

NOSTALGIA DIGEST ^{AND} RADIO GUIDE



MIRACLE ON 34th STREET
50th ANNIVERSARY

And Here's the Cinnamon Bear!

Searching for the Silver Star since 1937!

The exciting adventures of Judy and Jimmy Barton as they search for the silver star for the top of their Christmas tree.

They meet Paddy O'Cinnamon, the Cinnamon Bear, who tells them that the star has been stolen by the Crazy Quilt Dragon, and has escaped with it to Maybe Land. If the kids are ever to see the silver star again, they must go after the dragon.

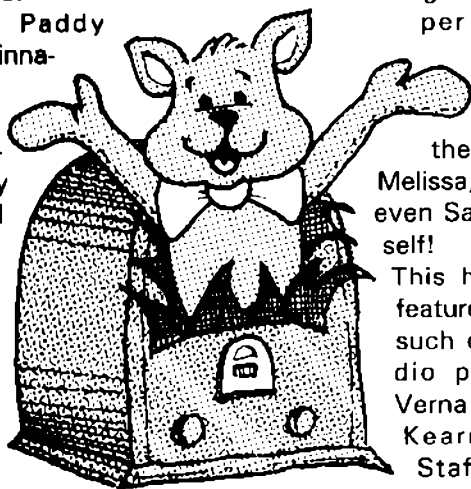
The Cinnamon Bear teaches them to "de-grow" and they shrink so they can go through a crack in the wall to the world of make-believe. The quest takes them through the land

of ink-blotter soldiers, across the Root Beer Ocean, and into confrontations with such characters as the

Wintergreen Witch, Snapper Snick the Crocodile, Captain Tin Top, Fe Fo the Giant, Queen Melissa, Jack Frost and even Santa Claus himself!

This holiday classic features the talents of such outstanding radio performers as Verna Felton, Joseph Kearns, Hanley Stafford, Howard McNear, Elvia

Allman, Elliott Lewis, Lou Merrill, Frank Nelson, Cy Kendall, Gale Gordon, Martha Wentworth, Bud Heistand, and Lindsay McCarrie.



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CHUCK SCHADEN'S NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

BOOK TWENTY-FOUR

CHAPTER ONE

DECEMBER 1997/JANUARY 1998

Hello, Out There in Radioland!

So you enjoy old time radio.

You enjoy listening to the great old programs. You enjoy talking about them, taping them, collecting them.

How do you feel about *appearing* in some of them?

You can, you know, if you become a member of our *Those Were The Days Radio Players*.

The *Those Were The Days Radio Players* is a group of more than one hundred fans of the old time shows who began getting together almost six years ago for the express purpose of reading scripts of the vintage shows and performing them wherever and whenever possible.

Actually, our *TWTD Radio Players* is made up of seven groups, geographically located throughout metropolitan Chicagoland, who read, rehearse and perform scripts for senior citizen clubs, schools, libraries, civic organizations, etc. Performances are also scheduled for the second Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. in the Radio Hall of Fame studio in the Museum of Broadcast Communications at the Chicago Cultural Center.

We have a **Chicago South** group led by John McCoy; a **Chicago North** group led by Anita Miller; a group in **Norridge** under the leadership of Pat Apida; a **Lake County** unit led by Judy Fusco; a **West-Central** group led by Bob Isaacson; a **West Suburban** unit led by Jed Skillman and Phil Wyld; and a **Northwest Suburban** group under the leadership of Wally and Rosemary Cwik.

The members of the *TWTD Radio Players* come from all walks of life and are of diverse age — from teenagers to retirees. They all have one thing in common: their love of old time radio.

These *Radio Players* have presented hundreds of vintage comedy, mystery, drama and western broadcast reenactments since we formed in 1992 under the direction of Tom Tirpak of Glenview. Our *Radio Players* are non-professional. Some may have had community theatre experience, but none had ever appeared in a scripted radio broadcast.

Each of our seven groups offers members an opportunity to act, direct, develop and present sound effects, music, technical direction, and more. The star of one script may be a two-line supporting player in the next, or a sound effects technician in another.

This is all a labor of love: selecting scripts, reading them, rehearsing them, and, finally, performing them. No one is paid for their performance and no group charges a fee for the performance. The entire organization, an outgrowth of our *Those Were The Days* program, does this work as an outreach project of the Radio Hall of Fame and the Museum of Broadcast Communications.

If you would like to become a part of our *Those Were The Days Radio Players*, just contact our coordinator, Janet Hoshaw of Glenview, Illinois at (847) 729-1668. She'll put you in touch with the leader of the group nearest to you in the Chicago area. Then you can get more information, attend a meeting of that group, and decide if this is something you'd like to do.

You'll meet people who share a common interest and you'll be doing something that will bring you and others a good deal of pleasure.

Good luck.

And Happy Holidays!

—Chuck Schaden

FILM
CLIPS

FILM
CLIPS

A Miracle for Christmas



By **BOB KOLOSOSKI**

It is the middle of June and the temperature is in the high 80s. The grass needs cutting, the family wants to go to a Cubs game, and the only thing I can think of is that today is the 50th anniversary of the release of *Miracle on 34th Street*.

The original film was released on June 19, 1947.

Why did 20th Century-Fox release a Christmas movie at the very beginning of summer?

Because even great movie moguls like Darryl F. Zanuck make bone-headed mistakes.

It all began in early 1946 when screenwriters George Seaton and

Valentine Davies were having lunch at the 20th Century-Fox studio commissary. Their conversation drifted into movies that dealt with Christmas and the general lack of imagination that dominated that film genre. They decided they could conceive a fanciful film that would be fun to watch, yet challenge the belief and disbelief in Santa Claus.

They began work on an outline for a story that had a man, who believes he is

Santa Claus, getting a job as Macy's department store Santa during the Christmas season.

Their story fell into place easily and, within a short period of time, they had a completed screenplay.



PHOTOFEST

EDMUND GWENN and NATALIE WOOD

The next challenge was to have studio boss Darryl Zanuck grant them permission to film the story and, also, to give the directorial assignment to Seaton who had written and directed two other films, *Junior Miss* and *The Shocking Miss Pilgrim*.

Zanuck proved to be a hard sell. He felt that the script

was weak and the casting of Kris Kringle would be both difficult and critical to the film. He sent his writers back to reconsider the entire project.

But they returned with a stronger script and a candidate for Kringle.

The man they had in mind was Edmund Gwenn, a British actor who had appeared in dozens of films. And their stronger script included location filming of Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York.



NATALIE WOOD, JOHN PAYNE and EDMUND GWENN

PHOTOFEET

Zanuck was still unimpressed, but agreed on the condition that Seaton would accept his next assignment unconditionally. Seaton agreed, then flew to New York to negotiate with Macy's.

William Pearlberg was assigned to produce the film. His first task was to assemble the cast. He was able to secure John Payne and Maureen O'Hara as the two leads. They had previously appeared together in *To The Shores of Tripoli* (1941) and *Sentimental Journey* (1945), and were two of the best looking actors on the Fox lot.

The part of the pessimistic little girl was only a bit harder to cast. The studio had signed young Natalie Wood to a short term contract hoping they had another Margaret O'Brien. She proved to be perfect for the part and would eventually develop into a talented actress.

Dependable supporting players Gene Lockhart, William Frawley, Porter Hall and

Jerome Cowan would round out the cast.

After Seaton and studio representatives had secured the full cooperation of Macy's and Gimble's department stores, the cast flew East in early November and started shooting scenes at the stores and around the New York area. Finally, on Thanksgiving Day, well-placed cameras filmed the parade and a few scenes relating to the parade. Follow-up shooting was completed and everyone went back to Hollywood to complete filming at the studio.

When the film was completed, studio executives including Zanuck, were disappointed with the final product. Zanuck indifferently gave permission to release the film as soon as possible, hoping it would run for a couple of weeks and then disappear.

To the surprise of many all-knowing big-wigs at the studio and despite its untimely early summer release, the film slowly picked up momentum and drew large au-

A MIRACLE FOR CHRISTMAS

diences wherever it played. It was re-released at Christmas, 1947 and became a must-see film that holiday season.

Even more astounding to Zanuck was the winning of the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor by Edmund Gwenn at the 1947 Oscar ceremony. George Seaton also won for Best Screenplay; Valentine Davies won for Best Original Idea; George Seaton won for Best Original Screenplay.

Miracle on 34th Street, made with a modest budget and very little studio support, simply charmed its way into the hearts of millions of movie fans.

And why not? It's a charming film that was a bright spot in a year of dark films. *Film noir* was the rage and Hollywood films were addressing hard issues. *Crossfire* and *Gentlemen's Agreement* criticized anti-Semitism while *Boomerang* questioned the American justice system. Filmgoers must have been relieved that *Miracle* had plenty of sunny scenes and a happy ending.

It is a highly watchable film today and one my family looks forward to seeing every Christmas (even though it is a black

and white movie!).

The charm of the film is the perfect blending of pleasing parts to create a satisfying whole. Edmund Gwenn is truly lovable as the man who believes he is the real Santa Claus. His controlled, low-key performance is the heart of the film and its success is directly related to his portrayal of Kris Kringle. The viewer wants to believe in him, as much as the characters in the story, and thus believe that there is something special about Christmas.

If there is a message in the film, it is *believe in good people and good ideals and good things will happen*.

The villain of the story, Mr. Sawyer, is a small man whose jealousy of Kringle becomes his downfall. By the final scene, the good people are happy and the villain has been disgraced and fired from his cushy job.

Over the past fifty years, *Miracle on 34th Street* has become a Christmas tradition. It has been shown on television for three decades.

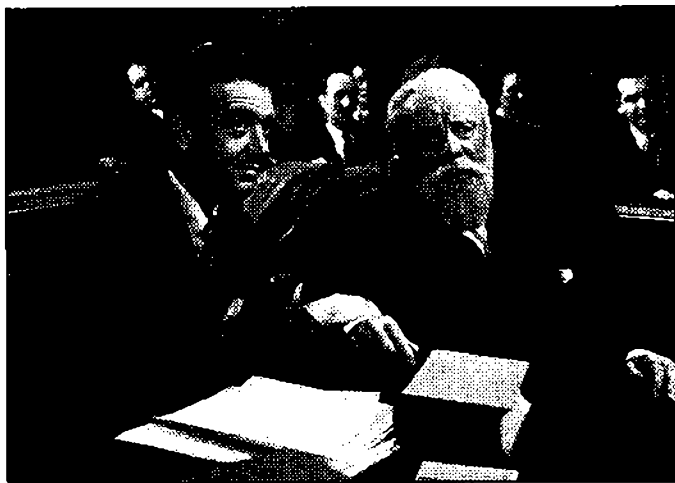
In 1973 a made-for-TV remake was produced with Sebastian Cabot as Kringle and David Hartman in the John Payne role. It was a nice try, but lacked the charm of the original; it was just a pale copy.

Several years ago super-producer John Hughes assembled a good cast and remolded the screenplay to fit the 1990s. The story was changed to a fictitious entity named Koley's Department Store (one of the fascinating aspects of the original movie was a behind-the-scenes look at the real Macy's), and the vil-



EDMUND GWENN and NATALIE WOOD

PHOTOFEST



JOHN PAYNE and EDMUND GWENN

PHOTOFEST

ployes in all his films. His choice of Sir Richard Attenborough as Kringle was excellent because Attenborough is a talented actor, and one who obviously paid attention to Gwenn's performance. Attenborough hits the mark and saves the film from becoming an elaborate, but tasteless, Christmas ornament.

But the original *Miracle on 34th Street* will never be over-

lain was an entrepreneur who owns a trendy rival store named Shopper's World.

In this version Kringle has to convince everyone he is Santa and save Krole's from an unfriendly takeover. This, of course, is done in the slick style John Hughes em-

shadowed by any of the remakes.

This holiday family favorite has made a believer out of millions of viewers over the past 50 years. ■

(NOTE--Hear a radio version of "Miracle on 34th Street" on TWTD December 6.)



MAUREEN O'HARA, JOHN PAYNE and KRIS KRINGLE

PHOTOFEST

Radio Orphan Annie's Secret Society

BY ED KNAPP



There was a time when radio ruled as "king" in American living rooms. Radio provided some form of entertainment listening for every age group, but especially for children of the thirties. Late afternoon weekdays after school, grade school youngsters were richly treated to an exciting line-up of 15-minute adventure programs specifically tailored to their tastes and vivid imaginations.

The variety of juvenile airwaves favorites included *Jack Armstrong*, *Dick Tracy*, *Tom Mix*, *Og Son of Fire*, *Terry and the Pirates*, and *Radio's Orphan Annie*.

Radio's Orphan Annie was a well-done radio adaptation of Indiana farm artist Harold Gray whose immensely popular comic strip was born in 1924.

Little Orphan Annie was a young auburn-haired waif, always wearing the same red single-piece dress, and with large black oval circles for eyes. Annie possessed adult-like strong character determination and qualities. In spite of hard times, she never let adversaries get in her way of moving forward with renewed spirit. So

Edwin S. Knapp of Three Rivers, Michigan is a retired professional photographer who spends his free time writing and collecting.

attracting were her depression-era troubles in the funnies; her never-give-up persona came to radio in 1931.

The *Radio Orphan Annie* show began at 5:45 p.m. "on the dot," five days a week. The program opened with the singing of the Annie song.

Who's that little chatterbox?

The one with pretty auburn locks.

Who can it be?

It's Little Orphan Annie...

and on for several more verses. The role of Annie was played by ten year old Shirley Bell from Chicago who essayed the radio character throughout its decade run. The program appealed to children since they could relate to her personally in the things she did and the way she thought.

Accompanying Annie in her airwaves adventures were her faithful dog Sandy (*Arf, Arf*), and young neighbor boy companion Joe Corntassle.

Over the air, the three close friends ventured around the world in all manner of exciting episodes that took them to remote island atolls, jungles and other perilous regions. "Lcaping Lizards," as Annie often expressed, they got in and out of hair-raising troubles on a regular basis. The non-stop exploits kept the ears of young listeners glued to the radio set.



**CLUB MEETS AROUND RADIO
EVERY DAY AT ORPHAN ANNIE TIME!**

The Ovaltine drink sponsor of Orphan Annie devised an accurate method of being able to determine just how popular the program was with the unseen listening audience of children.

They began a poll by offering attractive giveaway premiums, tied into the daily Annie radio adventures.

The program's silver-voiced announcer Pierre Andre would enthusiastically make the offers over the air at the conclusion of

an Annie episode. Youngsters had only to send in the inner seal from the top of a can of the sponsor's product, Ovaltine, along with their name and address, to receive the "wonderful," desirable gift.

The idea caught on with young listeners like wild fire. The tremendous response that led to even more Ovaltine sales, was beyond the sponsor's fondest wish.

The giveaway program went ahead with increased velocity and periodically, over

ORPHAN ANNIE'S SECRET SOCIETY

the next decade, made more premium gimmicks available to their faithful young listening audience than any other children's show on the air. The program tie-ins included Annie masks, games, cast member photos, shake-up mugs, rings (one-size-fits-all), and more.

The biggest response ever to an on-the-air premium announcement was yet to come.

1934 saw the introduction of an exclusive club for Annie's Ovaltine-drinking friends. The seal-sending devotees could become a special member of "Radio Orphan Annie's Secret Society" and receive a colorful secret manual with instructions on members' secret hand signs, passwords, and, most important, a secret code.

The code was used to decipher secret messages given by announcer Pierre Andre, giving Society members only a clue as to what was to happen next in Annie's thrilling adventures. Soon the Secret So-

ciety devised a shiny new metal gold decoder pin for its members. The secret decoder was cleverly worked into the show's plot lines for added appeal to children listening.

The Secret Society idea and gold decoder proved so overwhelmingly popular that each year the sponsor began a new "Radio Orphan Annie Secret Society" with an even bigger club manual and, always, a new sharp, eye-appealing shiny gold decoder pin, better than ever before.

The popularity of the Secret Society and the decoder's importance lasted for the balance of the program's period on the air.

Radio's Orphan Annie was the greatest while she lasted, but in the early 1940s the sponsor turned to another adventurer and Annie left the air to make room for *Captain Midnight*.

But that's another story. ■

(NOTE-- Tune in TWTD January 24 for episodes of *Little Orphan Annie* and *Captain Midnight*.)



Tales of the Yesteryear

The First 'Aeroplane' I Saw

BY RUSS RENNAKER

I got to thinking the other day of all the things that have come about in the interval since I was born. I don't know why but my first thoughts turned to the airplane.

I know there were electricity, the telephone, radio, and many others, but the airplane stuck in my mind.

The first airplane I saw (it was spelled "aeroplane" in those days) was at the Indiana State Fair. It must have been about 1912. I was six years old. I was fascinated. It was an odd looking thing. There were two wings and a pipe-constructed frame that held the motor, which was back of the wings, and a bicycle-seat for the aviator stuck out in front of the wings. It took off from the center of the oval race track, circled the fairgrounds and settled back on the grass infield. People lined the fence just to see it do that.

The second time I remember seeing an airplane was a few years later. It must have been about 1916.

It was a Sunday in the summer of that year. It was a very hot day. The rows of windows along each side of the church were wide open and the sound of birds twittering under the eaves seemed determined to drown out the minister. I was seated alongside my parents with my older sister on the other side.

The minister was in the middle of his sermon. Once in a while he would mop his face with a handkerchief, pause to catch

Russ Rennaker of Kokomo, Indiana was born in 1906 and is a retired broadcast engineer who worked at WBBM, Chicago and WJSV, Washington, D.C.

his breath and then continue. This was about the time my father always began to get restless. First he would shuffle his feet noiselessly on the wooden floor then shift his gaze to my mother who always sat quietly never looking to right or left until the minister had finished.

It was barely noticeable at first but eventually it became evident some other sound floating in through the windows was drowning out the twittering of the birds. It was a very faint drone, like a giant humming bird might make. It grew louder by the minute. My father stopped shuffling his feet and turned his head toward the row of windows. Mother leaned forward and looked around father at me as if I was making the noise. Other members of the congregation were beginning to get restless, bending their head at an angle to better determine where the noise was coming from.

Suddenly I knew! The drone had now turned into a very loud hum competing with the minister's voice. He hesitated, then continued. He hesitated again, pausing to look out over his restless audience. It was pretty obvious now what was causing the noise and those parishioners nearest the windows were twisting around in their pews to see if they could glimpse anything through the windows.

Then the minister stopped talking. He stood for a moment with his head cocked to one side listening. Then, looking out

TALES OF THE YESTERYEAR

over his congregation, he said, "It is quite apparent that most of you are more interested in the airplane that is flying over than you are to my sermon... so why don't we all re-assemble outside and get a good look."

With some degree of dignity everyone filed from the rows of pews and gathered in front of the church, everyone holding his head back and gazing intently into the azure blue sky.

My father was the first to speak. "There it is," he said and pointed toward the sky.

All eyes followed his outstretched arm. And there it was. Almost directly overhead. It was very high but easily discernible. It just seemed to float stationary there in the sky, but as you watched you could see it was really moving. For most of the watchers I am sure it was the first airplane they had ever seen.

"I wonder," mused the minister, looking directly at me, "does the noise we hear come from the plane's engine or from its' movement through the air?"

I looked first at the minister and then at my father. "I think it's the engines," I said, with more conviction than I really felt. My father looked down at me and I realized for the first time how proud of me he really was.

By 1918, with the war in Europe raging, the United States began producing airplanes on assembly lines. My pet hobby was making up fleets of tiny biplanes out of paper. But still the only real one I had seen was the one that Sunday up in the sky.

It was early spring and we were not yet in the war. For several days articles had appeared in the newspaper about a "flight" of army airplanes that were going to make a refueling stop in John Wheeler's farm just north of town. So it was that Friday morning teacher announced that school would be dismissed at noon so that those children who wished could accompany their parents to see the airplanes.

At noon teacher tapped the little bell that always sat within reach on her desk and the children scrambled for the door.

Several automobiles lined the school ground and among them was our brand

new Overland. My sister and I scrambled into the back seat. "Are we going to see the airplanes, Dad?" I asked. "We sure are," he replied and started the engine.

The Wheeler farm was about six miles from where we lived and just on the north edge of the little town of some 25,000 persons. Father knew where it was because two summers ago we had gone there to the Circus.

As we neared the field we could see automobiles parked along the road and eventually we could go no further. Father pulled the Overland over a side-ditch and parked in some farmer's field.

"I guess we'll just have to walk the rest of the way," he said. Apparently that was what others thought also and soon the fence that separated Wheeler's field from the road was lined with expectant people. There were several men, wearing yellow arm bands, who kept the crowd from climbing the fence.

We stood there, cupping our hands over

**"Does the noise
we hear come
from the plane's
engine or from
its' movement
through the air?"**

our eyes to shield them from the sun, starting into the blue, cloudless sky. Two lines of white flags on six-foot staffs formed the runway across the field. Supposedly the planes were to land between the flags.

"Well, how long do we have to stand here in the sun?" my mother asked and just at that moment someone shouted, "There they are! Look!"

I looked into the bright blue sky but saw nothing. Father was pointing toward the west and then I saw it. A tiny speck that looked to be standing still in the sky. Then a second, and a third. Six specks finally appeared in a "V" formation, becoming larger by the second.

Over the field the "V" formation broke up and the planes peeled off one at a time and when they reached the end of the runway they turned off into the field and lined up facing the crowd.

Gasoline tank-trucks pulled on to the field and men in blue coveralls carried ten-gallon cans from the trucks to the airplanes.

It was all over in thirty minutes. The planes took off in the direction from which they had come. They circled and formed up again heading east for some unknown army field that was their destination.

"Is that all there is to it?" asked Mother, but Father just snorted and headed back toward our car. It was just another first for him. But for me? Suddenly I knew what I was going to be when I grew up!

But it was not to be.

I was fourteen years old in the summer of 1920. The "Great War" had been over nearly a year. Wartime aces who flew the

piano-wire and cloth flying machines of the war— called "Jennys"— were doing stunt flying and barnstorming tours.

A fourteen year old boy on a farm in mid-America, in that era, had small opportunity for adventure. I simply lived and breathed airplanes.

When the war was over Lt. Chris Booker came home, bought a surplus "Jenny," took down all the fences on his father's one hundred sixty acre farm near Wabash and put the whole place in blue grass. With corn at twelve cents a bushel his father decided anything would be better than farming. He built a corrugated iron building at one end of the farm near the road and on the broad flat roof he painted a sign in huge yellow letters. "BOOKER'S FLYING CIRCUS."

One Sunday, after church and the fried chicken dinner, my father said, "How would you all like to drive up to Wabash and see the Flying Circus?" My mother scoffed at the idea but we all piled into the Overland and took off north toward Wabash and Booker's Flying Circus.

We spent many a Sunday there that summer. We would stand for hours in the hot sun, enduring the acrid smell of gasoline and castor oil, just to view the goings on. Once my father said, "I'd sure like to ride just once in one of them things..." My mother

interrupted with, "You will not!" and that ended the discussion.

It seemed to hold some kind of fascination for my father — or perhaps I misjudged him and he did it just for me. Mother always went along, I suspected, to see that father did not spend the five dollars on such foolishness. As for me, I took

**"How would you
all like to
drive up to
Wabash
and see the
Flying Circus?"**

TALES OF THE YESTERYEAR

it all in with eyes bright with excitement and mouth open in amazement.

One summer it was announced that the famous Lt. Booker of Booker's Flying Circus was to appear at the County Fair, taking up riders every afternoon for \$5 for a fifteen minute ride.

I spent hours trying to figure out how I could get five dollars to take a ride in that flying machine.

On the first day of the Fair I told my mother I was going to ride my bike over to the Fair and see if I could get a job. She thought that would be all right.

When I arrived at the Fairgrounds, I suddenly realized I didn't have the admission fare. I pushed my bike through a gap in the wooden fence behind the stables at the far end of the racetrack and sneaked through.

Sure enough. There stood the "Jenny" in a little cinder circle at one end of the oval inside the race track. A real live airplane!

As I stood there wide-eyed with my bike leaning against the fence, a figure came out of a shed a few yards away carrying a tool box in one hand and a flying helmet, straps blowing, in the other. I could hardly believe my eyes but it surely was none other than Lt. Booker, in leather boots and as big as life! Halfway between the shed and the flying machine something dropped out of his hip pocket onto the ground behind him. Like a bolt out of the blue I was over the fence and dashing across the grass. It was a large adjustable crescent wrench and just as Lt. Booker sat his tool box down I

handed him the wrench.

"Well, I'll be dogged," he said, looking me over from head to foot. "Just what I need -- a helper."

"Oh," I said, and couldn't think of another word.

"How about it, Sonny?" the aviator went on. "I'll tell you what I'll do. You help me all week, hauling gasoline to the machine in those five gallon cans, run the tools and so forth... and on Saturday I'll take you for a free ride."

I simply stood mute. Real live conversation with THE great Lt. Booker had never crossed my mind.

"Well, what about it, Sonny?" He was laying out some tools from the tool box on a piece of canvas.

"I'd sure like that, Sir." I gulped. He put one foot on the lower wing, swing himself up and disappeared behind the cockpit cowling. I was his helper!

By the time we got our first passenger I felt like a real aviator. I had carried ten five gallon cans of gasoline, made three trips to the tool shed for tools, handed him his helmet twice and his goggles once.

I had shouted "off" and "contact" so many times that week that by Saturday I was almost hoarse. I had been too busy to think much about my own flight, but Lt. Booker had not forgotten. As the crowd hurried toward the grandstand for the big vaudeville act and the fireworks afterward, he turned to me. "It's your turn, Sonny."

I sit here now, so many years later, and look at the "Million Miler" plaque hanging on my wall. Not one of those million miles can compare with my first fifteen minutes in the air. ■

**"You help me
all week...
and on
Saturday
I'll take you
for a free ride."**

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The Hour of Charm

Phil Spitalny and his All-Girl Orchestra

BY DICK FISHER

I don't know where I developed my interest in classical music. No one else in the family was interested in it, and we did not have a record player.

In looking back I can only assume it was from listening to the radio.

In those days there was a great deal of classical music on the radio and, of course, Texaco's opera broadcasts each Saturday afternoon. I really began to enjoy this type of music about the age of ten or eleven.

One of my favorite programs was the *Hour of Charm* with Phil Spitalny and his all-girl orchestra.

Spitalny's orchestra really was made up of all women and soon I became familiar with "Evelyn and her Magic Violin," the "Golden Voice of Vivian," the "Mellow Trombone of Selma," and my very favorite, the "Haunting Voice of Maxine."

Initially, the orchestra consisted of 22 members (later 35). An all-girl orchestra was unheard of in that day and time, and when they went on the air it was an instant success. Their talent was of the highest calibre and equalled or surpassed the all-male orchestras of the time.

Phil Spitalny was born in Odessa, Russia on November 7, 1890. He came from a family that was deeply rooted in music. In his early years he was first clarinet for the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra. (He was a recognized clarinet prodigy and, as

a youngster, performed throughout Russia.) He had two brothers who also formed their own orchestras but they did not become as famous as Phil Spitalny.

The idea for an "all-girl orchestra" occurred to him in 1932 while attending a concert featuring a brilliant girl violinist. This idea turned out to be a natural for the new medium of radio.

Now the real problems began. Spitalny was leading an all-male orchestra at that time. He immediately dissolved the orchestra and set out to solve his biggest problem in implementing his idea. Where would he be able to find women who could meet his rigid standards for talent in a world where women were mostly homemakers? Further, women who worked in the entertainment industry, because of late hours and travels about the country, were frequently considered to be of less than desirable moral character. (Remember, this was prior to World War II.)

As he began to spend large amounts of money and time on his search, even his closest friends thought his senses had left him.

Spitalny was eminently equipped to judge the abilities of the women he sought. He had musical training from childhood and had directed a fifty-piece Boston symphony orchestra on a very successful world tour and was well known as a bandleader in theatres and on radio and had made several records.

He searched the major cities for female talent and in the first months found no one who met his exacting standards. Then in

Dick Fisher, a Nostalgia Digest subscriber from Cincinnati, Ohio, originally wrote this article for RLL On the Air. It is reprinted with permission.



PHOTOFEST

the Julliard School of Music he found Evelyn Kaye Klein, who became his first violinist and concertmistress. (She was to become his wife much later, in June, 1946.)

Here the story becomes somewhat twisted as one reference says that Evelyn was the violinist he heard in 1932 at the concert which gave him the idea for the all-girl orchestra. Another source says she was discovered as outlined above.

With Evelyn's assistance he searched the country and for the next year he listened to over one thousand applicants until he finally selected twenty-two for his orchestra. He spent \$22,000 of his own money. In those days after the Depression began, that was an awful lot of money.

But now that he had his orchestra, he was faced with a second major hurdle. This was the stiff resistance of prospective radio sponsors. He had a fantastic product, but no one would listen, as the expectation was that an orchestra of women would be at the very best, "second rate."

Finally, with no sponsor even interested in listening to his girls, he decided to audition by remote and bill himself as Phil Spitalny and his Orchestra, making no mention of the female-only musicians. He found a sponsor immediately and it wasn't until the contracts were signed that it was

revealed that his was an "all-girl" orchestra.

A decision that lent an air of mystery to the orchestra was that everyone was known only by their first names. This also makes it very difficult to re-search the

members, as no records of last names of most of the girls is known today.

I have been able to determine that Vivian was Hollis Shaw and that Katherine Smith was the cornetist and Viola Schmidt was the percussionist. To my knowledge, there exists no record of the real name of Maxine or Jeannie, who were two of the vocalists.

The girls governed themselves, with Evelyn acting as the moderator. Spitalny made only business and professional decisions such as musical selections, manner of dress and hair style.

The girls owned stock in the orchestra. As a result, judgement was passed by the group on all off-stage matters, both personal and professional. A five-member committee was formed to watch over the rules, life-styles, and even dating.

When a girl wanted to go out, the man was scrutinized as to his work and marital status. It was also necessary for him to have references! If it was determined that this date was not in the orchestra's best interest, it did not happen!

The girls shared their rooms, recreation, and even their hopes and dreams and their sorrows. They became a very close-knit group. Spitalny did not get into the personal problems unless Evelyn ran into an impasse. His involvement was rare.

HOOR OF CHARM

The orchestra specialized in familiar music— classical, semi-classical, and show tunes. The arrangement of most of this music was done by Spitalny and the orchestra members and was unique. It had a charm that was not to be exceeded in the next fifty years. Spitalny said the music was a cross between symphonic and popular. I consider it the most unique and listenable music of the time.

The orchestra made theatre tours and movie shorts. They made their debut at new York's Capital Theatre.

Music ability was of great importance in hiring an orchestra member, but Spitalny strongly considered voice and beauty. All the girls sang in the chorus, and this segment of the show was something eagerly awaited.

A segment of the show that was anxiously awaited was the solo featuring the "Haunting Voice of Maxine." Maxine was not only an exceptional beauty, but her alto voice was remarkable in its depth and clarity. I have no idea what her last name was or what happened to her.



PHOTOFEST

The show always finished with a hymn sung by the entire orchestra. Their renditions were always inspiring and never failed to satisfy the soul.

Phil Spitalny never spoke on any of his radio shows or in his movie appearances because of his very heavy Russian accent. In those days accents were not to be revealed if at all possible — they most certainly would have ruined his radio show. The announcer on many programs was Evelyn of the Magic Violin, and Ron Rawson or Richard Stark.

He made several recordings for Columbia Records, and when Columbia dropped his contract, he began his own record company called "Charm Records." All of his recordings with the All-Girl orchestra were of hymns and were in albums.

A jacket liner for one of his albums makes the statement, "His faith was well rewarded for the All-Girl Orchestra and Choir has played its way into the heart of musical America and won the praise of critics such as Toscanini, who has chosen the *Hour of Charm* as one of his favorite radio programs."

It's too bad that so few of the *Hour of Charm* broadcasts have survived over the years. The program was on the air from April 18, 1934 to April 2, 1948.

When the show went off the air, Spitalny dissolved the all-girl orchestra and, with his wife Evelyn, retired to Florida.

He died on October 11, 1970. ■

(NOTE-- Hear Phil Spitalny and his All Girl Orchestra on TWDT January 10.)

Father Flanagan of Boys Town

BY FR. KEVIN SHANLEY, O. Carm.

**“There’s no such thing as a bad boy —
but they sure can be onery.”**

With that well-known dictum, Fr. Edward Flanagan of Boys Town in Omaha, Nebraska, changed the philosophy of America towards young boys headed for a life of crime. Along the way, Fr. Flanagan became one of the most beloved clergymen in the U.S. His life-long work was to provide a loving and nurturing environment for young boys for whom he became the only real “father” many of them ever knew.

On May 15, 1948, almost 50 years ago, at the age of 61, Fr. Flanagan died in a Berlin hospital. He had gone to inspect the youth facilities supported by U.S. Army personnel in the area. His death was mourned by President Truman and much of the world, but mostly by the thousands of young boys to whom he gave the chance of a happy and fulfilling life.

Born in Ireland on July 13, 1886, his early dream of serving the Lord eventually led him to Mt. St. Mary’s College in Emmitsburg, Maryland. In 1912 he was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Omaha and assigned to parish work there.

It was not long after that Fr. Flanagan realized that his charisma was his ability to relate to young boys, especially those in need. Although his first pastoral efforts went to help homeless men in the city, it was in 1917 that he began his life-long work with youth.

One day he strode into the city’s Juve-



nile Court and pleaded with the judge for the custody of five boys who were about to be sentenced to the Nebraska State Reformatory.

Many Americans thought then that juvenile delinquents should be severely punished and locked up in reform schools.

Fr. Flanagan countered that this only made them worse, and eventually unfit to enter in adult society as good and law-abiding citizens. The young priest eloquently pleaded that if each boy were given half a chance to prove himself, learn a trade, and then enter the adult world, a wonderful change would take place.

The sincerity and eloquence of Fr. Flanagan so moved the presiding judge that he remanded the five boys into the priest’s custody. He brought them back to the shelter he had established for homeless men, but soon realized that the boys needed a separate place of their own.

It was a time of great decision for Fr. Flanagan. It was not an easy decision to make, but after much prayer, he decided that his life’s work would be focused on young boys who needed help.

“What do I do now?” must have been a question that entered the young priest’s mind. He soon made arrangements for others to continue the work with the homeless men. Then, full of Faith, Fr. Flanagan walked into a real estate office in Omaha to inquire about a house to rent for his now

FATHER FLANAGAN

growing number of boys. A sympathetic young lady, Catherine Dannehy, told him of a possible home in a fairly good neighborhood. The only problem was the \$90-a-month rent. Fr. Flanagan thanked the young lady and went off to seek the aid of a friend. He returned with the funds, and thus began his famous Boys Town.

In 1938 MGM Studios made a movie entitled *Boys Town* and selected Spencer Tracy to play the role of Fr. Flanagan. Mickey Rooney, another of their stars, was cast in the role of a young juvenile delinquent named Whitey Marsh. The film was not only a smash hit, but changed the attitude of many in treating juvenile delinquents. Fr. Flanagan and his Boys Town, which was incorporated as a city in 1939, with a population of 500, became known

in many parts of the world.

The Rev. Robert Watson, a United Methodist minister who, as a youngster, played the role of Pee Wee in the movie, was invited back to Boys Town in 1990 to preach at the dedication of the \$3 million Chambers Protestant Chapel at Boys Town. It had become a place where all were accepted regardless of race, creed or color.

Rev. Watson, the child actor who had benefited greatly from the movie experience, said that the invitation to preach at Boys Town was "the most privileged thing that's ever happened to me."

As word of his great success with juvenile delinquents spread, Fr. Flanagan became virtually a celebrity. Movie stars such as Spencer Tracy, Mickey Rooney and Bette Davis were proud to call him a friend. Star athletes such as Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig were happy to have photos taken



SCENE FROM "BOYS TOWN" FILM (1938): Spencer Tracy as Father Flanagan with Mickey Rooney as Whitey Marsh and Bobby Watson as Pee Wee.

PHOTOFEST

with the founder of Boys Town. All contributed to his work with youth.

Fr. Flanagan lectured about the treatment of youth in many different countries and to any audience that would listen to him, and the wisdom he had gained from so many years of experience. He aided in the establishment of similar programs in many different places.

In addition, he testified before Congressional committees and other state and local government bodies to enable them to pass good and helpful legislation for youth. Even though he was not considered a great speaker, he was without equal in a one-to-one conversation. His sincerity won over many.

Although he was required to be away from Boys Town often in later years, Fr. Flanagan never forgot his boys. Part of his success was due to the respect he gave each boy there. He found each one different but worthy of his care and interest.

Even though he often admitted that he was frequently puzzled by boys, he seems to have known more about them than almost anyone else.

In his lifetime, Fr. Flanagan cared for some 5,000 boys who would not have made a success of their lives without his care and encouragement. Perhaps it was his spirit, noble and far-reaching, which brought about his great success and made his plan for the respectful treatment of youth imitated in many parts of the world.

Over his simple grave in Boys Town is the inscription: "Edward Joseph Flanagan: Friend of Christ and Man."

In tribute to him, the U.S. Postal Service issued a four-cent commemorative stamp



PHOTOFEST
"BOYS TOWN" FILM: Spencer Tracy as Fr. Flanagan with Mickey Rooney and Bobby Watson

still in circulation.

Even today, the spirit of Fr. Flanagan lives on not only in Boys Town, where over 100 girls are now part of the student body, but in many other places. A center for the study of youth problems was founded at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., funded by Boys Town.

But perhaps his greatest tribute was written by one of his boys on hearing of Fr. Flanagan's death:

*Somewhere in a German town,
the stars rolled back their doors;
and hands that molded seas and suns
reached down and folded yours.*

*Deep in the wings of God you slept,
tired and weary so.*

*You were one of earth's greatest,
and someday the world will know.* ■

Chuck Schaden's
THOSE WERE THE DAYS
WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1 - 5 P.M.

DECEMBER 1997

PLEASE NOTE: The numerals following each program listing for *Those Were The Days* represents the length of time for each particular show: (28:50) means the program will run 28 minutes and 50 seconds. This may be of help to those who tape the programs for their own collection.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6th
RADIO TO PLAN
YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST BY

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (12-8-46) Jack is doing his Christmas shopping in a Beverly Hills department store and can't make up his mind about the purchase of shoelaces — metal tips or plastic tips? Cast includes Mary Livingstone, Phil Harris, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Dennis Day, Don Wilson, and Mel Blanc as the shoelaces clerk; Frank Nelson as the floor-walker; Veola Vonn as the lingerie clerk; Elliott Lewis as the perfume clerk; Artie Auerbach as Mr. Kitzel. This is the first program of Jack Benny's legendary "Christmas Shopping" shows. Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (27:50)
IMAGINATION THEATRE (12-22-96) "A double feature movie for your mind." **1. Maybe There is A Santa Claus** features detective Harry Nile searching for a lost war veteran during the Christmas season. (25:00) **2. Macumber's Miracle Tonic** is a legend told by an old de-

partment store Santa about a pioneer Christmas. (24:00) Syndicated.

COUPLE NEXT DOOR (12-24-58) Peg Lynch and Alan Bunce with Francie Meyers and Margaret Hamilton. Assembling Betsy's doll house on Christmas Eve. Sustaining, CBS. (15:15)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (12-21-54) "Miracle on 34th Street" starring Edmund Gwenn recreating his screen role as Kris Kringle in this radio version of the 1947 20th Century Fox film. Macy's Department Store Santa is on trial to prove that he is the real Santa Claus. Virginia Gregg co-stars as Doris Walker; Whitfield Connor as Fred Gailey; Patty Iannone as Susan Walker; with William Conrad as District Attorney Mara; Parley Baer as Mr. Sawyer; Herb Butterfield as Judge Harper; Howard McNear as Mr. Shelhammer; Bill Bouchey as Mr. Macy; Sam Edwards as Alfred. Host is William Cummings. Lux Soap, CBS. (30:45; 17:20) *See the cover story on page 2.*

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA (12-16-52) "Barbed Wire Christmas" starring Edmund O'Brien. A true Christmas story about 4,000 American Prisoners of War in a German concentration camp in December, 1944. The POWs plan to attend a Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve even though it has been forbidden by the Gestapo. DuPont, NBC. (25:50)

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13th
RADIO TO ADDRESS
CHRISTMAS CARDS BY

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL (12-25-48) Gene Autry hosts an all-star two-hour Holiday Special featuring Bing Crosby, Burns and Allen, the Andrews Sisters, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson and Frank Nelson, Mitchell Boys Choir, Bob Sweeney and Hal March, Dan Dailey, Hedda Hopper, Dorothy Shay, Pat Buttram, and Lionel Barrymore appearing as Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." Wrigley Gum, CBS. (30:40; 30:16; 24:30; 30:13)

COUPLE NEXT DOOR (12-25-48) Peg Lynch and Alan Bunce star with Francie Meyers, Margaret Hamilton, Stuart Germaine. Opening presents on Christmas morning. Jell-O, Good Luck Margarine, CBS. (15:08)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (12-15-46) After addressing Christmas cards, Jack goes to a rehearsal, then to the department store to exchange the shoelaces he bought last week. This is the second program of Benny's "Christmas Shopping" shows.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20th RADIO TO WRAP, BAKE AND DECORATE BY

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (12-24-47) Guest is 11-year-old Margaret O'Brien who joins the Schnozz and regulars Peggy Lee, Candy Candido and Arthur Treacher. It's Christmas Eve at Jimmy's house when he and Margaret take a ride to the North Pole. Rexall, NBC. (28:45)

NOTE: After this broadcast, Jimmy Durante went into the hospital to have a growth removed from his lower intestine. The operation was successful, but kept him off the air for a month. Major stars substituted for him during his absence, and that sequence of Durante shows will be presented on TWTD during January.

GRAND CENTRAL STATION (12-19-51) "Miracle for Christmas." This is the sixth annual presentation of the classic Christmas drama. A cynical ambulance driver and a mysterious doctor make their rounds of mercy on Christmas Eve. Pillsbury Cake Flour, CBS. (26:32)

MEL BLANC SHOW (12-24-46) Mel can't decide what to buy his girlfriend for Christmas. Cast includes Hans Conried, Joe Kearns, Mary Jane Croft. Colgate Tooth Powder, CBS. (22:37)

GREAT GILDERSLEEVE (12-14-49) Harold Peary stars as Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve with Cathy Lewis as Katherine Milford, Mary Lee Robb as Marjorie, Walter Tetley as Leroy, Lillian Randolph as Birdie. It's Christmas time in Summerfield and Gildy has to buy an original gift for Miss Milford. He brings Christmas gifts for children in the hospital and reads the story, "Why the Chimes Rang." Kraft Foods, NBC. (29:41)

BING CROSBY SHOW (12-20-53) It's Bing's traditional Christmas show with Jud Conlon's Rhythmairs, John Scott Trotter and the or-

chestra, Ken Carpenter. Bing sings "Adestes Fideles" in English and Latin; Jingle Bells; White Christmas; Silent Night. General Electric, CBS. (27:52)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (12-23-47) Jim and Marian Jordan star. Fibber has lost the keys to his hall closet— and they're under three feet of snow! Teeney and the carolers sing "'Twas the Night Before Christmas." Johnson's Wax, NBC. (30:00)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27th SEASON'S GREETINGS

CHARLIE MC CARTHY SHOW (12-26-54) It's the day after Christmas and William "Hopalong Cassidy" Boyd visits Edgar Bergan and company. Mortimer Snerd claims he saw Santa Claus last night. Charlie tells Hoppy of a dream he had about Hoppy saving Christmas by thwarting a reindeer strike. AFRS rebroadcast. (27:00)

CASEY, CRIME PHOTOGRAPHER (12-25-47) "Santa Claus of Bum Boulevard" stars Staats Cotsworth as Casey, with Jan Miner as Ann and John Gibson as Ethelbert. A stranger has made an annual event of handing out money on Hackett street ("Bum Boulevard"). Anchor Hocking, CBS. (29:13)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (3-1-55) "The Bishop's Wife" starring Cary Grant and Phyllis Thaxter with Les Tremayne in a radio version of the 1947 film. A Christmas fantasy about a suave angel who comes to earth to help a bishop and his wife raise money for a new church. Cast includes Herb Butterfield, Herb Vigran, Howard McNear. Irving Cummings is host. Lux Soap, CBS. (34:25; 13:55) *Note: This is the 50th anniversary of the movie, "The Bishop's Wife."*

COUPLE NEXT DOOR (12-29-58) Peg Lynch and Alan Bunce, with Francie Meyers and Margaret Hamilton. Betsy finds a mysterious Christmas present still under the tree. Sustaining, CBS. (15:06)

RADIO CITY PLAYHOUSE (12-25-49) "'Twas the Night before Christmas" starring Lyle Sudrow, Bernard Grant, Ross Martin, Louis Van Rooten in a story by Paul Gallico. Two reporters must find an unusual gift for the wife of their managing editor. Sustaining, NBC. (26:55)

PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW (12-26-48) It's the day after Christmas and Phil is unhappy that he didn't get a gift from his sponsor. Cast includes Elliott Lewis, Walter Tetley, and Gale Gordon. Rexall, NBC. (28:22)

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JANUARY 1998

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3rd
HAPPY NEW YEAR
WITH GOOD OLD RADIO!

RED SKELTON SHOW (12-26-51) Red appears as Clem Kadiddlehopper as a tree salesman on the day after Christmas. Also: Junior the Mean Widdle Kid is working on his New Year's resolutions. Lurene Tuttle, David Rose and the orchestra. Norge, CBS. (30:11)

IMAGINATION THEATRE (12-29-96) A double feature movie for your mind. **1. Moving Day.** The discovery of an old pair of spectacles brings back to life cherished times in an old house, in this New Year's Eve comedy. (23:00) **2. The New Leaf.** New Year's Eve party-goers urge a doctor to tell their straight-faced friend he has only six months to live, just to see what he'll do about it. (25:00) Syndicated.

HENRY MORGAN SHOW (1-1-47) The comedian does a sketch doing lines and music leftover from last year, plus a preview of 1947

and a "Your Hit Parade" spoof of "songs most hated." Arnold Stang, Bernie Green and the orchestra. Eversharp, ABC. (23:41)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (12-30-52) Jim and Marian Jordan star with Bill Thompson, Arthur Q. Brian, Dick LeGrand, Gil Stratton Jr., Harlow Wilcox, King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Fibber finally arranges an invitation to the New Year's Eve Dance at the Country Club. Reynold's Aluminum, NBC. (31:19)

SUSPENSE (12-28-58) "32nd of December" starring Frank Lovejoy as a man who buys an unusual antique clock with the ability to control time. Cast features Joan Banks, Barney Phillips, Sam Pierce, Norm Alden. Sustaining, CBS. (18:51)

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (12-31-47) Garry Moore substitutes for Jimmy who is "in the hospital for repairs." Special guest is Red Skelton who, with Verna Felton, appear as Grandma and Junior, the Mean Widdle Kid who is to be the New Year Baby on New Year's Eve. Peggy Lee, Candy Candido, Roy Bargy and the orchestra. Rexall, NBC. (28:45)



JIMMY DURANTE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10th

ADVENTURES BY MORSE (1944) "The Girl on Shipwreck Island" is a three-part Carlton E. Morse adventure starring David Ellis as Captain Friday. Part 1: Flying out of Saigon, Capt. Friday's plane develops engine trouble and is forced to make an emergency landing on an island in the South Pacific. Syndicated. (24:40)

HALLS OF IVY (5-21-52) Ronald and Bonita Colman star as Dr. and Mrs. William Todhunter Hall of Ivy College. The school's mummy is missing. Voice of America rebroadcast. (26:02)

ADVENTURES BY MORSE (1944) "The Girl on Shipwreck Island." Part 2: "The Pirate is a Fighting Man." Syndicated. (25:10)

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (1-7-48) Bob Hope subs for Jimmy, still recuperating from surgery. "The Road to Pismo Beach" features Hope with Candy Candido in the Dorothy



VICKI VOLA

Lamour part and Victor Moore in the Crosby role. Also: Peggy Lee, Veola Vonn. Rexall, NBC. (28:30)

ADVENTURES BY MORSE (1944) "The Girl on Shipwreck Island" Part 3: "There is More About Gracie than Meets the Eye." Conclusion of the three-part series. Syndicated. (25:20)

ONE NIGHT STAND #3544 (1953) Phil Spitalny and his All-Girl Orchestra in a remote broadcast from the Blue Room of the Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans, featuring Evelyn and her Magic Violin. Selections include "South America, Take It Away," "Blue Room," "Ballerina," and "Blue Tango." AFRS. (30:19)

See the article about Phil Spitalny and his All-Girl Orchestra on page 14.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17th

SUSPENSE (3-13-47) "You Take Ballistics" starring Howard DaSilva as a police detective, investigating a murder, who questions a suspect who has all the right answers. Cast includes Jack Webb. Roma Wines, CBS. (29:56)

PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW (10-24-48) When Alice complains about high household bills, Phil suggests buying beef in quantity. Cast features Elliott Lewis, Walter Tetley, Gale Gordon, Robert North, Ann Whitfield, Jeanine Roos. Alice sings "Buttons and Bows." Rexall, NBC. (28:31)

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (11-2-50) "Mistress of the White House" starring Teresa Wright as Dolly Madison, wife of the fourth president. Ted Osborne as James Madison. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (29:03)

DIMENSION X (5-6-50) "Knock" with Arnold Moss, Louis Van Rooten, Joan Alexander. The last man on earth finds himself in a "zoo" run by aliens. Sustaining, NBC. (29:10)

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (1-14-48) This week Frank Morgan subs for the recovering Jimmy. Cast includes Peggy Lee, Candy Candido, Dave Berry, Roy Bargy and the orchestra and guest Victor Moore. Morgan help Moore train for a fight with Joe Louis. Rexall, NBC. (29:25)

RICHARD DIAMOND, PRIVATE DETECTIVE (12-7-51) Dick Powell stars as the detective with a cast featuring Alan Reed, Virginia Gregg, Herb Ellis, Herb Butterfield. Diamond is involved in an automobile accident with a car that was used in a robbery. Camel Cigarettes, ABC. (26:40)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24th

MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY (3-9-49) "Murder a la Carte" stars Jay Jostyn as Mr. District Attorney, Len Doyle as Harrington, and Vicki Vola as Miss Miller. A woman robber, who gets tips from the head waiter at a plush restaurant, doesn't like it when her husband tells her to quit. Ipana, Sal Hepatica, Bufferin, NBC. (30:07)

THEATRE FIVE (1960s) "Ring of Evil" starring Vicki Vola as a woman who continually receives frightening and obscene phone calls. Cast includes Roger DeKoven, Ann Costello, Elliott Reid, Hal Hackett. Announcer is Fred Foy. Syndicated, ABC. (21:02)

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (1-21-48) Al Jolson subs for Jimmy who is still recuperating, but expected back next week. Guest Victor Moore joins Al for a sketch, "Captain Jolie's Show Boat." Peggy Lee, Candy Candido, Roy Bargy and the orchestra. Al sings "Old Man River." Rexall, NBC. (29:25)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE (11-20-40) An isolated episode of the long-running series starring Shirley Bell as Annie. Joe and Annie follow a woman who goes into the Black Cat Cafe. Announcer Pierre Andre with an offer for an initialed "victory metal" identification tag and chain. Ovaltine, MBS. (14:23)

See the article on page 6.

CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT (2-30-42) Isolated episode of a wartime adventure dealing with the destruction of a Nazi sub base. Ed Prentiss

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stars as Captain Midnight. Pierre Andre announces. Ovaltine, NBC BLUE. (15:00)

ADVENTURES OF OZZIE AND HARRIET (11-28-48) It's another mix-up for "Ozzie, the Ladies' Man." Cast includes John Brown, Jack Kirkwood, Lurene Tuttle. Verne Smith announces. International Silver Co., NBC. (29:17)
INNER SANCTUM (6-19-45) "Dead Man's Holiday" starring Myron McCormick. After a train accident a man is unable to locate his wife who was sitting next to him. Continuing his search, he discovers a strange couple living in his home. Lipton Tea, CBS. (29:10)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31st

THE WHISTLER (5-7-45) "Accident According to Plan" features Elliott Lewis. A man, jealous of a co-worker's promotion, plans to kill him and make it look like an accident. Signal Oil Co., CBS. (30:00)

LIFE WITH LUIGI (3-4-52) J. Carroll Naish

stars as Luigi Basco, with Alan Reed as Pasquale who threatens to sell the building that houses Luigi's antique business unless Luigi marries Rosa. Announcer is Charles Lyons. Wrigley's Gum, CBS. (29:46)

DRAGNET (6-7-51) Jack Webb stars as Sgt. Joe Friday with Barton Yarborough as Ben Romero. A ten year old boy has been missing from his home for two days. Fatima Cigarettes, NBC. (26:15)

STUDIO ONE (10-21-47) "Singing Guns," starring Myron McCormick and Gary Merrill in a "hard-fisted, hard-riding, hard-shooting adventure" by Max Brand. A story about a sheriff and an outlaw and their strange friendship. Sustaining, CBS. (31:10; 28:30)

JIMMY DURANTE SHOW (1-28-48) The Schnozzola himself is back after four weeks in the hospital! Guest Victor Moore joins regulars Peggy Lee, Candy Candido, Howard Petrie. Jimmy and Victor want to produce their own motion pictures. Rexall, NBC. (29:30)

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WHEN RADIO WAS-- Carl Amari hosts a weekend edition of the popular series featuring old time radio broadcasts and interviews. *WMAQ, 670 AM, Saturday and Sunday, 10pm-midnight.*

IMAGINATION THEATRE-- This series is heard occasionally on *Those Were The Days* in Chicago, but is broadcast weekly in many other cities across the country. For the station in your area, call Tim McDonald at TransMedia Productions at 1-800-229-7234. For a list of stations carrying the program and an **episode guide**, the Internet address is: tmedia@aimnet.com

"When Radio Was" -- WMAQ-AM 670

Monday thru Friday Midnight to 1 a.m. Host Stan Freberg

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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December, 1997 Schedule

1 Nick Carter Ozzie & Harriet Pt 1	2 Ozzie & Harriet Pt 2 Man Called X	3 Escape Martin & Lewis Pt 1	4 Martin & Lewis Pt 2 Texas Rangers	5 Damon Runyon Theatre Superman # 5
8 The Saint Great Gildersleeve Pt 1	9 Great Gildersleeve Pt 2 Pat Novak For Hire	10 Rocky Fortune Milton Berle Pt 1	11 Milton Berle Pt 2 Broadway Is My Beat	12 Charlie McCarthy Superman # 6
15 Richard Diamond Phil Harris/Alice Faye 1	16 Phil Harris/Alice Faye 2 CBS Radio Workshop	17 Boston Blackie Abbott & Costello Pt 1	18 Abbott & Costello Pt 2 Suspense	19 My Favorite Husband Superman # 7
22 Dragnet Fibber McGee Pt 1	23 Fibber McGee Pt 2 Crime Photographer	24 Directors' Playhouse Red Skelton Pt 1	25 Red Skelton Pt 2 Jack Benny	26 Life of Riley Superman # 8
29 Suspense Mel Blanc Show Pt 1	30 Mel Blanc Show Pt 2 The Whistler	31 Great Gildersleeve Burns & Allen Pt 1		

January, 1998 Schedule

OUT OF TOWN LISTENERS PLEASE NOTE: <i>"When Radio Was" is a syndicated series heard throughout the country. If you're unable to tune in WMAQ, call (847)524-0200, Ext. 223 and ask which station in or near your town carries the program.</i>			1 Burns & Allen Pt 2 Four Star Playhouse	2 Arch Oboler's Plays Superman # 9
5 Green Hornet Marlin Hurl/Boulah Pt 1	6 Marlin Hurl/Boulah Pt 2 Suspense	7 Box Thirteen Fibber McGee Pt 1	8 Fibber McGee Pt 2 Mr. President	9 The Shadow Superman # 10
12 This Is Hollywood Jack Benny Pt 1	13 Jack Benny Pt 2 Dragnet	14 Six Shooter Charlia McCarthy Pt 1	15 Charlie McCarthy Pt 2 Michael Shayne	16 Escape Superman # 11
19 Gangbusters Great Gildersleeve Pt 1	20 Great Gildersleeve Pt 2 Man Called X	21 The Whistler Favorite Husband Pt 1	22 Favorite Husband Pt 2 Boston Blackie	23 Suspense Superman # 12
26 Texas Rangers Life of Riley	27 Life of Riley Pt 2 Have Gun, Will Travel	28 Lone Ranger Abbott & Costello Pt 1	29 Abbott & Costello Pt 2 Gunsmoke	30 The Shadow Superman # 13



NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

Happy New Year!

BY KARL PEARSON

For the past several decades it has been an American tradition to celebrate the arrival of the New Year with a good time!

During the big band era the strains of "Auld Lang Syne" as played by Lawrence Welk, Benny Goodman, Freddy Martin and others helped to usher in the New Year at ballrooms, hotels and night clubs across the country.

For those who may have preferred a quiet night at home, a twist of the radio dial brought faraway New Year's Eve sounds into the privacy of a home.

The New Year's Eve big band tradition carried on long after the end of the big band era and into the television era with Guy Lombardo's yearly telecasts from the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City.

Sixty years ago the December 31, 1937 edition of the Chicago

Tribune reported that many of the downtown restaurants and hotels were expect-

ing capacity crowds that evening. Many of the Loop hotels had lowered their New Years Eve prices to under \$10 per person,

a \$2 drop from the previous year, in order to encourage more people to spend the night on the town. The Stevens Hotel, for example, expected to break its all-time attendance record which had been set in 1928.

The Congress Hotel planned on over 800 New Year's Eve celebrants, while the Hotel Sherman anticipated 600 patrons in its Old Town room.

The same of issue of the Tribune also contained ads for several downtown hotels and ballrooms.

Buddy Rogers and his Orchestra rang in the New Year at the College Inn of the Hotel Sherman, while the hotel's Grand Ballroom presented the music of Frankie

Masters band. Kay Kyser and his Orchestra played for patrons at Otto Roth's

Dance Off the Old
Dance in the New
at Chicago's Gayest
New Year's Eve
CELEBRATIONS

Eddy **HOWARD**
and his orchestra
ARAGON
Lawrence nr. B'dwy

Art **KASSEL**
and his orchestra
TRIANON
Cottage Gr. at 62nd

\$3.00 Dancing and Fun
A Person
(Tax Incl.)
from 8:30 P.M.
All-Star Band,
Hot and Warm
for Everyone

Blackhawk Restaurant, while Dick Jurgens held down the bandstand at the Aragon Ballroom on Chicago's North Side.

Chicago dancers who planned to ring in 1940 were in store for a real treat. The music trade publications of the period reported that a number of well-known bands were in town for the holidays.

Both of the Dorsey brothers were in Chicago with their bands; Tommy was at the Empire Room of the Palmer House and Jimmy was on the stand of the Panther Room of the Hotel Sherman. An added attraction at the Panther Room was the music of Fats Waller and his combo!

Dick Jurgens was back once again at the Aragon, while Ray Herbeck "and his Music with Romance" were featured at the Edgewater Beach Hotel. Sweet band fans could hear Art Kassel at the Bismarck Hotel, Little Jack Little at the Hotel LaSalle, or Griff Williams at the Hotel Stevens.

John Kirby and his little band could be heard at the Pump Room of the Ambassador, and Earl "Fatha" Hines and his band were appearing at the Grand Terrace on Chicago's South Side.

A young unknown leader named Boyd Raeburn and his band played for New Year's Eve patrons at the Melody Mill ballroom in the western suburbs.

Radio had long been a part of the New Year's tradition, bringing the music and sounds of the evening's revelry

into homes across the nation. The National Broadcasting Company, formed in 1926, carried its first New Year's eve broadcast

in 1927. The radio column of the December 31, 1927 New York Times carried the following announcement:

"Four dance orchestras will participate in a two-hour New Year's Eve dance program to be broadcast at 10 o'clock over WEAJ and nine stations. They are the Roosevelt, Casa Lopez, Palais D'Or and the Park Central organizations and will be directed by their respective leaders."

The four leaders referred to in the article were B. A. Rolfe, Cass Hagan, Ben Bernie and Vincent Lopez.

As the public's interest in radio grew over the next few years, two more networks, CBS and Mutual, were formed. Within a few years each of the networks boasted a four to five hour lineup of bands from broadcasting venues across the country.

Traditionally these "New Year's Eve Dance Parties" began just before midnight New York time, often with the sounds of the New Year being welcomed in at Times Square. The scene then shifted around the town as various bands were heard at locations such as the Cafe Rouge, the Hotel New Yorker and the Famous Door.

Listeners were able to tune in and hear great music from coast to coast as each time zone celebrated the arrival of the New Year. Bands were

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

heard from locations such as New York's Park Central Hotel, Chicago's Trianon, Elitch's Gardens in Denver, and the Palomar in Los Angeles.

The radio section of the December 31, 1941 Chicago Tribune carried a complete listing of the New Year's coverage of each of the four radio networks.

WGN in Chicago carried the Mutual program, which included Guy Lombardo, Art Kassel, Eddie Duchin, Griff Williams, Dick Jurgens, Lawrence Welk, Del Courtney, Art Kassel, Frankie Masters, Bob Crosby, Horace Heidt, and Ray Noble.

WBBM carried the CBS broadcast, which featured the bands of Benny Goodman, Sonny Dunham, Johnny Long, Fletcher Henderson, Frankie Masters (doing double-network duty), Blue Barron, Claude Thornhill and several others.

The NBC-Red lineup (carried by WMAQ) included Carmen Cavallaro, Joe Reichman, Tiny Bradshaw, Tommy Dorsey, Ray Herbeck and Wingy Manone.

WENR and the NBC-Blue network rang in the new year with the bands of Glenn Miller, Muggsy Spanier, Henry King, Jack Teagarden, Vincent Lopez, Phil Harris, Paul Whiteman and many others.

The radio networks remained loyal to the "New Year's Eve Dance Party" programming long after the big band era ended. CBS continued its New Year's Eve lineup late into the 1960's, while NBC concluded its New Year's Eve run on January 1, 1973.

The New Year's Eve fare carried by the networks began to reflect of the changing tastes and times, and smaller groups, including those led by Dizzy Gillespie and Ramsey Lewis were featured along with established big bands like those led by Harry James, Count Basie and Lawrence Welk.

For many of his fans Guy Lombardo will forever be associated with New Year's Eve.

Lombardo and his Royal Canadians were a yearly tradition for more than five decades, first on radio, beginning in 1929, and later on television, starting in 1954.

The Lombardo band became so strongly identified with the holiday that it even adapted "Auld Lang Sync" as its theme song.

Guy died on November 5, 1977 in Tampa, Florida, yet the Royal Canadians still continue on to this day under the leadership of Al Pierson.

For many, however, New Year's Eve isn't quite the same without Guy Lombardo himself leading the Royal Canadians. ■

EVERY NIGHT
The Idol of Hollywood



in the

COLLEGE INN

BUDDY ROGERS
and his Swing Band
WITH HIS HOLLYWOOD REVUE
Invites You to
HOTEL SHERMAN'S
Greatest
NEW YEAR'S
EVE PARTIES
COLLEGE INN
SUPPER • BUDDY ROGERS AND HIS HOLLYWOOD REVUE
\$7.50
PER PERSON

BAL TABARIN
SUPPER • CHARLEY GAYLORD AND A GREAT SHOW
\$6
PER PERSON

GRAND BALLROOM
SUPPER • FRANKIE MASTERS AND A GREAT SHOW
\$5
PER PERSON

OLD TOWN ROOM
SUPPER • AL TRACE AND THE SIX SILLY SYMPHONISTS
\$3.50
PER PERSON

RESERVE EARLY FRANK. 2100

PUPPETMASTER OF THE AIR

Edgar Bergen Made Magic in an Unlikely Medium—Radio

BY ERIK J. MARTIN

Woody Allen perhaps said it best in his brilliant 1986 film homage to radio's golden age, *Radio Days*. "He's a ventriloquist on radio," said Allen, responding in utter disbelief to his co-star's praise of a fictional show starring a vaudevillian ventriloquist and his knee-high dummy. "How do you know his lips aren't moving?"

Yet, for millions of Americans, the illusion was real enough to keep Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy at or near the top of the radio ratings over many years, and to keep the program going for two decades.

Bergen got his start—quite literally, in Chicago, where he was born into a Swedish immigrant family in 1903. His parents took him on a visit to their native Sweden when Bergen was only four, and the child quickly learned the language. When his father was struck ill and retired from his job as an architect and dairyman, the family relocated to a quaint dairy farm in Michigan. There, young Edgar got his first job at age 11 working the basement furnace at a local movie theater. He worked his way up to film projector, and it wasn't long before he was also manning the theater's player piano.

The movies sparked Bergen's interest in show business. As a teen, Bergen enjoyed traveling vaudeville shows that would come into town, and fostered a special affinity for ventriloquists. Soon, he began practicing voice-throwing and investing in books about magic acts and ventriloquism. The youngster loved to entertain family and



EDGAR BERGEN
CHARLIE MC CARTHY, MORTIMER SNERD

friends, and, as he perfected his ventriloquist techniques, had a penchant for playing practical jokes on the unsuspecting.

When Bergen was only 14, his father died, and Mrs. Bergen again picked up the family and returned to Chicago. The boy took odd jobs to help make ends meet, and continued to exercise his ventriloquist skills.

Bergen's first dummy was a homemade paper-mache little boy named Rastus, which he crafted himself. The ambitious adolescent took Rastus with him to entertain fellow students at Lane Tech and Lakeview High Schools, lady attendees at the Elks Club, and at Saturday night church suppers.

But Bergen yearned for a more concrete act and a more substantial, authentic sidekick. He saved up his meager allowance

Erik J. Martin is a free-lance writer from Oak Lawn, Illinois.

PUPPETMASTER OF THE AIR

camings and paid a Chicago wood carver named Theodore Mack \$35 to craft out of pine what was to become Charlie McCarthy. Half the inspiration for Charlie's character and appearance came from a little smiling Irish street corner newsboy in Bergen's neighborhood named Charlie, whom Bergen had caricatured in his prototype sketches given to Mack. The other half came from Mack himself, who had breathed life into a piece of wood. In tribute, Bergen christened his puppet McCarthy after Mack.

Over the three months it took Mack to carve Charlie, Bergen began making plans to perform on the small, traveling Chautauqua vaudeville show circuit after graduating high school. The only problem was that his grades began to suffer as he devoted less time to books and more time to daydreaming about Charlie and his future. But his ventriloquist act so impressed the teacher who was ready to flunk him

that she agreed to tutor him and help him graduate on time.

During his summer breaks while attending Northwestern University, Bergen and McCarthy toured the Chautauqua circuits in Northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois. He landed his first major circuit booking at age 21 for the Western Circuit, an old vaudeville mainstay touring troupe. Two years later, Bergen traveled the big RKO Circuit, and, over the next ten years, he and his dummy began earning a reputation as masters of hilarity.

During this period from the mid-1920s to 1930s, Bergen would often get telegraph requests and perform on a moment's notice in places as far-off as South America and Europe, often declining lucrative offers in the States just for the chance to travel and perform abroad. Tours of England, Russia, and even Sweden—where Bergen and McCarthy literally spoke the vernacular—followed, which included regular routines like "The Doctor's Office," and "Cocktails at Five." The duo even did a

Highlights in the History of Bergen & McCarthy on (and off) Radio

1936: Bergen and McCarthy appear as regular guests on Rudy Vallee's program.

1937: The duo are given their own weekly hour-long show sponsored by Chase and Sanborn coffee, which quickly rockets to the top of the ratings.

1937: Don Ameche and Mae West perform the infamous "Adam and Eve" comedy sketch that, due to West's sultry voice, got her black-listed from radio appearances and nearly forced the program's cancellation.

1937: Bergen and McCarthy begin appearing in movie shorts and feature films; Bergen is bestowed a special Academy Award for comedy creation.

1938: Bergen's NBC show plays opposite Orson Welles' famous "War of the Worlds" broadcast on CBS—permitting Welles to take advantage of the nation's largest weekly audience switching stations during *Chase and Sanborn Hour* commercials.

1939: Charlie is kidnapped from Bergen by a reporter crony looking to play a practical

joke on the ventriloquist; the dummy is promptly returned, however, when the FBI is called in to investigate.

1939: Mortimer Snerd is added to the cast.

1940: Chase and Sanborn shortens the show to 30 minutes, and highly paid supporting stars Don Ameche, Nelson Eddy and Dorothy Lamour are cut in favor of weekly guest stars. Abbott and Costello join the show for one season.

1942-45: Bergen and McCarthy entertain U.S. service personnel stationed across the globe during World War II.

1944: Effie Klinker is introduced; Podine Puffington would debut as a side character several years later.

1948: For the first time since its debut, Bergen's show falls out of the list of the top 5 rated programs, remains in the top 7.

1949: Like Jack Benny and Amos 'n' Andy, Bergen leaves NBC for CBS.

1957: Bergen and McCarthy's last radio program after 20-plus years on the air.



brief stint with the Ziegfield Follies in 1934.

By 1935, with vaudeville dying, Bergen took his wooden creation out to the nite club scene. A more sophisticated audience called for a more spruced up dummy. Soon, the bow-tie wearing, tuxedoed and monocled Charlie with a slight British accent—an image Bergen borrowed by permission from *Esquire Magazine's* Esky mascot—was born.

Bergen's next frontier—radio—wasn't so easy to conquer, at first. The hardest working ventriloquist in show biz auditioned for WMAQ Chicago while in town to perform at the Chez Paree club. Station manager Clarence Menzer was blunt: "Your act just won't work on radio," he told Bergen.

In 1936, however, Bergen and McCarthy's shtick at the Rainbow Room nite club in Manhattan caught the attention of Noel Coward, who invited the duo to entertain at his private party. The expo-

sure garnered from this performance was noticed by Chicago's J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, which booked talent for the Rudy Vallee radio program. The duo were invited to perform on Vallee's show, and captured the ears of audiences immediately.

By mid-December of that year, Bergen and McCarthy were regulars on Vallee's program. In May of 1937, Bergen's years of struggling and persistence finally paid off—he and Charlie had landed their very own show: NBC's *Chase and Sanborn Hour*, sponsored by the famous coffeemaker. In a move that was almost unprecedented at the time, Bergen—a virtual unknown to national radio audiences until a few months earlier—was given the lion's share time slot on radio, Sunday nights at seven. The gamble paid off when the program became number one in the listener ratings only weeks after its debut, and remained at the top from 1937 to 1940, and from 1942-43. It also stayed in the top

PUPPETMASTER OF THE AIR

seven for 15 straight years.

Bergen's show helped launch the career of Don Ameche, who emceed the program and played Professor Gazolla, as well as the character John Bickerson opposite Frances Langford in the classic Bickersons sketch that soon became its own spinoff show. Abbott and Costello even got a jump start in show business by appearing weekly for one season in 1940 on the *Chase and Sanborn Hour*.

The show also benefitted from a great arsenal of radio pros, including, throughout its long run, British orchestra leader Ray Noble, announcers Ken Carpenter, Ben Alexander and Bill Goodwin, vocalists Anita Ellis and Dale Evans, and regular side players like Pat Patrick (Ersel Twing), Barbara Jo Allen (Vera Vague), Richard Haydn (Professor Lemuel Carp) and Jim Backus.

Frequent guests on the Bergen and McCarthy program included W.C. Fields, opera singer Nelson Eddy and actress Dorothy Lamour (all three of whom were regulars on the show in its early run), George Raft, John Barrymore, Barbara Stanwyck, Orson Welles, Jane Powell, and even Vallee, the man who gave Bergen his first broadcast break.

McCarthy's long running on-air feuds with Fields (who Charlie always needled about his drinking while Fields threatened to turn him into kindling wood) and Fred Allen generated legendary comedy bits, and Bergen and McCarthy's appearances on other radio shows like the *Jack Benny Program* only added to the duo's immense popularity.

Like Benny's "Wait a minute!" and "Hmmm," Bergen's program contributed several catch-phrases to radio's repertoire of signature lines: Charlie's "I'll clip ya! So help me, I'll mow ya down!"

Mortimer's "Ya don't say," and Bergen's retort, "Mortimer, how can you be so stupid?"

Charlie's personality as a sarcastic ham, flirtatious wolf with the female guest stars, and mischievous schoolboy kept constantly under the parental eye of Bergen, tickled the funny bones of American audiences. Bergen played the perfect straightman while Charlie got almost all the laughs. Some of the show's most hilarious responses came when Charlie would catch Bergen flubbing a line, moving his lips or letting his Swedish accent show—any combination of which would trigger Charlie to cut down his master with one ad-libbed, knee-slapping line after another.

Over the years, Bergen added new dummies to the show, including the brainless country yokel Mortimer Snerd (a big hit among audiences), the man-hungry, unsightly old maid Effie Clinker (an occasional character that wasn't as popular), and, for a short time, Podine Puffington. One mainstay character was non-dummy Ersel Twing, who had an annoyingly high pitched twang in his voice, and who was known to say "Friends...and you are my friends. Friends..."

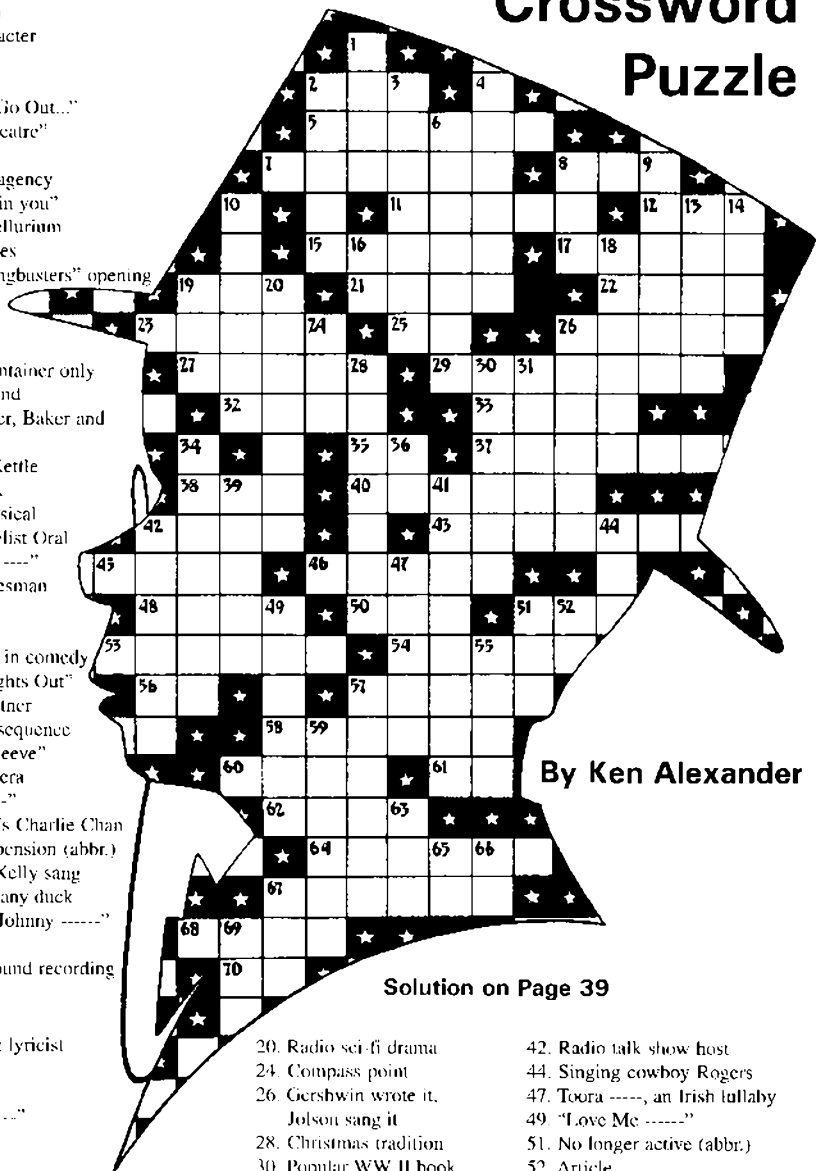
In the late 40s, Bergen and McCarthy changed sponsorship to Royal Pudding and, later, to Coca-Cola. The program finally ended its long run in 1957, but the dummy and the straight man went back to the stage to perform for live audiences. Bergen went on to do serious acting in a number of films and made-for-TV movies, including the pilot for the series *The Waltons*.

But by 1978, an exhausted Bergen officially retired from show business, and died later that same year on September 30. He is survived by Charlie, Mortimer and Effie, who are on permanent display at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago's Cultural Center. ■

A Charlie McCarthy Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

2. Unhappy
5. Developed, pectorally
7. European country
8. Actor O'Brien
11. Stallone character
12. Belief
15. Greek letter
17. "---- Song Go Out..."
19. "---- Radio Theatre"
21. Adherents
22. Government agency
23. "---- entertain you"
25. Symbol for tellurium
26. What a DJ does
27. Like the "Gangbusters" opening
29. Sketch
32. Greek root
for wind
33. One metal container only
35. Hollywood land
37. Benny's Parker, Baker and
Day
38. Perkins and Kettle
40. It strikes back
42. 1958 film musical
43. Radio Evangelist Oral
45. "The Road to ----"
46. Athenian statesman
48. Emcee Parks
50. Sailor
51. Bob's partner in comedy
53. He wrote "Lights Out"
54. Johnson's partner
56. Alphabetical sequence
57. "----- Gilderleeve"
58. Early soap opera
"Painted ----"
60. Janney; radio's Charlie Chan
61. Government pension (abbr.)
62. Where Gene Kelly sang
64. Owned by a zany duck
67. "Yours truly, Johnny ----"
68. "---- Quiz"
70. Early radio sound recording



By Ken Alexander

Solution on Page 39

DOWN

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oscar winning lyricist
Sammy 2. Tonto's steed 3. "Mommie ----" 4. Leaf Pores 6. Sang like Ella 8. Hawaiian dish 9. Connects 10. Radio show "Can ---- This?" 13. Newman-Redford film 14. Goat's greetings 16. Human's greetings 18. Actress Ida 19. Author Deighton | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Radio sci-fi drama 24. Compass point 26. Gershwin wrote it,
Jolson sang it 28. Christmas tradition 30. Popular WW II book 31. Sour 34. "Ipana, for the ---- of
Beauty" 36. System of radio
transmission (abbr.) 39. Soap opera "When ----
Marries" 41. Difficult questions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 42. Radio talk show host 44. Singing cowboy Rogers 47. Toora ----, an Irish lullaby 49. "Love Me ----" 51. No longer active (abbr.) 52. Article 55. Lip 57. Cordial, cheerful 59. Soap opera "---- Life" 63. Sports organization 65. Musical note 66. Twelve-mo. period 67. Period 69. Comic Skelton |
|---|---|---|

The Pearl Harbor Movie

How Bogie Almost Bombed

BY RICHARD W. O'DONNELL

Humphrey Bogart was never a big hit on radio. He did *Lux Radio Theatre* and, along the way, guest-starred on a string of radio shows, the most notable being a hilarious visit he paid to the great Jack Benny in the forties.

In general, though, Bogie did not achieve greatness on the airwaves. In the early fifties, teamed with wife Lauren Bacall, he did have some success with a syndicated show called *Bold Venture*. Humphrey was Slate Shannon and Lauren was Sailor Duval, his love interest and co-adventurer. The setting was Havana before Castro got there and most of the action took place on Bogie's boat, *Bold Venture* — and that explains the title.

There was calypso music, the usual suave villains, nasty cutthroats, and tempting females, but the show was a bit of a bore. The movie magic of Bogie and Bacall could not be projected over the airwaves, probably because Hemingway did not write the scripts. The show had a big audience at the start, but soon faded away and soon forgotten.

All things considered, *Bold Venture* was one of Bogie's few failures, once he hit the big time in the thirties and forties. However, just as he became a major star with *The Maltese Falcon*, there was a film that almost wrecked his career.

In 1941 Bogie made a film that might well have been his most embarrassing moment on the silver screen. All by himself, the toughest of the screen's tough guys

prevented a Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. How about that?

Happily for Bogie, the film had its ending changed before it was released. The late actor couldn't prevent a Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, because on December 7, 1941 such an event did happen, and it was a disaster for the United States.

Obviously, the ending of the film had to be changed, so Warner Bros., the producers, went back to the drawing board. Instead of Pearl Harbor, it was decided Bogie would save the Panama Canal.

And he did just that in a movie called *Across the Pacific*. Released in 1942, not long after the Pearl Harbor attack, it was a box office success. The black and white film is available on video, if you haven't seen it.

Across the Pacific, it should be noted, certainly helped to lift the nation's sagging spirit. At the time, American fighting men were losing the Pacific battle. Up there on the screen, at least, Bogie was able to win one for us. It wasn't Pearl Harbor, but it was the Panama Canal, and that was something to crow about.

In retrospective, even though it was a hit, the Brothers Warner must have been sorry they ever decided to make the movie. For one thing, there was the title. It was *Across the Pacific* and not once in the flick was there any action in the Pacific Ocean. The original script called for a boat trip across the Pacific from San Francisco to Honolulu.

After Pearl Harbor was bombed, changes were made in a hurry. It became a cruise down the coast to Panama. A fortune had

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AP. 46
PICTOFEST

ACROSS THE PACIFIC (1942) starring Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor and Sidney Greenstreet

been spent publicizing the film as *Across the Pacific* and the producers were stuck with the title.

Mary Astor, who co-starred with the legendary Bogart, recalled “*Across the Pacific* was the idea of the studio to cash in on the success of *The Maltese Falcon* with a quick follow-up of almost the same cast together again — at least Bogie, Sydney Greenstreet and me. John Huston, who directed *Falcon* also directed *Across the Pacific*.”

The ending of the film was made before the beginning. As a result, the film was still in production when Pearl Harbor was hit, even though Bogie had already saved it in sequences previously filmed.

Astor continued: “Since much of the plot concerned a ship sailing to Honolulu, and thwarting the plans of the Japanese to blow up Pearl, there was considerable re-

writing to do, so we had to close the picture down. It was kind of a creepy feeling to have been talking about ‘the plans of the Japanese’ in the picture, and have them practically blueprint our script. There was some talk about shelving the picture, but we reopened shooting a short time later. Then we ran into more trouble when the government started shipping out our Nisei cast.”

During the early months of the war, Japanese-Americans were shipped by the government to camps on the West Coast. It was feared some of them may have been involved in espionage operations for the enemy.

Fortunately, this was not true, and Nisei soldiers fighting for the United States during the second world war added a glorious page to the nation’s history.

According to Astor: “A little indignation

HOW BOGIE ALMOST BOMBED

and some wire pulling kept the Nisei performers with us at least until the picture was finished. A world-shaking tragedy comes into our lives, and characteristically all anybody was thinking of was, 'How will it affect the film?'"

Another ironic twist took place when director Huston, who had enlisted in the Army while filming the movie, was unexpectedly summoned to Washington. He received a telegram one day ordering him to be in

Washington the next day. He was needed to make documentaries.

Another director, George Sherman, was called in to complete the film, which was based on a *Saturday Evening Post* magazine serial by Robert Carson.

In the film, Bogie is tossed out of the military, heads for Canada and books passage on a Japanese freighter. In reality, even though he is pretending to be a disgraced officer, he is actually on a spy mission for our side.

On the freighter, he meets Mary Astor and captures her heart. Sydney Greenstreet, a villain if ever there was one, is also a passenger, and he bribes Bogart to get him to work for the bad guys. They arrive in Panama, and things start happening.

Without revealing any further details, in case you want to rent the film, let it suffice to say Bogie saves the Panama Canal in grand and glorious fashion — even though the odds were about 100 to 1 against him. Maybe more.

The action takes place in a town called



PHOTOFEST

Bogie is distracted by Mary Astor in "Across the Pacific"

Cristobal in the Canal Zone. However, the Oriental who managed the Pan American Hotel, where several key scenes took place, seemed more Hawaiian than Panamanian. And there weren't any Panamanians on the hotel staff, either.

Towards the end, Bogie goes to the Ewa Theatre to see a film.

The audience is loaded with Orientals, and they are enjoying a Japanese movie — until the shooting starts. Honolulu in the old days, had a number of Japanese movie

theatres. It is doubtful if there ever were any of them in Panama.

Nevertheless, Bogie found one in Panama! The shootout in the theatre is the one segment of the film where it is obvious the action is not taking place in Panama.

In the rest of the film, the producers seemed to have done a decent job of covering their tracks. There are a few minor errors here and there, but nothing serious.

Humphrey Bogart once told an interviewer he was certain his career might have been in trouble if the original version had been released before the December 7 attack.

"It's a good thing that film was never put out with the Pearl Harbor ending," he stated. "It might well have been, if we had filmed it during the summer of 1941, as was originally planned. For some reason, it was delayed. We didn't start work on that film until the fall of 1941.

"The story line had Greenstreet as the fanatical head of a spy ring. They were supposed to be after the American secret code, so they could find out the best time to attack Pearl Harbor. Now you must remember the movie was in production before the second world war broke out, so we didn't come right out and say the villains were Japanese. But from their slanted eyes, it wasn't too difficult to guess who they were supposed to be. The Chinese were on our side in those days.

"Once Pearl Harbor was attacked, we came right out and said they were Japanese spies. But not until then. Of course, by that time, there were a few other changes we had to make in the movie. We had to switch the ending to the Panama Canal."

With a smile, Bogie added: "I've often wondered what would have happened to my career if that film had been released — say, at Thanksgiving. My fans might not have believed in me any more." ■



Our Readers Write

WE GET LETTERS

PEORIA, IL — I found Richard O'Donnell's article "The Great Kemo Sabe Debate" (Oct-Nov, 1997) very interesting. One matter he didn't touch on is found on a couple of Lone Ranger tapes I have in which not only does Tonto call the Lone Ranger *Kemo Sabe*, but the Lone Ranger calls Tonto the same name. Any more information on this? I certainly miss your Saturday broadcasts since moving here. — **FR. ROBERT A. L'HOMME**

(ED. NOTE) — If, according to Clayton Moore who played the Lone Ranger on TV for so many years, *Kemo Sabe* meant "faithful friend" (as mentioned in O'Donnell's article), then it would not be unusual for the Ranger to call his Indian companion his "faithful friend." And thank you for being a faithful reader.)

OAK PARK, IL — I really enjoyed your article about Woolworth's (Oct-Nov, 1997) but are you *sure*? Born in '42, I grew up in an apartment on Neva (one block east of Harlem) just south of Grand and lived there 'til I left to get married in '66. But I remember TWO dime stores: Kresge's (the forerunner on K-Mart) and Neisner's. Was Woolworth's a predecessor of one of them? Also, to add a bit of trivia to the excellent article by Richard W. O'Donnell, "The Great Kemo Sabe Debate," a good friend of mine, Doug Wyman, who lives in Oak Park, studied in Detroit under John [Tonto] Todd from 1947 to 1951. In 1949 he appeared on two Lone Ranger shows, once as a bad guy and another, when Todd was ill, as Tonto. Who knows if he may have been Todd's successor except for the fact that, shortly thereafter, General Mills became the sponsor and decided to cancel the "live" broadcasts [and record all the shows]. I love the shows and the *Digest* is fantastic. Keep up the great work! — **JAY CHAMPELLI**

(ED. NOTE) — Our memory tells us that there was a Woolworth's at Grand and Harlem. But you know about memories...)

CHICAGO — I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the Big Band Special on *TWTD* Aug. 30. I was able to tape it all and Karl



MORE LETTERS

Pearson did a great job. Perhaps he could give us 30 minutes of Desi Arnaz and some of the lesser known, but quality bands of yesterday. —**FRANK HORN**

KENOSHA, WISCONSIN— I just listened to "Jolson Sings Again" (Sept. 27) and heard "Jolson Story" (Aug. 23). I am a Jolson fan and regret that he was a little before my time. I have his records, both movies of his life, and a CD of his hits. I was introduced to Jolson by the father of my best friend when I was 12 or 13 years old. Her father played his records and when I went over to baby-sit with my friend for her younger sister and brother, we would listen to his records. I have been a fan ever since. I read the article by Clair Schulz in the *Digest* (Aug-Sept, 1997). I'm afraid I was not aware of some things about Al Jolson, such as his super ego, and his philandering and gambling, in his private life, but I'm hooked and will remain a big fan forever.

—**DOROTHY DALPAOS**

CHICAGO— I'm a big fan of your Saturday afternoon program. I enjoy all old time radio shows, but you are the reason I think your *TWTD* program is the best ever. Your love for old time radio and the knowledgeable background information about the shows and celebrities does much to enhance the

NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

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enjoyment I receive from listening. I love your *Nostalgia Digest*. It's a treasure trove of information and fond memories. I get my copies at Metro Golden Memories, wouldn't take a chance on it being damaged in the mail. Special recognition to all article contributors, especially Ken Alexander. Being born in 1947, I grew up mostly with old time television. However, as I grew older I soon realized my true enjoyment was with old time radio, the big bands, and early recorded music in general. I now fondly include on that list "Those Were The Days" and you! —**ED BRANDT, SR.**

AKRON, OHIO— Bob Kolososki's column "Invaders from Space" (Aug-Sept, 1997) was excellent. "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" is my favorite old Sci Fi movie. I have a letterbox copy and a colorized copy. I wonder if he could do a "Film Clips" on Deanna Durbin. In the last two years over a dozen of her films have been released on video and a select few have played on AMC and TCM. I haven't been able to find any background on her at all from the past or present. One of her leading men was Robert Stack, who keeps busy in television to this day. I did read in the *Digest* article "North of the Border — Radio Stars from Canada" (June-July, 1997), that she was from Winnipeg and in the early '30s appeared on the Eddie Cantor show. *Nostalgia Digest* is one of the highlights of my life. Keep it coming. —**PAUL MERLO**

LOCKPORT, IL— I'm writing to let you know how much I enjoy your show. I tune in every Saturday and have spent a small fortune in blank cassettes for recording! Even though I'm only 30 years old (a youngster to your generation, Chuck!), I love old time radio. I've been listening for the last 15 years. When I was very young I listened to the Lone Ranger, Cisco Kid, Gunsmoke and The Shadow, which scared me to death, but I loved it! —**MEDINA A. JONES**

PARK RIDGE, IL— Plaudits to Clair Schulz for his great article on my late cousin Jack Carson (June-July, 1997). It was indeed generative of many grand old memories. His mother (Elsa Brunke Carson) and my dad (Theodore Brunke) were sister and brother. Jack's life was unfortunately cut short by that dreadful disease cancer, but his

memory lives on for a number of us with an affection for old time radio. —**JOHN F. BRUNKE**

CHICAGO— I remember listening to many of the programs that you play now when they were originally on in the early '50s. I used to sit in front of my family's radio with my hands on my knees and let my imagination run with the programming. Thanks for remembering a time when we were more considerate and thoughtful; a kinder, gentler time. Thanks for keeping those wonderful memories alive. **RAY MITCHELL**

MT. PROSPECT, IL— When I heard the opening theme on your September 13 program ("Radio's Theme Songs"), I thought at last, a new theme! It sounded real good and uplifting and happy and I recognized it as a radio theme. I liked this Fibber McGee and Molly theme and hope it is adopted. Your regular theme is sad and kind of depressing. —**WARREN KOSTELNY**

(ED. NOTE— We like the Fibber McGee theme, too, but after more than 27 years of using the "Those Were The Days" theme, we just can't bring ourselves to make a change. But we've had a lot of favorable response to our program about radio theme songs and we'll probably schedule a second edition sometime in the near future.)

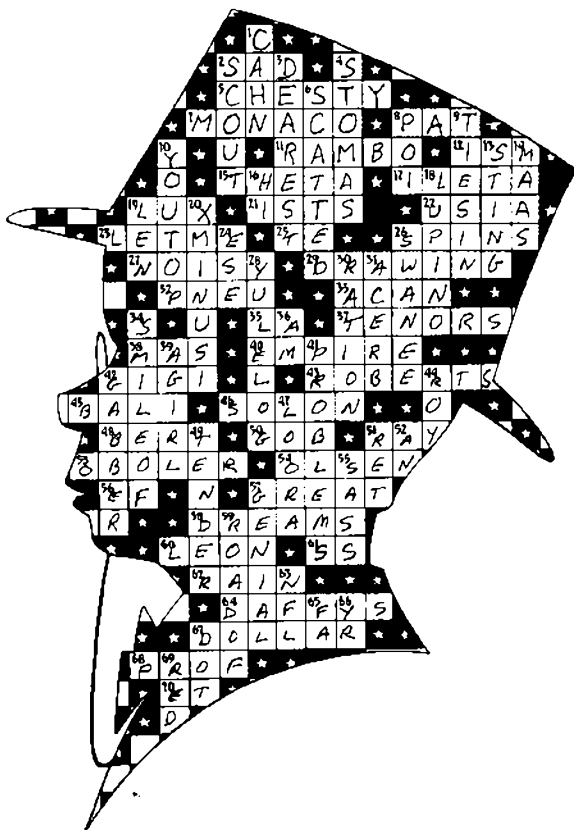
TINLEY PARK, IL— I've always found pleasure in your *Nostalgia Digest*, but in recent months, if possible, they seem even better. Part of this is because of Ken Alexander's contributions. Ken and I are about the same age. We went to different schools together, he on the north side and I on the south side. Needless to say, I've shared many of the experiences that he relates, including entering high school at an early age. I'm writing this as I listen to your program about radio's theme

songs. Some time ago I realized that often it's the theme music more than the program that fosters such strong feelings of nostalgia in myself. —**D. R. MARTIN**

LANSING, IL— My family especially enjoys the Six Shooter with Jimmy Stewart. How long did this program run? Why aren't there more available on cassette? The announcer mentions that the Six Shooter was written by Frank Burt. Did he write anything else? —**ROBERT MC GAGHIE**

(ED. NOTE— The Six Shooter was on NBC for just one season, beginning September 20, 1953. Quite a number of the Six Shooter broadcasts are available on tape — Metro Golden Memories carries four sets. Frank Burt created the Britt Ponset character and wrote the scripts for the program. Burt also wrote for other radio series, most notably *Dragnet*.)

Charlie McCarthy Crossword Solution





Museum of Broadcast Communications

museum pieces

Reported by Margaret Warren

A trip to the Loop is a must during the holiday season. State Street, with all its lights and festive store windows, and then on up along North Michigan Avenue and more of the same. During this year's trip, especially if you are playing host to visiting friends or relatives, take time to come to the Museum of Broadcast Communications and enjoy the exhibits.

There's the **Fibber McGee and Molly** display, complete with that famous closet. Go ahead, open the door.

There's **Jack Benny's** legendary vault waiting for you to tip toe in.

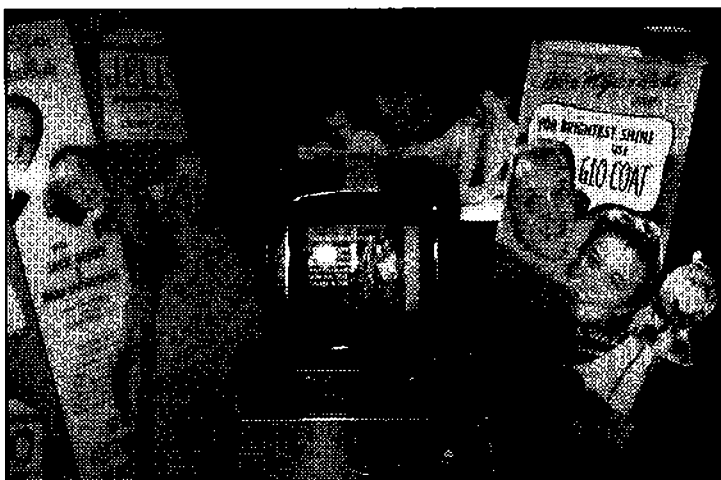
Stop at the displays that pay tribute to classic comedy and adventure radio programs. A push of a button gives you sound clips and pictorial backgrounds of some of the great programs, including **Fred Allen**, **Red Skelton** and **The Lone Ranger**.

Fans of early kids TV shows can get up-close

to some of their heroes like **Elmer the Elephant** and **Garfield Goose**. See **Bill Jackson's** famous pals: **The Old Professor**, **Dirty Dragon**, **Mother Plumtree**, and more.

Don't forget to stroll around the museum gift shop and pick up a treasure or two for broadcast buffs on your list. Everything from key chains to classic radios, books by and about the stars, tapes and T-shirts — dozens and dozens of terrific items.

AND MAKE A NOTE on your 1998 calendar: that wonderful comedy genius and creator of **M*A*S*H**, **Larry Gelbart** will stop by the Museum in March for a visit with fans. Stay tuned for details.



PUSH A BUTTON and back you go to those good old days of radio comedy in this special exhibit in the Radio Hall of Fame at the Museum of Broadcast Communications.

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← GUY LOMBARDO

was not the only bandleader who celebrated New Year's Eve year after year on radio. Read Karl Pearson's Notes from the Bandstand, page 26.

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