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NOSTALGIA DIGEST

AND
RADIO
GUIDE

APRIL — MAY, 1992



FRED ALLEN

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BOOK EIGHTEEN

CHAPTER THREE

APRIL-MAY, 1992

HELLO, OUT THERE IN Radioland!!

This year, as we observe the 22nd Anniversary of our *Those Were The Days* program, our attention is directed to a much more significant milestone:

The 60th Anniversary of the Jack Benny Program!

Jack's first show was broadcast on NBC on Monday, May 2, 1932.

To mark the occasion, we'll rebroadcast that first show on the actual date (plus 60 years!) on our *TWTD* program.

And, we're also calling on all Jack Benny fans to help us build a permanent exhibit to honor him at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in its new home at the Chicago Cultural Center (opening in mid-June).

The exhibit we have proposed is something, we think, that the star himself would especially appreciate.

WE'RE GOING TO BUILD JACK BENNY'S VAULT! And we'll fill it with fun from his radio and TV programs, memories of his fantastic cast of characters, and other Benny broadcast memorabilia.

But we need your help.

If you have appreciated the comedy of Jack Benny, if you have laughed heartily at his radio programs, if you can remember all the pleasure that Jack and his gang have given you, then you'll want to make a contribution to underwrite the design and construction of **Jack Benny's Vault** in the Radio Hall of Fame at the Museum of Broadcast Communications.

We're not looking for any corporate sponsorship. Just as we did with the Fibber McGee and Molly exhibit a few years ago,

we're asking that Jack Benny's *fans* make this a personal tribute to a favorite performer.

So we ask you to send \$5, \$10, \$20 or more to pay tribute to the man who has provided so much good, clean entertainment for so many years.

If you help us honor Jack, we'll add your name to the honor roll of contributors whose names will become a permanent part of **Jack Benny's Vault** exhibit.

If you send a contribution of \$39 or more (guess why we came up with the number 39!) we'll send you a special Commemorative Cassette Tape. This hour-long tape will feature several of Jack's visits to his vault over the years, plus a rare, complete Lucky Strike program from January 7, 1945, containing several Benny firsts: Jack's first on-the-air visit to his vault; the first time he meets the race track tout; and the first time Mel Blanc announced, "Anaheim, Azusa, and Cucamonga!"

So if you're a Jack Benny fan and want to be part of our old time radio tribute to him, we invite you to support this effort to build **Jack Benny's Vault** at the Museum.

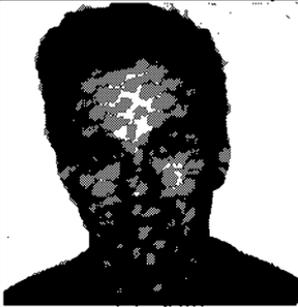
Send your tax deductible contribution to:

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Chicago, IL 60607

And be sure to mark the envelope on your check, "For **Jack Benny's Vault**."

And we'll see you at the opening!





FRED ALLEN: *Stopped By The Music*

BY TODD NEBEL

During the late 1940's a general uneasiness settled over the radio industry. Executives began worrying about the advent of television and its effects on radio, while ratings fell as more people bought television sets and became addicted to the new gadgets in their living rooms. Two developments during this period epitomized what was happening to network radio programming — and both affected the great radio comedian Fred Allen.

For fifteen seasons Fred Allen's Sunday night program on NBC had been one of the ten most highly-rated shows. In fact, during the 1947-1948 season, Allen's show was number one with a 28.7 Hooper rating to better all radio programs that year. But he had two problems.

Fred's first problem was more a public relation man's dream than anything else. One of Allen's key joke targets had been the many NBC vice-presidents. Allen noted that their job, "on finding a molchill on their desk in the morning, was to make

a good-sized mountain before they left that afternoon." Things came to a head, however, when Allen ran overtime on his April 27, 1947, show and his comment about NBC having a vice-president in charge of program ends — who "saved minutes and seconds of program time until he had two weeks worth, at which time he took a vacation" — was cut-off the air. The problem snowballed the following week when NBC cut-off Bob Hope and Red Skelton when each tried to joke about Allen's hassle. Newspaper stories and ads indicated that the ratings of all the affected programs were going up. It was a tempest in a small teapot, but the antagonism between Allen and NBC brass did not help him when later he was in trouble . . . with another problem.

In the late 1940's listeners were beginning to tire of most of the predictable lines and gags of many of the old radio comedy programs. Radio comedy, once the most popular form on the airwaves, was now competing against other types of programs. Drama shows, such as *The Lux Radio Theatre*, often had more listeners than comedy programs did. Quiz programs were becoming a broadcasting fad with winners receiving substantial prize money and lucrative prizes on such popular broadcasts as *Break the Bank (1945)*, *The Bob Hawk Show (1945)*, *Hit the Jackpot (1948)*, *Chance of a Lifetime (1949)* and *Shoot the Moon (1950)*. Ironically, the hosts of the quiz shows were often comedians looking for radio work. Phil Baker, Garry Moore and Eddie Cantor took turns as the master of ceremonies of

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FRED ALLEN

Take It or Leave It, Groucho Marx became the host of You Bet Your Life and Edgar Bergen starred on Do You Trust Your Wife?

In 1948, ABC began Stop the Music, a national music quiz program starring Bert Parks. It placed telephone calls at random across the country. When a person answered, Parks would shout to the orchestra to "Stop the Music!" and the caller who could name the tune being played, won a big prize under the assumption that he or she had been listening to the program.

Therefore, thousands of families refused to leave their homes on Sunday night while the program was on. They were afraid if Stop the Music called they would probably lose a fortune. Many poor people had telephones installed hoping they would be called and eventually find themselves wealthy. Actually the contestants who were to be called during the program that

night were notified earlier that same afternoon. Millions of listeners, with high hopes, sitting around their radios at home were actually wasting their time. They were never going to be called.

ABC put Stop the Music opposite Fred Allen's Sunday night time slot with bad results as a consequence for the comedian. Fred's show dropped from the top ten to number 38 (or an 11.2 Hooper rating) while Stop the Music went to the number two slot within only a few weeks. Now, genuinely concerned about the effect of the competing show on his audience, Allen posted a \$5,000 bond to guarantee a prize to anyone listening to his program who missed an opportunity to answer a Stop the Music call correctly. He thought that if he could insure listeners, many of them might be convinced to listen to his show, knowing that they all the while would be protected financially.

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and Gentlemen! Stay tuned to the Fred Allen Show! For the



BERT PARKS

FRED ALLEN

next thirty minutes you are guaranteed, if you, any listener in the United States, are called on the telephone during the next thirty minutes by any give-away radio program, and because you are listening to Fred Allen, you miss an opportunity to win a refrigerator, a television set, a new car, or any amount of a cash prize, the National Surety Corporation guarantees that Fred Allen will perform his agreement to replace any article of merchandise up to a value of \$5,000 or reimburse you for any amount of prize money you may have lost, up to \$5,000. Notice of any claim under this agreement must be mailed to Mr. Fred Allen, by registered mail, care of the National Broadcasting Company, Radio City, New York, and postmarked no later than midnight, Monday, October 11, 1948. Relax! Enjoy the Fred Allen program! For the next thirty minutes you are protected under the terms of a guarantee bond covering all valid claims up to a total of \$5,000.

By the time of the deadline, there were

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several fake attempts to collect, but no genuine payoffs. Fred fought valiantly during the remainder of the 1948-1949 season, but now he was becoming increasingly bitter about the medium's insatiable appetite to devour talent. "When Stop the Music can give three iceboxes away instead of two and get listeners, its a silly business to be in anyway," he said in December, 1948.

The exhaustive process of broadcasting since 1932, and the incessant demands of creating and writing a weekly radio comedy program had affected his health, for he suffered from high blood pressure. It therefore was ill health and poor ratings which later forced Fred to relinquish his program; his last regular show said farewell with his old friend Jack Benny as guest on June 26, 1949. However, by now television was already becoming the country's new pastime. For example, with 172,000 television sets across the nation in 1948, by 1952 that number had jumped to 17 million! Listening to Jack Benny was no longer a Sunday night ritual and his ratings plummeted between 1948 and 1953. Bob Hope's ratings fell from 23.8 in 1948 to 12.7 in 1951 and by 1953 it was down to 5.4.

For Fred Allen, who made guest appearances on radio and television until his death in 1956, he would never again regain his earlier prominence. He did, however, live long enough to see the demise of network radio and was to later write in his autobiography, his mistakenly held belief that his humor would be forgotten: "Whether he knows it or not, the comedian is on a treadmill to oblivion. When a radio comedian's program is finally finished it slinks down memory lane into the limbo of yesterday's happy hours. All that the comedian has to show for his years of work and aggravation is the echo of forgotten laughter."

But, by 1992, Fred Allen has yet to be forgotten. ■

How The West Was Fun!

— BY CLAIR SCHULZ —



Picture this scene: an audience is watching a western movie. There before them are all the ingredients they have come to expect: the stalwart hero and his faithful horse, the beautiful damsel who needs help, the villain and his henchmen, the Indians and the cavalry, a herd of cattle, and perhaps even a posse thrown in for good measure. But wait! Somebody's missing. A western just isn't a western without that bumbling, muttering character known as the sidekick.

There was never a shortage of humorous sidekicks. Smiley Burnette, Pat Brady, Fuzzy Knight, Andy Clyde, Pancho, Pat Buttram, and Andy Devine rode wide or snide next to the two-fisted idols of our

youth. But there was one confederate who was head and whiskers above all the others: that sputtering, cantankerous curmudgeon, Gabby Hayes.

George Francis Hayes was born on May 7, 1885 when the West was still wild, though he started life as a tenderfoot in Wellsville, New York. He ran away from home before finishing eighth grade and joined a traveling repertory group that took him as far as Chicago. After an apprenticeship in burlesque, he was so successful a headliner in vaudeville that he was tempted to retire at forty-three when he moved to California in 1928. When the Crash woke him up, he began looking around for work and found it in that

HOW THE WEST WAS FUN

novelty called the Talkies.

Hayes began his film career with bit parts in musical comedies like *Rainbow Man* and *Smiling Irish Eyes*. He also appeared in two serials, *The Lost City* and *The Lost Jungle*, and a pair of the better thirties comedies, *\$1,000 a Minute* and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*. But once he tried on western duds as one of the *Riders of the Desert* in 1932 he knew he belonged where the buffalo roam.

For a couple years he played heavies, but in *The Lucky Texan* (1934) he got his first chance to play a comical sidekick and he milked it for all it was worth, hamming it up during the final chase scene that featured horses, a railroad handcar, and a Model T Ford. In another 1934 film, *Blue Steel*, while playing a sheriff he unveiled two of his great scene-stealing techniques: chewing a mouthful of tobacco and scratching that bird's nest of a beard.

The first cowboy hero he appeared with regularly was John Wayne in the Lone Star/Monogram series, although he did not have a continuing role; he might be an editor in one and a rancher in the next. Even in the first few Hopalong Cassidy pictures he had no permanent identity, and his character was even killed in the initial offering. *Hopalong Cassidy* (1935). But once he became Windy Halliday in *Bar 20 Rides Again* he was Hoppy's steady partner for nineteen films until he left the series in 1939.

There were hundreds of people both in and out of show business who complained that they could not find work during the Great Depression. George Hayes was not one of them. In fact, those years comprised his most productive period. He appeared in thirteen films in 1932, fifteen in 1933, 1934, and 1936, twenty-one in 1935, and twenty-six more before the decade closed. Many actors do not log a hundred films during careers that span two generations. For example, Melvyn Douglas was in seventy-five movies from 1931 to 1981,

the year of his death. Gabby Hayes galloped through 105 features in eight years.

From 1939 to 1946 Hayes was under contract to Republic where he was very much at home working for the studio most identified with B oaters. He rode most frequently with Roy Rogers during those years, but he also aided Gene Autry, Bill Elliott, and Buck Jones. Somehow he found time to be seen with Ken Maynard, Tim McCoy, Bob Steele, Don Barry, Allan Lane, Sunset Carson, Bob Livingston, and other good guys of the second rank. The only western actors more popular than Hayes in 1943 were Rogers, Burnette, and William Boyd. The last cowboy star he supported was Randolph Scott, and he stayed with him through his 170th and final picture, *The Cariboo Trail*, which was released in 1950.

Not only did Hayes rub elbows with most of the Hollywood cowboys but he also met just about everybody in the who's who of the West. The leading characters in *Man of Conquest* (1939) were Sam Houston, Andrew Jackson, Jim Bowie, and Davy Crockett. *Young Bill Hickok* and *Jesse James at Bay* were early Rogers-Hayes films. In *Badman's Territory* (1946) he encountered the James Gang, the Dalton Boys, Sam Bass, and Belle Starr, and when they came back in *The Return of the Badmen* two years later they brought the Sundance Kid, the Youngers, and Billy the Kid with them. These horse operas may not have been historically accurate, but, as one reviewer remarked, the all-important business of westerns was "hard riding and fast shooting."

Amid all the gunplay, fights, rustling, and robbing there was still time for comic relief. How did they spell relief in those sagebrush sagas of fifty years ago? G-a-b-b-y. Oh, he was called Breezy, Pop, Hap, Juke, Hardtack, Desprit, Pesky, Grizzly, and even just plain Gabby twice, but no matter what they called him he was always cut from the same shabby bit of cloth.

Some of the humor he provided was



ROY ROGERS AND GABBY HAYES

physical such as pratfalls or ludicrous chases, but more often than not the laughs came as a result of his irascible disposition. Quite frequently it was the antics of his temperamental jackass Hannibal or the temerity of some rascal that would set off that toothless wad of hair. He would toss distinctive curses like "You dad-ratted coyote," "You gol-darned son of a prairie varmint," "You bandy-legged smart aleck," "You dad-burned scalawag," and "Consarn your ding-busted mangy hide" at man and beast alike.

Even when he was agreeing with Cassidy or Rogers with his trademark "Yer durn tootin'" or the tamer "Yessiree bob" it was difficult not to smile at this marble-mouthed man of the mountains. More than a few of the chuckles he generated came simply from his edentate manner of speaking which resulted in quaint expressions such as "Eggsaactly. Tomorrey is Sattiday," "Shorc recminds me o' th' time that loco idjit kerlapsed up in Montanny," and other forms of geriatric baby talk. It was fun just to listen to him stretch the truth; he did it with a twinkle in his eye that rendered him as harmless as Fibber McGee. He was a real character, but in spite of or because of his idiosyncrasies he was a credible one. A *New York Times* critic reviewing the 1947 Bill Elliott film *Wyoming* wrote that "the bewhiskered George (Gabby) Hayes,

as Elliott's partner, is entirely plausible."

Once during a break in his film schedule Hayes decided to let a barber remove that famous beard. He regretted it immediately because he thought his bare face made him look twenty years older. He snuck in the back door of his house and informed his wife they were going to their house in Palm Springs. He never recanted his claim that he didn't leave their desert home until the whiskers grew back.

Hayes did little professional work after his film career ended. William Boyd, who owned the rights to the Hopalong Cassidy movies, edited a number of these features for television in 1949 and 1950 so a new generation could see Hoppy and Gabby together. George had a television series of his own from 1950 to 1953 in which he provided the narration for dramatizations of American history for the younger set. Gabby's face showed up in a number of other places during the fifties, most notably on comic books and cereal premiums.

Thornton Wilder could have been speaking for the King of the Sidekicks when he proclaimed that he had been born old. George Hayes, who plated old grumblers virtually his entire career, did not even reach sixty-five years of age until he was through with movies at mid-century. His wife of forty-five years died in 1957, and Gabby officially retired in 1960. He died February 9, 1969 in Burbank and is buried in Forest Lawn.

The legacy of Gabby Hayes upon the consciousness of Americans is probably greater than most people realize. Visualize a prospector with a mule and the Old Man of the West coming down from the hills. Now picture the coot squinting out from under the turned-up brim of that flea-bitten hat as he sits impatiently on a saddle next to Hoppy, Roy, or Gene. It's the same person, riding out of our reel past into our real one.

Hayes once told an interviewer, "Gabby is a lying, bragging old codger, but everybody loves him."

Yer durn tootin'!

Those Were The Days Radio Players

Chuck Schaden Reporting

On the last Saturday of 1991, we asked our *Those Were The Days* listeners if anyone would be interested in forming a group of amateur radio actors who might enjoy doing broadcast recreations of old radio scripts.

Before we left the air that afternoon, we had a list of almost 90 listeners who said yes, indeed they'd like to have some fun with old radio scripts. And the next week we added another 60 names to the list.

The object of the *Those Were The Days Radio Players* is to share and promote our interest in old time radio; to learn first-hand about acting and sound effects techniques used in broadcasts from the "golden age" of radio; and to go "on tour" with a program about old time radio, including a "live" radio script, performed for various senior citizen organizations, residents of retirement and nursing homes, historical societies, and other non-profit groups in Chicago and suburbs, thereby doing worthwhile volunteer work and having fun doing it.

The *TWTD Radio Players* is open to anyone who wants to participate. No previous experience is required. Members of the group will become actors, directors, sound effects persons, publicity people, etc.

Tom Tirpak of Glenview, Illinois is the volunteer producer and creative director of the *TWTD Radio Players*. In 1988 Tom started the Illini Golden Age of Radio Club at the University of Illinois in Urbana. His group of university students had performed "live" radio scripts for audiences in Central Illinois and had received enthusiastic "reviews."

The first meeting of the *TWTD Radio Players* was held in the Kraft Theatre at the Museum of Broadcast Communications on Saturday morning, January 18th.

We talked about how we might get together regularly to rehearse and perform radio scripts; how we could locate performance and rehearsal sites; and then — without rehearsal — we actually performed excerpts from several old time radio scripts.





Also, with so many people wanting to participate, it was decided to form smaller groups and the membership, then, was divided geographically into four groups.

Subsequently, volunteer "directors" were chosen for each of the smaller groups:

CHICAGO NORTH: Bob Gorecki and Judith Salas, both of Chicago; Bob Isaacson of Oak Park.

CHICAGO SOUTH: Rev. John McCoy of Hometown; Mike Wiersma of Chicago Heights; Sharon Lonski of Chicago.

NORTH SUBURBAN: Wally and Rosemary Cwik of Park Ridge; Janet Hoshaw of Glenview; Lea Wagner of Des Plaines; Judy Fisco of Round Lake Beach.

WEST SUBURBAN: Dr. Pamela Makris and Shirley Consordia, both of Wood Dale; Kate Quan of Schaumburg.

Since January, the groups have been meeting, scripts have been distributed, and plans are being made for performances. All performances, incidentally, will be announced in advance on our *Those Were The Days* program.

A quarterly newsletter will be sent to all members of the *TWTD Players* and the entire membership will try to get together

two or three times a year for special activities.

There are no dues; the group is sponsored by our *Those Were The Days* program.

If you are interested in joining, drop a note to *TWTD Radio Players*, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053. Be sure to include your name, address and telephone number.

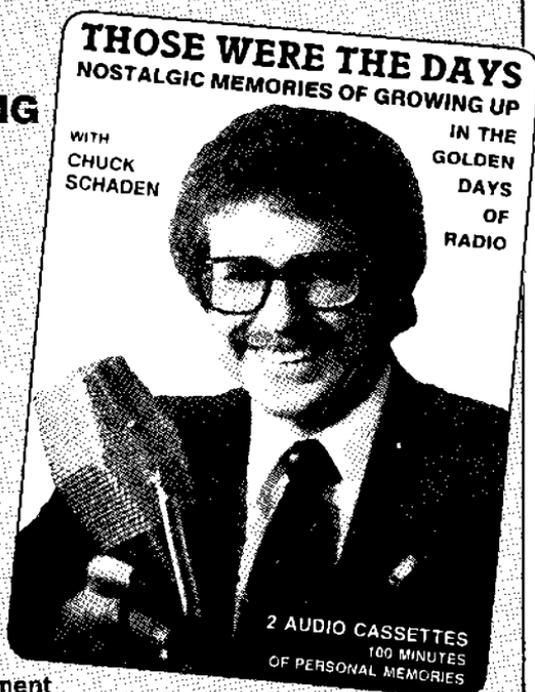


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Recorded before a live audience at the Museum of Broadcast Communications, Chicago, which shares in the proceeds of the sale of these tapes.



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*Ken Alexander
Remembers . . .*

The Andy Griffith Show



I am not, I never have been, and I never will be a fan of television. In the early Fifties, when television was burgeoning and radio as we knew it was dying on the vine — even then I disliked TV. I resented it because of what it had done to radio.

As a child and as a teenager, I have been a devoted fan of radio, the Theater of the Mind. There was *magic* in that boxy console standing on the parlor floor. Wondrous sounds emanated from the speaker behind the brown brocaded grille.

The sound of a human voice could conjure up the image of a fearsome villain, a lovely lady, a bratty kid, an aristocratic snob, a tough hoodlum, a friendly salesman — a more realistic image than ever appeared on a TV tube.

Then there was the music. And there were the sound effects. The voices, the music, the sound effects: properly mixed by a skilled engineer under the hand of a gifted director working with a cast of fine actors, those elements combined to evoke mental pictures of almost incredible beauty, or terror, or comicality.

Now, the picture in *my* mind may not have been the same as the picture in *your* mind. The pirate *I* saw may have had a long black mustache, an eye patch, and shiny black boots. *Your* pirate may have had a full red beard, tattooed arms, and a peg leg. But therein lay the beauty of radio: each listener used his own imagination to create the scenery, the costumes, and the characters.

When television took over, most of the network radio shows went off the air. About all the radio networks had to offer was five minutes of *News on the Hour*; for the remaining 55 minutes of the hour, the local stations would provide us with recorded music punctuated with the patter of a disc jockey. There was nothing wrong with that. Some of the music was enjoyable and some of the disc jockeys had pleasing personalities on the air, but it wasn't radio as we had known it. The magic was gone.

True, some of the stars of radio successfully made the transition to television, but there was no magic there, either. The picture was on the television tube instead of in the mind's eye.

I've long been resigned to the fact that old time radio will never return to the networks and that TV is here to stay. And even though I've forgiven television for having killed radio as we knew it, I very seldom watch any TV.

I sometimes read what the TV critics have to say about the new shows. On Saturdays the *Chicago Sun-Times* prints a column called "What's Happening on the Soaps," which tells, in capsule form, the past week's developments in the plots of the soap operas. I scan the column from time to time just to get an idea of the kind of shows television is offering. And sometimes, while in a barber shop or browsing in an appliance store, I'm confronted by an actual TV set in operation. On the basis of what I've read and seen, I've decided

THE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW

that television is not for me.

I gather that, as a general rule, the characters in the dramatic shows of today are selfish, mean, amoral. Each one is looking out for Number One. They curse at each other. They don't *care* about each other. They simply are not the kind of people whose lives I'm interested in following.

I'll concede that in the days of old time radio the shows had their share of scoundrels among the characters: the detective shows, the adventure series, the westerns were full of miscreants. But they were the *antagonists*; the main characters were defenders of truth, champions of law and order, people to be admired for their moral respectability.

In other words, in the old radio shows there were good guys and bad guys; in the modern-day TV soap operas, as far as I can tell, there are no good guys. (By "good guys" I mean the kind of people you'd want your children to turn out to be.)

Millions of people follow the TV soaps and sitcoms and derive a lot of enjoyment from them, but I am not among those millions. There is one TV series, though, that I do like to watch, in reruns. Call it square, call it corny, call it maudlin if you will. I don't care.

It's "The Andy Griffith Show."

Whether or not you're a fan of the show, you're undoubtedly familiar with the situation and the characters. The setting is the fictitious town of Mayberry, North Carolina. The main characters: Sheriff Andy Taylor, a widower; Andy's young son, Opie; Andy's Aunt Bee; his deputy, Barney Fife; Floyd Lawson, the barber; Goober Pyle, auto mechanic and owner of the service station; and his cousin Gomer, who also works at the station.

Some of the episodes are just plain funny; there's no moral, no message. Others are deeply touching, but even these more serious episodes are laced with humor — humor which is always gentle.

But the remarkable thing about "The Andy Griffith Show," when seen against the backdrop of the modern TV shows, is that here is a series in which the people *care* about each other. Some of the characters goodnaturally tease each other once in a while. Andy and Barney have their differences of opinion. But no one would intentionally cause anyone pain.

Ben Weaver, the owner of the local department store, is a mean old skinflint on the surface, but Andy somehow always finds a way to chip away enough of that surface to reveal a tender heart.

"The Andy Griffith Show" is about the traditional small-town values: friendliness, honesty, love, compassion, trust, loyalty, kindness. If it were a movie, it would be rated G. Some of the characters are not the brightest people in the world, but I surely would prefer their friendship to that of the characters who populate the TV shows of today.

Most fans have their favorite episodes of "The Andy Griffith Show." Many people like the one about Aunt Bee's pickles, which she enters in the competition at the county fair.

In one of my favorite episodes, Opie, while playing with a slingshot in the front yard, accidentally hits a songbird and kills it. He feels terrible when he discovers what he has done. Andy knows that the bird's death was accidental, but he points out to Opie that in a nest in the yard are three baby birds that are now motherless; they will not survive unless Opie takes care of them.

Opie rises to the occasion. He transfers the three babies from their nest to a birdcage and assumes full responsibility for their care and feeding. Opie becomes attached to the birds, and when Andy tells him that it's time for the birds to be turned loose, Opie is reluctant to let them go. But Andy explains that songbirds were meant to be free.

With some sadness, Opie says goodbye to each of the fledglings and releases them, one at a time, hoping that they will be able



ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW — Aunt Bee (Frances Bavier), Opie Taylor (Ronny Howard), Andy Taylor (Andy Griffith).

to fly. Each one flies swiftly up into the trees in the front yard.

Opie picks up the cage, looks at it for a moment, and says to Andy, "The cage looks awful empty, don't it, Paw?"

Andy replies, "Yes, Son, it sure does." Then he looks up at the tree, where twittering birds are flitting from one leafy branch to another. And he adds, "But don't the *trees* seem nice and full!"

I always shed a tear at the end of that show. In fact, quite a few of the episodes have that effect on me.

Two hundred forty-nine episodes of "The Andy Griffith Show" were produced. The series made its debut on October 3, 1960, on the CBS television

network, and ran for eight seasons. According to the Nielsen ratings, "The Andy Griffith Show" was always among the top ten shows. Today, three decades later, it's still being shown and it's still being enjoyed — proof, I would imagine, that there are quite a few of us squares out here.

I wonder whether any of today's TV fare will be shown in reruns 30 years from now.

"The Andy Griffith Show." As Andy himself might say, "You know, it seems to me like they just ain't makin' television shows like that no more."

• And he would be right. And I think that's a shame. ■



Museum of Broadcast Communications

museum pieces

Reported by Margaret Warren

THE COUNTDOWN HAS BEGUN!

We're getting ready to move the Museum from River City to the Chicago Cultural Center! It's a big job and it'll take some time, so the River City doors will close after Sunday, April 26th only to re-open in mid-June at our exciting new location at Washington and Michigan.

SO SPECTACULAR is the planned opening that it will take two days to do it and it will coincide with the Museum's Fifth Anniversary. Mark your calendars now. The partying begins on Friday, June 12 with a major gala, black-tie, \$100 per person bash with Stanley Paul and his orchestra, celebrities, food and drink and a WBBM Newsradio remote from high atop the first and second floors of the Cultural Center in beautiful downtown Chicago. Recover from that and it's time to party again on Saturday, June 13 at 10:00 a.m. when the ribbons get cut, we open to everyone with more guests, fanfare and WGN Radio on the premises doing a remote broadcast. Plan to attend. Phone the Museum for details and reservations.

THE GUY MOST EXCITED about the move has to be our president, Bruce DuMont, who these days is all smiles and at the ready with a list of about 800 ideas and plans he has for our new location. And don't get him started on his plans for **The Radio Hall of Fame** or you'll never get away! He'll tell you that The Radio Hall of Fame will have exhibits, live drama originating from the Museum and that WGN Radio will be the flagship station for the first nationwide broadcast of The Radio Hall of Fame Induction Ceremonies later this fall.

IT WAS THE RADIO Hall of Fame that provided the perfect backdrop for a wonderful reception and screening on

January 8. It was our first event held in the Cultural Center and it acted as a Museum fundraiser and opportunity to preview the major PBS documentary, "Empire of the Air: The Men Who Made Radio." That program ran later in January on Channel 11 and on PBS. On hand that evening were the film's producers Ken Burns and Tom Lewis and Chicago radio legend, Paul Harvey. They introduced the screening of this in-depth look at three of the men — Lee deForest, David Sarnoff and Edwin Howard Armstrong — who developed radio into the major medium it became. We saw them as creative inventors and tough competitors.



PAUL HARVEY (right) spots the photographer interrupting his chat with **TOM LEWIS**, author of **EMPIRE OF THE AIR**.



EMPIRE OF THE AIR producer **KEN BURNS** signs autographs at the **MBC Radio Hall of Fame** preview.

The event brought several hundred Museum members and friends together for a preview look at the Cultural Center and the radio documentary. Watch for more Radio Hall of Fame news as the planning goes forward.

BACK TO OUR GALA OPENING.

We'll no sooner open the Cultural Center than we'll begin a spectacular three-month long exhibition saluting Walt Disney's television years. "The Genius of Disney: The Television Years" will run from June 19 through September 13 with special screenings of Disney television programs, public seminars featuring in-person participation by many of the people who worked with Disney along with programs designed for teachers and workshops for kids.

LATER IN THE FALL as you gear up to cast your vote, we'll take a look at political advertising and communication

with a special exhibition focusing on both current and past political campaigns. The exhibition is in the planning stages now, but it's expected to include candidates, at all levels, from many parts of the nation. There will be seminars with experts to explain the campaign strategies. At the presidential level, if you liked Ike, Adlai, Barry, Lyndon or Jimmy, you'll get to see what worked and didn't work in some of those campaigns too.

NOW IS THE TIME to sign up for membership in the Museum of Broadcast Communications. More and more exciting special events, exhibitions and projects are in the works. Just phone the Museum at (312) 987-1500, ask for Stacey and she'll tell you how a mere \$35 will make you a Museum member and put you on the list to receive advance invitations, free admission to Museum events — and more. ■

Museum of Broadcast Communications
800 S. Wells St., Chicago 60607

**FOR INFORMATION ON MEMBERSHIP OR UPCOMING EVENTS
PHONE (312) 987-1500**



APRIL

Old Time Radio Classics — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY MIDNIGHT to 1:00 A.M. SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| <p>PLEASE NOTE: Due to WBBM's commitment to news and sports, <i>Old Time 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>Old Time Radio Classics</i> will be rescheduled to a later date. All of the programs we present on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are syndicated rebroadcasts. We are not able to obtain advance information about storylines of these shows so that we might include more details in our <i>Radio Guide</i>. However, this easy-to-read calendar lists the programs in the order we will broadcast them. Programs on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. This schedule is subject to change without notice.</p> | | | 1 Lone Ranger Jack Benny | 2 The Shadow Vic and Sade | 3 Life of Riley Lum and Abner | 4 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS |
| 5 Blackhawk Hockey NO RADIO CLASSICS | 6 Lights Out Strange Dr. Weird | 7 Six Shooter Unsolved Mysteries | 8 Duffy's Tavern Sgt. Preston | 9 Scarlet Queen Abbott & Costello | 10 Nick Carter Vic and Sade | 11 To Be Announced |
| 12 To Be Announced | 13 Weird Circle Unsolved Mysteries | 14 Lights Out Chandu the Magician | 15 Life of Riley Easy Aces | 16 Burns & Allen Third Man | 17 The Shadow Jack Benny | 18 To Be Announced |
| 19 To Be Announced | 20 Pursuit Chandu the Magician | 21 Charlie McCarthy Lone Ranger | 22 Fibber McGee The Shadow | 23 Fibber McGee Escape | 24 Fibber McGee Crime Classics | 25 To Be Announced |
| 26 To Be Announced | 27 Sherlock Holmes Abbott & Costello | 28 X Minus One Burns & Allen | 29 Lights Out Chandu the Magician | 30 Gangbusters Can You Imagine That? | | |

MAY

Old Time Radio Classics — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY MIDNIGHT to 1:00 A.M. SATURDAY and SUNDAY 8:00-10:00 P.M.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| <p>PLEASE NOTE: All of the programs we present on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are syndicated rebroadcasts. We are not able to obtain advance information about storylines of these shows so that we might include more details in our <i>Radio Guide</i>. However, this easy-to-read calendar lists the programs in the order we will broadcast them. Programs on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. This schedule is subject to change without notice.</p> | | | | | 1 Sgt. Preston Vic and Sade | 2 Scarlet Queen Charlie McCarthy Hopalong Cassidy Milton Berle |
| 3 <i>Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night</i> | 4 Life of Riley Captain Midnight | 5 Third Man Lights Out | 6 Once Upon a Midnight Charlie McCarthy | 7 The Shadow Tarzan of the Apes | 8 Jack Benny Hermit's Cave | 9 Six Shooter Fibber McGee & Molly Gangbusters Third Man |
| 10 <i>Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night</i> | 11 The Shadow Charlie McCarthy | 12 True Detective Mysteries Jack Benny | 13 Roy Rogers Captain Midnight | 14 Nightbeat Third Man | 15 This Is Your FBI Chandu the Magician | 16 Sherlock Holmes Charlie McCarthy Scarlet Queen Milton Berle |
| 17 <i>Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night</i> | 18 X Minus One Lum and Abner | 19 Life of Riley Tarzan of the Apes | 20 Lone Ranger Jack Benny | 21 Third Man Life of Riley | 22 Bulldog Drummond Charlie McCarthy | 23 Fibber McGee & Molly Third Man Six Shooter Gangbusters |
| 24 / 31 <i>Old Time Radio Nostalgia Night</i> | 25 Jack Benny Nick Carter | 26 Barry Craig, Investigator Third Man | 27 The Shadow Chandu the Magician | 28 Lights Out Jack Benny | 29 Crime Classics Tarzan of the Apes | 30 Charlie McCarthy Sealed Book Milton Berle Hopalong Cassidy |

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. **ALSO NOTE:** A ★ before a listing indicates the vintage broadcast is of special interest during the 50th anniversary of World War II.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4th

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) A highly acclaimed eight-part radio documentary written and narrated by Edward Brown, Frank Gorin and William B. Williams, bringing together the complex events of the World War II years in America. Part 1: Nazis and Martians — 1938-39. *The Depression ... FDR's New Deal ... "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" ... Hollywood's mixed signals on peace and war ... Hitler dreams his dream in Vienna ... Appeasement by London and Paris ... Radio's immediacy and "The War of the Worlds" ... Poland invaded ... America struggles with neutrality ... London's children sent away ... FDR speaks of "America's rendezvous with destiny."* (50:00)

YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR (2-27-56 thru 3-2-56) "The Fathom Five Matter" starring Bob Bailey as America's fabulous free-lance insurance investigator, the man with the action-packed expense

account. Dollar investigates when a cruiser bursts into flame off the coast of Miami. Complete story in five parts. Sustaining. CBS. (15:11; 15:05; 15:08; 15:07; 15:25)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (4-7-42) Jim and Marian Jordan star with Isabel Randolph, Gale Gordon, Bill Thompson, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. When Mrs. Uppington asks the McGees to contribute to the wartime scrap drive, Molly decides it's time to clean out the hall closet. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (9:05; 9:15; 11:00)

★ **TREASURY STAR PARADE** (2-28-42) Third program in the World War II series. Igor Gorin, Judith Anderson and Robert Montgomery. U.S. Treasury Department (14:34)

SATURDAY, APRIL 11th

★ **KRAFT MUSIC HALL** (4-16-42) Bing Crosby welcomes guests Ronald Reagan, Sabu the Elephant Boy, and Spike Jones and his City Slickers. Regulars include Mary Martin, Victor Borge, Ken Carpenter, John Scott Trotter and the orchestra. Bing greets short wave listeners around the world, and Reagan mentions that he will join the U.S. Army Cavalry in three days. Kraft Foods, NBC. (12:00; 18:00; 13:25; 15:25)

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (7-15-48) "Girls Are Like Boats" features Joe Kearns and Lois Corbett in a romantic comedy about a yacht race. Host is James Hilton. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (14:45; 14:22)

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) Part 2: *London Calling — 1940. Changing times and the end of a difficult decade ... Boogie woogie and the Blues ... Main Street USA ... War-time prosperity without the war ... Isolationism ... Dunkirk, Churchill and the fall of France ... Wendell Wilkie ... America First movement ... England's finest hour ... Edward R. Murrow in England ... the Blitz.* (50:00)

★ **G.I. JIVE #895** (1940s) Jill presents music of Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Harry James, Lionel Hampton. AFRS. (14:35)

LET'S PRETEND (1950s) "Beauty and the Beast" is the story told by Uncle Ted and dramatized by the Pretenders. Sustaining. CBS. (13:30; 11:41)

CUSTOM CASSETTE SERVICE

A custom cassette tape recording of any of the old time radio programs broadcast on THOSE WERE THE DAYS — currently or anytime in the past — is available for a recording fee of \$13 per one hour or less.

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

Send your requests to:

HALL CLOSET CUSTOM TAPES

Box 421

Morton Grove, IL 60053

If you have any questions, please call (708) 965-7763

SATURDAY, APRIL 18th — EASTER GREETINGS

LIFE WITH LUIGI (4-8-52) In a letter to his Momma, Luigi tells of his plans for Easter. He's inviting his night school class to dinner. J. Carroll Naish is Luigi, Alan Reed is Pasquale, Hans Conried is Schultz, Mary Shipp is Miss Spaulding, Jody Gilbert is Rosa. Wrigley's Gum, CBS. (12:10; 17:55)

NEW YORK CITY EASTER PARADE (4-12-36) Newsman George Hicks, broadcasting from Fifth Avenue in front of Radio City, interviews several passers-by and observes the Easter parade. NBC-Red. (7:25; 5:50)

KRAFT MUSIC HALL (3-25-48) Al Jolson welcomes guest Clifton Webb and introduces the Kraft Choral Club from Chicago in this Eastertime show. Oscar Levant, Ken Carpenter, Lou Bring and the orchestra. Kraft Foods, NBC. (7:10; 10:20; 11:50)

HOLLYWOOD STAR TIME (4-21-46) "Song of Bernadette" starring Vincent Price, Lee J. Cobb and Vanessa Brown in a radio version of the 1943 film, the

story of the miraculous apparition of the Blessed Virgin to a poor village girl. Frigidare/General Motors, CBS. (28:45)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-10-55) As Jack and Mary Livingstone 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)

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) Part 3: Arsenal of Democracy — 1941. Roosevelt's third term . . . the Four Freedoms . . . "V for Victory" . . . Lend Lease . . . Churchill's "Give us the tools and we will finish the job" . . . Liberty Ships . . . Germany invades Russia . . . Japan looks south . . . Hollywood backs mobilization . . . Lindbergh . . . Peacetime draft . . . FDR appeals to Emperor of Japan for peace . . . Yamamoto's planes head for Pearl Harbor. (50:00)

SATURDAY, APRIL 25th

22nd ANNIVERSARY SHOW — "THANKS FOR LISTENING"

As we complete twenty-two years of *Those Were the Days* broadcasts, we'll express our appreciation with an afternoon of fascinating sounds from and about the good old days of radio:

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) Part 4: The U.S. at War — 1942. The drama of Pearl Harbor . . . the Rose Bowl in North Carolina . . . Six million Americans in uniform . . . Famous enlistments . . . Japanese-Americans are put in camps . . . "Goodbye Mama" . . . Churchill's visit . . . Jimmy Doolittle's raid on Japan . . . "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" . . . America's industrial miracle . . . "Arms for the Love of America." (50:00)

SUNNY MEADOWS PROGRAM (1-18-29) Very early radio broadcast featuring Ray Miller and his orchestra in a program recorded in Chicago. Host is Sunny Meadows. Select-A-Speed Washers, Syndicated. (8:30; 6:30; 6:10)

★ **TREASURY STAR PARADE #4** (1942) Comedy by Ole Olson and Chic Johnson, music by Ella Logan and Carmen Miranda, drama with Lt. Robert Montgomery as a weary factory hand in an "Average American" sketch. U.S. Treasury Department. (14:21)

★ **MOBILGAS NEWS PROGRAM** (4-20-42) Chicago newsman Fahey Flynn reports on the news of the world, two days after Gen. James H. Doolittle and a squadron of American B-25s conducted a "sizable raid" on the Japanese mainland, including Tokyo, Yokohama, Kobe and Nagoya. Mobil Oil Co., WBBM. (14:40)

MAYTAG FROLICS (3-1-29) Very early program featuring the Coon-Sanders Orchestra (Carlton Coon, Joe Sanders) with such tunes as "Harold Teen," "Way

Down in the South," and "Bless You, Sister." Maytag Washers, Syndicated. (9:30; 13:05)

★ **G.I. JIVE #896** (1940s) Jill puts some nickles in the A.E.F. jukebox to hear tunes by Bobby Sherwood, Bing Crosby, Martha Tilton and Count Basie. AFPS. (14:25)

A LEGEND NAMED JOLSON (1971) Newsman-columnist Walter Winchell narrates a musical documentary about the life of the "world's greatest entertainer." The program features clips from various radio broadcasts on which Al Jolson appeared. Commercial recording. (17:40; 13:45)



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1-5 P.M.

MAY

SATURDAY, MAY 2nd

CHARLIE MC CARTHY SHOW (5-3-42) Edgar Bergen welcomes guest Edward Everett Horton who has a complaint about Charlie's pet kangaroo. Regulars include Bud Abbott and Lou Costello, Ray Noble and the orchestra. Chase and Sanborn Coffee, NBC. (6:56; 9:34; 12:40)

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) Part 5 in the 8-part documentary written and narrated by Edward Brown, Frank Gorin and William B. Williams: Give Till It Hurts — 1942. *Radio Charlie . . . Grim news from the Pacific . . . The "long night of barbarism" engulfs Africa, Europe and Russia . . . Blue Stars and Gold Stars . . . Comics, radio and movies get into the war . . . "This is the Army" . . . "Any bonds today?" . . . Ration books, victory gardens, scrap drives . . . The Battle of Midway . . . Africa invaded . . . "Casablanca" . . . Christmas, 1942.* (50:00)

CANADA DRY PROGRAM (5-2-32) Jack Benny's first appearance on his own program features singer Ethel Shutta, announcer Ed Thorgerson, George Olson and his orchestra. Jack does his first show live (of course) with no studio audience. Canada Dry Ginger Ale. NBC-Blue. (29:20)

★ **VIC AND SADE** (5-8-42) Paul Rhymer's characters come to life as Rush and his friends start a scrap drive for the war effort: "The Virginia Avenue Area Sons of Patriotism Salvage Indemnity." Art Van Harvey (Vic), Bernadine Flynn (Sade), Billy Idelson (Rush). Announcer is Ed Roberts. Crisco, NBC. (13:00)

★ **TEXACO STAR THEATRE** (5-3-42) Fred Allen with Portland Hoffa, Kenny Baker, John Brown, Alan Reed, Minerva Pious, announcer Jimmy Wallington, Al Goodman and the orchestra, and guest Oscar Levant. Fred's "March of Trivia" discusses the "stagger plan" for wartime work, and the Texaco Workshop Players present a "One Long Pan" sketch. Texaco, CBS. (15:40; 15:00; 13:00; 13:35)

SATURDAY, MAY 9th

★ **TEXACO STAR THEATRE** (5-10-42) Fred Allen welcomes guest Marlene Dietrich on this show presented on Mother's Day. The March of Trivia talks about sugar rationing; Fred and Portland Hoffa discuss car pooling. Regulars include Kenny Baker, Minerva Pious, Alan Reed, John Brown, Jimmy Wallington, Al Goodman and the orchestra. Marlene sings "See What the Boys in the Back Room will Have" during a

Workshop Players production of a "thundering epic of the frozen north." Texaco, CBS. (16:05; 14:10; 15:30; 13:55)

★ **COMMAND PERFORMANCE #12** (5-4-42) Actress Betty Grable hosts this shortwave broadcast from the United States of America to our fighting men around the world. Guests are Judy Canova, Robert Benchley, Jack Benny, Mary Livingstone, Dennis Day, Phil Harris, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Mary Martin, the Music Maids, and Harry James and the orchestra. U.S. War Department. (9:00; 12:55; 4:25)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (5-12-42) Jim and Marian Jordan as the residents of 79 Wistful Vista. Fibber is sure a foreign spy is following him, taking pictures with a hidden camera. Gale Gordon, Bill Thompson, Isabel Randolph, Frank Nelson, Harlow Wilcox, King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (10:00; 10:50; 9:10)

★ **G.I. JIVE #897** (1940s) Jill spins the platters featuring Benny Goodman, Lena Horne, the King Sisters, Harry James. AFRS. (14:13)

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) Part 6: G.I. JOE — 1943. *"When Johnny Comes Marching Home" . . . Rosie the Riveter . . . Twelve million men in uniform . . . WACS and WAVES . . . Stagedoor Canteens . . . "Guadalcanal Diary" . . . Stalingrad . . . Yamamoto shot down . . . J.F. Kennedy's P.T. 109 . . . "Comin' in on a Wing and a Prayer" . . . the Navy at Salerno . . . "The Story of G.I. Joe" . . . Ernie Pyle and Bill Mauldin . . . General Patton . . . Heroism of the 442nd Infantry — Japanese-Americans.* (50:00)

SATURDAY, MAY 16th

NOTE: Today, May 16, is Perry Como's 80th birthday. The popular entertainer was born in 1912.

SUPPER CLUB (10-9-44) Perry Como welcomes guest Nat King Cole to the fictional night club. Music by the Satisfiers, Lloyd Shaeffer's orchestra. Martin Block announces. AFRS rebroadcast. (14:30)

INNER SANCTUM (7-19-48) "Death Demon" starring Everett Sloan and Anne Seymour. A man is convinced that his dead father is talking to him. Bromo Seltzer, CBS. (15:24; 12:45)

SUPPER CLUB (4-14-48) Perry Como observes Pan American Day and congratulates disc jockey Eddie Hubbard on the second anniversary of his Chicago broadcasts. Chesterfield Cigarettes, NBC. (14:50)



PERRY COMO

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) Part 7: Liberation — 1944. *The beaches at Normandie . . . Hollywood goes on the road . . . Tokyo Rose . . . The Allies Take Rome . . . Victory Gardens go to seed and Scrap Drives falter . . . D-Day rallies . . . Plot against Hitler . . . Truman joins the Democratic ticket . . . Roosevelt wins a fourth term . . . Marines take Guam . . . McArthur returns to the Philippines . . . Paris is liberated . . . Battle of the Bulge.* (50:00)

SUPPER CLUB (3-2-50) Perry Como greets guest Kirk Douglas. Regulars include the Fontaine Sisters, Mitchell Ayers and the orchestra. Perry and Kirk appear in a sketch, a "sequel" to Douglas' film, "Champion." Chesterfield Cigarettes, NBC. (7:00; 7:30; 12:25)

★ **TREASURY STAR PARADE #5** (1942) Olsen and Johnson and Carmen Miranda pay another visit to the program. Lt. Robert Montgomery reads a sonnet, "The Memory of John McGee." U.S. Treasury Dept. (14:27)

BING CROSBY SHOW (4-5-50) Bing is joined by Perry Como and Arthur Godfrey for a program from the Civic Opera House in Chicago before an audience of members of the National Association of Tobacco Distributors. Ken Carpenter, Jud Conlon's Rhythmaires, John Scott Trotter and the orchestra. Chesterfield Cigarettes, CBS. (6:10; 22:55)

SATURDAY, MAY 23rd

★ **GREEN HORNET** (5-23-42) "Invasion Plans for Victory" features Al Hodge as Britt Reid, also known as the Green Hornet, who "hunts the biggest of all game — public enemies who try to destroy our America." Reid and Kato are involved in a wartime mystery. Sponsored by "Uncle Sam," NBC Blue. (16:35; 12:20)

★ **THE HOME FRONT** (1982) The final program in the eight-part series. Part 8: Victory — 1945. *Doodle Bugs and the V-2's strike Britain . . . the Bomb nears completion in the U.S. . . . The push to Berlin . . . Yalta . . . President Roosevelt dies . . . The nation mourns . . . Lord Haw Haw in Germany . . . Hitler dies in his bunker . . . Berlin falls . . . V-E Day . . . Iwo Jima and Okinawa . . . The Atomic Bomb . . . V-J Day . . . The boys come home . . . End of the "long night of barbarism" . . . New Era begins.* (50:00)

HALLS OF IVY (5-21-52) Ronald and Bonita Colman as Dr. and Mrs. Hall of Ivy College. The school's Mummy is missing! Voice of America rebroadcast. (12:00; 12:00)

★ **TEXACO STAR THEATRE** (5-24-42) Fred Allen, Portland Hoffa, Kenny Baker, Al Goodman and the orchestra, and guest Jack Haley. The March of Trivia discusses the New York Dimout. Jack tries to get Fred to go back to Vaudeville with him! The Workshop Players offer a sketch on accidents and lawyers, Texaco CBS. (14:37; 21:17; 13:05; 11:55)

★ **TREASURY STAR PARADE #6** (1942) Once again, guests are Olson and Johnson and Carmen Miranda. Host Robert Montgomery recites a wartime vignette, "Mrs. Murgatroyd's Dime." U.S. Treasury Department. (14:07)

SATURDAY, MAY 30th

STOP THE MUSIC (3-21-48) Bert Parks hosts the premiere broadcast of the musical quiz show with songs by Kay Armen, Dick Brown, and Harry Salter and the orchestra. Sustaining, ABC. (12:20; 15:00; 13:15; 18:15)

FRED ALLEN SHOW (10-24-48) Guest Dale Carnegie joins Fred and Portland Hoffa, Kenny Delmar, Minerva Pious, Peter Donald, Parker Fennelly, the DeMarco Sisters, Al Goodman and the orchestra. Fred makes an offer to listeners who might be called by a quiz show while listening to him. His question for the night is "How do you feel about stopping giveaway radio shows?" He asks Dale Carnegie, author of "How to Win Friends and Influence People," for advice on how to stop worrying. Ford Dealers, NBC. (16:05; 12:25)

NELSON EDDY PROGRAM (4-7-46) Guest Jeanette MacDonald joins Nelson for a stroll down Memory Lane as they reminisce about and sing selections from their popular films. Robert Armbruster and the orchestra. AFRS rebroadcast. (12:50; 17:00)

THE MAN CALLED X (3-10-51) Herbert Marshall stars as Ken Thurston, whose investigation of illegal aliens begins at the Flying Mustang Dude Ranch. Cast features Leon Belasco as Pagan Zeldschmidt, plus Sidney Miller, Bill Johnstone, Lou Merrill. Participating Sponsors, NBC. (13:00; 13:35)

FRED ALLEN SHOW (6-26-49) Guests Henry Morgan and Jack Benny appear on Allen's last show, with Senator Claghorn, Titus Moody, Mrs. Nussbaum, Ajax Cassidy. Ford Dealers, NBC. (15:30; 14:11)

4M
PS

FILM
CLIPS

*Movies
Go To
War
1942-1943*

By BOB KOLOSOSKI



New Year's Eve, December 31, 1941 was a solemn occasion for most of the free world — what was left of it. Japan was scoring a string of victories in the Pacific and a successful invasion of the Aleutian Islands in the Bering Sea off the coast of Alaska. Hitler's troops were within miles of Moscow having overrun a vast area of Russia with lightning speed. The Russian winter was the only force able to slow the advance of the Axis armies. Rommel and his Afrika Korps were firmly entrenched in North Africa and the British were bracing for another offensive masterminded by the Desert Fox. Most of Europe was under the heel of the Nazi "jack" boot and the calm waters of the Pacific were being stirred up by the mighty Japanese Pacific fleet. So when the clock struck twelve midnight on that New Year's Eve, there wasn't much to celebrate and 1942 was a year to fear.

The only hope Americans had was that the Philippine defenders could hold out against the all-out Japanese invasion of that island group. As of yet, there were no victories for the Yanks to celebrate, but there was one bit of pride in a defeat. The fall of Wake Island on December 23rd 1941 was absorbed by Americans with mixed emotions because the small Marine garrison bravely and brilliantly defended the island against overwhelming odds for over two weeks. Less than nine months later, Paramount released WAKE ISLAND with Brian Donlevy in his best film role as the commander of the 385

marines trapped on the small Pacific island. The cast, including William Bendix, Robert Preston, Macdonald Carey and Walter Abel, played their roles with visible dignity making this film a fine tribute to the men who fought and died on the tiny Pacific island.

The fall of Bataan in the Philippines in April, 1942 was a major shock to the American public and Hollywood responded with three films in 1943 depicting the American defeat. Surprisingly, two of the three films were based on the stories of the American women who were trapped at Bataan and not the men. Both films dealt with the heroic army nurses who did their best to help ease the suffering of the G.I.'s wounded in the defense of the Philippines. The better of the two, SO PROUDLY WE HAIL, starred Claudette Colbert, Paulette Goddard, and Veronica Lake as the doomed nurses assigned duty at Bataan peninsula during the dark days of 1942. Over at MGM, CRY HAVOC starred Margaret Sullavan, Ann Sothorn, Joan Blondell and Fay Bainter as a much more glamorized group of army nurses stationed at Bataan. On another sound stage at MGM, Robert Taylor, Lloyd Nolan, and an all-star cast of males did a fine job in the film BATAAN.

Over at Warner Brothers, a remarkable film called AIR FORCE was released to become a big hit with the movie-going audience of 1943. Directed by Howard Hawks and starring John Garfield, Gig Young and John Ridgely, it tells the story



WAKE ISLAND (1943) starring Macdonald Carey, Robert Preston and Brian Donlevy.

of a B-17 bomber that took off from San Francisco on Dec. 6, 1941 and arrived at its destination, Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7. There were heavy doses of propaganda sprinkled throughout the film, but it managed to give its audience something to cheer about during the early days of the war.

In those early days of 1942 the Japanese conquest of the Pacific was rapid and complete. The Japanese high command decided to wipe out the American power in the Pacific with one major battle. The spot was Midway Island and the time was June, 1942. The battle of Midway was a decisive defeat for the Japanese fleet and a much-needed victory for the American people. The events at Midway opened the door for American invasions of Japanese held islands. The first invasion was at the

island of Gaudalcanal in the Solomon Island group in August, 1942.

In 1943, 20th Century Fox released GAUDALCANAL DIARY with Preston Foster, William Bendix, and Lloyd Nolan as Marines of the First Division assigned the task of taking the island away from the Japanese. The film successfully mixed a bit of humor with the horror of war in recreating the events that lead to the U.S.A.'s first invasion of the war.

In contrast to the based-on-true-events filming of GAUDALCANAL DIARY, DESTINATION TOKYO was made as pure fantasy but with such panache that it has been imitated several times. Cary Grant is the skipper of the submarine Copperfin ordered to sneak into Tokyo Bay and gather data necessary for Doolittle to carry out his famous bombing raid of

FILM CLIPS

Tokyo in 1942. The crew is a cross-section of the American fighting forces with John Garfield, Dane Clark, Alan Hale, and John Forsythe squaring their chins as they take on the Japanese fleet in the film's explosive finale.

While Grant and crew were patrolling the waters of the Pacific, John Wayne and the FLYING TIGERS were patrolling the skies over China. Released in 1942, the film gives a good account of the American flying group that flew for the Chinese

against the Japanese before and after America entered the war. The group lead by Colonel Claire Chennault was the first line of defense against the Japanese air force and with only a handful of pilots, managed to shoot holes in the Japanese conquest of China.

The events in the Pacific were paralleled a few thousand miles away in North Africa. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps and the British Eighth Army lead by Lieutenant General Bernard Law Montgomery spent most of 1942 conquering and then losing African real estate. In November, 1942 the Americans landed a force in North Africa and under leader Major General George Patton they linked up with the British troops and chased the Germans to Tunis where they surrendered in May, 1943. The best movie made during the war years about the African campaign was SAHARA. It starred Humphrey Bogart as a tough sergeant in the U.S. Tank Corps and the odd collection of Allied troops he whips into shape to defend a desert waterhole.

Bogart is best remembered for the 1942 release of CASABLANCA which co-starred Ingrid Bergman and Claude Rains. The movie was an instant success because it was playing at the theatres when President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were meeting in Casablanca to discuss war strategy.

The desert war was trivialized in FIVE GRAVES TO CAIRO with Eric Von Stroheim hamming it up as Field Marshal Rommel. It all takes place in a hotel somewhere in Libya and the only action takes place when Rommel orders room service!

While the desert war raged on, the only fighting in Western Europe was being waged by patriotic guerrilla fighters in occupied countries. COMMANDOS STRIKE AT DAWN starred Paul Muni as a Norwegian resistance leader who escapes the Nazis and winds up in England. He is selected to lead a raid on his own occupied village and destroy the German airfield

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BATAAN (1942) starring George Murphy, Lee Bowman, Thomas Mitchell, Robert Taylor, and Lloyd Nolan.

there. The film has a fine supporting cast including Lillian Gish and Alexander Knox and was filmed in Newfoundland to give it an authentic local look. It was one of the first films to focus on the commando or "special forces" units that have become commonplace expressions, but were new to the public in 1942 and 1943.

John Steinbeck's novel *THE MOON IS DOWN* was translated to the screen in 1943 and also dealt with the Norwegian underground. It lacked the punch of "COMMANDOS" but was timely and well received by the public. The final film to deal with Norway's occupation was *THE EDGE OF DARKNESS*. This one starred Errol Flynn and Ann Sheridan and is rather tame until the final reel when all

hell breaks loose and Flynn leads his fellow villagers in revolt against the nasty Nazis.

With all the action in Norway, Hollywood didn't have much time or inclination to focus on the battle of Russia. The Russians had counter-attacked the Germans in January, 1942 and in June, 1943 had begun to turn the tide in their favor. By the time Samuel Goldwyn's *NORTH STAR* was released in late 1943 the Russians had the Axis forces in retreat and would eventually chase the Germans all the way to Berlin. The film takes place in a Russian village and Eric Von Stroheim was again cast as a vile general of the Third Reich. It was unique in 1943 for dealing with the Eastern front.

The Russian war was discussed in

FILM CLIPS

ACTION IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC since the destination of the Allied convoy was a Russian port. The 1943 film was intended as a tribute to the American Merchant Marines and although it was preachy at times, it packed an emotional punch that is still effective. Captain Raymond Massey and first mate Humphrey Bogart lead a first class crew across U-boat infested waters and have to use every trick in the book to reach their objective. The battle against the dreaded U-boats for the Atlantic was as important as any other theatre of operation and another fine film to pay tribute to the men who fought that battle was **CORVETTE K-225**. The corvette was a mid-sized destroyer that the Canadian navy used to escort convoys. Randolph Scott played the captain of a corvette that was assigned dangerous convoy duty. Many of the battle



GUADACANAL DIARY (1943) with Richard Jaeckel and William Bendix.

scenes were actually filmed in combat on the Atlantic.

The war was being fought at almost every corner of the globe and in the U.S. the war against spies or fifth columnists continued. Alfred Hitchcock was an old pro at making spy movies before the war and his one espionage movie during the war was **SABOTEUR**. Released in 1942 and not one of Hitchcock's stronger films it still wowed the audience with the climax at the Statue of Liberty. Miscast Robert Cummings was the hero who must clear himself of murder and sabotage charges by finding the real German agents. As serious as **SABOTEUR** took itself, **ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT** was just the opposite and was played strictly for laughs. Bogart played a New York gambler that stumbled across a gang of German spies whose number killer is Peter Lorre. A little "sleeper" produced at MGM was **JOE SMITH, AMERICAN** and starred Robert Young as an aircraft worker who was kidnapped by enemy agents trying to learn the secret of a new bombsight. He managed to triumph over the evil that invaded his home.

By the end of 1943 the Allies were close to triumph over the evil that had invaded the world. The Germans were beaten in North Africa and American and British troops were fighting in Sicily and Italy. The Russian winter campaign had begun in November of 1943 and was taking its toll on a weary German army. General Stillwell was fighting a successful campaign in Burma and in the Pacific the U.S. navy ruled. When New Year's Eve, 1943 rolled around the free world was a little larger and the forces of darkness that had blanketed the world were being ripped to shreds. Two hard years of defeat and suffering were over, but the war was far from over. Americans had more sacrifices ahead and Hollywood had many more tributes to make. For America and her allies their finest hour was yet to come. ■

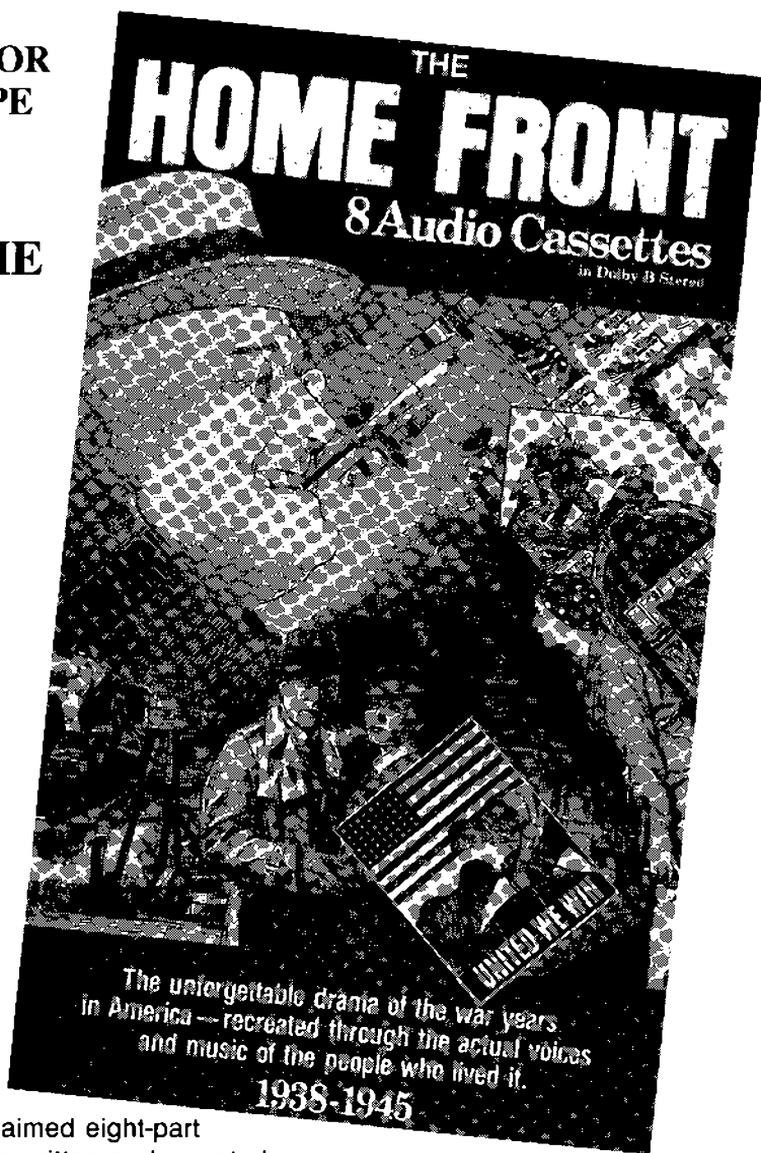
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NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

Big Band Releases on Compact Disc

BY KARL PEARSON

Over the past few months there have been dozens of great new big band and jazz releases. In this column we'll take a look at some of those releases.

One of the latest trends in the record industry is the boxed set or multiple-CD set package. The compact disc format is perfect for such an approach, since the playing time of a CD is nearly twice as long as that of a Long-Playing record (an

average LP is 40 minutes long, while a CD can contain as much as 77 minutes worth of sound). With such a format it is now possible to present an artists' entire recorded output or at least a major overview in a multiple-CD set. Popular vocalists, rock bands, vintage blues singers, country artists and big bands are being given this multiple-disc treatment. Many of these sets include lavishly illustrated booklets, informative liner notes and discographical information.

Several Swing Era issues in this format have appeared on the market over the past few months. The most massive Big Band reissue yet available to date is the 13-CD set titled "The Complete Glenn Miller: 1938-1942" (Bluebird). This hefty boxed set contains the Miller band's issued output, with the final volume containing 20 alternate takes. This compilation was originally issued in the LP format during the late 1970's, on eight double album sets released over a five-year period. The CD issue is not a mere duplication of the LP as these CD transfers are wonderful improvements over their original LP counterparts. In order to make all of the 287 tracks fit onto sixteen LP's the RCA engineers were forced to squeeze eight or nine selections onto one LP side, created a loss of "highs" or the upper end of the audio spectrum. With the CD format there is no need to compress selections in such a manner, and each of these CD's contains 20 to 23 tracks. The 141-page booklet includes Mort Goode's original LP liner notes which were based primarily on interviews with original Miller sidemen. The only fault which I have with the

booklet is with the photo selection, as some of the photos have little or no relation to the subject material! Although this set carries a rather weighty price tag (\$125 to \$150 at various record stores), it is highly recommended for those who really enjoy Miller music.

One big band release which is slightly more affordable (around \$35) is "Benny Goodman: The Birth of Swing" (Bluebird). This is a well-produced 71-track set containing 3-CD's worth of Goodman's Victor big band output. The set begins with Goodman's first Victor session of April 4, 1935 and ends with the November 5, 1936 session which featured a young Ella Fitzgerald. The album features many of the classic Fletcher Henderson arrangements (such as "King Porter Stomp") and performances by Jack Teagarden, Jess Stacy, Ziggy Elman, Bunny Berigan and Gene Krupa. Vocalists Helen Ward, Joe Harris and Buddy Clark are also heard. Unlike the Miller set, this is only a partial collection of recordings. The small group sides are being released separately while there's more big band material to follow. However, like the Miller CD reissue these items also originally appeared on LP in the late 1970's. Since the technology of sound restoration has improved greatly over the past fifteen years, producer Orrin Keepnews insisted on obtaining new transfers from the original sources. In most cases the results have been astonishing, with a new degree of clarity and brilliance. In a few cases the results are disappointing. Sloppy editing (a missing opening half-note on "Stompin' At The Savoy" is one example) and an occasional technical flaw are noticeable: these instances are rare. On a brighter note several new alternate takes surfaced during a search of the RCA vaults; they are included here for the first time. Also included are informative liner notes by big band authority George Simon and tenor saxophonist/researcher Loren Schoenberg, a former Goodman assistant.

This is another highly recommended



BENNY GOODMAN

purchase.

Another great package worth mentioning is "Billie Holiday: The Legacy" (Columbia/Legacy). This 3-CD 70-track set reviews Billie's career for Columbia records and spans the years 1933 to 1958. Accompanying Billie on many of the sides are such Swing Era greats as Artie Shaw, Buster Bailey, Buck Clayton, Teddy Wilson, Bunny Berigan, Lester Young, Roy Eldridge, Charlie Shavers and Johnny Hodges. The set consists primarily of a number of Billie's small group recordings, with several newly-discovered alternate takes thrown in for good measure. Also featured are several radio performances, including Billie singing with Count Basie's big band and a recently discovered appearance on Benny Goodman's "Camel Caravan" in 1939. A 1934 movie soundtrack recording of Billie backed by Duke Ellington's orchestra is also featured.

Just a few months ago an exciting new series of jazz reissues were announced. The "Decca Jazz" series, released by GRP records, consists primarily of jazz material as drawn from the Decca and Brunswick archives. This series, also



NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

produced by Orrin Keepnews (who must be a very busy man these days) currently includes releases by Louis Armstrong, Woody Herman and Bing Crosby. The Woody Herman CD features the pre-war "Band That Plays The Blues" while the Bing Crosby release features many of Crosby's jazz-oriented vocals accompanied by artists such as Joe Sullivan and Eddie Condon. The Louis Armstrong CD features the 1935 Armstrong big band. These releases will undoubtedly be welcomed by collectors, for much of the Decca output was neglected for much of the microgroove era. Some of these selections were never even available on LP at all! All of the selections are beautifully remastered in brilliant sound, with an occasional alternate take or unissued performance thrown in for good measure. This series promises to be one of the most exciting new items on the big band/jazz scene. Releases by Count Basie (featuring the Basie band's entire Decca output on 3 CD's) and Charlie Barnet are scheduled to appear soon, and there are promises of much more to come.

Over the past few years a number of long-play albums have been re-released in CD form; in most cases these CD reissues are superior to their original LP counterparts. Many of these CD reissues include "bonus tracks" or additional selections that did not appear on the original LP issues. One example of an LP-to-CD "upgrade" is the Count Basie CD release "Basie In Sweden" (Roulette). The original 1962 Roulette LP release was 37 minutes in length. Four bonus tracks have been added to the current CD version for a revised playing time of 58 minutes. An added plus of such CD upgrades is that today's audio technology can extract more from old studio master tapes than was previously possible. With a greater range of fidelity and longer playing time, the compact disc versions have more to offer. ■

WE GET LETTERS

FREEMONT, IL — I can't often listen to the midnight broadcasts and get frustrated because I can't get the Sunday afternoon program. I ask myself why I bother to subscribe to the *Nostalgia Digest*, then you run an article like the Bergen & McCarthy biography (in the December-January issue) which was worth a year's subscription by itself. So here is my renewal for another two years. Keep up the good work and "thanks for the memories."
— H. K. HINKLEY

CAROL STREAM, IL — I'm writing to tell you how much I love your World War II programming. I'm only 22 years old and I think it's great to hear the war as my grandmother heard it (my grandfather served in Europe, 1942-45). It is really something the way the American people pulled together during those four years. I'm also writing to tell you about an early wartime radio broadcast that would fit perfectly with your WW II format. It is a program I heard several years ago called Murder Clinic originally aired approximately March 22, 1942. In the middle of the broadcast an announcer breaks in and announces instructions for a blackout over New York City. A siren goes off and then he says that the station will leave the air. It is very interesting and demonstrates the panic in America at that time. Keep up the great programming.

— HENRY TCHOP

(ED. NOTE — We're not familiar with that program, but we'll try to find a copy. Can anyone help?)

MOUNT PROSPECT, IL — This is a quick note to tell you how much I enjoyed your December 7 Pearl Harbor Day broadcast on WNIB. I especially liked the news and news analysis broadcasts during the early part of the show. I am too young to have heard the original broadcasts; however, my recent experience listening to the CNN during the Gulf War gave me a sense of the emotion the original listeners must have felt as they heard WW II unfolding for America. I think yours was the best of the Pearl Harbor Day special broadcasts. I have been listening since the early 1970s. Now my 9-year old son is getting a history lesson by hearing the WW II broadcasts each Saturday. Keep up the good work!
— LEONARD A. BUSS

OAK PARK, IL — Thank you for your *Those Were The Days* show on Pearl Harbor and the American Declaration of war. I had always heard from my parents how much the radio coverage of the war meant to them, particularly the speeches of Roosevelt and Churchill, and Edward R. Murrow's reports. Your program helped me (born in 1947) understand better what they meant. I appreciated especially the way you played everything in its entirety, for example the rather time-consuming and confused account of President Roosevelt entry into the House of Representatives. I assume that this was

due at least in part to the fact that no one would say that he could not walk very well.

I'll close this by telling you a radio story on my family. (I checked this with my mother because I was hazy on the details.) Since my parents were enemy aliens, they were not allowed to have a short-wave radio, and so they took their radio to a repair shop to have the short-wave part disabled. The FBI came to check on them, and turned on the short-wave. To my parent's horror, it came through loud and clear. But then it turned out that it was only a regular commercial radio station, so they were in the clear.

I often listen to your show on Saturday afternoons, and look forward to more "news programming." I always feel I learn some history from your programs, because by playing everything in its entirety you keep the details that really bring the past to life.

— MICHAEL C. ALEXANDER, Associate Professor,
Department of Classics,
University of Illinois at Chicago

HINES, IL — Your late show is really great! After a day's work I look forward to your late show in a very quiet, relaxing atmosphere. Thanks for being there!

— SUE DONOHUE

MOUNTAIN HOME, ARKANSAS — Keep up the good work for preserving radio history the way it was! I can still hear you at night except when some Spanish stations crowd you out of my receiving area. I enjoy your magazine immensely, in particular the articles by Dan McGuire as they so clearly describe Chicago as I knew and loved it.
— SALLY ANN PETERS

GREENDALE, WISCONSIN — The *Nostalgia Digest* is really worth my while — great articles and memorable pictures. I had the opportunity to attend the annual Christmas party of the Waukesha County Philatelic Society where a ventriloquist performed. I showed him the December-January *Digest* with the story of Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. You can be sure he was quite interested in it. Please send me another copy of that issue; I will reimburse you for the cost. I always enjoy your show on Saturday. During my workday, I listen to the great music on the station as I enjoy the great classics in music as well.

— DENNIS A. CHASSER

CRESTWOOD, IL — I have listened to your Saturday afternoon broadcasts for about twenty years and enjoy all of them. Unfortunately we will be retiring to Arizona about July 1st. I surely will miss your programs, but I will look forward to receiving each issue of the *Digest*. Thanks for making your weekly visits into my home a trip into the past which was such a happy time in my childhood. Keep up the good work and let's hope that

you can keep bringing nostalgia into everyone's home for another twenty years.
— RICHARD BENZ

(ED. NOTE — Best wishes to you on your retirement, and thanks for listening.)

DECATUR, IL — Thanks for all the great radio shows you've played on *Radio Classics* in the past year, especially the holiday shows. I also enjoy the rare shows like *Unsolved Mysteries* and *Can You Imagine That*. I think I found the date for the Abbott and Costello Christmas show you played. In the book, *Tune In Yesterday*, the run of the show is given as 1942-1949/50, with a regular Thursday night slot except for 1947-48. In the show, Bud tells Lou that "Christmas isn't until next Monday." The only year in that period that had a Monday Christmas was 1944, and the previous Thursday would have been the 21st. I used a 200 year calendar to find this date. It comes in handy dating shows.
— KEN ROBINSON

(ED. NOTE — Thanks for being a Time Detective! John Dunning's book *Tune In Yesterday* has been an invaluable aid for listeners to the good old shows. The bad news, of course, is that his book has been out of print for some time. The good news, however, is that he is working on an update, a revised edition, due out in a year or two. If anyone has any corrections or additions from the original edition, drop John Dunning a note at Box 18514, Denver, CO 80218. And we'll keep tuned in to his progress so we can let you know when the new edition will be ready.)

CALUMET CITY, IL — I started listening to your old time radio stories on WBBM at midnight in June, '91. My friend got me interested when he let me borrow an episode of the *Green Hornet*. First, I would like to say that I enjoy all the stories and especially the background information. I do have one complaint: I would like to hear more *Green Hornet* stories. I understand that it is hard to get equal time for all the stories, but I don't think having any episodes in the last six months is fair. I think by replacing some of the Jack Benny or Burns and Allen (which I think are played the most) with some stories like the *Green Hornet* or *Flash Gordon* you could get other audiences who enjoy action more than comedy. I still like Benny and Burns and Allen, but playing them too much (example: Jack Benny was played 25 times in the last eight months) might be a turnoff to those who love a variety.

— DAN LEIB, 14

PALOS HEIGHTS, IL — I can't begin to tell you or express my gratitude, a feeling of joy and appreciation for *Old Time Radio Classics*. I look forward to each program with anticipation. It's a time to relax, to enjoy real prime talent, clean subject matter and a time to re-live happier days. I catch all the presentations: Saturday, Sunday and my favorite time from midnight to 1:00 a.m.
— MRS. THELMA WILCZAK

WE GET LETTERS

ORLEANS, ONTARIO, CANADA — Many continued thanks for the *Nostalgia Digest* that I receive every two months. I find the stories and features very interesting. I did not grow up during the height of the "Golden Age" of radio and, hence, missed these shows the first time around. Even at the tail end of the radio shows as they were, I spent the first years of my life in Germany.

It's funny what spurs the interests sometimes. When I was 14 years old, I was going through the record bins of our local Sears store, when I came upon a record entitled, "Themes Like Old Times (90 of the most famous original radio themes)." Well, this looked like an interesting item for sure. At that time, the only radio program that I was avidly listening to was "The Adventures of Chickenman," a WCFL Chicago-based tongue-in-cheek comedy show on WKBW from Buffalo, N.Y.

When I found out where this show was being produced, I thought I'd do a little "DX'ing" and try out this far off station. It was on WCFL, years later, that I first heard your program. I was just tuning in at the time when your broadcast was playing one of the themes that I'd been listening to on this record I'd had now for a few years. But it didn't stop there. The broadcast continued to play the rest of the show. I dropped most of my regular activities and became a regular listener of the program, and a subscriber to *Nostalgia Digest*.

Years have gone by and you changed stations and time slots a few times. Here in the Ottawa Region, it is very difficult to receive WBBM at 1:00 in the morning (different time zone), but to no avail.

However, the magazine keeps me "plugged in," and I repeatedly listen to the cassettes that I have purchased by mail from you over the years. Again, thanks for everything you have done in keeping radio "alive."
— JÜRGEN KAISERLING

(ED. NOTE — Thanks very much for writing and for your subscription to the *Digest*. We're glad you found us. And if you ever find your way to Chicago, please let us know. We'd be pleased to say "thanks" in person.)

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN — May I go back a little way to late August to tell you how much I appreciated the thoughtful sentiments you expressed about how you and your wife met, where you went on your first date, etc. Congratulations on your 35 years together! I also want to tell you it was very nice to get to know the Gildersleeves a little better. Each week (in August) I got into it a little more!
— JUDY KOWALSKI

TOWER LAKES, IL — I want to thank you for reintroducing the greatest entertainment we ever had. I am really indebted to you, Chuck, because many years ago, on your Saturday show, I heard Jack Benny for the first time. It started a hobby for me that I will never outgrow. I can listen to the same Benny shows



VIRGINIA PAYNE starred on radio as **MA PERKINS**

over and over again. It amazes me when I think about the work that went into those shows. The writing, the acting, and at that time they thought they were only doing it for that spot in time. They never would have dreamed that those shows would be listened to fifty years later.

— TIM REHBEIN

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN — Enclosed please find my check to renew the gift subscription for Bud Hase for one year. I thought you might like to know something about my brother who is such a fan of your magazine. Bud is 55 years old and has Down's Syndrome. He has been hospitalized since early October and your publication is one of the few bright spots in his life these days. He so loves his "old radio days" that even though he is ill he continues to quiz family and hospital staff on all of the old radio programs he so vividly remembers. And he does know them all — from Jack Benny to The Shadow to Fibber McGee and Molly and the original soap operas. Ma Perkins is a particular favorite because our mother was a schoolmate of Virginia Payne.

Bud doesn't "read" in the conventional sense, but that doesn't stop him from pouring over your magazine from cover to cover. He enjoys the pictures and recognizes some of the words. My mother reads the articles to him.

On behalf of Bud and our family I would like to thank you for publishing the *Nostalgia Digest*. Bud has constantly requested that I find him books on radio (with pictures) and you know what a limited supply there are. Your magazine was a godsend!

— CAROL R. HASE

(ED. NOTE — Thank you for such a special letter. Please be sure to read the following sentence to Bud: "The photo of Virginia Payne on this page is printed especially for Bud Hase, a real fan of old time radio.")

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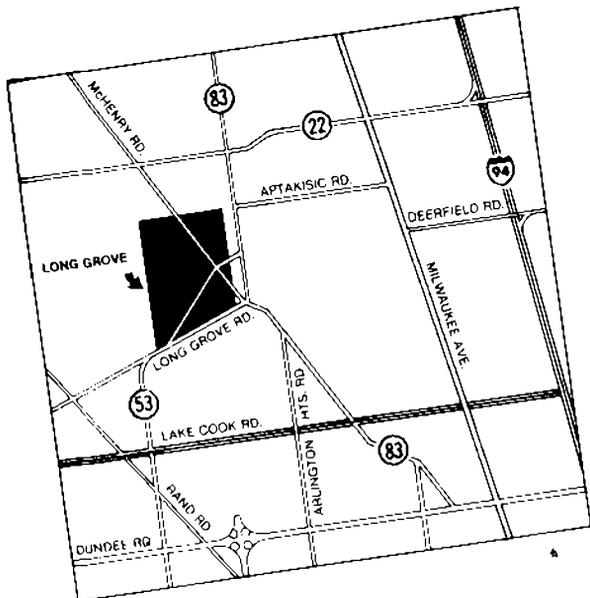
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**Those Were the Days
Radio Players**

are gathering these days to read scripts in preparation for performances before various groups in the Chicagoland area. Chuck Schaden, left, and Tom Tirpak conducted the first meeting of the new group. Page 8

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