor cartoons, and any old time fan of Superman will instantly recognize his distinctive voice.

He's alive and well and living in New York.

