

# NOSTALGIA DIGEST <sup>AND</sup> RADIO GUIDE



ART LINKLETTER

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## HELLO, OUT THERE IN RADIOLAND!!

BOOK FOURTEEN CHAPTER THREE

APRIL-MAY, 1988

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A number of milestones are coming up this spring.

★ Composer Irving Berlin will be 100 years old this year and we're planning an extra-special salute to him on our May 7 *Those Were The Days* program. In addition to some wonderful vintage radio sounds, we'll have some live entertainment in our studio at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago. We'll be joined by two outstanding barbershop quartets, the *Lake Shore Harmony Four*, and the *Villagers* who will present some great Berlin tunes. Plus, a fine pop singing group, the *Skylarks, Unlimited* will treat us to a medley of songs by America's foremost songsmith. Plan now to be part of our studio audience.

★ Another birthday boy is Superman, who turns 50 this year. The Man of Steel is still strong as ever and we'll devote our entire May 14th TWTD program to a couple of radio chapters telling of his origin and a complete Superman adventure from his first year on the air.

★ A major milestone for Chicago radio will be observed in May when WBBM Radio turns 65. It's also the 20th anniversary of WBBM's Newsradio 78 format and to mark the occasion we'll have a special two-hour edition of *Radio Classics* on Friday, May 6th from 7 to 9 p.m.

★ We've also written a book, *WBBM Radio: Yesterday and Today* which looks at the station's illustrious past and present. The book will be published around May 1st and you can be sure we'll let you know how to get a copy!

★ We complete eighteen years of *Those Were The Days* programs with our broadcast on April 30 and on that date we'll have a special WNIB show to mark the occasion. *You* have made it possible for us to stay on the air all these years and we appreciate your support.

Thanks for listening.



# SPEAKING OF RADIO



## Chuck Schaden's Conversation with ART LINKLETTER



*Some time ago we had the opportunity to visit Art Linkletter in his office in Beverly Hills, California. We noted that, during the golden age of radio, he put together a program called People Are Funny, a mostly visual, audience participation program. How he translated the visual to the audio was what we wanted to know and we asked how he was able to accomplish that.*

Well, of course we didn't know anything about television when we started it so we didn't have any problems. We just described everything that went on and prayed for the day when television would arrive. And of course when television did arrive, we found out that it had many, many limitations and that a lot of the fun of *People Are Funny* was gone because anticipation is greater than realization. And things that you could describe as being funny often weren't really that funny. So it was a very interesting experience to have spent ten years in radio, waiting for television, and then to find out that it had many, many limitations on it.

Radio's a participatory experience and television is a passive, spectator sport where everything is laid out for you and you have no room for imagination; no room for heightened enjoyment of things depending on your own cultural and educational background. It's all laid out flat. Whereas in the old days on *People Are Funny*, to use an extreme example, we would hit somebody in the face with a chocolate meringue pie. If you were listening to it, you could visualize that as aesthetically as you wished it to be or as crudely and burlesque as you wished it to be. When it was on television, there was no possible point of interpretation. There

it was and it made some people angry and it made some people happy.

*Where did People Are Funny come from in the first place? How did it all begin?*

I was doing a number of radio shows in San Francisco. I was the Mr. Radio of San Francisco, doing twenty-one shows a week on seven stations: *Man in the Street*, *Who's Dancing Tonight* from the ballroom, and *Are You a Genius?* from Oakland, and many other programs. And it occurred to me that a program built on psychology would be most interesting since I was a psychology minor in college, an English major, so I devised a program idea called *Meet Yourself* in which I would get people up to the microphone, have them answer questions or participate in a stunt and then have a famous psychologist from Stanford University come into the picture and interpret that person's personality. Is he an ambivert or an introvert or an extrovert or whatever he was depending upon what the stunt was. And then we would go on to the next stunt.

I came to Hollywood one time on a chore that was not related to this and I ran into a man named John Guedel. And he had exactly the same idea, only he had a psychologist from USC and he called it *People Are Funny* while mine was *Meet*

*Yourself:* Look into the mirror of your own self and find out really who you are. So John and I found that we were compatible. We were both writers, we were both idea men. He was a producer and I was a performer. So we pooled our talents, took his title which was the better, more saleable title. We spent fifteen dollars each, which was a total of thirty dollars, borrowed a studio at NBC, assembled a cast of characters and made a pilot.

Well, the psychologist didn't work out because we wanted him to be strong and definitive. We wanted to do a stunt and then he would give a complete analysis of that person. And, naturally, a professional psychologist from a big university would only say, "There's an indication that possibly, under certain circumstances, this man might conceivably be this way." We wanted him to say, "He is thus and so." So we threw him out and left the stunts in!

We sent the record to a Chicago agent named Russell Seeds who was having problems with the United States government over a program called "Sergeant Quirk and Captain Flagg" because World War II was beginning and the show that he had on NBC for a tobacco company was a very tough show between a non-com and a captain, that is, a commissioned officer. So they were cancelling that show and at just at that moment they needed something else and they picked up *People Are Funny* and we were off and running. So here was the birth of a show which ran for nineteen years.

*It ran on radio until from about '42 until when?*

Until about '53 and then went into television until about '61 or '62.

*Was it on television at the same time it was on radio at any point?*

Yes, at one time, just as *House Party* which I did on CBS. I was on both networks.

*That's a little unusual, isn't it, in those days?*



Very. Especially during those years when there was so much competition between the two. But I was on five days a week on CBS, on radio, and then finally TV. And both shows were suited for radio or TV. And they at one time were on all four networks—the radio and the television on each two networks. So it was quite an adventure.

*Was there any problem with doing that?*

No. I just had to be sure that I was loyal and capable and did a good show of each. In fact, it was better for me because each network was trying to make its show more important to me and to the viewer than the other network show. So I got reams of publicity and attention and all the things that make young, rising emcees happy.

*You said before it was actually easier to do *People Are Funny* on radio than on television. How did you find that transitional period?*

Well, as a matter of fact, what I did, to tell you the secret, inside truth, was, that

## SPEAKING OF RADIO

I was so concerned about the worries of television and the transition that I went over to ABC and sold the Jolly Green Giant a show called *Life With Linkletter* which was really a hidden version of *People Are Funny* under a different title. And so there I was, on all three networks—the real *People are Funny* on NBC radio, the substitute *People Are Funny* under a different title on television on ABC, and the *House Party* on radio.

*Life With Linkletter* show which ran for a year and a half before NBC decided that *People Are Funny* had the priority and wanted it on the air on television. We found, on *Life With Linkletter*, for instance, that if we gave a lady a skunk and sent her up Hollywood Boulevard on a mission, that the description of the expressions on the faces of the passers-by evoked a much better image in the listener's eye than the occasional blase and even indifference with which you would greet a lady with a skunk on a leash on Hollywood Boulevard!

*Was People Are Funny live on television or was it on film?*

Chuck Schaden's



## SPEAKING OF RADIO

Conversations with . . .

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dennis Day  | <input type="checkbox"/> Edgar Bergen  |
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It was live at first and then it was filmed.

*Was it better on film or live?*

It was better on film because we could edit. And some great, great stunts didn't pay off the way they should have because people didn't react the way they should have.

I'm amused at today's game shows which I see on TV. When a person wins money, he jumps up and down and squeals and yells and kisses the emcee and falls down and does all that stuff. That's not natural. That's not the way people react. That's all coached. That's not only coached but it's threatened. If they don't react that way, they're never seen. We never told people how to react.

*Did you ever have any problems with people's reactions?*

Our only problem was, they didn't react strongly enough. We'd give somebody a house or a car and they'd say "Thanks." We would put together two brothers who hadn't seen each other for thirty-five years, separated by family problems. We brought them together and they'd say "Hi, Joe" instead of crying. On the other hand, there were times we got gigantic response out of very little things. You just don't know. People are funny! They're unpredictable. And if you look at the shows across the board today in the daytime, you'll see that they are predictable and they are the same and they are reacting exactly like two peas in a pod, whatever show you see.

*You were doing an audience participation show probably before anyone else was doing it.*

Ralph Edwards and myself and John Guedel, we three, my partner John and myself and Ralph. He had *Truth Or Consequences* and the two shows started at approximately the same time. We were fighting all the time about who got the ideas and who didn't and now, of course, we're good friends. But there was a lot of tension in the early days when we were both trying to make it. But we organized.



between the three of us, about a third of all the shows you see today, like *To Tell The Truth*, *The Price Is Right*, and *Let's Make A Deal*. We were hiding prizes in boxes and behind screens.

I never did care for quiz shows. Never wanted to do a quiz show, although I've done some. But I always wanted to have audience reactions to people undergoing real life hazards and problems. We've done everything.

*Were there any stunts that really backfired?*

Oh, yes. We had people, for instance, who got mad on stage. We got two neighbors together one time and neither one of them knew they were going to be on the program and we had researched and discovered that they had a problem in the neighborhood and they feuded. And we thought if we got them on the air in front of a live coast to coast audience and confronted them with the childishness of a simple argument over a dog, they would get back together again. And we'd give them a wonderful prize of a trip to Europe together. Well, they would have nothing

of this. When they found that the other one was on the stage, fireworks ensued and they wouldn't talk to each other and they wouldn't accept a prize and they made it even worse than it was before because now it was out in the open nationally. That was a surprise because they were both nice ladies and both reasonable separately. But it demonstrated to me very forcibly how Hatfield and McCoy feuds began almost from something they couldn't remember but at the end were killing each other over the growth of an animosity.

*On the other hand, was there a stunt or an event on the program that turned out so much better than you had expected? Something that had extra benefits to it?*

Oh yes. That often happened. Everything happened on the show. In nineteen years there's nothing you could mention that didn't happen because we had people who, as a result of some stunt, changed their whole lives.

We did a thing where we took a scaled, plastic case with a telephone number and an address inside of it, and we dropped twelve of these into the Pacific Ocean. And they said the first person who breaks this open and phones us will get a ten thousand dollar reward. Months went by and then one day we got a short-wave message from an atoll in the South Pacific. A native boy had found this on a beach in an incommunicable-type atoll and they waited for a month to get favoring winds so they could bring it to the naval base in a twin-hulled canoe. And the guy broke it open—they were afraid it might be a Japanese bomb—and we flew this young man all the way from this atoll in the South Pacific to Hollywood, did a stunt with him, showed him things to do, gave him money to go out and buy whatever a guy would buy with fifty dollars in an hour in stores he never even dreamed existed and come back and report. But anyhow, we gave him the ten thousand dollars as a final blow-off and he went back and changed the entire life of that island. For instance, they had never

## SPEAKING OF RADIO

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had water supplies that were dependable. And with that money they built a reservoir to catch the rain that came at intervals and they set up a medical center. This ten thousand dollars just changed the whole life of those people forever on that little island.

*It's amazing what a radio show can do.*

It really is.

*Where did the idea come from for the House Party?*

I was in San Francisco, flying up and back every week to do *People Are Funny* 'cause I still was doing my shows in San Francisco.

*Were you still doing those twenty some shows every week?*

I cut 'em down to about four or five, but I like to live in San Francisco. So I stayed up there and I'd be doing a man in the street show for a couple of hundred dollars on Market Street one night. The next night I'd be in Hollywood emceeing a coast to coast radio show. It seemed a little incongruous but I enjoyed both lives. So I started interviewing kids up in San Francisco as part of a show called *What's Doing, Ladies*, for Safeway Stores, and John Guedel and I had an idea. Why don't we sell a show called *Under 21*, five-a-week, daytime, where we take kids from three to 21 and vary all the things they do from accomplishments to little malaprops. So we cut a record and John took it back and Young and Rubicam liked it and submitted it to General Electric and they liked it but they said, "We want a five-a-week, half-hour show, but we only want kids for about eight or ten minutes. So we went to work, figured out a lot of other things to do, and used the kids as the only feature five days a week and did things that I was doing in San Francisco like looking in ladies' purses and, naturally, interviewing guest celebrities and authors and things like you're doing right now. And GE bought it and



that show stayed on the air for twenty-five years.

*And that made a very easy transition to television.*

Very easy. Much more so than the other.

*Was it being simulcast at any time?*

Yes, for three or four years, five years.

*You must have had some pretty interesting experiences with the kids because they really are unpredictable.*

Yes. It led me into a whole new way of life because I wrote the book *Kids Say The Darndest Things* out of my experiences. It was the number one best-seller for two years in a row, unheard of, in the nation. People remember the kids more than they remember the rest of the show. And a lot of people say to me you used to have that show where you interviewed kids. And I say that was only five minutes out of thirty. How about the other twenty-five? You know, they were good minutes too.

But the idea of interviewing children was so unusual and was so difficult, very few

people were able to do it. And it was so startling and in those early days of radio when censorship was quite intense. You know, we couldn't use words like "pregnant". You couldn't say a woman was pregnant; that was a no-no. It was terrible. Now they not only say it but tell you how she got that way, in detail, in front of an audience and they'll applaud! But how times have changed.

So, the kids would say things that the network would let go by because they were said in innocence by a child that they would never let a writer write or a professional performer say. And, you know, I'd say to a child, "What does your mother and dad do for fun?" and he'd say "Search me, they always lock the door." Well, a CBS censor would faint at letting that pass on a show like *The Jack Benny Show* or the *Burns And Allen Show* but they could get by because what does a five-year-old kid know? They wouldn't let me repeat it as a story that was said because I know what he said. But he could say it.

*And you, indeed, sometimes baited them on a little bit.*

Oh, yes. There's no doubt about it and I got criticized by people who said you shouldn't encourage children and I say, "Well, what do you want?" A kid says his dad's a painter or a plumber. That's not very funny. But if he says "My dad likes to play poker every Monday night in the basement with the minister," then we got something. But we never told them to say it and we never cued them to say it.

I had a very smart teacher who picked them up at school each morning at nine o'clock in a limousine. The school chose the kids, you know. We had nothing to do with who the kids were and we went right down all the schools. We had a very difficult thing to get and that was the approval of the Board of Education, Los Angeles, for children to be taken out of school on a school day and taken to a commercial radio show. Now, you know, that takes a

lot of approval. And so we had to agree to go through all the schools. We had the black schools and the brown schools and we had the ghetto schools at a time when they never got any nod of recognition from anybody. That was a long time ago, before this whole matter of civil rights and equal rights and ethnic rights was even dreamed of. And we went right down the line and those schools got television sets and radio sets and record players for their use which were very valuable and we also got kids who were great.

The teacher would be with them for about two and a half hours, they would tour CBS and so forth. And while she was with them, what she was really doing was interviewing them and they didn't know it. She'd bring up subjects and talk about things and if a kid said something that was very cute, she'd jot it down. Now, the chances of that kid saying the same thing to the same question was the shot I had. And quite often, they never said the same thing twice because they weren't told to and they may not have really believed it or they may not have thought about it again.

I'll give you an example of a five or six year old child who was riding along and the teacher said, "Well, let's play a little game. Who's the president of the United States?" And one of them says "Abraham Lincoln is the president of the United States right now." That's pretty funny. So she'd jot it down, make a little note of it. She'd give me the note. Meantime, in the bathroom, one of the other kids said "You're an idiot. Abraham Lincoln or George Washington isn't the president." And they'd say, "The real president is Lyndon Johnson, or Kennedy or Truman" or whoever it really was. And so when I'd ask the kid the question, I'd get an answer that had been corrected. On the other hand, I got answers that were corrected wrong. They told him "Abraham Lincoln is not the president of the United States. It's George Washington" 'cause they didn't know either.

## SPEAKING OF RADIO

One time I had a note that a little boy had a pet turtle named Ozzie Nelson. I thought that was kind of cute. So I said to the boy "Do you have a pet?" and he said, "Yeah." I said "Well, what is it?" and he said "It's a dog." And I said, "What's its name?" and he says "Rover" or something like that, dull. And I said, "Well, didn't you ever have any other kind of a pet?" And he said, "Oh, we use to have a turtle but my dad flushed that down the toilet." So you see, I got a better one! I also got disappointments where I had great answers from the children that I knew they'd said and I never could get it back. Never could get it back . . . That's the way it worked and so it was fun for me.

And I got a lot of things, of course, that the teacher never heard of because I had a way with children. And the secret of my success with children was really quite simple. Number one, I'm a good communicator, anyway, with anybody. Number two, the children who are on the program had all seen the program. So they knew what was expected and that was, I was gonna talk to them. They weren't surprised, they weren't baffled. And they also knew that they could do what other kids were doing. And they'd just talk about things they knew about. They weren't going to be asked to juggle, sing, ride a unicycle or do something that was beyond their ability. So they're ready for it.

They'd been brainwashed, so to speak, at least indoctrinated by just watching or listening to the show on the radio.

And then finally, in the third place, a most important thing occurred before we went on the air. And that is, I went in and talked to them for five minutes. And in that talking to them I did something essential to the communication with children. I let the children see the child in me. In other words, I played games with the kids. I was not a big distant, grown-up figure. They recognized in me somebody of the same mental intelligence and level! At least the same emotional quotient . . . They weren't afraid of me. They knew I was gonna play games and they like to play games. I played games with them in the dressing rooms. So when I got out on the air, we were just going on.

Of course the little ones didn't know what was going on. A four year old often would come up to me after the program was over and pull my sleeve and say, "Mr. Linkletter" and I'd say, "Yes" and he'd say, "When does the show start?" I'd say, "What did you think that was out there?" "Oh, that was the show." But, of course, those were the kind, the little three and four year olds who are just, you know, floating free. They're just marvelous, like the little girl, I said to her, "What do you do?" And she said, "I help my mother in the house." And I said, "Well, you're only three and a half, four. What can you do around the house?" She says, "I help her with the breakfast." I said, "Come on, what do you do?" She says, "Well, I put the bread in the toaster. Of course I can't flush it." One of the little boys, I said to him, "Do you get an allowance?" And he says, "What's that?" I said, "Oh, I guess you don't know what that is. It's money you get for being a good boy." "Oh yeah," he says, "I guess I do." I said, "Well, what do you get?" He says "I get a nickel every day I have a dry bed." And I said to him, "Well how much money have you made this summer?" and he said "Nothing."

### NOSTALGIA

### DIGEST

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*Kids say the darndest things, don't they?*

They were a delight. Just a delight. I had a little boy who had a Mickey Mouse wrist-watch on. Somebody had given it to him for a birthday. I said, "Oh, you got a watch." He said, "Yes sir," I said, "What time does it say?" He said, "It doesn't say anything, you gotta look at it." Very direct. An older boy one time, I said to him, "What did your mother tell you when you came down here today?" "She just told me to be a normal boy" and I said, "Well, what is a normal boy?" He says, "I think it's 98.6." These kids, you know, come up with some surprising bits of flashes of information.

*You often asked what somebody told them not to say.*

Oh yes. I had to do that protectively because the parents were getting nervous and they were brainwashing the children. You see, we never told the children what to say. But it finally worked out that the parents did. They were telling them what

not to say. And, of course, I double-crossed them very easily by asking them what they had been told not to say. And it came out letter perfect because they had been rehearsed, you know. A little boy said, "My mother told me not to announce to the world she's pregnant." "Well," I said, "why not? That's a marvelous thing." He says, "She ain't yet." Or the little boy, I said "What did your mother tell you not to say today?" He said, "Well, she told me I could say anything but don't get this shirt dirty because it's brand new. it doesn't fit, and we're going to take it back when I get home."

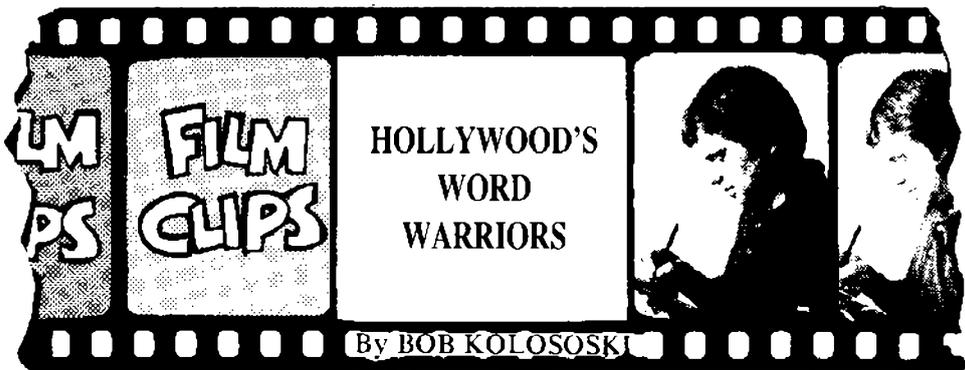
*Those are marvelous things. You made an interesting transition from radio and television into movies. You were in a couple of films, too, weren't you?*

Yes. I tried everything. I suppose when you're hot in this business, and you can get any door open, that you allow yourself to play with your own ego and your own vanity and imagine yourself to be some other thing than you are. You know, the clown wants to play *Pagliacci* and the quizmaster wants to be a movie hero or whatever. And I've tried them and I wasn't particularly successful, frankly.

In the first place, I didn't like them. I don't like movies and I wasn't very good at it. I'm very good at being Art Linkletter. I am not very good at being the *Count of Monte Crisco* . . . But the things that I played. I played a preacher. I played a wagon-master in a *Wagon Train*. I did play a couple of emcees in pretty good sized movies. One was with Ronald Colman, Vincent Price and Celeste Holm called *Champagne For Caesar*. And it still plays. I see it one o'clock in the morning. There's this young kid, kind of frightening.

But I didn't like movies. They were mechanical. They were artificial. They are. They're shot out of context and out of sequence, in little bits and drips and drabs and they're super rehearsed and you take one scene over fifteen times and the one you hate the director picks. It's not





Flappers, speakcasys, bootleggers and the Charleston were all part of that wild decade known as the Roaring 20's. It was a time of great change in America, particularly in two areas—technology and entertainment. The Broadway theatre scene was tremendously popular, but vaudeville was dying a slow, agonizing death. Radio, a great triumph of technology was becoming commonplace in American homes. Astute advertisers were cashing in on selling products to the American public via radio commercials. America wanted to hear Rudy Vallee croon and Will Rogers spin his folksy humor. They wanted sound. So when Warner Bros. released "The Jazz Singer" in 1927 it shouldn't have been a great surprise to the Hollywood moguls that John Q. Public would flock to movie theaters to hear Al Jolson sing. However, as the box office receipts on "The Jazz Singer" rose higher, the studio bosses' jaws dropped lower. Sound was in and it was "here to stay". No one, not even Warner Brothers, was technologically ready for the sound revolution.

Sound, like bolts of lightning, was striking terror in the hearts of movie people and its path of havoc ruined many careers. The studios built new soundstages and invested millions in tons of equipment. Talkies was the buzz word around the country, but back in Hollywood a major problem emerged. Now that actors could talk on the screen they needed someone to put words in their mouths. The movies

needed writers and quick. The producers and directors were used to working with story outlines and creating action as they went along during the filming. Comedy studios had gag men who were geniuses at evolving a simple situation into a full scale comedy routine, but it was sight comedy. Audiences wanted to hear witty dialogue, torrid words of love and pleasant conversations. This crisis shook Hollywood to its very foundations and writers were brought in to "shore up" the community.

Fortunately there was a core of writers in Hollywood that made the transition easily but the studios were in desperate need of reinforcements. Herman Mankiewicz sent a telegram to Ben Hecht in 1927 beckoning Hecht to Hollywood. Hecht answered the call and settled in at Paramount for \$300 per week. He wrote the screenplay for "Underworld" in five days and was given a \$10,000 bonus. The quest for easy "Hollywood money" and a sharp decline in Broadway action attracted dozens of New York literary types to the "land of milk and honey." In the 1927-28 Broadway season 244 productions were running and by 1934 that number had dropped to 149. Many Broadway theatres had become movie palaces and banks were foreclosing on legitimate theatres almost weekly. As bleak as the New York scene was, the Hollywood sun was shining that much brighter for any writer who would abandon the "Great

## FILM CLIPS

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White Way" for Tinseltown.

By 1938 seventeen Hollywood writers were earning more than \$75,000 per year and thirteen percent of all writers earned more than \$1000 per week. The studios were committed to churning out 450 features per year to please the movie audience appetite. Original plots were hard to come by. In the 1938 film "Boy Meets Girl", James Cagney played a screenwriter who summed up the typical Hollywood plot as "boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy wins girl".

Early on in the history of Hollywood Broadway plays were used as the basis of many films. That system rapidly intensified in the 1930's. Studios were willing to pay playwrights huge sums for their wares. Preston Sturges was paid \$40,000 for his 1932 play "Child of Manhattan" even though theatre critics bombarded it with terse criticism. "Casablanca" was adapted from an unproduced play named "Everyone Comes to Rick's". At opening nights on Broadway 20-30 patrons would be Hollywood agents dissecting the material for the possibility of screen adaptation. In fact, in 1936 one of every four Broadway plays was partially financed by a Hollywood studio. Also in 1936 the seven major studios set up the Bureau of New Plays to sponsor new playwrights. These efforts aside, the studios were still desperate to have qualified wordsmiths work in Hollywood and they were willing to pay to ease their desperation.

The lure of Hollywood money drew a mixed bag of authors and playwrights to Los Angeles. David Ogden Stewart, Aldous Huxley, Charles MacArthur, Maxwell Anderson and others arrived ready to create masterful screenplays—only a few succeeded. In 1927 F. Scott Fitzgerald was lured to Southern California to write a screenplay entitled "Lipstick". It was rejected by the producer and Fitzgerald left Hollywood vowing never to return. In 1930 he briefly returned to work on "Red

Headed Woman" at MGM. Once again he left the land of sunshine but he found himself back at MGM in 1937. He worked on several scripts but received screen credit for a single film—"The Comrades". For his efforts he was paid \$91,000 and the door was left open for him to return. The British author P. G. Wodehouse spent 1931 in Hollywood and received \$104,000 but never completed a full script. William Faulkner was in Hollywood several times during the 1930's and worked on several scripts including "Gunga Din" and "The Road to Glory". And although his rapid writing habits were a rarity in Hollywood his dialogue was usually stilted and not easily repeated. Sidney Greenstreet complained continuously about a Faulkner script stating that the speech he was given was impossible to recite. Nevertheless over a twenty year period, Faulkner spent four years in Hollywood and earned nearly \$300,000 for his screen work.

The remarkable paradox that existed was the treatment of the writers by the studio executives. The studios needed the screenwriters and paid them well but in essence treated them as second class citizens. Most screenwriters were packed into tiny cell-like offices and expected to turn in a minimum of five pages of script a day. Once a script was completed the writer was not allowed to visit the set or offer criticism of the day's filming. Standard procedure at most studios was to turn a completed script over to another writer to be "reworked". Raymond Chandler was angered when his script for "Double Indemnity" was nominated for an Academy Award and he wasn't invited to the studio press conference. Brian Foy, head of the B unit at Warner Brothers in the 1930's, had a stack of scripts on his desk. When a production was completed he would put the script on the bottom of his stack. When a script writer came in for a new assignment he was given the script on the top of the pile and instructed to "doctor it up". This recycling of scripts infuriated most professional screenwriters.

One of the few moguls who seemed to understand the worth of talented writers was Samuel Goldwyn. Garson Kanin was hired, at age 24, by Goldwyn at \$250 a week as basically an apprentice writer. He was given free reign of the film library to screen films and learn by what others had done. Kanin eventually quit because he wanted to direct and Goldwyn wanted him to remain a writer. Goldwyn hired Lillian Hellman in 1936 to adapt her play "The Children's Hour" for the screen. She and Goldwyn had raging arguments over differences on the treatment and she left (giving up a \$2,000 per week salary) and went to Paris. Goldwyn sent emissaries to bring her back guaranteeing a long term contract and no interference. He wanted her to write the screenplay and his respect for her talent was rewarded with several excellent scripts.

Many top flight screenwriters felt that in spite of the generous salaries they were making their talents were being wasted. Robert Benchley once stated that Hollywood was "a flat, unloving plain, inhabited by a group of high ordinary people." S. N. Behrman wrote several film scripts including "A Tale of Two Cities", but observed that "making fun of Hollywood is extremely simple . . . almost without aiming, you may fire and scarcely miss". Herman Mankiewicz ("Dinner at Eight", "Citizen Kane") was in New York in 1940 and remarked "Oh, to be in Hollywood, wishing I was back in New York." The authoress Dorothy Parker claimed that she "worked for cretins" however she and her writer husband Alan Campbell earned \$5,200 a week. They turned out scripts for "The Big Broadcast of 1936" and "Crime Takes a Holiday" and every evening went home to their Beverly Hills mansion to stew over their employment plight.

Of course many of the writers just buckled their seat belts and went along for the ride. Robert Riskin had been a mediocre playwright who blossomed when he collaborated with Frank Capra on many of Capra's best films of the 30's. Dudley

Nichols ("The Informer", "Bringing Up Baby", "Stagecoach") found screenwork rewarding. He was fascinated by the power of the camera and his contribution to putting life on the screen. Playwrite Robert Sherwood was able to continue writing plays while working in Hollywood. His play "The Petrified Forest" was a huge success on Broadway as well as on the screen and his script for "Rebecca" won the 1940 Academy Award.

Eventually there emerged a group of strong willed writers who took a giant step forward and began to direct their own material. Perhaps the two best known writers turned directors were Preston Sturges and John Huston. They were so well versed at both aspects of filmmaking and more importantly successful that others followed. Robert Rossen began as a scriptwriter at Warner Brothers and turned to directing films including "All the King's Men". Delmar Daves wrote dozens of scripts at MGM until Warners gave him a chance to direct "Destination Tokyo" in 1943.

Today Hollywood is a different place and writers are not stuck to one studio. Whatever freedom they enjoy can be traced back to the working writers of the 1930's who contributed so much to a golden era of filmmaking.

**HUNDREDS  
of  
GREAT BOOKS  
on the  
MOVIES  
are available  
at  
METRO-GOLDEN  
MEMORIES  
in Chicago**

# NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

## *Jan Savitt and his Top Hatters*

By KARL PEARSON



For every top-name bandleader like Benny Goodman or Tommy Dorsey, there were many lesser-known leaders throughout the big band era. One of those leaders was Jan Savitt, who led a number of fine orchestras in his all too short career.

Jan was born in Petrograd, Russia in 1912 into a musical family. His father was a drummer in the Czar's Imperial band; his grandfather was a friend of the famous composer Tchaikowsky, and a composer in his own right. Jan's family emigrated to America when he was eighteen months old, where the Savitts settled in Philadelphia. He began violin lessons at age four and became a well-known child prodigy. At the age of fifteen he enrolled at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he received three scholarships. Leopold Stokowski was impressed with the young Savitt and offered Jan the position of concertmaster with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Savitt's career in popular music began in 1934 at radio station WCAU, the CBS affiliate in Philadelphia, where he directed the station's house band. His first series was titled "Savitt Serenade". Within a short time he became house bandleader at NBC's affiliate in Philadelphia, KYW. The KYW band adopted Irving Berlin's "Top Hat" as its theme, and the band became known as "Jan Savitt and his Top Hatters".

It was at KYW that the band developed its "shuffle rhythm" style. "Shuffle

rhythm" was a clever device that featured the pianist playing double time against the band, which gave an extra lift, or drive, to the sound of the band. This device had first been used by Henry Busse's orchestra in 1933, but was developed further by Savitt.

The Top Hatters started to develop a following through its nightly broadcasts; some of the programs were heard several times weekly throughout the United States and Canada over NBC and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. With increased popularity came the demand for personal appearances and Jan took the band out on the road for dates in the Philadelphia area. Eventually he decided to leave the KYW studios and lead a touring band of his own.

Part of the band's success also lay in its vocal department. Female vocalist Carlotta Dale provided a warm, emotional style to such ballads as "You Go To My Head". Male singer, Bon Bon (whose real name was George Tunnell), also sang in a warm manner but with a great deal of swing and distinctive style. Bon Bon (in addition to Billie Holiday, who sang with Artie Shaw for a short time) was one of the first black vocalists to sing with a white band.

The Top Hatters had a number of big record hits in the succeeding years, such as "El Rancho Grande", "It's A Wonderful World", "Rose Of The Rio Grande" and the band's biggest hit "720 In The Books", named after the number of the



**BOB BON IS AT THE MICROPHONE WHILE BANDBLEADER JAN SAVITT TAKES A PEEK AT THE CAMERAMAN!**

score in the Savitt library. The band also played many of the top spots in the country such as the Steel Pier in Atlantic City, the Hollywood Palladium and the Panther Room of Chicago's Hotel Sherman.

Within a couple of years changes were made in the Savitt style. Bon Bon and Carlotta Dale left the band to pursue careers of their own. They were replaced by a series of fine vocalists such as Allan DeWitt, Joe Martin and Gloria DeHaven. Jan also began to phase out the shuffle rhythm style, although not completely. Arrangers such as Eddie Durham (who had written for Count Basie, Jimmie Lunceford, Artie Shaw and Glenn Miller) provided new musical ideas. And when Artie Shaw, Harry James and Tommy Dorsey added string sections to their bands, Jan did likewise, but on a smaller scale. Where

Artie, Tommy and Harry had as many as fifteen to twenty string players, Jan added five, plus himself. Being a violinist himself, he knew how to make those six strings sound as good as or better than the larger string sections.

Jan and the band eventually dropped the Top Hatters tag and settled in on the west coast, where it played many of the better spots and in 1944 Savitt expanded his string section for a theater tour with young Frank Sinatra. After the war, Jan reduced the size of his band but continued to play west coast engagements.

Jan Savitt was an intelligent, articulate musician, highly respected by his men. In October 1948, while riding to an engagement in Sacramento, his career came to an end when he suffered a stroke and passed away at the young age of thirty-six.

<b>APRIL</b>			<b>RADIO CLASSICS — WBBM-AM 78</b> <b>MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.</b> <b>SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.</b>			
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> — All of the programs we present on <i>Radio Classics</i> 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 <i>Radio Guide</i>. However, each show we present is slightly less than 30 minutes in length and this 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. and so forth. Programs on <i>Radio Classics</i> are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. Thanks for listening.</p>					1 The Falcon Jack Benny	2 Life of Riley Dragnet Charlie McCarthy Lights Out
3 Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS	4 To Be Announced	5 Hopalong Cassidy Great Gildersleeve	6 Sealed Book Challenge of the Yukon	7 The Falcon Lights Out	8 Stand By For Crime Burns & Allen	9 Damon Runyon Theatre Lone Ranger This Is Your FBI Fibber McGee
10 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	11 Gangbusters Life of Riley	12 Lights Out Stand By For Crime	13 Burns & Allen The Falcon	14 Green Hornet Hopalong Cassidy	15 Jack Benny Sealed Book	16 Green Hornet Burns & Allen Lights Out Fibber McGee
17 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	18 Dragnet Sealed Book	19 Great Gildersleeve The Falcon	20 Stand By For Crime Jack Benny	21 Challenge of the Yukon Gangbusters	22 Hopalong Cassidy Lights Out	23 Lone Ranger Jack Benny Dragnet Black Museum
24 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	25 The Falcon Life of Riley	26 Gangbusters Burns & Allen	27 Jack Benny Hopalong Cassidy	28 Sealed Book Great Gildersleeve	29 Stand By For Crime Dragnet	30 This Is Your FBI Green Hornet Jack Benny Challenge of the Yukon

<b>MAY</b>			<b>RADIO CLASSICS — WBBM-AM 78</b> <b>MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.</b> <b>SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.</b>			
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	2 Lights Out Charlie McCarthy	3 Red Ryder Stand By For Crime	4 Gangbusters Sealed Book	5 Jack Benny Six Shooter	6 7-9 p.m. SPECIAL PROGRAM Commemorating WBBM Radio's 65th Anniversary	7 Jack Benny Challenge of the Yukon Burns & Allen Lone Ranger
8 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	9 Burns & Allen The Falcon	10 Lights Out Great Gildersleeve	11 Life of Riley Stand By For Crime	12 Charlie McCarthy Sealed Book	13 Black Museum Gangbusters	14 Challenge of the Yukon Burns & Allen Lone Ranger Jack Benny
15 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	16 Red Ryder Great Gildersleeve	17 Jack Benny The Falcon	18 Lights Out This Is Your FBI	19 Stand By For Crime Gangbusters	20 Sealed Book Charlie McCarthy	21 Burns & Allen Lone Ranger Jack Benny Challenge of the Yukon
22 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	23 Lone Ranger Sealed Book	24 Black Musuem This Is Your FBI	25 Jack Benny The Clock	26 Lights Out Charlie McCarthy	27 Stand By For Crime Gangbusters	28 Lone Ranger Jack Benny Challenge of the Yukon Burns & Allen
29 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	30 Lights Out Lone Ranger	31 Burns & Allen Six Shooter	<p><b>PLEASE NOTE</b> Due to WBBM's commitment to news and sports, <i>Radio Classics</i> may be pre-empted occasionally for late-breaking news of local or national importance, or for unscheduled sports coverage. In this event, vintage shows scheduled for <i>Radio Classics</i> will be rescheduled to a later date.</p>			

# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

## APRIL

**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.

### SATURDAY, APRIL 2nd FUN AND FOOLISHNESS ON THE AIR

**PEOPLE ARE FUNNY** (Jan., 1954) Art Linkletter puts the contestants through their paces and offers a 1965 Hudson Jet automobile to the listener who identifies Mr. "X". Milky Luigi and Mars Candies, CBS. (16:25; 12:55)

**LIFE WITH LUIGI** (4-1-52) J. Carrol Naish stars as Luigi Basco with Alan Reed as Pasquale who plays an April Fool's joke to try to scare Luigi into marrying Rosa. Wrigley's Gum, CBS. (13:50; 18:00)

**TEXACO STAR THEATRE** (4-9-35) Ed Wynn, the Perfect Fool, appears as the Texaco Fire Chief with announcer Graham McNamee and Eddie Duchin and the orchestra. Texaco Oil Co., NBC. (10:20; 7:40; 9:40)

**OUR MISS BROOKS** (1-15-50) On Friday the 13th, Walter Denton plays a practical joke on school principal Osgood Conklin. Eve Arden stars as Miss Brooks, Richard Crenna is Denton and Gale Gordon is Conklin with Jeff Chandler as Mr. Boynton and Jane Morgan as Mrs. Davis. Colgate, Lustré Creme, CBS. (10:09; 19:01)

**IT PAYS TO BE IGNORANT** (1940s) Tom Howard tries his luck with zany panelists George Shelton, Lulu McConnell and Harry McNaughton. Sustaining, MBS. (11:00; 9:20; 8:00)

**FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (4-6-48) Jim and Marion Jordan star as Fibber and Molly with Gale Gordon, Arthur Q. Brian, Bill Thompson, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, and Billy Mills and the orchestra. Fibber decides to help Doc Gamble fix his car. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (10:30, 12:30, 8:25)

### SATURDAY, APRIL 9th EASTER GREETINGS

**JACK BENNY PROGRAM** (4-10-55) As Jack and Mary Livingston stroll up Wilshire Boulevard on Easter Sunday, they bump into the Beverly Hills Beavers, Bob Crosby, Dennis Day, Don Wilson, The Sportsmen, Mr. Kitzel, Frank Nelson, Mel Blanc, Sheldon Leonard, Arthur Q. Brian. Mary and Jack sing, "Happy Easter." Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (14:40; 11:15)

**MEL BLANC SHOW** (4-8-47) The local Chamber of  
-18- *Nostalgia Digest*

Commerce organizes an Easter Egg hunt and Mel offers a prize. Cast includes Mary Jane Croft, Hans Conried, Joe Kearns, Alan Reed, Jim Backus, the Sportsmen, Victor Miller and the orchestra, announcer Bud Heistand. Colgate-Palmolive, CBS. (10:10; 13:20)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE** (5-16-49) "April Showers" starring Jack Carson, Dorothy Lamour and Robert Alda in a radio version of the 1948 film. A story of backstage life in the good old days of Vaudeville. Cast includes Alan Reed, Willard Waterman, Howard McNear, Bill Johnstone, Bobby Ellis. William Keighley is the producer. Lux Soap, CBS. (26:00; 17:15; 16:50)

**PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW** (4-17-49) Alice has invited her daughters' school principal to dinner on Easter Sunday. Elliott Lewis is Frankie Remley, Robert North is Willy, Walter Tetley is Julius, and the Harris girls are played by Jeanine Roos and Anne Whitfield. Rexall, NBC. (18:45; 9:05)

**AMOS 'N' ANDY** (3-30-45) Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll star as radio's all-time favorites. Sapphire has saved some money for a new Easter hat, but the Kingfish has other ideas. Rinso, NBC. (8:45; 8:55; 12:32)

### SATURDAY, APRIL 16th REMEMBERING JUDY AND MICKEY

**SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS** (3-22-43) "For Me and My Gal" starring Judy Garland, Gene Kelly and Dick Powell in a radio version of the 1942 movie musical. Judy and Gene repeat their screen roles as a World War I vaudeville couple trying to play the Palace. Lady Esther Products, CBS. (14:20; 15:44)

**THE HARDY FAMILY** (1950) Mickey Rooney appears as Andy Hardy with Lewis Stone and Faye Holden as Judge and Mrs. Hardy in a radio series based on the successful MGM films. Andy is chosen by the Junior Chamber of Commerce to meet and entertain a visiting skier. Polly Benedict is jealous! Syndicated. (14:45; 12:55)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE** (10-28-40) "Strike Up the Band" starring Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney in a radio version of their 1940 film. It's Mickey and Judy's first appearance on the Lux Show. Cecil B. DeMille is



JUDY GARLAND and MICKEY ROONEY are the subject of a special *Those Were The Days* salute on April 16th.

producer with John Scott Trotter appearing in the story as Paul Whiteman. High School students organize a band! Lux Soap, CBS. (20:35; 19:00; 17:20)

**OUR SPECIAL GUEST** will be *Nostalgia Digest* columnist and film buff BOB KOLOSOSKI who will recall the film careers of Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney.

### SATURDAY, APRIL 23rd

**SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS** (10-5-50) "Champagne for Caesar" starring Ronald Colman, Vincent Price, Art Linkletter, Barbara Britton, Audrey Totter and Joe Kearns in a comedy spoof on radio give-away shows. Based on the 1950 film. Sustaining, ABC. (13:50, 15:18; 14:55; 15:20)

**THE WHISTLER** (1940s) "The Professor and the Fox" is the Whistler's strange story. A wealthy woman is being sued for \$50,000. Sustaining, CBS. (8:19; 18:05)

**JAN SAVITT AND HIS TOP HATTERS** (12-2-38) Remote broadcast from the Arcadia Restaurant in Philadelphia with vocals by Carlotta Dale, Bon Bon, and the Three Toppers. Sustaining, NBC. (10:15; 11:35; 7:50)

**MY FRIEND IRMA** (2-3-52) Marie Wilson is Irma Peterson, Cathy Lewis is Jane Stacy. Irma is to write a column with choice bits of neighborhood gossip. Alan Reed is Irma's boss, Mr. Clyde with John Brown as her boyfriend, Al. Ennds Chlorophyll Tablets, CBS. (12:00; 16:30)

### SATURDAY, APRIL 30th 18th ANNIVERSARY SHOW "THANKS FOR LISTENING"

As we complete eighteen years of *Those Were The Days* broadcasts we express our appreciation with a special program featuring some radio sounds that put the spotlight on several performers who had an influence on our personal interest in "show biz."

**DANNY KAYE SHOW** (1-13-45) Danny Kaye is joined by Eve Arden, Lionel Stander and Harry James and his Music Makers in a broadcast which highlights his "life story." Danny also performs the classic "Lobby Number" from his first movie, "Up In Arms." Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer, CBS. (9:50; 11:12; 9:00)

**MOONLIGHT SERENADE** (6-13-40) Glenn Miller and his orchestra in a remote broadcast from the stage of the Civic Theatre in Chicago. Vocals by Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and Ray Eberle. Chesterfield Cigarettes, CBS. (13:25)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE** (2-16-48) "The Jolson Story" starring Al Jolson and Evelyn Keyes with Ludwig Donath and William Demarest in a radio version of the 1946 Columbia film musical hit. William Keighley is the producer. Jolie sings many of his biggest songs in this biography of the "world's greatest entertainer." Lux Soap, CBS. (20:00; 17:07; 24:30)

**EXTRA ADDED ATTRACTION** — During today's program, we'll feature sound clips of *Those Were The Days* host Chuck Schaden's appearances on other radio and television shows. Don't miss it if you can!

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# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

## MAY

**SATURDAY, MAY 7th**  
**HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY**  
**IRVING BERLIN**

**SCREEN GUILD PLAYERS** (1-11-43) "Holiday Inn" starring Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore in musical highlights from the 1942 film featuring the music of Irving Berlin. Announcer is Truman Bradley. Lady Esther products, CBS. (14:45; 14:30)

**IRVING BERLIN STORY** (1950s) Doug Bogart interviews Irving Berlin who reminisces about his career and his craft against a background of outstanding Berlin music and comments by Ginger Rogers. Fred Astaire and Bing Crosby. An audio-autobiography. BBC. (13:00; 15:20; 12:19; 19:00)

**MAGIC KEY OF RCA** (2-19-36) Excerpt of a program featuring Ray Noble and his orchestra, Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians, and Richard Himber and his orchestra presenting for the first time on the air, music from Irving Berlin's new motion picture, "Follow the Fleet". Milton Cross and Ben Grauer. RCA Victor, NBC. (18:30; 13:51)

**PHILCO RADIO TIME** (5-7-47) Bing Crosby welcomes guests Al Jolson and Irving Berlin for some musical fun and memories. John Scott Trotter and the orchestra. Ken Carpenter. Philco, ABC. (6:05; 12:40; 9:30)

**OUR SPECIAL GUESTS** will be the Lake Shore Harmony Four and The Villagers, members of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, plus the Skylarks, Unlimited, vocal group who will entertain throughout our program, live from our studio at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago at River City.



**LAKE SHORE HARMONY FOUR**



**THE VILLAGERS**

**SATURDAY, MAY 14th  
HAPPY 50th BIRTHDAY  
TO THE MAN OF STEEL**

**ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN (2-12-40)** First show in the Superman radio series. The story begins on the planet Krypton and tells how Superman's parents act to save their child as their planet is being destroyed. Sustaining, MBS. (12:33)

**ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN (2-14-40)** Second show in the series. The child from Krypton lands in Indiana and takes on the identity of Clark Kent. Clayton "Bud" Collier stars as Kent/Superman. Sustaining, MBS. (11:31)

**ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN (1940)** "The Voice Machine" a 12-part adventure starring Bud Collier as the Man of Steel and mild-mannered reporter Clark Kent. Joan Alexander is featured as Lois Lane. Sustaining, MBS (11:53)

- Chapter 1: "Dr. Roebing's Disappearance."
- Chapter 2: "Lois Lane's Escape" (11:36)
- Chapter 3: "Superman Captures Jack Roebing" (11:40)
- Chapter 4: "Dr. Roebing's Amazing Voice Machine" (11:50)
- Chapter 5: "The Voice Machine Destroyed" (11:46)
- Chapter 6: "Roebing Repairs the Voice Machine" (11:40)
- Chapter 7: "The Assassination Plot Unfolds" (11:50)
- Chapter 8: "The Mob Moves on Benson" (11:40)
- Chapter 9: "Who is the Big Guy?" (11:40)
- Chapter 10: "A Distress Message to Dr. Roebing" (11:50)
- Chapter 11: "The Voice Machine Saves Kent and Perry White" (11:55)
- Chapter 12: "The Errand of Death Foiled" (11:20)

**SATURDAY, MAY 21st  
ARMED FORCES DAY**

**SALUTE TO ARMED FORCES RADIO**

**COMMAND PERFORMANCE (1946)** A fourth anniversary program, presenting clips from past Armed Forces Radio Service programs since the series began shortly after the United States' involvement in World War II. Bob Hope emcees this hour-and-a-half broadcast and presents Janet Blair, Foy Willing and the Riders of the Purple Sage, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, G. I. Jill, Slim Gaylor Trio, Bob Mitchell Boys Choir, Kay Kyser and Jerry Colonna, Linda Darnell, Mel Blanc, Fred MacMurray, Frances Langford. AFRS. (14:15; 14:00; 11:17; 18:35; 20:10; 8:15)

**MAIL CALL #111 (1940s)** Hostess Ginny Simms presents Jimmy Durante, Johnny Mercer, Jo Stafford, the Pied Pipers, and Harry James and the orchestra. AFRS. (13:20; 11:05; 5:15)

**G.I. JOURNAL (1940s)** An anniversary show presenting highlights of the past year's programs. Linda Darnell presents Bob Hope, Betty Grable, the Pied Pipers, Frank Morgan, Kay Kyser, Bing Crosby, and



**BOB HOPE**

Abbott and Costello with their famous "Who's On First" routine. AFRS. (12:30; 8:30; 8:45)

**COMMAND PERFORMANCE (8-14-45)** A special V-J Day program with Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dinah Shore, Frank Sinatra, Orson Welles, Frances Langford, Major Meredith Willson and the Armed Forces orchestra. AFRS and all USA networks. (11:32; 7:28; 9:45)

**SATURDAY, MAY 28th**

**AMOS 'N' ANDY (4-6-45)** Andy decides to look for a new place to live and the Kingfish has a suggestion. Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll star. Rinso. NBC. (11:00; 7:00; 12:00)

**THE SHADOW (9-19-48)** "Revenge is Murder" starring Bret Morrison as Lamont Cranston and Grace Matthews as the lovely Margo Lane. Four diamond thieves squabble among themselves. Sustaining, MBS. (13:50; 13:52)

**CAN YOU TOP THIS? (5-18-48)** A joke-fest with announcer Dennis James, and storytellers Ward Wilson, Harry Hirschfield, Joe Laurie, Jr., and Peter Donald. Colgate-Palmolive Peet Co., NBC. (8:20; 13:40; 7:55)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE (3-18-40)** "The Rains Came" starring Kay Francis, George Brent, Jean Parker and Jim Ameche in a radio version of the 1939 motion picture. The wife of an Englishman falls in love with a Hindu doctor in Ranchipur, India amidst a setting of earthquake, flood and plague. Cecil B. DeMille is host-producer. Lux Soap, CBS. (19:15; 21:25; 18:00)

**EDDIE CANTOR SHOW (1-24-45)** Lots of World War II flavor in this show, dedicated to Uncle Sam's war bond campaign, with announcements for the sale of bonds replacing commercial messages from the sponsor. Eddie provides the comedy with Harry Von Zell, Nora Martin, Leonard Seuss, Bert Gordon. Bristol Meyers, NBC. (8:25; 10:30; 9:55)



I REMEMBER IT WELL...  
 They Don't Make 'em Like They Used To!  
 BY DAN MCGUIRE

Ronald Colman suggested this column to me. Sort of.

Jack Benny's long-suffering neighbor was portraying George Apley on a Sunday TV matinee. In one scene he struggles to communicate via one of fellow actor Don Ameche's new inventions—the telephone.

It was an early vintage wall-mounted device. Its mouthpiece protruded only about six inches from the wall, with no evident adjustment for height. The receiver, with its long handgrip, had a very short cord, presumably to keep the user positioned close to the mouthpiece. A crank on the side "rang up" the operator, who then came on the line to inquire "Number, please."

In my preschool years telephones were considered a luxury rather than a necessity. My family and many others in our neighborhood got along quite well without them.

The first phone ever to intrude upon my boyish view of the big world was at my maternal grandparents' house. Prominently located in the dining room, it sat upon a table designed for the use, with a drawer to store the then thin directory.

Like Mr. Ford's early automobiles, its color was basic black. One of the tall goose-neck models, it had a lamp style base. The swivel mouthpiece was atop its long neck. The earpiece hung in a cradle just below.

Grandma and Grandpa Farr's phone was one of the new improved models with a dial. If your call was local and you knew the number, you no longer had to jiggle the cradle arm to signal an operator.

The evolution of telephones is grist for a column of its own. Do we really need such modern conveniences as call waiting, call forwarding, cordless phones, phone answering machines, etc. ad infinitum? But George Apley's encounter set me pondering many benchmarks of "progress," things that ain't what they used to be—and not necessarily for the better.

As a boy I brushed my teeth with Pepsident tooth powder. The metal can was shaped like today's hand lotion containers minus the pump. Its shaker head was covered by a pop-off cap. To use the powder, you poured some into your palm, then sopped it up with the moistened bristles of a tooth brush.

The transition to tooth paste had its merits. Powder sometimes was spilled around the bathroom. But it's a challenge to measure out enough paste and not too much. (A cynic might suggest the manufacturers had thought of that.) Like words spoken in anger, excess paste can't be returned to its source.

At least the original tinny metal tubes could be folded over and would stay folded. As you emptied the tube and continued folding upward, you eventually had the satisfaction of knowing you'd squeezed out the last useable smidgen.

Now we have plastic tubes possessed of an annoying elasticity. Roll them as tightly as you can. They unwind immediately upon their return to the medicine cabinet. Or try to get that last squeeze out of the neck. It's easier to drop the last ball into a clown's eye socket in one of those pocket

size skill toys.

Helping Mom open a new can of coffee used to be a treat. It required peeling off a metal band that sealed the lid to the can.

A "key" was lightly welded to the bottom of each can for this purpose. The key actually was a thin length of metal formed into an oval shaped handle with an inch of shank extending at a 90 degree angle from one side. At its tip was a small slot. It accommodated a tapered end of the can's metal band to get the process started.

Excess air had been pumped out of the can in the packing process. Your initial twist of the key broke the seal and there was a *whoosh* of air rushing in to fill the void. This was true of all brands, but one manufacturer capitalized on the fact by boasting that his coffee was "vacuum-packed for freshness."

One needed a steady hand to strip away the entire band in one unwrinkled coil. If it twisted sideways and tangled on itself, finishing the job was difficult. It also increased the chance of cutting a finger on the sharp metal edges.

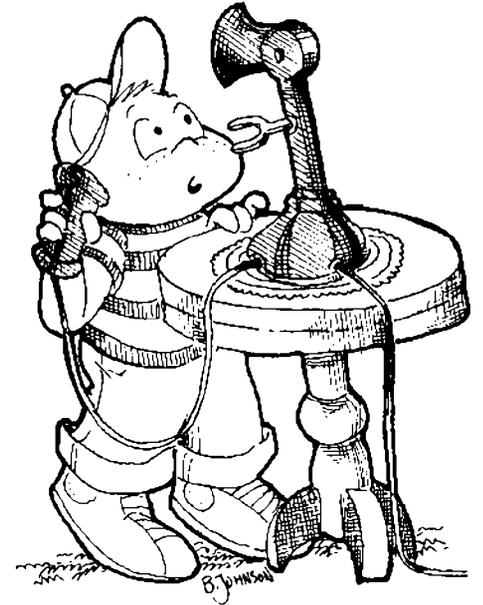
When you proudly presented the opened can to Mom, you got to keep the key. Removing it carefully from the spring-wound metal band, you added it to the collection of discarded and found keys that you kept on a long chain.

Some kids kept a separate chain just for can keys. You never knew when Mom might lose or break one and you'd have to come to her rescue with a spare.

The advent of electric can openers and plastic lids made key-opened cans all but extinct. Once they held such diverse products as sardines and Crisco shortening. During a recent investigative reporting foray I found only one food item still packed this way: canned hams.

These keys were rough, unpolished, oversize—purely utilitarian. No self-respecting collector of my generation would save them. Thus are today's kids denied one more of life's simple pleasures.

Anacin and Bayer aspirin once were sold in handy pocket size tins of 12 tablets. The



tin had a tiny bulge in the middle of its front sides, top and bottom. Snap the lid down, it stayed securely shut. Press the rear edges between thumb and forefinger, it popped open easily.

Kids coveted the empty Bayer and Anacin tins. They were perfect for storing small quantities of change and other small flat treasures. (Also for hiding and passing secret messages.)

When I first began going to the movies *sans* parents, I was very nervous about losing my limited funds. I had to continually check to see if the loose coins in my watch pocket were all still there. Then I hit upon carrying them in a Bayer tin.

The makeshift coin container was a solid presence I could feel and know that it was still there. When I walked, it gave audible reassurance with a continuous metallic clicking sound.

Headache remedies are still available in 12-packs. But they are flimsy cardboard flip-top boxes, like sawed-off packs of Marlboros. You wouldn't risk carrying your week's allowance in them.

## I REMEMBER IT WELL

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Throat lozenges and Band-Aid bandages are still available in metal boxes with snap lids. But these are much larger and meant for different treasures. Besides, you can't conceal them in a watch pocket.

Back when my brothers and I were consuming literally thousands of peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches, these deliciously compatible foodstuffs were akin also in their packaging. Both came in decorative "tumblers" that became drinking glasses when emptied.

The jelly glasses were illustrated with nursery rhymes. Jack and Jill, for instance, would go merrily up in the front of a glass, then tumble down the reverse side, spilling their pail of water.

Our favorite peanut butter, a brand that's still popular, told the story of Peter Pan's adventures. The full collection probably totalled about 50 glasses. Mothers had to remember which ones they already had so as not to select duplicates when they shopped.

The glasses had lids that were crimped on. Because the lids had to be pried off, they never fit snugly afterward. The Board of Health probably prefers today's screw-on lids. But both products were stored in the "fridge" and the contents were used up rapidly. I never knew anyone to get ptomaine poisoning from jelly or peanut butter.

At least half of Mom's "everyday" glasses had once contained peanut butter or jelly. In thousands of homes like ours, kids drank their milk a bit more willingly while twirling glasses that told the tales of Simple Simon, Humpty Dumpty et al.

In my view, the change-over from tin to aluminum cans for beer and soda pop has proved too costly to be classified as progress. (I'll not dwell on my personal preference for returnable bottles circa 1940s Coke machine.)

"Tin cans" were, in fact, made of thin sheet steel plated with a coat of tin to prevent corrosion. Their capacity to pre-

serve foodstuffs for an indefinite period was a tremendous boon to food processors, merchants and housewives. Not to mention millions of GIs who might never have savored the treat of K-ration meals.

Early tin beverage cans were opened by punching a hole in the top with the pointed end of a can opener. A second hole on the opposite edge permitted air to enter as you drank, thus allowing the liquid to flow more smoothly.

I received one of my earliest ecology lessons while fishing on Lake Springfield with my uncles Mac and Leo. We had a cooler in the boat with beer and soft drinks in tin cans. When I drained a can of Coke, Uncle Leo had me use the church key to make a small scratch on its side before submerging it in the water.

Bottles thrown into the water sometimes broke. Shards often washed into shallow water where swimmers stepped on them. With our tin cans, Uncle Leo explained, the oxidation process began even as they sank to the bottom. Soon they would rust away to nothing, their elements returning to the earth whence they came.

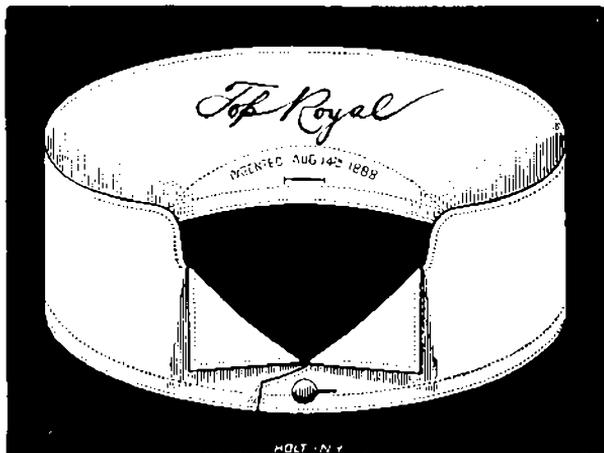
Unfortunately, this doesn't work on aluminum cans. They can be recycled but are otherwise all but indestructible. Casually discarded empties blight urban lawns and country landscapes. Waste management experts worry over dwindling landfill areas.

Aluminum cans are an extreme example, but a lot of simple pleasures have bit the dust in the name of progress. Wouldn't you rather pour your Classic Coke from a returnable bottle into a Peter Pan tumbler? And if we still placed all our phone calls through a live operator, do you suppose we'd get any more obscene calls?

\* \* \* \* \*

*P.S. My list of examples outgrew the space for this article. A "Part II" column seems likely. Readers who have their own lists of "they don't make 'em like that no more" items are invited to send them to me care of the editor. I'll include as many as possible.*

**UNIVERSALLY POPULAR**  
**WORN BY THE WELL-DRESSED**  
**TOP ROYAL**



**FOR SALE BY MEN'S FURNISHERS.**

MANUFACTURED EXCLUSIVELY BY

**CORLISS BROS. & CO., TROY, N. Y.**

NEW YORK OFFICE,  
76 Franklin Street.

CHICAGO OFFICE,  
247 & 249 Monroe St.

## **THOSE GREAT OLD ADS** **They Don't Write Anymore!**

**BY BOB PERLONGO**

*(Excerpted from his forthcoming book)*

Medical quackery of one sort or another dates from the most ancient of ages—yet its high-water heyday may well have been the nineteenth century, in a brashly unfettered and increasingly urban and goods-consuming America. Although quack claims were quite common in English publications throughout the 1700's, it took good old

Yankee ingenuity and the rapidly expanding, largely unregulated American economy of the century following to make a high if unfine art of it.

Panacea promises abounded on signboards, posters and barn sides—and most especially in the nation's papers and magazines. It was the era of "patent" medicines—and frequently dubious ingredients that didn't have to be listed on the label. Virtually every drug, notion or

## THOSE GREAT OLD ADS

general store had a special patent-medicine department, often abutting a raft of horse and poultry remedies. Business was brisk indeed in all-purpose pills, medicated salves and soaps, and tonics of every imaginable—and unimaginable—variety. (By 1905, traffic in such nostrums had reached an annual volume of \$75 million, a truly astounding figure considering the smaller population and much higher value of the dollar then.) In fact, so-called “snake oil” became the very symbol of the bilking life. However, since your typical free-lance libation often contained up to twenty percent alcohol, most customers were soon too mellow to mind—or perhaps even notice—that their “cure” was never very long-lasting.

Cheap postage, improvements in printing and distribution, and the speedy spread of literacy all commingled to sweeten the climate for such “patent” magnates as Lydia E. Pinkham (of Vegetable Compound renown), Colonel Hostetter (Stomach Bitters), and, perhaps most remarkable of all, Dr. J. C. Ayer, who parlayed hair-restorer and cherry-pectoral profits into paper and cotton mills, and even had a town named after him—Ayer, Massachusetts.

Unfortunately, much of what went down was downright dangerous. The use of opium derivatives like codeine and

cocaine, for instance, was so common during and after the Civil War that addiction was generally euphemized as “the Army disease.” Also, misguided reliance on patent pills and potables all too often led users to neglect seeking the services of a qualified physician, who—despite the relatively primitive state of medicine then—might have been of some lasting help.

Not surprisingly, there were increasingly frequent calls for reform; in 1892, for example, the *Ladies' Home Journal* announced it would no longer accept patent medicine ads. But it was the passage of the Pure Food and Drugs Act of 1906 (Forerunner of today's Pure Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act) that wrote the writing on the wall, finally providing a weapon against at least the most blatant and harmful forms of quackery: “patent” purveyors everywhere were soon forced to clean up their act or close shop.

Among the ads that follow, most speak of cures, including a couple meant for one's horse: like, barb-wire liniment or heave powder, anyone?

After the cures come the lures: perfumes: perfumed soaps, hair renewers, hats, gowns, corsets, bustles, porcelain teeth—all things irresistible, it seems. Or at least that's what advertisers banked on making their particular lures. As more and more people moved from farm to city, the idealized image of the American Woman



### FACIAL BLEMISHES.

the Largest Establishment in the World for their Treatment. Facial Development, Hair and Scalp, Superfluous Hair, Birth Marks, Moles, Warts, Moth, Freckles, Wrinkles, Red Nose, Acne, Pimples, Bl'k Heads, Scars, Pitting, etc., and their treatment. Send 10c. for book of 50 pages, 4th edition.

**Dr. JOHN H. WOODBURY,**  
87 North Pearl St., Albany, N. Y.  
Established 1870. Inventor of Facial  
Appliances, Springs, etc. Six Parlors.

# Scott's EMULSION



OF Pure  
Cod-Liver  
AND  
OIL  
HYPOPHOSPHITES

ALMOST AS PALATABLE  
AS MILK.

So disguised that the most  
delicate stomach can take it.

Remarkable as a  
**FLESH PRODUCER.**  
Persons gain rapidly  
while taking it.

## SCOTT'S EMULSION

Is acknowledged by Physicians to be the *Finest*  
and *Best* preparation for the relief of  
**CONSUMPTION, SCROFULA, GENERAL  
DEBILITY, WASTING DISEASES OF  
CHILDREN, and CHRONIC COUGHS.**  
ALL DRUGGISTS. Scott & Bowne, New York.

## THOSE GREAT OLD ADS

was used to sell a multitude of disparate products—nor was her male counterpart forgotten, as countless high-collar and shaving-stick ads will attest (samples of which are here included).

As you browse through this paper arcade of (allegedly) healthful and/or prettifying wonders, you might well feel yourself a passenger in a Barnum-and-Bailey kind of time machine. And why not? Just strap yourself in and let it ride:

Is that a signpost up ahead? Or merely, perchance a patent pitchman barking of his wares?

"Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye! Step right up, ladies and gentlemen, step right up! For we are talking cures and we are talking lures . . . And we are talking Dr. Mattison's Indian Emmenagouge . . . Like it says, it 'will cure any case curable by medicine and it is also perfectly safe' . . . Please, please, one at a time while we are talking NO-TO-BAC—for all you nicotine-ridden excuses for men! . . . Yes, gents, what you need is NO-TO-BAC, guaranteed to deliver 'MANHOOD FOR 50c!' . . . Half-a-million former tobacco-users tried NO-TO-BAC—and became 'manly, magnetic men from prematurely old physical wrecks'!

USE  
**TARRANT'S  
SELTZER**  
APERIENT  
FOR  
DYSPEPSIA,  
SICK HEADACHE,  
CONSTIPATION.

"By every feature I can see  
You're Bilious in a high degree,  
You're losing snap and losing weight,  
Your pulse runs at a railroad rate.  
In "Nature's Remedy," behold  
A certain Cure for young and old.  
The Constipation will depart,  
The Indigestion quickly start,  
And soon Sick Headache will subside  
When Tarrant's Seltzer has been tried."





### **ASLEEP ON THE RAILROAD TRACK.**

A little child, tired of play, had pillowed his head on a rail and fallen asleep. The train was almost upon him when a passing stranger rushed forward and saved him from a horrible death. Perhaps you are asleep on the track, too. You are, if you are neglecting the hacking cough, the hectic flush, the loss of appetite and growing weakness and lassitude, which have unconsciously crept upon you. Wake up, or the train will be upon you! Consumption, which thus insidiously fastens its hold upon its victims while they are unconscious of its approach, must be taken in time, if it is to be overcome. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery has cured thousands of cases of this most fatal of maladies. But it must be taken before the disease is too far advanced in order to be effective.

For Weak Lungs, Spitting of Blood, Shortness of Breath, Bronchitis, Asthma, Severe Coughs, and kindred affections, it is an efficient remedy.

Copyright, 1888, by WORLD'S DISPENSARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, Proprietors.

# WE GET

# LETTERS

**BERWYN, IL** — I have been getting *Nostalgia Digest* now for about ten years, and it gets better all the time. Starting in November, 1984, each time that I renewed I also sent a one year subscription to a friend whom I thought would also like it. I never renewed the other subscriptions because I wanted other people to become subscribers also. My November '84, '85 and '86 people have all renewed. I believe if each dedicated subscriber did this every year, in a few years *Nostalgia Digest* would have more subscribers than TV Guide. Unfortunately in November, 1987, I could think of no one to add to my list so I subscribed for myself only. However, now, two months later, I have found a couple who would really enjoy it. They listen to you every Saturday afternoon and they remember hearing many of the programs from the original broadcasts in the thirties and forties. Please don't tell them who it's from, just say from "A Friend." I don't want them to feel any obligation towards me for it. — **HAROLD KNOTT**

**(ED. NOTE** — Thanks for the gift subscription. You are a true and loyal reader and we love your idea. And Watch Out, TV Guide!!)

**CHICAGO** — Just a quick line to let you know how much I enjoyed your review of the famous 1938 Benny Goodman Carnegie Hall concert. Karl Pearson sure does a wonderful job with this type of material and I wish that you would feature more of his productions from the big band swing period. — **HAROLD STIRTON**

**WILMETTE, IL** — Enjoyed today's program as always, but PLEASE pronounce Franklin Delano Roosevelt's name properly! Even though many people in this area pronounce Roosevelt to rhyme with booze — it does not. It is pronounced as though you are using the word rose — as in a rose by any other name. There may be other Roosevelts that pronounced it the way you do, but I can assure you F.D.R. did not. I am a former archivist at the F.D.R. Presidential Library and assistant to the editor of F.D.R. AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS and I can tell you that the first day on the job I pronounced it incorrectly. I can assure you I never did again. Many radio announcers in this area pronounce his name incorrectly, so maybe you would be so kind enough to start a trend to pronouncing it correctly. — **CAROLYN K. STONE**

**HOMWOOD, IL** — Today I wrote a letter to WBBM supporting your *Radio Classics*. I got to thinking wouldn't it be great if we could find a station that would wholeheartedly support old time radio. I would like to think that WBBM would be that station. I've seen one of my favorite programs kicked off WBBM as of last week — Len Walter's Money Watch. I am upset about that, but I'd really be angry if *Radio Classics* ever left the radio. I would love to see the sports programs banished on the radio. What a waste of time. At least Fibber McGee and Molly make me laugh! Boy, do they! I love

them! What's the use of collecting the old time sets if *Radio Classics* is pre-empted by hockey?

— **JOHN L. FRIGO**

**(ED. NOTE** — Hang in there, hockey is just about finished for the season and then we have a nice, long spring and summer of vintage shows. And thanks for listening.)

**MIAMI, FLORIDA** — You cannot imagine how surprised and happy I was to read the article offering tapes, etc. to commemorate Paddy O'Cinnamon. I lived in Chicago from 1938 until 1951. I can't remember which Christmas I took that first magical trip with Judy and Jimmy, but I know that I didn't miss a year after that. I don't think my husband and children believed their had been such a radio program. They have heard me tell them about it every year. Thanks again for many happy memories. — **VALERIE COOK**

**SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA** — I write to tell you how absolutely pleased my adult children and I were with the excellent quality of the story book and cassette tapes of The Cinnamon Bear. The package arrived recently and in good condition. I hope that we are only a small part of the numbers of people who will order the set as we did. — **MRS. JAMES W. SWANSBRO**

**CARY, IL** — I listened to the Cinnamon Bear as a child. About 14 or 15 years ago I bought a set of cassette tapes from you. I've used the tapes in school for several years. This year my four year old daughter enjoyed the story. Thanks for preserving this memory for me.

— **MARGARET OSBAKKEN**

**ROCKFORD, IL** — As a child I remember running home from school each afternoon during the pre-Christmas season to catch the daily episode of The Cinnamon Bear. I was thrilled one day a few years ago to find the tapes available. I've been using it with my gifted third graders ever since. My class is thoroughly enchanted by Paddy O'Cinnamon and all the characters from the story. We've had "Teddy Bear Day" when each child brought their favorite bear to school, treats to enjoy while listening, i.e. cinnamon flavored bear candies, cinnamon buns, needlepoint bear pins to wear, etc. It brings back memories for me of cozy afternoons, laying on the floor on my stomach in front of the radio, sharing adventures with Judy and Jimmy.

— **BARBARA EKSTROM, Beyer School**

**WARREN, MICHIGAN** — I cannot receive WBBM - 780 AM at the time you are on. The station comes in fairly clear around 10 p.m. We can receive CKLW and it does have an hour program on Sunday of old time radio

shows. However, the selection is not as great as yours. Also the commercial interruptions are too numerous.

— **EMILY PEPLINSKI**

**CHICAGO** — In a recent "We Get Letters" section Walter Quasthoff inquired about a 15-minute radio program, airing at 6 p.m. weekdays, on which Lynn Burton spun records and chatted. I believe the program was named "The Man Who Came to Dinner," and Burton would sign off each evening by uttering, "I'm grateful for the plateful." The show was probably carried on WIND or WLS. In addition to being a popular radio figure, Burton also operated, at one time or another, several restaurants. Up until a few years ago one of his eateries was located on North Sheridan Road. My wife and I would occasionally patronize the establishment. Ever the gracious host, Burton was always willing to discuss his radio days with interested diners. Wouldn't it be great to have him back on radio where he truly belongs? — **ANTHONY ZANETELLO**

**PARK RIDGE, IL** — I have not yet received the February/March copy of your *Nostalgia Digest*. I believe my subscription ran out with the December/January issue. At least I renewed it in November. A copy of my cancelled check is enclosed. Could this be simply an inefficiency phenomenon on the part of the United States Postal Service? Or does it go deeper? Could it be an innocent processing error on your part or that of an aide? Or, and I hate to even think this, could you or an aide have cashed my check and flown the country to a beach in Aruba or some other exotic paradise? I'm willing, for the moment, to assume that this is an innocent error. I have to believe that a Northwest side boy who grew up listening to Superman, Sgt. Preston, This Is Your FBI, Mr. District Attorney, the Lone Ranger and Dragnet wouldn't knowingly commit a serious crime of fraud. Therefore I have not turned this case over to the authorities — yet. (Copies of this letter are going to Sgt. Friday, Miss Miller and Tonto.)

— **MARGARET A. WARREN**

**(ED. NOTE** — Sorry you didn't get your last issue. A new copy is in the mail. Please note the postmark from Aruba.)

**MATTESON, IL** — On January 23 I taped all 10 episodes of I Love A Mystery. The first eight episodes I taped on a 120-minute tape and the last two on a 60-minute tape. When I ran the tape back I discovered that the 60-minute tape was defective and it did not record those episodes. You can imagine my consternation. I spent all afternoon taping and don't have the last two episodes. In the past you have indicated that the tapes can be obtained for shows which you broadcast. Is it

possible to obtain a tape of the last two episodes? I thoroughly enjoy your *Those Were The Days* programs each week. They are wonderful. I enjoy the *Radio Classics* weeknights, but I wish the programs weren't so edited. I realize there isn't much you can do about that. You have also developed a young radio lover. My daughter is 11 and literally every night she falls asleep listening to old time radio tapes on her tape recorder which is right next to her bed. She particularly enjoys Jack Benny and Fibber McGee and Molly. Thanks for all the wonderful hours of enjoyment.

— **GORDON COCHRANE**

**(ED. NOTE** — Custom tapes are \$6.50 per half hour and we'll be glad to send those last two chapters of the Temple of the Vampires to you. Regarding *Radio Classics*, it's sometimes tough to squeeze in two shows in a single hour, but we try to edit only standard openings and closings, no program material. Sometimes we need a shoehorn!)

**CHICAGO** — During the last year or so, it seems to me that many of the cigarette commercials have been eliminated from shows you broadcast on WNIB. This was especially noticeable on the Jack Benny programs where only the Sportsmen's jingle was left in the broadcast. However, this did not happen on all shows and, in fact, sometimes all of the cigarette commercials were broadcast. Will you please clarify what restrictions you are obliged to meet (if any) concerning broadcasting cigarette commercials and who is imposing those restrictions.

Also, for those of us who record a substantial portion of your Saturday afternoon show, the program listing and timing information included in the *Digest* is invaluable. However, when you mix in some "Lucky Strike Extras" or cancel the scheduled programs to "Remember" a certain personality, we are operating under a real handicap. When you are going to vary from the scheduled programming, would you please give us a listing of the changes or additions (along with the timing for each segment) at the beginning of your show and repeat them a couple of times throughout the program. It would sure help! Thanks

— **JIM OSTARELLO**

**(ED. NOTE** — Cigarette commercials — old or new — are not permitted on radio or television. WNIB has graciously given us a waiver whenever a commercial is integral to the story or comedy of the show. WNIB also permits us to leave in the name of the cigarette during an opening or closing announcement, but we must omit any "straight" or "hard-sell" messages. Occasionally one slips through, but we try diligently to adhere to present day broadcast standards. Besides, even cigarette commercials may be hazardous to your health! As far as timing information goes, we're glad it helps you and other listeners who tape the shows. When we present an "unpublished" special, we try to

## WE GET LETTERS

give timing information, usually at the beginning of our *Those Were The Days* program. We feel it is too much "clutter" to keep mentioning program times throughout the show, so if you miss the announcement, please feel free to call our studio in the Museum of Broadcast Communications at 987-1510 and we'll be glad to provide it for you during the program. Hope this information helps.)

**BARRINGTON, IL** — I would like to thank you for the many hours of radio entertainment you have brought me. Ever since I first listened to your program seven years ago, when I was eight, my favorite radio personality was Jack Benny. Since then I have obtained over 70 of his programs. My favorites are his Christmas shows with Mel Blanc as the clerk. I wish Jack's shows were on more during your program, so I could add to my collection like I do in February. Your *Nostalgia Digest* is great. I especially enjoy I Remember It Well and The Home Front. I wish that eventually you will be able to put in a story line about the programs on WBBM.

— MARK O'HARA

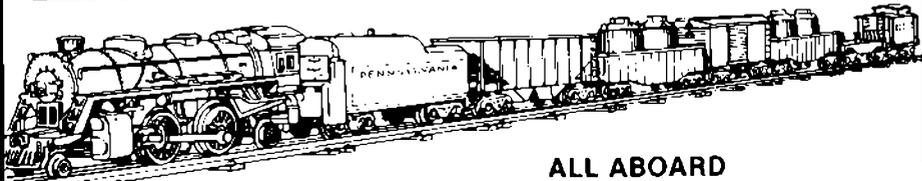
**GEORGETOWN, MARYLAND** — I think your

publication is wonderful. I thoroughly enjoy every issue. I am a long time broadcaster—50 years—and still not retired. I started in radio in Akron, Ohio, went to Syracuse, N.Y. (WFBL)—and wound up with WRC-NBC, Washington, D.C. Television started up and I went into it for NBC, Washington. Among my "firsts"—announcer for the opening of the co-axial cable (the start of network TV) . . . announcer for the first telecast of the opening of Congress in January, 1947 . . . NBC announcer for Presidents Truman and Eisenhower—which I also did on radio. Today, I am a free-lance announcer for ABC-TV, Washington and CBS-TV News Bureau. Recently I was the announcer for ABC-TV's historic, live "Capitol to Capitol" programs—Washington and Moscow. More are slated for 1988. I was also the announcer for ABC-TV's coverage of the Summit, week of December 6, 1987. However, radio still remains my favorite. I am director of broadcasting for a small, local AM radio station in Gaithersburg, Maryland: WMET-AM-1150. I combine managerial duties with on-air performances and some writing and sales. I love every moment. Keep up the splendid work on the *Nostalgia Digest*. — JOHN BATCHELDER

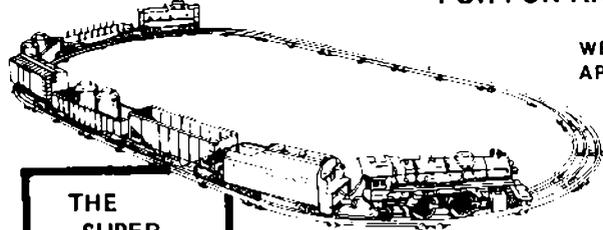
(ED. NOTE — Nice to hear from you, John. Glad that you still love radio and we're flattered that you find time in your busy schedule to read our *Digest*.)

# LIONEL®

THE GREATEST NAME  
IN MODEL RAILROADING



ALL ABOARD  
FOR FUN AND EXCITEMENT



THE  
SUPER  
STORE!

WE BUY, SELL, SERVICE,  
APPRAISE AND RESTORE  
MODEL ELECTRIC  
TRAINS, TRACKS,  
AND ACCESSORIES  
BY LIONEL, LBG,  
AMERICAN FLYER,  
MARX, KALAMAZOO,  
WILLIAMS AND OTHERS.

Come In and Visit with Mike Moore  
who loves to chat with you  
about model railroading.

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NILES • 470-9500

**Home  
TV & Appliances**

# CASSETTE TAPE SPECIALS \$5.50

SAVE 20% — REGULARLY \$6.95 EACH PLUS TAX

TAPE NO. 1 **APRIL** TAPE NO. 2

Each  
Plus Tax

## LIFE OF RILEY

William Bendix

### "The Other Woman"

Riley gets involved, by mistake of course, with another woman. It gets complicated as Riley, even though innocent, tries to cover-up his dinner appointment with her. The mix-up is full of laughs ala the bumbling Bendix-Riley. Drell, 4/26/47.

### "The Dinner Party"

Riley puts on a fancy dinner for his daughter Babs. He rents a large mahogany dinner table, only it is a combination dinner-casino table. The fun starts when they sit down to eat. Dreff, 5/3/47.

## ESCAPE #2

### The Homicidal Maniac

You are trapped in the dank darkness of a ruined plantation house, and somewhere in the pitch black room is a homicidal maniac with a knife, groping for you, trying to prevent your ESCAPE. 12/17/47.

### The Follower

Mark Litton discovers a dead man in his apartment and his wife missing. ESCAPE with us to Mexico City and the story of a man caught up in the terrifying web of murder and intrigue. 2/18/51

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