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NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND
RADIO GUIDE ©

JUNE — JULY, 1988



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BOOK FOURTEEN CHAPTER FOUR

JUNE-JULY, 1988

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NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

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Some items for your Nostalgia Calendar:

★ Good news for fans of the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre. The popular series, broadcast from 1974-1983, is coming back and you'll be able to hear it as part of our *Radio Classics* on WBBM. The kick-off date is scheduled to be September 5th and the show will become a regular feature on *Radio Classics* along with all the other great vintage programs.

★ If you enjoyed our February Jack Benny re-creation, you may want to participate in our June Quiz Show event on *Those Were The Days*. It will be held at our studio in the Museum of Broadcast Communications and listeners are invited to participate. The subject will be TV Trivia, and we'll hold auditions for panelists on Saturday morning, June 11th. The Quiz Show will be broadcast as part of our WNIB program that same afternoon, at about 2 p.m. Four listeners will be selected to compete with four celebrity panelists for fun and prizes. There's room for a large studio audience, so be sure to "come on down" for our radio quiz show re-creation.

★ Did you ever want to host an old-time-radio show? You may get the chance if you enter our "Chuck Schaden Sound-Alike" contest. Just prepare a one-minute audio cassette tape of you doing your best Schaden impression and send it to Sound-Alike, Box 421, Morton Grove, Illinois 60053. Best entries will be played on the air in the weeks preceding July 2nd when the winner gets a cathedral radio replica (AM-FM, cassette) and will co-host our *Those Were The Days* program on that day.

God, what next?

Thanks for listening.

Chuck Schaden

SPEAKING OF RADIO



Chuck Schaden's Conversation with EVE ARDEN



Eve Arden created the role of Connie Brooks for the popular radio and television series Our Miss Brooks. A while ago we had a chance to visit with her and talk about her career. We remarked that before she became Connie Brooks, even before she became Eve Arden, she was Eunice Quedens.

When I got to New York, I worked for Lee Shubert in the first Shubert Ziegfeld Follies that they did after Ziegfeld had died. Lee Shubert said, "We're going to put your name up on the marquee, and we can't put *Quedens* up there. It's too long." So, that's when I came up with Arden.

Did you just pull it out of the air?

More or less, yes, I did. I was waiting to go in and see him and he had given me a deadline on a name. I was reading a book and the heroine was Eve. I had a package of Elizabeth Arden cosmetics in my hand. I tried it out on him and he liked it. That was it.

You know if you had used a different cosmetic your name today could be Lady Esther, I suppose.

Right. Ha! Ha!

Well, how did you get from Mill Valley, California, where you were born, to the Ziegfeld Follies?

I went to San Francisco first, and I worked for the Henry Duffy Stock Company there. It was a marvelous kind of super stock, where you rehearsed for four weeks and played eight to twelve weeks, depending on how popular the play was. It was great training. Then I joined a little Band Box Repertoire Company. There were just four of us in the company.

That meant a lot of long parts, because I played all the leads, and they were divided among four people. From there, I did a revue at the Pasadena Playhouse. We took it into Hollywood, and that's where Mr. Schubert saw me and signed me for the Follies. So that got me to New York.

I see. You worked with Danny Kaye on Broadway didn't you?

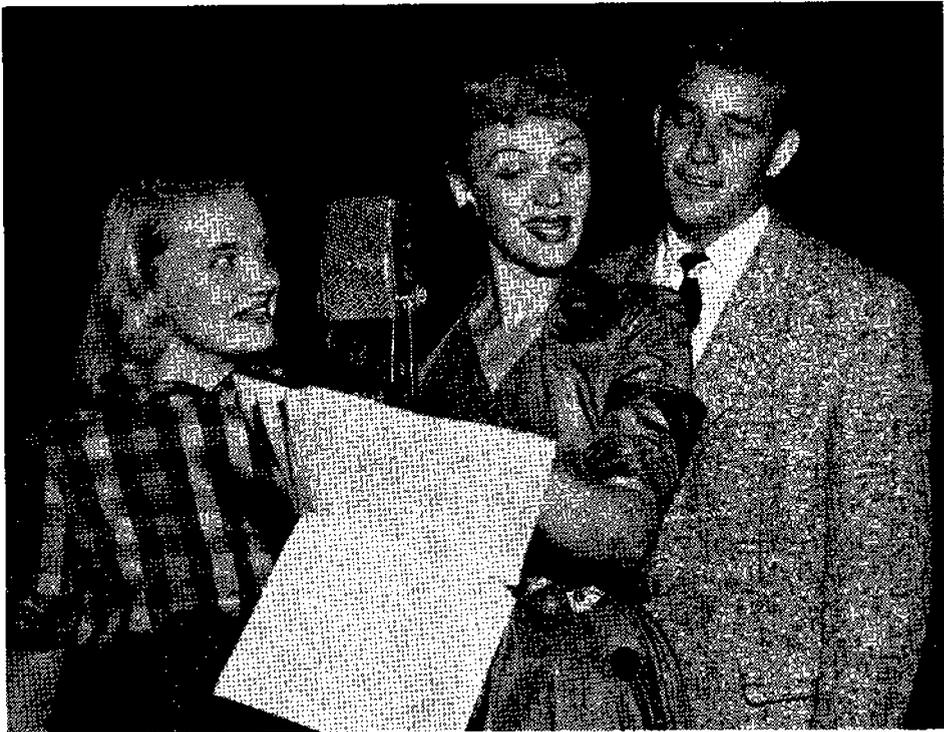
Yes, I went back later and did *Let's Face It*, with Danny Kaye.

Then you were in the Follies and a couple of other shows, too, before you went back to California?

Yes, I did the Theatre Guild Revue called *Parade* and then I did another Follies. Then I came out to California. My mother had passed away, I came out and suddenly I got a picture to do. So I stayed and did some pictures. And then I went back and did another show, two shows as a matter of fact. Came back and did some more pictures, and then I went back and did *Let's Face It*. I sort of commuted in those days. I love the theatre. I was a comedienne, and I did numbers and sketches and things like that in revues that were great fun. I sang and danced.

Your first major screen role was in Stage Door.

Well, that was the first one, and then I



OUR MISS BROOKS on radio: Gloria McMillen as Harriet Conklin; Eve Arden as schoolteacher Connie Brooks; Richard Crenna as Walter Denton.

did Voice of the Turtle. Well, you have the whole list, I couldn't possibly remember them.

You even worked with the Marx Brothers!

Yes, Day at the Circus, practically the only picture that ever impressed our son! Ha! Ha! That pulled me up a few notches!

You were in the movies with Warner Brothers and for RKO, too.

Oh, I worked for all the studios, MGM, RKO, Paramount . . .

You and Lucille Ball were somewhat typecast as the business woman, or the secretary . . .

Yes, secretary and best friend of the heroine, who never got the man. Ha! Ha! Ha!

Ted Sennett wrote a book called Lunatics and Lovers about those screwball comedies of the 30's and 40's, and you were very evident in many of those. He said, describing the role that you played in those films, you "would walk onto the screen, dispense acid like wine to the fools you were obliged to tolerate and then make a nice exit." You know I think that really did sum up your screen roles.

Well maybe that covered a few of them, but I never thought that I was so acid, you know. They called me brittle, which annoyed me because I was always really the gal with the good heart who saved the heroine and patched up all her troubles, and took care of everybody. But I did make a flip remark now and then.

Well, those flip remarks really were very well remembered, and kind of became the trademark for Eve Arden.

SPEAKING OF RADIO

Right.

Mildred Pierce was one of your finest screen appearances.

Yes, so they tell me. I was so amazed because you make a picture, or you did in those days, and if you're not the lead, you work maybe two weeks in a row. Then I used to go to Palm Springs for two or three weeks during the making of the picture. Which always distressed the camera man, cause I came back eight shades darker. Then you would work a week or two more. So you had really very little concept of what you had done in a picture. I could never bear to see them after. It destroyed me. So I gave it up. But then I read in the paper that I had been nominated for an Oscar in *Mildred Pierce*. So I felt I had to go and see what the heck I had done. I went and the theatre was very crowded. I went and sat in the second row down front. There were no other seats. After 10 minutes I left. I never saw it again, until it was on TV, as an old picture.



Did you like it?

Yes, I enjoyed it, but I wasn't that mad about it. I think *Voice of the Turtle* was one of the best things I had done.

You moved from film with ease into radio, working with Ken Murray for awhile, and Jack Haley.

I did those things when I was working in the theatre in New York. Then I came out on the coast with another one of those. Then I did a show with Danny Kaye on radio. Then finally along came Miss Brooks.

*How did *Our Miss Brooks* come along?*

Well, they had made a couple of recordings with a couple of other actresses. I believe Joan Blondell was one. They didn't feel she was right, and Shirley Booth was one. So they asked me to do it and I held very little hope for it. But they said they wanted to put it on as a summer replacement. I said, "Well, then you're going to have to do it right fast, 'cause I'm going to New York. So we taped all of them very fast. I got to New York. At the end of my stay there, Frank Stanton, the president of CBS, said, "Congratulations, you're the number one show on the air." Which astounded me! So then we went into fall production. It was on radio five years, one of which overlapped the four years on television.

There's something very interesting about the transition of radio to television. A lot of the shows that were very well established on radio didn't make it on TV. I think a lot of it was due to the fact that the people who watched the TV show saw people they couldn't relate to, because they had their own ideas of them in their own mind.

Right.

*Yet, with one exception, every member of the *Our Miss Brooks* radio broadcast moved into television.*

And the only one who didn't, as you know, was Jeff Chandler. The reason for that was that Jeff had suddenly become a



big motion picture star. He really wanted to do it with us, but he just physically didn't look the part. I mean, when you looked at Jeff, you didn't believe he was the shy, bumbling Mr. Boynton. Vocally he did it. So Bob Rockwell was the perfect replacement for him on television.

They didn't want to take Dick Crenna into TV. They asked me to make tests with some boys. And I said, "What for?" They said for Walter Denton. I said, "You're crazy, people know Dick." They said he's too old. But I said, "He doesn't look it. He doesn't sound it. They'll love him." They pressured me to make the tests. So I said, "I'll do it if you make a test of Dick, too." There was no question after that.

Then they came to me part way through the series and said, "We're going to make a big change. Just keep you and Gale Gordon as Mr. Conklin, and that's all. We're going to send you to Hollywood, and it's . . ." I said, "It's not going to

work. I bet I have my people back in three months." And I did. It was a shame, but that spoiled it.

They changed from a public school to a private school, and from a high school to a grammar school.

It never recovered from that. That was really the reason we went off the air. It's a shame.

Why did they want to make the change?

Well, we were caught in a game that is played, really, by an awful lot of TV producers and sponsors. When the time comes to renew, each one pretends that . . . you know, the sponsor and the network say, well the show's ratings are going down a little and it's not as good as it used to be. Then the creative people get very upset. They come and say, but we've got a great new idea. Then they change it and it ruins the whole thing. That was the problem with that.

When the Our Miss Brooks series ended, you came back shortly thereafter with the Eve Arden Show.

Yes. We made a good pilot which sold immediately. Then they came to me and said, "Well, we're on now, but you can't have the same producer, director or writer." I said, "How can you do that?" They said, "Oh, we'll put 15 writers on it." Well, you put 15 people in a little screening room, and have them look at one thing. They all come up with a totally different idea. So it just didn't homogenize, you know.

That didn't click too well, but you were a big hit with Kaye Ballard in The Mothers-In-Law.

Yes, and then they dropped that.

You never got away from making movies. You were in Anatomy of a Murder, and The Dark at the Top of the Stairs.

"Yes, my life seems to go in spurts, but mostly we love the theatre. At one time my

SPEAKING OF RADIO

husband Brooks West and I took our four children on summer stock tour.

Did they appear with you in the show?

No, no, it gave them a wonderful vacation and allowed us to be with them in a kind of different role, than we were at home, where we were always having to say, "Did you do your homework? Did you make your bed? Did you do this? Well, do it." But we would tour in a station wagon with a nurse and a dog. We would talk with them, and they would see the countryside with us. We would be by a mountain lake one time, and by the seashore another. So it was a good way of life for us for quite a few years.

You have a big ranch in California?

Yes, a great big ranch, and then we took them to Europe for a year and a half. That was a wonderful period.

I was flipping through an old TV Guide and there was something in there about the animals on your ranch being named after movie stars?

Oh, yes. That was, of course, quite a few years ago when the children were young. We had three cows. They were named Marilyn Monroe, dear Marilyn, her namesake died from eating baling wire; Elizabeth Taylor, that was a black angus with a white face, looked like Liz we thought; and Jane Russell. We had the Gabor sisters who were our sheep. And, Mama Gabor, who promptly gave birth to triplets. We had all the animals named for different people. It was fun!

Names are somewhat significant to you, because your first two daughters are Connie and Liza.

Liza is the eldest, Connie, then Duncan and Douglas are the boys.

Connie was Connie Brooks! Didn't you choose that name for the series?

People always asked if Our Miss Brooks was name after my husband, Brooks West. But Brooks and I hadn't met until I had been on radio for almost four years.

You actually met when you were in a play together?

Yes, toured in summer stock the first year. But when they were giving Miss Brooks a first name, I had just adopted a little girl and named her Connie. So I said, "How about calling her Connie Brooks?" That's when it hit. Liza has never forgiven me because I had named a little business that I had, after her first. Then the business went defunct. In the second show I did, I was named for Liza, but she lost out on Miss Brooks.

Well, we haven't lost out! We thank you very much for so many good things that you've done over the years.

Well, thank you. I must say it is very pleasant when people come up to say they enjoy Miss Brooks more than anything, I guess, that I've done. They always mention that. It's nice to hear.

We appreciate your talent.

Thank you, Chuck.

Chuck Schaden's



SPEAKING OF RADIO

Conversations with . . .

- | | |
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. . . and many others

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SPEAKING OF RADIO

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NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

1939 — A Big 'Big Band' Year

By KARL PEARSON

1939 was a boom year for the big bands. Business was booming with increased demand for personal appearances, radio programs and film work. Record sales, which had slumped during the depression, were on the resurgence.

The increased demand brought a number of new big bands on the scene. Two of the new bands were formed by outstanding trombonists, each of whom teamed up with another top-notch musician. The first was Jack Teagarden, recently out of Paul Whiteman's orchestra, who was joined by trumpeter Charlie Spivak. The other trombonist was a well-respected studio musician named Wilbur Schwichtenberg, who teamed up with drummer Ray McKinley. Wilbur, who realized that his last name could become a marquee changer's nightmare, changed his name to Will Bradley and the Will Bradley/Ray McKinley band was born.

Two trumpet players also organized bands of their own during 1939. One was Harry James, who left Benny Goodman's band in January after a two-year stay with the King of Swing. Within a matter of weeks, Harry formed a fine band of his own that included two young, unknown vocalists, Connie Haines and Frank Sinatra. The other trumpet player was Benny Carter, a multi-talented musician who played all the conventional reed, brass and rhythm instruments, as well as being an outstanding arranger. Benny is one of the few greats from the swing era who still plays today.

There were a number of outstanding successes during 1939. One was Artie

Shaw, already on top at the beginning of the year due to his recording of Cole Porter's "Begin The Beguine." By the end of the year Shaw, tired of the band scene, junked his orchestra and fled to Mexico. Saxophonist Charlie Barnet, playing at New York's Famous Door, a tiny nightclub that seated fewer than sixty people, had a very big hit record with "Cherokee". The number was composed by arranger Billy May riding on the band bus to a record session. And at Glen Island Casino, in New Rochelle, New York, a relatively unknown trombonist was gaining national attention through his nightly broadcasts over NBC. Within a few months there would be very few people who had not heard of Glenn Miller.

Big Bands were playing coast to coast in 1939, in such locations as the Panther Room of Chicago's Hotel Sherman, the Trianon Ballroom in Cleveland, Elitch's Gardens in Denver, the Dancing Campus of the New York World's Fair, Frank Dailey's Meadowbrook in Cedar Grove, New Jersey, the Chicago Theater, the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles, and the Pennsylvania Roof in New York City. And in the fall of 1939, the Hotel Pennsylvania opened a brand new room that was to become one of the most famous locations to hear big bands: the Cafe Rouge.

The year 1939 also was a year of change. Vocalist Jack Leonard left Tommy Dorsey's band, but while Tommy lost his star vocalist, he was able to obtain Sy Oliver, the great arranger who had just left Jimmie Lunceford's band. Benny Goodman, having lost Harry James earlier in the

NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

year, had found a new discovery in electric guitarist Charlie Christian and had also gained a full-time arranger/pianist in Fletcher Henderson. The year also had its moments of sadness, with the passing of bandleader Chick Webb and saxophonist Herschel Evans, who had been a featured player with Count Basie's orchestra.

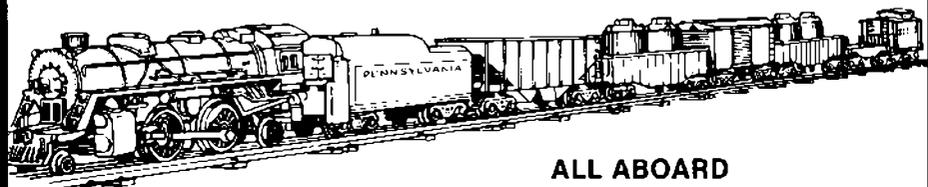
A number of fine songs were first heard during 1939. "And The Angels Sing," "Beer Barrel Polka," "Deep Purple," "Don't Worry 'Bout Me," "Hold Tight (Want Some Sea Food, Mama)," "Melancholy Lullaby," "Over the Rainbow," and "Undecided" became a part of our musical history. Another of the "biggies" of 1939 was written by Saxie Dowell, who played saxophone with Hal Kemp's band. It was the tale of "Three Little Fishies in an itty bitty poo."

The sale of phonograph records in 1939 was phenomenal. RCA Victor and Decca were the leaders, joined later in the year by the newly-revived Columbia label, which had been purchased the previous year by CBS. Kay Kyser's "Three Little Fishies" sold big on Brunswick, while Orrin Tucker's "Oh Johnny, Oh Johnny, Oh!" was one of the first big sellers for the new Columbia label. Over at RCA Victor/Bluebird, Artie Shaw's "Out Of Nowhere," Charlie Barnet's "Cherokee" and Glenn Miller's "In the Mood" led the list of top sellers. On the Vocalion label (also owned by CBS), Dick Jurgens had a minor hit with "My Last Goodbye" and "Careless," both which featured the smooth vocals of Eddy Howard.

A very impressive year, indeed. The next year, 1940, would also prove to be a banner year for the big bands. But that's another story.

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I REMEMBER IT WELL...

LET'S GO TO THE PAY-SHOW!

BY DAN MCGUIRE ...

A recent letter from G.P. Lucchetti to the editor of *Nostalgia Digest* brought this reader a warm nostalgic glow. After a period of hard times, the Patio theatre has been completely refurbished and is making a comeback.

For a period of eight or ten years in my carefree youth, I spent at least four out of five Saturday afternoons at the movies. Wayne, Chuck, Bobby and I were matinee addicts. Two or more of us made weekly pilgrimages to one of the dozen theatres on Chicago's northwest side.

Unless some competing double bill was more appealing, the Patio was our first choice. It simply was more accessible from our semi-rural suburban neighborhood.

Those Were The Days listeners probably have heard Chuck Schaden mention that as youngsters we called the Patio "the Pay-Show." This had nothing to do with the cost of admission, which was the same at all shows. It came about because none of our gang knew what a patio was.

Our young minds were not so inquisitive as to question the names of theatres. But in making our weekly decision it was a problem not being able to pronounce one show's name.

Georgie, whose older sister was in high school, was picking up snippets of Spanish from her. With his advanced knowledge he informed us the word was pronounced "pay-show." That made as much sense to us as most of the other theatre names. And so it was.

Interestingly, none of our parents ever corrected us on this score. Those were the

days when parents didn't worry about what film we were going to see. Moms would ask which theatre we had selected so as to know about when we should be due back home. They knew what we meant by "the



*PATIO THEATRE, 6008 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, in 1966.

I REMEMBER IT WELL

Pay-Show," but apparently accepted it as a kids' code word or nickname.

Some of us were seniors in high school before we learned the correct pronunciation. On the eve of his wedding, I took Chuck aside and set him straight lest he embarrass himself in conversation with his bride during their honeymoon.

The standard matinee schedule at most theatres was: "Doors open 12:30; Show starts at 1 p.m." It was about a 45-minute trip to the Patio. That meant eating an early lunch and leaving no later than noon so we could arrive after the ticket line had diminished but in time to buy candy before the lights went out.

First we walked four blocks to Irving Park Road. Then we waited five or ten minutes for a Chicago Surface Line shuttle bus. This smaller model of the standard oblong-shaped big-city vehicle took us as far as Neenah Avenue, where the Irving Park trolley line began.

Across from the old Dunning State Home, we would board one of the familiar Red Rockets and present our transfers. In the solidly comfortable reversible wicker seats, we sat and watched familiar landmarks pass as the streetcar rocked and clanged along on its tracks. Dunning Station Post Office. Merrimac Park. The shoe store with the big Buster Brown display in its window.

When we passed St. Pascal Roman Catholic Church and its parochial school it was time to start moseying toward the front compartment. As the Austin Avenue traffic lights loomed ahead, we would instruct the motorman in our most grown-up voices, "Next stop, please."

The streetcar screeched to a halt, the motorman pulled a lever that slid the front door open and we debarked to a safety island. From the vantage point we could view the panorama of shops and shoppers along both sides of Irving Park.

It was a scene typical of the era. A bakery, deli, cleaners, drug store, hobby

shop, neighborhood pubs on either side of the street, a shop that sold and repaired radios, a storefront branch of the Chicago Public Library. Most of the buildings were flush against their neighbors, with upper stories that housed the owners, no two brick-works the same color.

To our eyes, the focal point was the blinking marquee of that second building from the northwest corner — the Pay-Show.

When the traffic light turned green, we hurried across the street. Outside the theatre we paused to examine the "stills," glossy photos of scenes from today's features.

The glass front doors were propped open and only a few kids were ahead of us at the ticket booth inside. We each produced 12 cents, the price for "children age 12 and under."

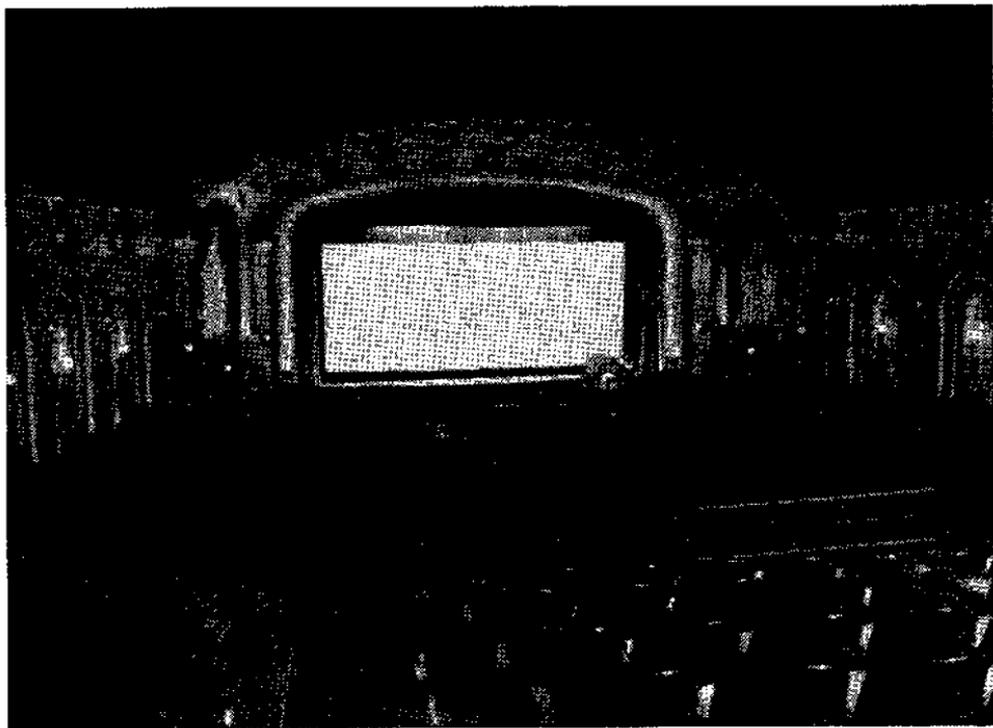
Overhead, a huge chandelier hung from what seemed an inadequate chain. The lobby walls were decorated with posters ballyhooing future features. An usher at the second set of doors tore our tickets in half and returned stubs to us.

Inside the main lobby, the stairs at left and right were roped off as usual at matinees. Signs draped over the ropes proclaimed: "Balcony closed." At center stage, the concession booth was mobbed by boys and girls in ill-defined lines.

Here we waited our turn to make the difficult choice of what snacks to munch on for the next three or four hours. With a dime allotted for this, I usually spent five cents for a box of buttered pop corn. The remaining nickle went for lemon drops, licorice nibs, Milk Duds or something else that could be eaten one or two at a time.

By the time we resolved the inevitable debate about how far down to sit, the house lights would dim. The matinee always began with a cartoon, and we added our voices to 1,200 others in shouting our gleeful approval.

Tom and Jerry were favorites of my generation, along with Heckle and Jeckle, most of the Disney characters and the



**INTERIOR OF PATIO THEATRE, restored to its original elegance.
(Photos by Chuck Wlodarczyk)**

Looney Toons bunch. Many of the same cartoons we howled at at the Pay-Show are entertaining kids today on TV and in home videos.

After the cartoon came the weekly episode in the current serial. I was a sucker for "cliff hangers," even the one with Brenda Starr, whose comic strip adventures I disdained. When my favorite comic heroes, Batman and Robin, appeared in a serial, I was in heaven. Once it began, it did not matter what was showing on the Patio's main bill. I had to be there every Saturday to see how my heroes would escape each week's close encounter.

As the serial wrapped up and left us with our mouths hanging open, a colorful panorama appeared on the screen with searchlights criss-crossing left and right. A fanfare blared in the background and the screen filled with the words: "Previews of Coming Attractions." This was followed by typical Hollywood teaser scenes from

both of the movies that would be appearing next Sunday through Wednesday. Next came a similar treatment of the double bill for next Thursday, Friday and Saturday. If a blockbuster film was scheduled a few weeks hence, there might be coming attractions dubbed "Coming Soon."

After all this, the first feature would begin with its introductory plug for the studio that produced it. Because the Saturday matinee was usually a packed house of junior film fans, the Thursday-through-Saturday bill had to be something that would appeal to juvenile tastes. Typically, we might see the latest Abbott and Costello laugh riot paired with "The Falcon in Mexico," or a John Wayne war movie with "Thunderhead, Son of Flicka." The management tried to include one film that could be enjoyed by both small fry and adults, since they couldn't count on kids to fill the seats at three evening screenings.

I REMEMBER IT WELL

As the feature's title flashed on the screen, our half-pint horde would give a cheer and settle back to munch on our cavity-makers. Most features were between 75 and 90 minutes long. With the short subjects, viewing time was likely to run about 3½ hours. Then, likely as not, we would sit through the cartoon and serial again, and maybe the previews if they were really interesting.

Following a stop in the washroom, we would exit the Pay-Show, checking the posters again and comparing the illustrations to what we had seen in the previews. Outside, we would catch a westbound streetcar and re-hash the best parts of the show enroute home.

In the 1940's the Patio probably ranked as a medium or small movie house. Though its decor was modestly ornate, it could not compare with the opulent elegance of downtown theatres or even the chain of Balaban & Katz neighborhood houses. Perhaps its most memorable feature was the blue ceiling filled with tiny lights that gave the effect of stars blinking in a night sky.

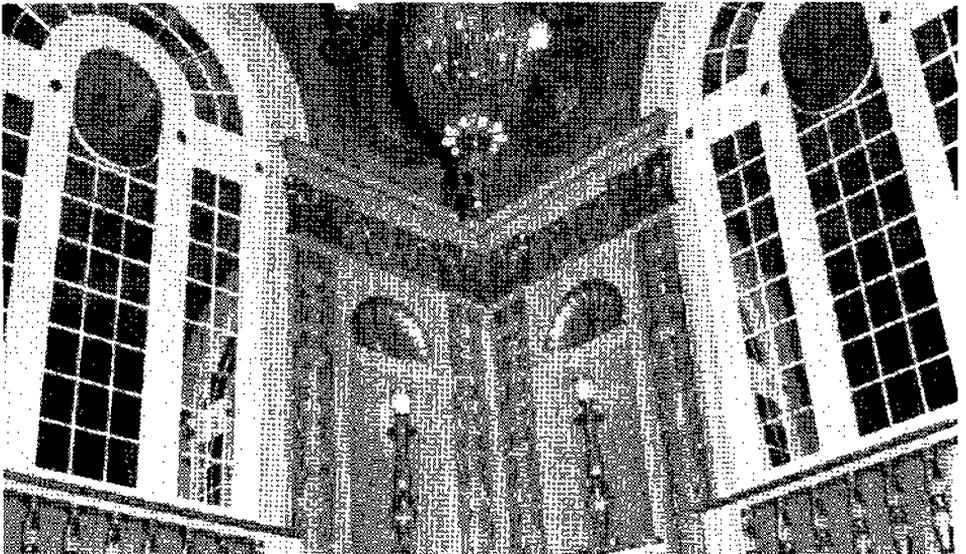
But my pals and I weren't concerned with ambiance. We were entertained by literally hundreds of Hollywood's A, B and C offerings at the Pay-Show. None of them would have been any more enjoyable had we seen them at one of downtown Chicago's super theatres.

In recent years a decline in movie attendance and other factors killed off half the theatres that once thrived on Chicago's northwest side. For a time the Patio's days appeared numbered. Now it has been blessed with new owners who are committed to giving it another try.

The Patio was built in a period when movies were our number-one entertainment medium. This splendid example of neighborhood theatres from that by-gone era is worth preserving. Loyal patronage by its neighbors will make that possible.

It's a longer ride for me now, but I plan to check out the Pay-Show this month. Who says you can't go back?

Editors Note: The departure of Dan McGuire and his pals from the northwest side is believed to have precipitated the downturn of movie attendance in that area.



PATIO THEATRE LOBBY showing ornate detail.



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RADIO SHOW RE-CREATION BRIGHTENS JACK BENNY MONTH

A highlight of Jack Benny Month this year was our *Those Were The Days* recreation of a Jack Benny program. More than 350 fans jammed the *Museum of Broadcast Communications at River City* on the afternoon of February 27th. A group of talented listeners, winners of auditions held earlier in the month, assumed the roles of the Benny characters to provide a memorable tribute to the great comedian and his cast. "A good time was had by all" really applies to the occasion and these photos give you a peek at what the studio audience saw as they watched the broadcast. The official cast photo (suitable for framing) appears on the next page. Will we do it again? You betcha!



SOUND EFFECTS MAN Tony Lincoln created the sound patterns with a door provided courtesy of the **Goodman Theatre, Chicago.**



THOSE WERE THE DAYS host **Chuck Schaden** warms up the studio audience prior to the broadcast.



JACK BENNY AND DON WILSON (Gary Stamm and David Katz) mix it up with the SPORTSMEN (The Brandy Bunch Barbershop Quartet).



JACK AND MR. KITZEL (Gary Stamm and Mike Schwimmer) go through their routine as director Yuri Rasovski beams with approval.



JACK BENNY CAST — OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH

THE IMAGE OF JACK BENNY indicates pleasure with the re-creation of his program as the cast gathers for this official photo. Shown, from left, standing, are **Tony Lincoln** (sound man); **Sharon Jacobson** (NBC Chime-striker); **The Brandy Bunch Quartet** (The Sportsmen); **Tom Calhoun**, **Ken Spengler**, **Bob Heselbarth**, **David Reiser**; **Dave Mayberry** (Frank Nelson); **Mike Schwimmer** (Mr. Kitzel); **Mary Ellen Little** (author of the original script based on the Benny characters); **Yuri Rasovski** (director);

and **Lorna Raver Johnson** (production coordinator). Front row, from left are **Gary Stamm** (Jack Benny); **Kathy Konopasek** (Mary Livingstone); **Barry Richert** (Phil Harris); **Don Kraus** (Rochester); **Ken Grabarek** (Dennis Day); **David Katz** (Don Wilson); **John Schaefer** (Mel Blanc); **Joan Leidig** (Receptionist); and **Chuck Schaden**.

Jack Benny Program re-creation photographs taken at the Museum of Broadcast Communications by **Margaret Warren**.

JUNE			RADIO CLASSICS — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M. SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.			
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Charlie McCarthy This Is Your FBI	2 Lone Ranger Dragnet	3 Lights Out Red Ryder	4 Green Hornet Black Museum Jack Benny Lights Out
5 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	6 Lone Ranger Sealed Book	7 Charlie McCarthy Lone Ranger	8 Lone Ranger Lights Out	9 Hopalong Cassidy Lone Ranger	10 Lone Ranger Green Hornet	11 Fibber McGee This Is Your FBI Burns & Allen X Minus One
12 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	13 Red Ryder Black Museum	14 This Is Your FBI Hopalong Cassidy	15 Dragnet Lights Out	16 Green Hornet Gangbusters	17 Hopalong Cassidy Burns & Allen	18 Fibber McGee Life of Riley Charlie McCarthy Jack Benny
19 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	20 Lights Out Stand By For Crime	21 Charlie McCarthy Dragnet	22 Sealed Book Challenge of The Yukon	23 Lights Out The Falcon	24 This Is Your FBI Green Hornet	25 Fibber McGee X Minus One Burns & Allen Lights Out
26 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	27 Dragnet Lone Ranger	28 Stand By For Crime Hopalong Cassidy	29 The Falcon Charlie McCarthy	30 Lights Out This Is Your FBI	PLEASE NOTE 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.	

JULY			RADIO CLASSICS — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M. SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.			
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
PLEASE NOTE: — 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.					1 Dragnet Lone Ranger	2 Charlie McCarthy Burns & Allen X Minus One Fibber McGee
3 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	4 Great Gildersleeve Lights Out	5 The Falcon Black Museum	6 Lone Ranger Gangbusters	7 Dragnet Challenge of the Yukon	8 Sealed Book Stand By For Crime	9 Burns & Allen Lone Ranger Lights Out Jack Benny
10 *Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	11 Burns & Allen The Falcon	12 Gangbusters Charlie McCarthy	13 Gangbusters Jack Benny	14 Gangbusters Life of Riley	15 Dragnet Challenge of the Yukon	16 Jack Benny Lights Out Life of Riley Green Hornet
17 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	18 Democratic Convention NO RADIO CLASSICS	19 Democratic Convention NO RADIO CLASSICS	20 Democratic Convention NO RADIO CLASSICS	21 Democratic Convention NO RADIO CLASSICS	22 Black Museum Dragnet	23 Lights Out Burns & Allen Charlie McCarthy Fibber McGee
24 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night	25 Green Hornet Gangbusters	26 Jack Benny Pt. 1 Dragnet	27 The Falcon Sealed Book	28 Jack Benny Pt. 2 The Falcon	29 Six Shooter Lone Ranger	30 Fibber McGee Challenge of the Yukon Burns & Allen Lights Out
31 Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night						

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

JUNE

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, JUNE 4th FUN AND FOOLISHNESS ON THE AIR (Rescheduled from an earlier date)

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 Way 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 practical jokes 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; 9:01)

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 (2-2-43) Jim and Marion Jordan star with Bill Thompson, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men and Billy Mills and the orchestra. Fibber and Molly decide to clean out their hall closet. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (10:24; 12:57; 7:54)

SATURDAY, JUNE 11th COME ON DOWN! AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION SHOWS

STOP THE MUSIC (8-17-54) Bill Cullen hosts this big-time musical game show featuring Jack Haskell, Jill Corey, Dick Hayman, Ray Bloch and the orchestra. Sustaining, CBS. (11:05; 17:30; 15:15; 13:45)

MR. AND MRS. (9-23-46) Ed Cooper emcees this local Chicago game show featuring husband and wife contestants. Sealy Mattress Co., WGN. (10:15; 9:30; 9:30)

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT (5-29-49) Garry Moore hosts the popular "64 dollar question" quiz program with contestants attempting to answer questions worth \$1, \$2, \$4, \$8, \$16, \$32, and the big one, \$64! Eversharp Pens and Pencils, NBC. (12:55; 18:40)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be **JEFFERSON GRAHAM**, author of a big new book, **Come On Down!! The TV Game Show Book**. We'll arrange for members of our studio audience to join with guest celebrity panelists for a *Those Were The Days* TV Trivia Quiz Show, with prizes and everything! So plan on visiting our broadcast this day at the *Museum of Broadcast Communications*, 800 S. Wells Street, just two blocks south of Congress Parkway, in the River City complex. We'll have full details on the air during the weeks before this special event. Don't miss it if you can!



BILL CULLEN

SATURDAY, JUNE 18th

EDDIE CANTOR SHOW (1-17-45) The energetic comedian stars with Harry Von Zell, Nora Martin, Leonard Seuss, Bert Gordon, Billy Gray. Eddie sulks because Bing Crosby won the Critic's Award. Trushay, Ipana, Sal Hepatica, NBC. (9:20; 10:05; 9:40)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (11-15-43) "Hello, Frisco, Hello" starring Alice Faye and Robert Young in a radio version of the 1943 movie. Producer Cecil B. DeMille is host. This is a recording of the *rehearsal* for the broadcast. Lux Soap, CBS. (24:15; 16:15; 16:10)

SUSPENSE (12-9-56) "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" starring Victor Jory with Larry Thor, Jack Krushen, Lou Merrill, Chet Stratton, Roy Glenn. A Confederate spy, about to be hanged by the Union army, contemplates his escape. Sustaining, CBS. (14:23; 14:50)

OUR SPECIAL GUESTS will be **YURI RASOVSKI** and **CAROL ADORJAN**, authors of the new book, *WKID*, original radio scripts for youngsters. During our broadcast, one of their mystery scripts, "A Night On Bear Mountain" will be dramatized.

SATURDAY, JUNE 25th CLANG, CLANG, CLANG, WENT THE TROLLEY

GREEN HORNET (1940s) "Trouble Hits the Trolleys" stars Al Hodge as Britt Reid, the Green Hornet. A series of trolley accidents cause the Hornet to continue his hunt for "the biggest of all game, public enemies who try to destroy our America!" Syndicated, MBC. (15:00; 13:45)

ALDRICH FAMILY (1940s) Ezra Stone stars as Henry Aldrich with Jackie Kelk as Homer Brown. In order to raise money to purchase some war surplus Pilot's Boots, the boys attempt to get a job on the trolley line. House Jamison and Katherine Raht as Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich. Syndicated. (15:20; 10:10)

POPEYE (1936) "The Runaway Trolley" The famed comic strip character comes to life on radio, along with Olive Oil and Wimpy, as Popeye attempts to stop a runaway streetcar! Wheatena, CBS. (13:00)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (11-1-49) Jim and Marian Jordan star as the Wistful Vista Transit Company offers a prize for the best idea to improve service on the trolley lines. Cast includes Bill Thompson, Gale Gordon, Arthur Q. Brian, Dick LeGrand, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (12:20; 12:07; 6:10)

ADVENTURES OF OZZIE AND HARRIET (1-30-49) Ozzie decides to take a job driving the school bus, but first he must pass a bus driver's test. Tommy Bernard and Henry Blair appear as David and Ricky, Janet Waldo is Emmy Lou. International Silver Co., NBC. (14:18; 15:19)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be **ALAN R. LIND**, Author of *Chicago Surface Lines, An Illustrated History* who will be on hand to reminisce about the golden days of streetcars in Chicago.



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THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

JULY

SATURDAY, JULY 2nd COMEDY CAPERS

DUFFY'S TAVERN (1940s) Archie, the Manager of Duffy's Tavern, is absent and in his place we find Jimmy Durante and Ann Sothern who perform a play written by Archie. AFRS rebroadcast. (12:40; 14:20)

MILTON BERLE SHOW (3-2-48) Uncle Milt presents a Salute to Literature with Pert Kelton, Jack Albertson, Mary Shipp, Billy Sands, Frank Gallop, Dick Varney, Ray Bloch and the orchestra. Milton talks about his new book, "Out of My Trunk." Phillip Morris Cigarettes, NBC. (12:15; 8:15; 9:05) **NOTE:** Milton Berle will celebrate his 80th birthday on July 12, 1988.

JUDY CANOVA SHOW (2-28-48) Judy decides to get a new public relations man. Cast features Mel Blanc, Joe Kearns, Alan Reed, Rudy Dandridge, Gale Gordon, the Sportsmen, Charles Dant and the orchestra. Colgate, Halo, NBC. (10:19; 13:24; 4:06)



MILTON BERLE

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (1-17-43) From New York City, where Jack is scheduled to play a duet with Oscar Levant at Carnegie Hall. Oscar joins the gang, including Mary Livingston, Dennis Day, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Don Wilson, and Joe Besser in an "Information Please" sketch. Grape Nuts Flakes, NBC. (11:50; 8:20; 8:20)

THAT'S RICH (1953) Stan Freberg stars in a situation comedy. Rich enters a slogan contest for 12-year olds. Sustaining, CBS. (14:12; 16:00)

SPECIAL ADDED ATTRACTION: The winner of the **Chuck Schaden Sound-Alike** contest will be announced on this program and the winner will be on hand to co-host today's *Those Were The Days* broadcast. Don't miss it if you can!

SATURDAY, JULY 9th

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (4-28-48) Guest Lucille Ball joins Jimmy and regulars, Peggy Lee, Howard Petrie, Roy Bargy and the orchestra. Jimmy takes the girls on a tour of industry to show the attitude of big business towards women! Rexall, NBC. (8:35; 9:00; 10:20)

UNCLE NED'S SQUADRON (11-11-50) Ned Locke stars with Hugh Downes as co-pilot in the Ready Room for this kids' adventure series from Chicago. Studio guests include members of a Cub Scout pack from Morton Grove, Illinois. Sustaining, NBC. (15:40; 14:15)

RAY RAYNER SHOW (5-19-71) Excerpt from the popular television series features host Ray Rayner singing the "Little Orphan Annie" theme song and visiting with guest Chuck Schaden, talking about vintage radio programs for kids. WGN-TV, Chicago. (25:23)

DAISY DISCOVERS AMERICA (4-10-51) Ella Logan and Sheldon Leonard star in a musical story with Lou Bring and the orchestra. An immigrant from Scotland asks a cab driver in New York to drive her to Pittsburg! Syndicated. (8:50; 12:22; 7:42)

PHIL HARRIS - ALICE FAYE SHOW (6-26-49) In this last show of the season, the sponsor has Phil sign an option for the next season of broadcasts. Cast includes Gale Gordon, Elliott Lewis, Walter Tetley, Frank Nelson. Rexall, NBC. (12:00; 17:30)

OUR SPECIAL GUESTS will be **NED LOCKE** and **RAY RAYNER**, making an appearance today at the *Museum of Broadcast Communications* in honor of the exhibit celebrating WGN-TV-Channel 9's 40th anniversary.

SATURDAY, JULY 16th RADIO IN 15 MINUTES

TOM MIX RALSTON STRAIGHT SHOOTERS (4-13-45) Curley Bradley stars as Tom in this isolated episode from the long-running western series. Don Gordon announces, Shredded Ralston, MBS. (15:00)

GUIDING LIGHT (7-15-40) An isolated episode in the long-running daytime drama. P&G Soap, NBC. (13:05)

SPORTS NEWSREEL (11-22-46) Bill Stern broadcasts from Chicago with his guest Mickey Rooney. Colgate, NBC. (15:10)

DICK TRACY (1946) An isolated episode in the "Case of the Broken Window." Sustaining, ABC. (15:20)

CLUB FIFTEEN (1949) Bob Crosby stars with the Andrews Sisters in a quarter-hour of musical variety. Sustaining, CBS. (14:20)

WENDY WARREN AND THE NEWS (1950) Unusual daytime drama finds the main character appearing on a newscast with Douglas Edwards, then moving into her "soapy" life. Isolated episode. Maxwell House Coffee, CBS. (14:00)

JURGEN'S JOURNAL (9-5-48) Walter Winchell with news and commentary about the chances for war in 1948, Tokyo Rose, and the tax cut. Jurgen's Lotion, ABC. (14:10)

STELLA DALLAS (1940s) Isolated episode from the long-running daytime series. Sustaining, CBS. (10:55)

LOUELLA PARSONS (9-26-48) Hollywood gossip with the queen of Tinsel Town columnists. George Raft is guest; Marvin Miller is announcer. Woodbury Soap, ABC. (14:22)

CHESTERFIELD SUPPER CLUB (2-18-48) Perry Como and the Satisfiers with a quarter-hour of musical entertainment. Chesterfield Cigarettes, NBC. (13:40)

TENNESSEE JED (5-26-47) Isolated episode in the kid's adventure series. Tip Top Bakers, ABC. (14:45)

SATURDAY, JULY 23rd

KATE SMITH SHOW (4-4-46) Lt. j.g. Gene Kelly, on leave from the U.S. Navy, is Kate's guest, appearing in a romantic radio sketch. Kate sings "Doctor, Lawyer, Indian Chief" and other songs. Ted Collins, announcer. Sustaining, CBS. (10:10; 15:00)

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (7-1-48) "Penny Serenade" with Francis Robinson, Gerald Mohr, Frank Lovejoy, Ed Begley, Anne Whitfield. Browsing through a stack of phonograph records, a young woman recalls memories of a happy marriage. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (15:30; 13:42)

HARVEST MOON FESTIVAL (11-18-50) Remote from the Chicago Stadium, this is a half-hour broadcast

segment of the sixth annual charitable event sponsored by the Chicago Sun-Times. Columnist Irv Kupicient announces that all proceeds from the event go to veterans hospitals. Dave Garroway, George Jessel, Louis Prima, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, and Harvest Moon Festival vocalist winners Shirley Harvey and Kyle Kimborough. Sustaining, WMAQ, Chicago. (15:00; 14:30)

WILLSON-NESBITT SHOW (8-18-42) Meredith Willson and his orchestra plus storyteller John Nesbitt in a summer replacement show for Fibber McGee and Molly. Willson presents an "America Sings" medley while Nesbitt relates the story of the "Christ of the Andes." Johnson's Wax, NBC. (10:05; 8:35; 10:00)

BOB HOPE SHOW (4-9-46) Broadcasting from the Pasadena Playhouse, it's Hope with Jerry Colonna, Skinnay Ennis, Francis Langford, and Brenda and Cobina. AFRS rebroadcast. (10:50; 7:30; 9:20)

SATURDAY, JULY 30th

CHICAGO THEATRE OF THE AIR (11-8-47) "Rose Marie" by Rudolf Friml and Otto Harbach is presented by Marion Claire with the orchestra under the direction of Henry Weber and Robert Trendler in charge of the chorus. Musical roles are sung by Aniza Kuzak, Morton Boale and George Tozzi. Speaking parts feature Elmira Bessler, Everette Clark, Norman Gottschalk, Maurice Copeland, and Sidney Ellstrom. John Barclay narrates; announcer is Lee Bennett. This was a major Chicago-originated broadcast from studios at WGN. Sustaining, MBS. (31:00; 22:10)

MYSTERY HOUSE (1940s) "Death in the Saddle" is about a cowboy who takes a large bet he can ride a bronco that has brought death to other riders. Syndicated. (12:12; 12:35)

ARBOGAST (11-2-51) Bob Arbogast and his sidekick Pete Robinson in a zany, local program from Chicago, a mixture of original comedy and recorded music. Sustaining, WMAQ. (9:40; 11:40; 9:10)

SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE (12-30-49) "One Way Journey" starring William Powell, Peggy Dow, Steven Dunn, and John Dehner. A touching story of a couple in love; one has a terminal illness, the other awaits execution. Sustaining, NBC. (15:50; 14:30)

FRED ALLEN SHOW (10-26-47) Comedian Jack Haley joins Fred, Portland Hoffa, Minerva Pious, Kenny Delmar, Al Goodman and the orchestra. The Allen's Alley question: "Do you prefer sweet or swing music?" Allen and Haley want their life stories made into a movie. Tenderleaf Tea, Blue Bonnet Margarine, NBC. (14:38; 15:05)



By BOB KOLOSOSKI

One of the fond memories I have about being an adolescent in the 1950's was the great wealth of 30's and 40's movies shown on TV. The new medium had hours of broadcast time to fill and the studios were selling off their backlog of films to the networks to plug the gaps. One studio in particular seemed to have its films on TV especially for us kids. The Hal Roach treasury of short subjects (one and two reel films) were on every afternoon of every day for nearly the entire decade. The Roach studio was unique in that it mainly produced comedy shorts. Its roster of comedy stars was headed by Laurel and Hardy and included Charlie Chase, Harold Lloyd, Thelma Todd and Zasu Pitts and any kid's favorite, the "Our Gang" series.

The "Our Gang" or "Little Rascals" shorts were an after school must for all the kids in my neighborhood. We clustered around the TV anticipating the antics of Spanky, Alfalfa, Buckwheat and/or the other troupes of kids who formed the "gang" over its twenty-year production history.

The first film in the series titled "Our Gang" was a silent produced in 1922 and built around Ernie "Sunshine Sammy" Morrison, a black child actor who had had his own series at the Roach studios. The gang through the twenties (the silent films) included Mickey Daniels. Mickey was a freckled faced kid who spent most of his time trying to impress Mary. Mary Kornman was a pretty, blonde-haired girl flattered by the attention the boys gave her.

Joe Cobb was the heavy-duty kid and very sensitive about everything but his weighty appearance. Curly-haired Jackie Condon started out as the "baby" of the group but soon graduated to the most mischievous member of the gang. Wide-eyed and innocent Farina replaced Ernie Morrison as the black kid in the gang in 1923 and stayed a gang member until 1933. Cute as a button Jean Darling was a platinum blonde sweetheart who became the flirtatious female in the group.

The first "Our Gang" all-talking feature was "Small Talk" released in May, 1929. This ushered in a new era for the gang and a few new faces. The most famous kid to join the gang at this time was Jackie Cooper. He was in the series for only two years and then graduated (via "The Champ" with Wallace Berry) to features and the MGM studio. During the 1930's (the golden era of the "Our Gang" series) dozens of kids came and went but there emerged a nucleus of kids that were the little rascals as far as my gang was concerned. George "Spanky" McFarland was without a doubt the most popular member of the gang. His first gang comedy was "Spanky" released in March 1932 when Spanky was only three years old. He stayed on until 1942 and appeared in virtually every "Our Gang" comedy during that decade. The only "Our Gang" feature was "General Spanky" released in December 1936 starring (who else) Spanky. He was cute, loveable, and nobody's fool and with his pal Scotty



OUR GANG stars appeared in a one-reeler entitled "Nite 'n' Gales" in 1937. Shown are Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer, Darla Hood, George "Spanky" McFarland, Billy "Buckwheat" Thomas, Eugene "Porky" Lee.

(Beckett) he usually took charge of matters. Even the big kids took their cues from him. In other words he was a pint-sized chairman of the board.

As Spanky grew up his constant companion became the perpetually "cowlicked" crooner Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer. As a comedy team they were something of miniature versions of Laurel and Hardy. Alfalfa was usually "in trouble" or "in love" and level headed Spanky would save the day with a plan. They were ably backed up by Szymie Beard the bald headed, derby domed black kid who mugged the camera better than most of the kids. His sometimes relative Billie "Buckwheat" Thomas is today frequently impersonated by comedian Eddie Murphy. Darla Hood was the darling little brunette with whom Alfalfa was constantly falling in love. His rival for

Darla's affection was Butch played by Tommy Bond who along with his faithful companion "Woim" (Sidney Kibrick) terrorized the gang but was always out-smarted by Spanky or Alfalfa. Eugene "Porky" Lee shuffled along with the gang eating anything that was discarded or left unattended.

Two child actors who tried to audition for "Our Gang," but never got past Hal Roach's watchful secretary, were Shirley Temple and Mickey Rooney. Somehow I don't believe they would have fit in, especially with Spanky, Alfalfa, Darla, Buckwheat and Porky forming such a solid group.

That basically, was the gang that we watched and liked the best. This combination of kids began forming about 1934 and held together until 1942. Just as the kids changed so did the creative staff

FILM CLIPS

behind the scenes. Hal Roach originally watched over the silent gang series but pressures from his other series forced him to turn over total control to Robert F. McGowan who was listed as producer and director of nearly one hundred "Our Gang" comedies. He turned over the directorial chores to Gus Meins in the early 1930's and then in 1936 Gordon Douglas took over as director. All three produced an "Our Gang" classic or two (or three) while working for Hal Roach. The series was always in good hands at Roach with Leo McCarey acting as a gag writer on several of the silent films. Academy Award winning director George Stevens strated out as a Hal Roach cameraman and photographed several "Our Gang" comedies. The gang was at home on the Hal Roach lot.

In 1938, Roach surprised everyone by selling the entire "Our Gang" unit to MGM. Roach wanted to concentrate on producing feature films and was slowly dissolving his short subject approach to film-making. The Gang basically stayed the same and Gordon Douglas stayed on as director. Eventually MGM changed directors, brought in some new kids (including Robert "Bobby" Blake as Mickey and digressed from comedy to

morality plays. Apparently Louis B. Mayer couldn't resist passing his vision of American life to the movie-going audience through the "Our Gang" comedies.

The productions at MGM (56 in all) are far inferior to the ones produced at the Roach studios. Roach was a master of comedy timing and most of his "Our Gang" comedies are direct hits. Of the nearly 170 gang comedies he produced, my gang and I had our favorites. The list is too long to print, but the "creme de la creme" boils down to a few. "Hook and Ladder" (1932) followed the gang as they built their own fire engine. "For Pete's Sake" (1934) starred Pete the pup as the hero of the story. "The Kid from Borneo" (1933) has Spanky running up against a wild man from Borneo thinking it's his uncle George. "The First Round-Up" (1934) was the best of the Spanky-Scotty teamings as the gang goes camping in the woods. "Mama's Little Pirate" (1934) has the gang finding a cave full of treasure and the giant who guards the loot. The "Our Gang Follies of 1936" and "Our Gang Follies of 1938" were both mini-musical gems that stand up against the major musicals produced at that time.

Of course the list goes on but unfortunately most of these classic comedies are not shown on Chicago television any longer. It would be great for some station to pick up the series and give the children of the 80's a chance to enjoy and perhaps learn from the "Little Rascals." The rascals didn't have any money but they had imagination and were capable of amusing themselves without computers or video games. It was a time when an empty lot was an all purpose sports field and the perfect backdrop for "cowboys and Indians." Every character in the series seemed to be the "nice kid next door." The gang was a group of wonderful kids who managed to have great adventures and lots of harmless fun. They were loved by the kids of the Roaring 20's, the depression 30's and that warm loving glow still burns bright in the hearts of kids of all ages.

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The Death of F. D. R.

By Todd Nebel



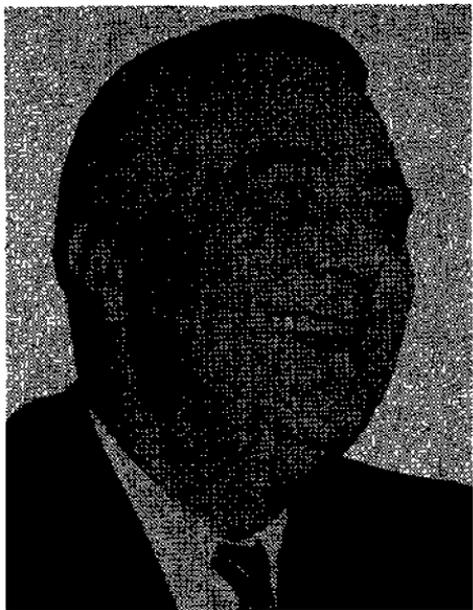
Nineteen forty-five was a watershed year in the twentieth century. On the homefront, Americans were bombarded with news of major political and military occurrences — allied victory in two war theaters, the first use of the atomic bomb, the return to peace, the chartering of the United Nations, the dawn of the nuclear arms race and the most shocking of all, the death of President Roosevelt.

There was little doubt in anyone's mind, except perhaps his own, that President Roosevelt would pursue a fourth term in 1944. The war was far from won and the role of Commander-in Chief could easily be transferred in mid-battle. But following his victory over Dewey in the 1944 elections, his graying and haggard appearance at his fourth inauguration caused shock waves throughout the inaugural audience. And following Roosevelt's meeting with Churchill and Stalin at Yalta in February, 1945, Winston Churchill would later comment that he noticed "the President was ailing and often there was a far away look in his eyes. His jaw sagged and his cigarette holder dangled."

The President's personal physician, Dr. Howard G. Bruenn, later commented in the April 1970 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine* that the President's health had taken a dramatic downturn in the spring of 1944. During a routine check in March, 1944, the President was diagnosed as having hypertension, hypertensive heart disease, cardiac failure

(left ventricular) and acute bronchitis. Complete rest, improved diet and regular doses of digitalis were prescribed by Dr. Bruenn.

What accounted for most of the public concern for the President's health, said Dr. Bruenn, was his loss of weight which gave a lined-haggard look to his face and made his clothes appear too large for his torso. According to Dr. Bruenn, the President lost nearly 20 pounds due to his own determination to trim down as well as medical restrictions on his diet. However, the President's condition faltered further when he ignored his rest and diet regimen.



PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE HOME FRONT

This was especially true following the Yalta Conference when the President resumed his late night schedule and subsequently lost his appetite and appeared very tired. A period of total rest was suggested by Dr. Bruenn and accordingly on March 29th, the President left Washington for Warm Springs, Georgia.

On April 12, 1945, while he sat in a chair going over state papers, and at the same time as the subject of some sketches that were being made by an artist, President Roosevelt suddenly complained of "a terrific headache." He became unconscious a minute or two later. Two hours after that, at 3:35 p.m. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt died as the result of a massive cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Georgia.

The news of the President's death, which came late on a Thursday afternoon, hit the nation with the same impact as those first shocking bulletins about Pearl Harbor. First, there was an instant of utter disbelief. Then a gradual realization once the word was repeated. You might have heard the news in any number of ways; a breathless announcement breaking into a radio program, a telephone call at your home or office from a friend who asked, "Have you heard the news?", a snatch of conversation picked up in a bar, on the street or in a trolley or subway, "Roosevelt just died", "the President is dead!"

Lillie Bernstein, whose four sons were soldiers, said, "I was on the corner of Wabash and Randolph streets in Chicago and I stood and cried my eyes out. I thought the world had come to an end."

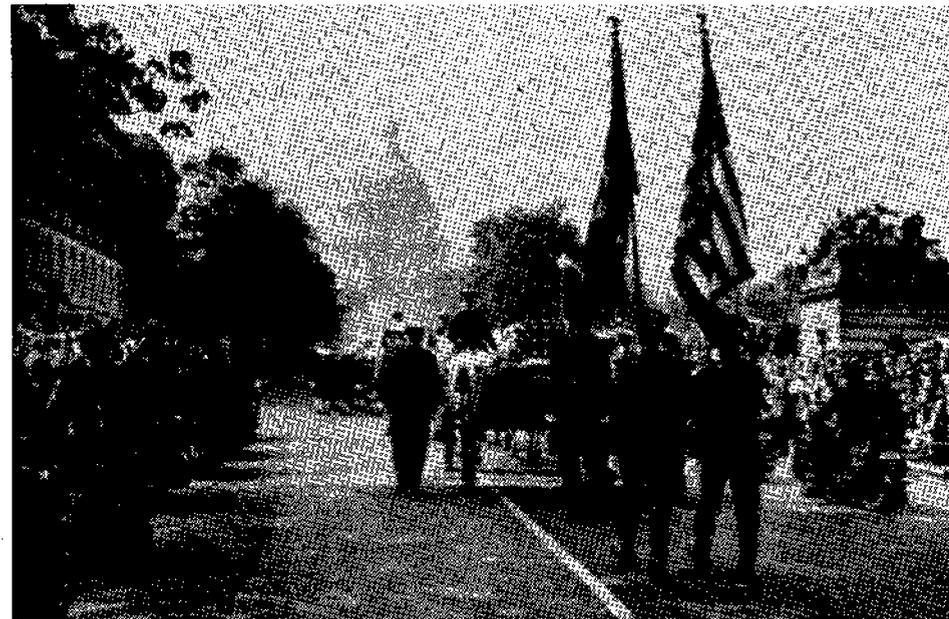
Mary Dandoucris, a student at the University of Wisconsin, said, "I'll never forget the gloom that we felt at campus on his death. When the news came, I think I was in journalism class, and one of the fellows I knew came by and said, 'Did you hear?' and I thought he was joshing me, because I was a strong supporter of Roosevelt. I remember, later, clustering

around the radio and hearing about it. The thing that was predominant was that the churches all stayed open, and there were special memorial services, a lot of quiet music on the radio stations and we all went to church."

Jack Altshul, columnist for the Long Island paper, *Newsday*, remembered: "God, there were people in the office who were professed Republicans and may have come from stockbrokering families who have never forgiven Roosevelt and still, during the war, were blaming him for bringing on the war, and getting us into it. But I can remember going with some of those guys to the bar where we used to hang out after we put out the news edition and the guys were crying."

And Anne Relph of Louisiana said, "That was a terrible, terrible afternoon. I can remember riding my bicycle back to the playground after school, having just heard on the radio that Roosevelt had died and feeling, as a child, that this was going to be the end of the world, because he was the only President I'd ever known. I was almost not aware that there could be another President. He had always been **THE PRESIDENT**, in capital letters."

One of the first persons to learn of the death of the President was Vice-President Harry S. Truman, who spoke with reporters the next morning and acknowledged that he himself was unprepared for the new job. "I felt like the moon, the stars and all the planets had fallen on me!" By April 13th, the news had reached around the world — in Berlin, in Hitler's Bunker, where Russian artillery shells were exploding outside, Prime Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels told the Fuhrer that Roosevelt's death was "an astrological sign; a gift from the heavens and a turning point for Germany." The rest of the world was startled to learn that the Japanese had interrupted radio broadcasts with a message from Premier Suzuki, offering sympathy to the American people. A Japanese radio announcer said, "We introduce a few minutes of special



THE FUNERAL OF PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

music in honor of the passing of the great man."

On April 13th and 14th, America's attention turned to memories of the slow journey north bearing Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and the casket; the blind accordionist, Graham Jackson playing *Going Home* as the cortege left Warm Springs; the townspeople and farmers who stood motionless by the tracks almost the entire distance to Washington, D.C.; the riderless horse up Pennsylvania Avenue; and the sense of grief when Arthur Godfrey underlined for millions of radio listeners the emotion he felt watching the procession.

"Now just coming past the treasury I can see . . . I can see the horses drawing the caisson . . . and behind it . . . behind it is the car bearing the man on whose shoulders now falls . . . now falls the terrific burden and responsibility . . . that were handled so well by the man to whose body we are paying our last respects now . . . God . . . God bless him, President Truman! And then, in a losing effort, to muffle his own sobs, Godfrey said, "We

now return you to the studio."

Finally, there was the ceremony in the East Room of the White House with Britain's Anthony Eden and Russia's Andrei Gromyko in attendance and Roosevelt's empty wheelchair against the wall. Then came the final journey through the Bronx and West Point to Hyde Park and Roosevelt's Sunday morning funeral.

Not since the death of President Lincoln, 80 years almost to the day, had the heart of the nation been so torn than now. Roosevelt had become in his lifetime a towering symbol of strength and hope; able to surmount human frailties and spirit. To millions of men and women who had gone off to war, Roosevelt was the only President they had ever known, which made his death that much more a personal loss. For twelve years he had dominated the life of the country with his leadership and personality. Whether one loved or despised him, the enormous hold he had on the public's imagination as well as the impact of his sudden passing, was keenly felt by all Americans.

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE — My only regret in subscribing is delaying this long. I hope the next issue arrives soon. My dad and I have been listening and continue to spread the word. Several of my YMCA friends are discovering classic radio now. CKLW Radio carried "The Golden Age of Radio" at 7 p.m. EST on Sundays — one hour. Pittsburgh's WTKN Radio is changing back to a music format and the call letters WWWW. WGN tells me that they have no immediate plans to resume offering the old time radio show. WILM News Radio 1450 here in Wilmington carried classic radio for Christmas and airs Campbell Playhouse every Saturday and Sunday. Baltimore's WBAL presented holiday classic radio. — **BRUCE A. CABO**

HOMewood, IL — Here is my renewal for *Nostalgia Digest*. I really enjoy every issue and I save them all. Since I first decided to collect old time sets, it's been a lot of fun hearing those old shows. There is no reason why we can't continue the tradition today. Remember the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre? It was a great show to lose sleep by, but so what! I own two television sets, but I don't use them much. In fact, I don't allow one to rear its ugly head in the living room at all. But several old time radios have pride of place, and boy, they sure look and sound good. I think those antique radios were a great part of our American heritage. Quality was king, and it's apparent in these old Atwater-Kent, Philco, and RCA Radiola sets that played at the flick of a switch. You keep playing that great old time radio and I'll keep listening. By the way, the Jack Benny tryouts were great! — **JOHN L. FRIGO**

CRETE, IL — Just a note to tell you how much pleasure you gave me last Sunday evening by playing two hours of Jack Benny on WBBM! The episode with Amos 'n' Andy was especially hilarious to me. I have only recently discovered your program on WBBM and have enjoyed it immensely. I do regret, however, that, for whatever reason, I have not heard any of the old Amos 'n' Andy radio shows on your program! — **BOB ALEXANDER**

VILLA PARK, IL — My aunt was the lady who owned the Steinmetz Pharmacy at 2944 N. Naragansett back in the 1930's until about 1943 or so. Some time ago, when you had a gentleman from California on your show (who was a 1938 or 1939 graduate of Steinmetz), he referred to "brown-bagging" it in high school and getting a malt at Steinmetz Pharmacy where the lady very generously added extra ice cream. That was my Aunt Laura. She really got a thrill out of it when I wrote her and told her what was said about her on your program. I'm another Steinmetz alumnus, from Mulligan Avenue. — **LORRAINE ENGELHART**

NILES, IL — It just dawned on me that the "birthday fairy" laid two more on me since I last renewed my *Nostalgia Digest*. I don't know about you, but they seem to be zipping by pretty fast. I was talking to a guy from

WE GET LETTERS

my high school alumni association and he HAD to tell me that in three years we'll have our 40th Graduation Anniversary. The funny thing is I don't feel much different from that grammar school kid stretched out on the floor in front of the old Philco, listening to "you know what" in the 40's! Anyway, I wanted to get my renewal in so I don't miss any issues. I go back to Volume 1, Issue 1. Thanks for all the great listening. — **BUD NICHOLS**

BUFFALO GROVE, IL — As a member of the over-fifty crowd, one who grew up in the Golden Days of Radio, I have a strong affinity for old radio dramas, especially for mystery and detective programs of the 1940's. After spending the past several years making video tapes of vintage adventure films, my interests returned to radio, and to your rebroadcasts of classic radio on WBBM and WNIB-WNIZ.

My two favorite drama series were/are *The Shadow* & *I Love A Mystery*. In your extensive collection do you have Jack Packard, Doc Long, and Reggie York meeting "The Woman With the Amputation," and/or Lamont and Margo battling the "Cat That Kills"? These were two spellbinders. In the months to come I hope you might be able to locate some recordings of Peter Quill. The show never made prime time listings, however; the Sunday, Feb. 2, 1941 show on WGN about werewolves was an excellent story written and produced by Blair Walliser. The drama starred Alice Hill, Ken Griffin, and Marvin Mueller.

Terry and the Pirates was never as popular as Jack Armstrong, but there were several good shows aired by WGN at 5:15 daily after Oct. 6, 1941. Do any recordings survive? Personal research for one of my favorite programs, *Latitude Zero*, an adventure series with a science fiction twist has been fruitless. Maybe one of your readers or media historians has some information about this show that was aired in the mid-to-late 1940's. — **BILL KIDOLE**

(ED. NOTE — The *I Love A Mystery* sequence you asked about has not turned up yet, and neither has the *Shadow* adventure, "The Cat That Kills." Peter Quill has been on our most wanted list for over 20 years. Still, no sign. Also, can't locate *Latitude Zero*, a science fiction series about a submarine, but we'll try to serve up a Terry and the Pirates sometime soon.)

MARIETTA, GEORGIA — Almost every night at 9 here in the suburbs north of Atlanta, I tune in as many as three radios to listen to *Radio Classics* — WBBM, 780. With the occasional fading, I madly adjust knobs to try to hold the signal. Luckily, you faded only twice on February 11 during the replay of "A Pail of Air" on X Minus One. Truly enjoyable! But all the programs are good — Lone Ranger, Jack Benny, Fibber, Sgt.

Preston, FBI, Green Hornet. Great! I grew up and gained values during the 30s and 40s, thanks to radio. Would it be possible to get the old afternoon 15-minute segments of Terry and the Pirates, Jack Armstrong, Don Winslow of the Navy and all the adventure shows that got us to eat Wheaties and be patriotic? It was a great time to be a boy.

Anyone who works so hard to hear 50-year old radio shows is nuts. But the technical challenge is forgotten with the words, "Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear . . ." It's part of my hobby. I have loved radio always. My grandmother would tune in to 650 for Grand Ole Opry every Saturday night — in Central Texas — getting Nashville. In high school I would listen to the big bands live from New York late at night. In the Navy, I tuned carefully to get California stations from the Pacific. Interests in shortwave stations grew — with the investment in receivers.

Now, I drink morning coffee with Australia, get early and late evening news from BBC, hear the latest trouble from Israel, South Africa, Japan. But on "those" nights at 9, I tune up my ICOM R71 and a GE Superradio and a 26-year old transistor portable to hear what Chuck is offering us all the way to Atlanta. The GE usually wins out (buy one and try it!) even over a \$1,000 Communications receiver with scads of antenna wire outside. This has been going on since last September. The turkeys who listen to rock or "talk" shows in the Chicago area should have their PLL's locked onto 780 or melt an IC. Your signal to Atlanta remains true — and appreciated. Keep the signal strong and moderation high. I'm listening! (Radio: a 24-hour-a-day hobby . . . and no greens fees!) — **RAY AUTREY**

OLUSTEE, OKLAHOMA — First, I want to say thanks for the Jack Benny "39th Birthday Special" aired Sunday, February 14, 1988, on WBBM. I especially enjoyed the interview you did with Mr. Benny in 1970. Also, I enjoyed the radio shows that were aired.

I'm relatively new to collecting old radio shows. I began in January of 1986; so I've been collecting for only 2 years. I became aware of *Radio Classics* accidentally when I was monitoring the AM radio waves one night in early March of 1986. Among the earliest radio shows I started to tape was from WGN's "Old Time Radio" aired on Sundays at 8:30 p.m. About 2 months later, I first heard *Radio Classics* on the radio. I believe that an episode of "The Green Hornet" was the first episode I taped from *Radio Classics*. From then on up to now I've been taping shows from WBBM as well as other shows from KNX (Los Angeles, CA/1070AM); KOMA (Oklahoma City, OK/1520AM); & KOA (Denver, CO/820AM). Besides old radio shows, I also collect old radio commercials, speeches broadcast in the 1930's & 1940's, radio ads for movies

& news programs from the 1930's & 1940's. My old radio collection is very small. I have a bit over 100 cassette tapes with old radio shows on them. I have approximately 76 different shows and over 300 episodes total. I want my collection to grow gradually over the next years.

One of the reasons why I have written you, besides to thank you for all the excellent radio shows you've aired, is to ask you how long *Radio Classics* has been broadcast on WBBM. I believe you stated that *Radio Classics* had been on for 2 years, but I'm not sure on that. I usually tape the weeknight shows at 8:00 p.m. and then listen to them later on in the night. I also tape some of the shows from the weeked edition of *Radio Classics*. During one weekend last year I was fortunate enough to tape the conversation you had with Carlton E. Morse of "I Love A Mystery" and "One Man's Family" fame. I also taped the first 5 episodes of "ILAM's" "The Thing That Cries In The Night". I got the rest of the concluding episodes from a friend.

Among the shows aired on *Radio Classics* I like are: "The Six Shooter", "Gunsmoke", "Have Gun Will Travel", "Dragnet", "Red Ryder", "The Clock", "Box 13" and especially "The Third Man" (with Orson Welles). I now have 7 of the 24 episodes of "The Third Man" and I hope to get the rest of them this year.

— **LETTER UNSIGNED**

(ED. NOTE — Thanks for listening. *Radio Classics* made its debut on WBBM on December 16, 1985.)

ROSELLE, IL — I just vaguely remember the end of the "golden years" of radio. I was four years old when we got our first TV, so I remember Junior Miss, the Breakfast Club, the Lone Ranger and a few other radio shows we heard while in the car. But now even my twelve-year-old son looks forward to your shows — especially the comedies with Gracie Allen and Fibber McGee. We wish we could hear more of you during the week and and less sports! — **GLENDIA LUSH**

CHICAGO — It's a genuine pleasure to renew my subscription to *Nostalgia Digest*. I'm sure glad that someone out there taped all the good old radio shows. They are great and still as good as heard originally. The only thing that dates them is when they talk about prices! Otherwise, the material is as good as it was then. — **BERNIE NYQUIST (Schurz, class of '49)**

DALLAS, TEXAS — You have made my day! I have searched for years for the Cinnamon Bear. I couldn't believe that it just disappeared. My brother-in-law just happened across your announcement and bought the book and tapes for my sister. Memories! Memories! Now my children can experience the fun also. I have talked about the Cinnamon Bear so much, they are excited about the possibility of hearing it. I would like to order a tape set and the book for myself and a

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JACK BENNY SHOW

Guest — Groucho Marx

Jack and Groucho are playing checkers, as they need the exercise. Groucho wants to double the stakes they are playing for, but Jack thinks 5¢ is enough. Everyone then joins in a melodrama, "The Gilroy Murder Case." Grapenuts, 2/20/44.

JACK BENNY SHOW

Guest — Eddie Cantor

Broadcast from the Hollywood Canteen. The whole gang is working there . . . Mary is dancing, Rochester is trying to sing, and Butterfly is also entertaining. They meet Larry Adler who plays "Begin the Beguine" on his harmonica. Eddie Cantor is also working there, and he and Jack get into an argument over who is the older. Lucky Strike, 2/27/44.

AMOS 'N ANDY SHOW

The Sure-Fire Investment

Fire destroys Kingfish's furniture, and he gets \$400 from his insurance company. Sapphire tells him to put the money in the bank, but the Kingfish decides to invest his money with the Frank Morgan Investment Co. He will double his money overnight with Brazilian Brass Mines. Frank Morgan Guest. Rinso, 12/8/44.

AMOS 'N ANDY SHOW

Mail Order Bride

Andy is a member of a lonely hearts club, and he proposes to a beautiful girl by mail . . . #66 in the catalog. An error has been made and he has proposed to #99, a very homely girl. To get out of the proposal, Andy's lawyer says he must be dead. The Kingfish arranges a fake suicide, and then the fun begins. Rinso, 12/15/44.

5.50 Each
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TAPE NO. 1

JULY

TAPE NO. 2

JACK BENNY SHOW

Guest — Ray Milland
The Lost Weekend Sketch

This is one hilarious Lost Weekend sketch (this version) with Jack and Ray playing twin brothers . . . both alcoholics. Phil Harris is funny as the elder brother who frowns on drinking and wants them to stay away from liquor! Lots of laughs and gags. Lucky Strike, 3/10/46.

JACK BENNY SHOW

Fred Allen & Jack Paar

This is their last show of the season, and Jack decides to go down Jack Benny's Alley and ask the question, "Who is the better comedian . . . Jack or Fred Allen?" Allen appears on the show . . . to louse-up Jack's show. Parr is introduced as the kid that will be Jack's summer replacement. He gets "some-kind-of" advice from Jack and Fred. Lucky Strike, 5/25/47.

AMOS 'N ANDY SHOW

Income Tax Problems

Andy earned only \$250 in 1944, but to impress his new girlfriend he tells her that he earned \$7,000. He signs a tax form with the \$7,000 declared amount, but plans to change it back to \$250 when he gets the form back. However, the tax form is filed and he now owes \$1,200 on his taxes for 1944. Rinso, 3/2/45.

AMOS 'N ANDY SHOW

More Income Tax Problems

Andy is afraid that he will have to go to jail because he owes \$1,200 on his income tax return . . . a mix-up. His attorney, Sharty, tells him to flee the state, and a collection from his lodge gives him enough money "to take a subway ride." Then the Kingfish takes over and Andy's problems . . . well, you know the Kingfish's finagling. Rinso, 3/9/45.

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