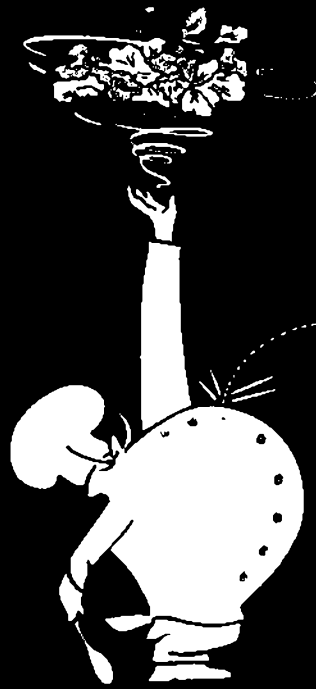


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## CHUCK SCHADEN'S NOSTALGIA DIGEST

BOOK TWENTY-EIGHT

CHAPTER FIVE

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2002

### *The Chicago Stadium, 1928-1994*

BY GINO LUCCHETTI

You know you're getting old when you've outlived a famous landmark building.

Although being only six years old at the time, I was there when the first shovelfuls of dirt were dug for the start of the building of the Chicago Stadium, and I was among the first visitors to 1800 W. Madison Street for the Grand Opening in March, 1928.

A year or so later, I paid a respectful visit to the building for the wake held in that awesome structure for its "father," Patrick T. "Paddy" Harmon, who conceived it, implemented it, nursed it to fruition, was its midwife and assumed its paternity. That edifice was, indeed, his masterpiece, his magnum opus, his pride and joy, and possibly it could be considered his tombstone.

The Chicago Stadium was also a technical marvel-of-its-time structure. A deceptively simple, almost austere block-like but awesome structure that held sway as Chicago's sports and spectacle venue for practically every major or minor event held in the city, be it a benefit, a bash, a political barn-burner, a

*Gino Lucchetti of Oak Park, Illinois is an observer of the news of the day and his letters can often be found on the Op-Ed pages of Chicago newspapers. His memories of days gone by occasionally reach the pages of the Nostalgia Digest.*

passing fancy, or a mere fad. Boxing matches, wrestling bouts, circuses, six-day bike races, roller derbies, dance marathons, hockey, ice spectaculars, political conventions and even, when Chicago's winter weather of 1932 made Wrigley Field unusable, a Bears' National League Playoff game site.

If an event planned was to be huge, loud, boisterous and/or too big for other venues, it would be held at The Chicago Stadium. If ever there was a Chicago landmark, a cynosure of all eyes — it was that behemoth of a building.

My childhood home was at 25 S. Lincoln Street (currently Wolcott Street), a half-block south of the stadium site. If it were still there it would be just about in center-court of the new United Center.

I can recall being shooed away quite often by the work crews when the Stadium's construction birthpangs began in early 1928, always mischievously underfoot at the building site while watching wide-eyed the assemblage of huge, powerful mechanical monsters clanking, grinding, roaring, straining as in a nightmare, yet so fascinating to a bug-eyed, nosy, bewildered, inquisitive kid. Machines that began gouging out a hole for its base, so abysmal that my buddy — and fellow sidewalk construction "expert" — and I speculated it might whisk us to China if we stumbled into it. The excavation was so deep that it

penetrated well beyond the ordinary topsoil into a layer of clay that was so pure that it was suitable for modeling with it. My two cousins, who were budding artists and sometime students at the Chicago Art Institute, actually used the clay for that purpose.

I gaped at it and hung around it as it went up miraculously. Day by day, month by month, a mass of brick and stone becoming a fortress-like building that took up a complete city block. It was a structure that was developing an identity because of the athletic images that were sculptured on friezes around its outside: athletic figures and sports events. A massive, uncluttered arena with unbroken sight lines, no vision impairments, no poor seats. In short, a modern Roman Colosseum in every way, except for blood sports (excluding hockey, of course). It became a building that would assume a personality that rivaled Chicago's: big, broad, muscular and capable of prodigious, extravagant, important things.

As your ordinary impish young squirt, capable of climbing like a monkey and quick and sly as a ferret, I was all over the place and usually in it. And, because I was as curious as any bewildered kid in some enchanted land, I could always find an unguarded entrance to worm my way in by, or squirm through.

If a circus was running there, there was always a door or gate big enough to let an elephant and the circus wagons and cages pass through, so who'd expect a kid wouldn't be able to sneak in also. If it were a special day, say, for kids from some school, or maybe a scout troop, to attend, who could tell if there was one more rambunctious street-wise kid who really wasn't part of it mingling with the horde being let in?

My curiosity never let me pass up a

chance to get in if I could find an open door, a loose canvas flap, a tent's fly. Maybe a doorman, or just some kindly cop, might wink and turn his back to let a young squirt ooze by. After all, they, too, were young once.

I recall one especially interesting escapade. I was in that cavernous building and decided to explore it. I wandered through it, up flights of stairs, around corners, through doors that led where? — who knows? who cares? It was adventuresome and exciting! Then I found an unlocked steel door. In a flash I was through it and —gulp!— out onto a steel-mesh walk-way just below the ceiling with a great but awesome view of the arena at what seemed to me a mile above whatever was going on below! One wide-eyed look down convinced me I was in a place where I definitely shouldn't be.

My immediate first thought was to bolt the scene. I had heard the steel slam behind me, but—ohmygawd! what if that door had automatically locked? My first tug at it didn't open it and I wondered about the scene I'd be in when I was discovered cringing and blubbing on that frail steel mesh walk until someone found me—especially my older brother and my sisters, who I'd hear mockingly cackling about it for the next hundred years— or how loudly my voice would echo through the stadium when I hollered, or maybe whimpered, for help, hours later.

The door hadn't opened easily on the first try because I had panicked and hadn't turned the knob before tugging at it. The next time it opened. Whew! With a gasp of relief I scooted out that door and backtracked, scampering all the way until I found an exit where I pulled up short, gathered my wits and, with as much aplomb as I could muster, I

sauntered past the guard as if I'd become bored with whatever prosaic events were going on. To this day, if I'm exiting a strange building and decide to go through a fire door or some unfamiliar exit, I don't, until I try the knob on the other side to see if it remains unlocked.

Hockey in the late 1920s and early '30s was very big and there was a league of semi-pro teams that were company sponsored. I can recall only one name, the Baby Ruth team, probably because it was also a candy bar, a sweet-tooth being one of my human weaknesses. I remember seeing some other sports and being bored by them. But seven day bicycle races, roller derbies and marathon dances didn't remain popular for too long.

A final impression lingers: the sound of that humongous monster, The Chicago Stadium's prodigious pipe organ. It played appropriate, if not memorably inspiring, background music, pretty much the way organs are used today at sporting events. As massive and stolid as the building was, Al McIgard—the only name connected to it that I can recall—

could make the entire house shudder when he opened up on its forest of pipes, some big as telephone poles, and went into organ overdrive loud enough to make one's dental fillings vibrate. That happened when whatever was going on in the spectacle-of-the-day called for some especially enthusiastic acknowledgment.

Possibly what is just as amazing as the Stadium's massiveness and ubiquitousness on the Chicago scene was that this majestic stone and steel marvel which was still utilitarian—even after sixty-six years of continuous and steady use—had been built for the trifling sum of seven million dollars. What a bargain! What it earned in dollars or reaped in benefits is immeasurable.

Maybe Paddy Harmon, who died virtually impoverished by today's standards, would be honored as the man who found gold on Madison Street and gave billions of memories to millions of Chicagoans and Midwesterners. He was a man with a dream who turned it into concrete and steel reality. ■

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## *Hello, Out There in Radioland!*

### MOVING DAYS

When we began *Those Were The Days* in 1970, our program originated in the studios of WNMP (later changed to WLTD) on Lee Street in Evanston.

In 1975, after switching from WLTD to WNIB, we began broadcasting the program from our own studio on Cicero Avenue in Chicago.

Five years later, in 1980, we moved the program to another studio, one we built on Waukegan Road in Morton Grove.

In 1987, we transferred our broadcast equipment to Chicago's South Loop when the Museum of Broadcast Communications opened in River City.

When the Museum relocated in 1992, we relocated with them to the Chicago Cultural Center.

This year, after 15 years in the Museum, we decided the time had come for us to make another move. On June 22 we began originating our Saturday afternoon broadcast from the studios of WDCB, on the campus of the College of DuPage, in suburban Glen Ellyn.

We'll stay in DuPage County for a while -- we're not certain for just how long -- but at least we'll be able to keep a watchful eye on the new antenna tower!

--Chuck Schaden

## COVER STORY

Abbott and Costello

# Masters of Slapstick

BY WAYNE KLATT



**ABBOTT:** How stupid can you be?

**COSTELLO:** How stupid do you want me to be?

At the time they said this, in *Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy*, Costello had lost weight for his health and had modified his piping voice, and Abbott had gained weight from middle age, and so there was little physical difference between them. The relationship was still the same as when they had made their first film, *One Night in the Tropics*, 15 years before. But this time they tried something new. Abbott took his share of slapstick. He falls from the sky and into a cart, he gets hit with a camera, he is pushed through a ceiling, and he falls off a camel. Yet none of this gets a laugh because we never see his reactions, and that was what Costello was all about.

It's hard to understand how a vaudeville team could be so wildly successful without knowing the nature of moviegoers just before and during World War II. Universal, without the star power or top writers of rival studios, was cranking out frothy romantic comedies so that women could immerse themselves in glamour. Take *One Night in the Tropics* (1940), with sometimes witty dialogue and a plot guaranteed to end happily. The original script would not have made the kind of movie males

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*Wayne Klatt is an editor at the City News Service of the Chicago Tribune and a free-lance writer.*

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could sit through with much attention, but then the studio decided to introduce a chubby short guy and a taller man with a growling voice.

Bud Abbott and Lou Costello got as far as they did only because they were the visible members of a comedy team. The unsung third member was gag writer John Grant, who had served them well in burlesque and wrote comedy routines in most of their films.

Grant had a canny knack for knowing what would work best for the odd pairing of a sweet guy and a selfish guy who happens to be his only friend. "They weren't innovators," said Bud's nephew, Norman Abbott. "Abbott and Costello were flat-out joke men. They took existing material and did it better than anyone else." Like all burlesque house writers, Grant sometimes stole routines outright ("Slowwwly I turn..."), but usually invented or vastly improved others.

Costello, originally Cristillo, had wanted to be a heart throb (he had Irish-Italian good looks as a teenager) but, let's face it, his height and eventually his shape predestined him to be a comedian. In fact his weight, most of it put on in the late 1930s, hid the fact that he was an agile athlete, so that we are continually surprised by the stunts he could pull off. There was no trick photography in *Here Come the Co-Eds* (1945). Lou really did all those basketball shots.

He evolved into the character of a grown-up boy in 1938, two years before the team's



*The Kate Smith Hour* (1938)

Kate Smith laughs uproariously at Bud Abbott and Lou Costello

movie debut, when they were replacements for one-liner comedian Henny Youngman on the *Kate Smith Hour* radio program. When the producer complained that listeners wouldn't be able to tell their voices apart, Lou raised his a touch and added an endearing whine. Suddenly he seemed like a child being picked on by a bully or an older brother. What made this mistreatment funny was that his character usually thought he deserved it.

Bud and Lou would step up to the radio microphone cold, without a script, and just do a routine for five minutes. For the first time, people on farms and in small towns heard burlesque comedy and thought it was wonderful. When "the boys" said they had run out of material one night, they received last-minute permission to perform the one routine the producer had thought would never go over. It was called "Who's On First."

With Kate Smith at last trouncing the Rudy Vallec program in the ratings, Bud and Lou went from \$350 a week to \$1,250. They knew they were ready for Hollywood.

In later years Lou became hardened but his heart was shown early on when he saw that scenes involving the star of *One Night in the Tropics*, Allan Jones, had been cut to make room for Bud and Lou routines. "That bothers me because he's a nice guy," said Lou. How many stars would say that?

Their "overnight success" was many years in the making.

Bud (William) Abbott was born in 1895 in an Atlantic City tent — his father was a circus promoter and his mother was an elephant rider. He dropped out of school after eighth grade. At 15 he signed up as a cabin boy, according to one account, or, according to another, was Mickey Finned and shanghai'd on a freighter on its way to Norway. However he got there, he was forced to shovel coal for meals. Returning to America, Bud grew up introverted and shy and entered vaudeville comedy without a capacity for being funny.

After playing straight man for his wife, Betty, in the 1920s he developed a nattily dressed suavity, the opposite of what he was in real life. And so rather than his be-

ing boss, it was Lou who made all the decisions for the team and stood up to the producers and directors.

Lou was born in 1906 in that hotbed of show business talent, New Jersey. His early jobs ran from newsboy to prizefighter (honest). As a young man, Lou took \$2900 his father had withdrawn from his life's savings and hitchhiked to Hollywood. He barely made a living doing stunt work (in 1928 doubling for beautiful Dolores Del Rio!). Disillusioned in his dreams of becoming a movie star, he returned East and was hired as a Dutch (German) comedian in burlesque. He teamed up with Abbott in 1936 when they both needed a new partner. Without that coincidence, both no doubt would soon be obscure and burlesque comedy would have died a lot sooner.

It's hard to realize, but for most of their careers Abbott was receiving 60 per cent of the profits. That's how much the contributions of straight men were appreciated in burlesque and vaudeville. Indeed, Lou was funny almost entirely because Bud wasn't. Abbott's talent is easy to overlook, but he was appreciated as the best in the business by Groucho Marx and Mel Brooks.

Their first movie was soon forgotten, but

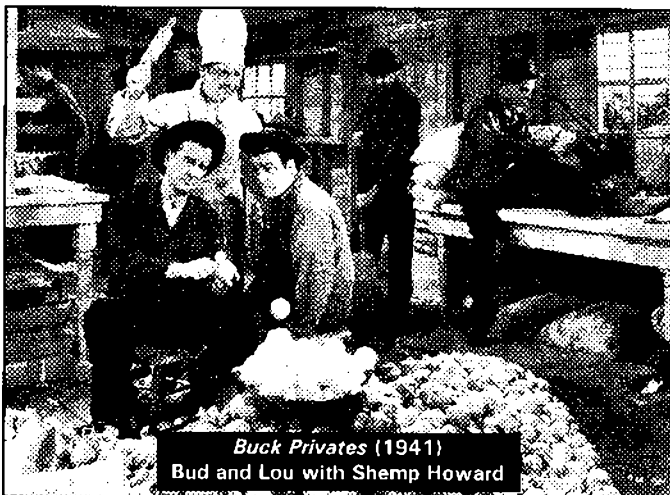
not the team. Although still in financial straits, Universal decided to risk giving the team their own feature, *Buck Privates*. Since "the boys'" specialty was verbal humor, they found ways of using slapstick to make the movie more visual, with the agile Costello always the "fall guy." When the writers couldn't think of enough gags, Bud and Lou took an hour break and devised the hilarious close-order drill scene by themselves.

Lou also quickly learned that with wrong-headed studio bosses, you had to fight for anything you wanted. As Maxine Andrews of the Andrews Sisters recalled, "he didn't fight only for himself -- he fought for everybody involved."

The studio wouldn't even pay to have the Andrews Sisters learn their dance steps for what would be their megahit, "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B," so they had to practice on their own time at night. The sisters also paid a song publisher \$200 from their own pocket so that "Apple Blossom Time" could be included when the studio wouldn't pay.

The film, made in 20 days including musical numbers, turned a \$180,000 budget into a \$4.7 million blockbuster. One reason was its timeliness: the quickie was

released just five months after the draft bill was passed. Another was that women loved it. Most women did not care for low comedy, which they regarded as common or even cruel. (Men liked Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton more than women did, and women tended to be indifferent to the Marx Brothers.)



*Buck Privates* (1941)  
Bud and Lou with Shemp Howard

PILOT/OFEST

Lou, in fact, was the first movie comedian that women actually felt comfortable with, as if he were their son or kid brother. His character had an indomitable spirit. Although he could be embarrassed or disappointed, he was never spiteful or unrealistically ambitious. His character was someone women felt they could have fun being with, yet Lou the actor also was recognized as a great clown by none other than his idol, Charlie Chaplin.



*Who Done It?* (1942)

PHOTOES1

“The boys” were given no chance to appreciate their fame. The studio rushed them into two movies, *Hold That Ghost* (there is no ghost in it) and *In the Navy*. In *Ghost*, Lou found his best female partner in Joan Davis as a professional radio screamer. But to cash in on the popularity of *Buck Privates*, the studio released the song-studded *In the Navy* first. And so two of the team’s best films hit the screens less than two months apart in 1941.

One of the writers of *Hold That Ghost*, Robert Lees, said that when he and his partner Frederic Rinaldo saw the film in the loneliness of the projector room, “we were almost so upset that we considered taking our names off it... But when we saw the picture with an audience, we were rolling in the aisles along with everybody else. You see, it was all in the timing.” The film could have been called “Abbott and Costello Save Universal.”

This inability for screenwriters to understand the logic and timing of burlesque routines was why Abbott and Costello relied on John Grant. Audiences could always tell when his talents were missing. Grant could not save some films, but without him there is no chemistry between the two men. (Grant is missing from the credits for *Rio Rita*, *Abbott and Costello in Hollywood*,

*Little Giant*, *Africa Screams*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Lost in Alaska* and *Dance with Me, Henry*.)

Studio heads, acting as rashly as Bud and Lou characters, decided to squeeze every cent of profit they could from the team, forcing them into substandard quickies. *Keep ‘Em Flying* released just four months after *Hold That Ghost* and *Ride ‘Em Cowboy*, then lent them to MGM for the forgettable *Rio Rita* (1942).

That same year “the boys” starred in a film comedy set in a radio station, *Who Done It?* and started their own radio show and kept on even after Lou had a bout with rheumatic fever. On the afternoon of November 2, 1943, his first day back to work, Lou’s sister called during a radio rehearsal and told him that his 11-month-old son had toddled into the swimming pool behind his home and drowned.

Lou raced home, but an hour before air-time he called NBC and said he would be able to make the show. Comic voice-man Mel Blanc, who was in the cast that week, believed Costello decided to go on only because that morning he had asked his wife, Anne, to keep Butch up at the radio to see if the little boy could recognize his daddy’s voice. The audience had no way of telling that the greatest tragedy of Lou’s life had



just occurred. Blanc, guest star Lana Turner, and the studio audience saw Lou break down and cry as soon as the script ended.

Bud gestured for the engineer to keep the microphone on and explained what had happened. He ended by saying, "There is nothing more that I can say except that I know all of you join me in ex-

pressing our deepest sympathy to a great trouper. Good night."

As a friend recalled, "The baby's death knocked the hell out of Lou... he was zapped of all inner life and purpose to go on." Costello's relationship grew even warmer with all children, including his daughters Carol and Paddy, and later his third girl, Chris.

Costello remained convincingly naive on screen, but now that he was realizing the cost he was growing bitter over how he and Bud were being exploited by Universal. As he would tell his frequent stunt man, Vic Parks, "Don't let [them] get you down."

Bud took to drinking between "shoots" to keep up with the demands, although alcohol never seriously interfered with his work. His discomfort around people was worsened by his epilepsy. When they were performing on stage and Lou sensed his partner was going into a seizure, the little guy found a way to hit him funny, helping his partner snap out of it, and then they finished the act quickly.

The team's low point in the decade might have been *In Society* (1944), despite a hilarious sight gag involving a bathtub. The "big scene" at the end just had shots



PHOTOFEET

of Lou spliced into footage from the fire truck chase in the W. C. Fields film *Never Give a Sucker an Even Break*.

As always, Bud and Lou "relaxed" between shoots with poker games they played on the set or in their trailers with invited friends. Poker was the curse of vaudeville, since it was an obsession born of long train rides. Now and then "the boys" would delay shooting a scene or have someone withdraw \$10,000 from a bank so they could continue their hand. Often the team would joke around the set until Lou would say "time to get serious," meaning time to be funny on camera, which was always harder work than any non-comedian can understand.

Not only did Abbott and Costello films keep coming, after each new picture Universal would release previous ones, meaning that second-run movie houses were never more than a few weeks without Bud and Lou. With the war winding down, and audiences more prepared for serious entertainment, they were seen somewhat as has-beens, all the more because they were repeating their comic routines.

In 1946, someone had the idea of separating Bud from Lou while keeping their

screen personalities. This flopped in *Little Giant* but clicked with the delightful *The Time of Their Lives*, released five months later. *Lives* not only had a solid story, it was directed by Charles Barton, who alone understood the charm of Lou's little-boy act. Barton used an extra camera in every scene to make sure he recorded all of Lou's reactions. The fun-loving Barton, who looked like a tavern bouncer, became a personal friend of Lou and went on to direct their next seven films.

Some of the maturity of *Lives* remained in the now-overlooked *Buck Privates Come Home*, the only film that ever gave my father a belly laugh (when the racing car hydrofoils). Here Bud's abrasiveness is modified to present the boys as the foster fathers of a little French girl.

Then it was back to formula fun until they made *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948), the last time moviegoers saw Bela Lugosi as Dracula and Lon Chaney, Jr. as the Wolf Man. With the script doing homage to horror films rather than spoofing them, it was the only one Lou detested. He insisted it was just not funny — unaware of how much his contribution would be. Costello came to like the film only because his beloved mother told him it was the best he ever made. Most fans and critics agree.

Seven months after *The Noose Hangs High*, and just five months before *Meet Frankenstein*, the studio unleashed *Mexican Hayride*, with the boys forced to do what they could with the tatters of a Cole Porter stage extravaganza. Costello trying to dance in drag

lingers in the mind.

The best thing about their next film, *Africa Screams* (1949), was finding Hillary Brooke. On the screen the blonde former model looks beautiful and classy, a natural foil for slapstick. Hillary didn't need the work (she went on to marry an MGM executive) but simply loved the relaxed atmosphere of working in low-budget films and television.

*Africa Screams* has moments but amounts to a misstep. Bud and Lou, this time working without gag writer John Grant, had made what amounts to a kiddie film, so the humor is silly rather than using their clever twists of logic. Notice the improvement when Grant helped them out in *Abbott and Costello Meet the Killer, Boris Karloff*, who is not the killer. The film was released just three months later in 1949.

As the decade ended, so did Abbott and Costello as a creative element in film comedy. From now on they were mainly repeating themselves. They began appearing on television in the *Colgate Comedy Hour* in 1951, and the next year starred in their own half-hour series with Hillary Brooke. (Catch the episode when Lou takes a chimpanzee to the license bureau and discovers



*The Time of Their Lives* (1946)

PHOTOFEST

rather late that he's getting a marriage license.)

The rest of their movies—despite a few good scenes here and there—were either retreads or aimed at children. As for how such a dignified actor as Charles Laughton could co-star in *Abbott and Costello Meet Captain Kidd* (1952), he was one of their biggest fans.

Lou was prostrated by exhaustion in 1953 but refused to stop working. After rebounding in *Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy* (1955), the boys left Universal when the studio refused to raise their salaries for a remake of *Fireman Save My Child*. (Universal needed the money for *Francis the Talking Mule* and *Ma and Pa Kettle* films.) That was an unfortunate decision on everyone's part.

Bud and Lou made one final film together, the painful-to-watch *Dance with Me Henry* (with Abbott for the only time playing a non-Abbott character).

Then they went their separate ways.

Lou starred in *The Thirty Foot Bride of Candy Mountain*, doing his best with a role much too young for him. But he suffered from health problems and died in his home on March 3, 1959. He was 53 years old.

Bud had often quarreled with Lou on minor matters, but now realized how much he missed the man he would call "my little buddy." Later, in 1959, the Internal Revenue Service rejected half a million dollars of Abbott's tax deductions over a seven year period. Bud appeared on television and asked his fans to send him fifty cents or a dollar. Maybe it was a joke as his son later said it was, but Bud's tone was one of



Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein (1948)

PHOTO: LSI

desperation. In a month, letters with dollar bills were "stacked up all over the house," Bud Jr. said. They amounted to about \$300.

Bud Abbott continued working now and then in nightclubs and dubbing his voice for Abbott and Costello cartoons (by now needing crutches and leg braces to get around) before he died at age 78 on April 24, 1974. The man who estimated he had made six or seven million dollars in his lifetime had been living out his final years on Social Security.

Abbott and Costello, victims of overwork and overexposure, quickly fell out of fashion, but their popularity increases now and then as times change. A clip showing "Who's On First" plays on monitors at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, and a Lou Costello web site has messages from fans as far away as Canada and the United Kingdom.

But the boys will never be appreciated in the same way because there will never again be anything like the 1940s, when a little fat man saying "I'm a baaaad boy" could take people's minds off the tragic world news of the day. ■

Tune in TWTD August 24 to hear Abbott and Costello in "Buck Privates" on the Lux Radio Theatre.

“I have a brother in the balcony...”

# Dr. I.Q.

...BY RICHARD W. O'DONNELL

Every time I watch one of those current TV shows where they give away thousands and thousands of dollars — and millions, too — my memory harks back to 1942, or maybe it was 1943, when I was almost on the *Dr. I. Q.* radio show. They chose the guy in the next seat.

For those who are too young to remember, *Dr. I. Q., the Mental Banker* was a quiz show that was on NBC from 1939 to 1948, and the year after that on ABC. During most of its run, it was on Mondays at 9:30 p.m. on the East Coast.

What made this show different was that it was a traveling quiz show. It stayed for seven weeks at a major theatre in a big city and then moved on to another showplace in another town for a stay, and then on and on.

Every second year during its run, *Dr. I. Q.* came to the Metropolitan Theatre in Boston where I grew up. Every time it did, I talked my older brother Frank into taking me to one of the Monday night movies.

*Dr. I. Q.* came on after the second feature and before the main attraction. Nine announcers from local radio shows were

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*Richard W. O'Donnell is a free-lance writer from Port Richey, Florida.*

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hired and they were situated throughout the theatre, where they could select various members of the audience and allow them to answer a question.

Lew Valentine was *Dr. I. Q.* during most of the show's run, except for three years during WW II, when a chap named Jimmy McClain filled in for him while Valentine was in the service. On the night I recall, McClain was in charge.

Prizes were silver dollars for answering the question. Five dollars for easy ones. Ten dollars for more difficult ones, and so on, up to twenty dollars. Then there was the weekly biography. You started up around fifty dollars and worked your way downward. Every time you missed a clue, you lost dough until all of the money was gone.

Losers were given a package of Mars bars. Mars Candy sponsored the show

during most of its run. The consolation prize was almost as good as being a winner of five silver dollars.

"I have a lady in the balcony," an announcer out there in the theatre would call out. Her name would be given; maybe her occupation and local town.

Then Dr. I. Q. would ask, "For five silver dollars, what type of pet did Mary have?" Once the question was answered, another announcer out there took over: "John W. Twerp is with us tonight, Dr. I. Q. He's an elevator operator."

And Dr. I. Q. would fire back: "For ten silver dollars, how many white stripes are in the American flag?" An answer was given, and on they went to the next contestant and the next question.

It was non-stop except for the commercials.

On our night of nights. I was waving and squirming and trying to get the announcer's attention. He ignored me. I was too young, I guess. Instead, he chose the guy next to me, who happened to be my brother Frank.

"You want to go on?" asked the announcer. Frank hadn't been waving. "Why not?" he replied.

Lo and behold! It was the Big One. It was the biography.

Dr. I. Q. came up with the first clue. "This famous American writer was born in Boston in 1809. Who is he?"

Almost as soon as the question was asked, Frank fired back: "Edgar Allen Poe!" My brother was right! He was the deep one in the family, always listening to classical music and reading books by 19th Century authors.

"You've won fifty silver dollars," Dr. I. Q. shouted happily. "Congratulations!" Well, the audience went wild. They cheered and there was applause. And then



Dr. I. Q. Jimmy McClain

PHOTOFEST

the show went to a commercial.

Looking back, I seem to recall that top prize may have been sixty dollars. That figure keeps popping up in my head. It was either fifty or sixty.

And, sure enough, they gave my brother his prize that night. As I recall, it wasn't actually silver dollars he received. Can you imagine lugging all that heavy dough home late at night in Boston back then? I think they gave him the green stuff. Either that or they mailed him a check.

Later on my brother gave me a ten dollar bill. "I wouldn't have gone to that show if you hadn't dragged me there," Frank reminded me. "I figure you deserve a share of the prize." In those days a ten spot was a small fortune. I was rich. But only for a few days.

*Dr. I. Q.* is only a fond memory now. They tried him on TV for a while, but he didn't work out. He's been off the air for decades, but I'll never forget the good doctor. ■

# Whatever Happened to Randolph Scott?

BY GARDNER KISSACK

It has been 40 years since his last film and more than a dozen years since his death, but his 100 movies, especially those from the 1940s and '50s, remain as a tribute to and legacy from Randolph Scott, one of Hollywood's most popular and rugged individuals who, some say, was the ultimate western star.

Although he is widely considered to be one of the most authentic cinema cowboys (he was a superb horseman, doing his own stunts in his fifties) and most of his films were westerns, his roles were as varied as his co-stars during his long film career (1928-62).

In his early years he made five films in 1932, eight in 1933 and six in 1935, where the variety was evident: *Roberta* was a musical; *So Red the Rose* took place after the Civil War; and *Follow the Fleet*, featured musical sailors Fred Astaire and Randolph Scott!

In *The Last of the Mohicans* (1936) he was Hawkeye, James Fenimore Cooper's protagonist in his tale of the French and Indian War. (A generation of grade school students first were exposed to the Cooper novel by this movie when it was shown during the 1940s and '50s.) By 1938 Shirley Temple and Scott were in *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* and in 1940 Scott teamed with Irene Dunne and Cary Grant in *My Favorite Wife*. He made *Pittsburgh* in 1942 with John Wayne and followed it in 1943 with WW II films, *Corvette K225* and *Gung Ho!*

But the western was his forte. *Abilene Town* (1946) was the first in a series of films

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*Gardner Kissack of Chicago Heights, Illinois is a volunteer tour guide for the Museum of Broadcast Communications and an admirer of Randolph Scott.*

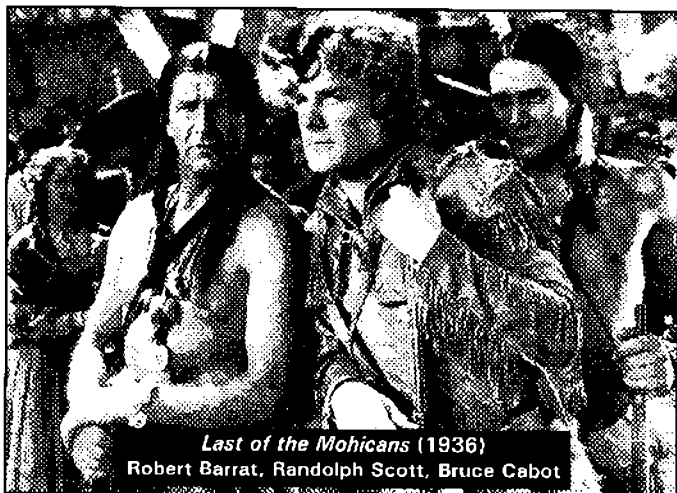
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Randolph Scott

PHOTOFEST

Scott made over the next decade and a half devoted to showing the strength of the pioneer spirit and the frontier hero: *Badmen's Territory*, *Coroner Creek*, *Canadian Pacific*, *Fighting Men of the Plains*, and *Colt* .45. When Chicago-born film director Budd Boetticher died in late 2001, his obituary noted that his Randolph Scott pictures from the 1950s "are considered classics of the genre" and his reputation as "one of the finest directors of westerns" was based on films made with Scott between 1956 and 1960: *Seven Men From Now*, *The Tall T*, *Decision at Sundown*, *Buchanan Rides Alone*, *Ride Lonesome*, and *Comanche Station* "morality plays" with Scott as "the strong-willed mythical hero."



*Last of the Mohicans* (1936)  
Robert Barrat, Randolph Scott, Bruce Cabot

PHOTOFFS

Like some other great actors, for most of the parts Scott played, he was less an actor and more a man who portrayed his own values and traits/characteristics — a man who, according to his son, C. H. Scott, “simply portrayed himself.” Unhurried.

and the friends of Randolph Scott were legion. His many good friends included Fred Astaire, with whom he loved to attend baseball games; Joel McCrea, his pal for many years who co-starred in his final film in 1962, *Ride the High Country*; John Wayne,



GARDNER KISSACK COLLECTION

going back to the days when they were in *The Spoilers* and *Pittsburgh* in 1942; fellow golfers Jack Lemmon, Dale Robertson and Billy Casper, and, of course, Cary Grant from the “old days” in the late 1930s when they were carefree bachelors entertaining starlets and wannabes by the dozens at their Santa Monica beach house (often with Freeman Gosden of *Amos 'n' Andy* fame). Were there ever two more roguishly dashing and debonair leading men? Can you just imagine the soirees they hosted?

During his three most active decades, from about 1930 to 1960, Scott was never without a script to read or film to make, so his leisure pursuits were, to him, extremely necessary and important. They were gardening and golf, his greatest passions after his wife and children. He had for years a once-a-

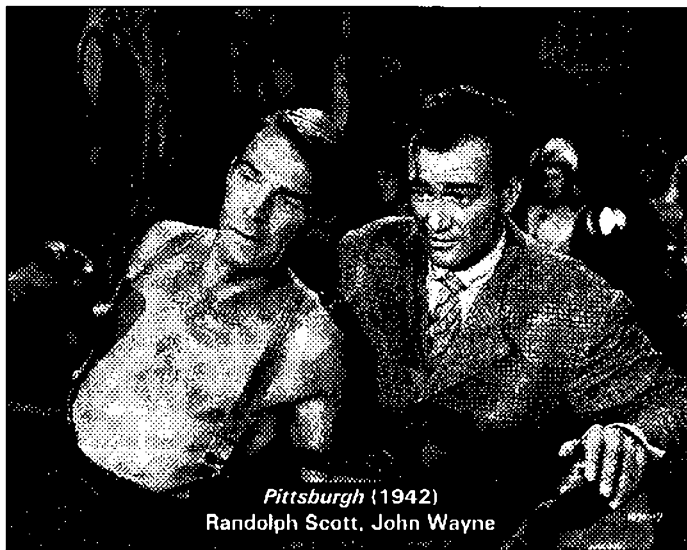
Deliberate. Strong. Polite. Thoughtful. Dignified, but with an impish grin at the ready. Courageous, with a look-you-in-the-eye steadiness. That was the man, on and off the screen. Resolute, but with that wry, ready-to-laugh twinkle in the eyes.

People are often judged by the company they keep, and

week gardener for assistance, but did the bulk of the planning and planting and pruning himself, and his landscaping projects were grandly designed, as one might imagine.

His golf game was no less important and he kept memberships at several country clubs, honed his skill until he was quite good, and golfed with hundreds of partners, among them Bob Hope, Freeman Gosden, and Dwight Eisenhower.

At his leisure, away from the movie set, when not wearing a suit for a banquet or evening out (not his favorite pastime as he much preferred the quiet company of a few



*Pittsburgh* (1942)  
Randolph Scott, John Wayne

PHOTOFEST

friends during a round of golf), he could often be found in trim slacks and his famous and favored flowered Hawaiian shirts. And, even during informal activities, "his sparkling eyes and gentle Southern smile shone like a lighthouse beacon,"



*My Favorite Wife* (1940)  
Gail Patrick, Cary Grant, Irene Dunne, Randolph Scott, Granville Bates

PHOTOFEST



according to his son. "He spoke softly, without arrogance" and there was something that "encompassed all parts of his being from his stance to his stature to the confidence of his voice."

Regularly among the film industry's top ten money-makers during his peak years, it was his wise business investments that provided his family the sustaining comforts over the years and, even though real estate and oil were among his favorite ventures, he knew how to save, too. Many people considered him a Virginia gentleman—he was born there—but he was just four years old when his family moved to Charlotte, North Carolina and he considered that his home.

His long-time friend, the Rev. Billy Graham, asked to say the eulogy at his funeral when, on March 2, 1987 Randolph Scott died at age 80.

In a town and in a business that thrives on controversy, rumor and scandal, almost nothing was written about the Scott family because there was almost nothing about which to write.

The teenage son borrowing his father's '55 Thunderbird one night without permission and Scott's being able to eat whatever and whenever he wanted and remain trim was not exactly "news." Also not news was his devotion to his wife, Pat, who for years after her husband's death continued to answer the star's fan mail.

In the early 1970s, the Statler Brothers sang:

*Whatever happened to Randolph Scott,  
Riding the trail alone?*



*Ride the High Country* (1962)  
Joel McCrea, Randolph Scott

PHOTOFEST

*Whatever happened to Gene and Tex  
And Roy and Rex, the Durango Kid?  
Oh, whatever happened to Randolph Scott,  
His horse plain as could be?  
Whatever happened to Randolph Scott  
Has happened to the best of me!*

Few, if any, actors lived a more complete life, fulfilling a personal sense of adventure and achieving financial success while being a model of discipline and decorum, and maintaining a happy, domestic family life.

He really was, as his son believes, one of the finest and most decent men ever to ride off the screen and into cinema history. Of that there is little, or perhaps no dispute.

It may be true that today not many of America's young want to grow up to be like Randolph Scott as there were a generation or two ago.

But the qualities he demonstrated on the big screen—and the same he actually possessed—are timeless and endure as part of the American character. ■

*Note—Tune in to TWTD August 10 to hear Randolph Scott in a radio version of the film Stagecoach.*

### PENNY SINGLETON

Penny Singleton, "Blondie" to millions of screen and radio fans, is a sunny blonde with a crinkly grin, who is equally at home in gingham or sequins.

The Columbia star was born in Philadelphia, Pa., on September 15, daughter of Bernard and Mary McNulty. While she was still a big-eyed toddler, Penny loved to dance. Her talent was evident, so the McNulty elders decided to allow their Mariana Dorothy McNulty to appear on the stage.

When the little Irish lass was eight, she made her debut on a program of school talent in Philadelphia. From that time on, she was permitted to sing and dance intermittently as long as it didn't interfere with her regular schooling. Dancing became her one great ambition, and a few years later she entered an advanced school of dancing, Al White's, in her home town.

It was while the slim, freckle-faced girl was studying acrobatic and ballet dancing

*continued on page 18...*

### ARTHUR LAKE

Playing the part of Dagwood Bumstead has become second nature to Arthur Lake, who portrays the Chic Young comic strip character in Columbia's series of *Blondie* pictures as well as on the air 52 weeks a

year. Lake is in his eleventh year of acting "Dagwood" to Penny Singleton's "Blondie."

Though Lake has a fine background for appreciating the nuances of comedy, he maintains that to this day he doesn't really know what makes people laugh.

The son of Arthur Silverlake and Edith Goodwin, both professional entertainers, the youngster was introduced to show business at the age of three. Even before then, he had whiffed the magnifi-

cent smell of greasepaint while comfortably ensconced in a big theatrical trunk in his parents' living room. Included in the act was his sister, Florence Lake, also a well-known figure in film circles today.

As a boy, Arthur made his motion picture debut in 1924 in a silent Western star-

*continued on page 19...*



*Dagwood and Blondie*  
Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton

---

*These are the official Columbia Pictures biographies for Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake, written by Lou Smith, Columbia's Director of Publicity and issued April 29, 1949. Arthur Lake died January 10, 1987 at age 81.*

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# Penny Singleton

...continued from page 17

at White's that Anatole Freedland, the composer, signed Penny for a top spot in an act he was taking on the road. They toured the key cities of the nation for more than six months, winding up in New York. J. J. Shubert caught her act there, and signed her for a Winter Garden production in which she sang and danced. The youngest dancer ever featured on Broadway, Penny was on her way to stardom.

In rapid succession, Penny appeared in *Great Temptations*, *Sky High*, *Innocent Eyes* and *Sweetheart Time*. In the last-named she was starred.

Her next two engagements, *Good News* and *Follow Through*, were sensational hits and established Penny as a new type of dancer and personality. Then came *Hey, Nonny Nonny*, in which she was co-starred with Frank Morgan.

By that time, Penny had become ambitious to do dramatic roles. She joined a stock company at Ivoryton, Connecticut. A talent scout saw her and within a few days she was given a contract by Hunt Stromberg, then of MGM, for a principal role in *The Thin Man*.

Indifferent movie roles followed. Penny was ready to pack her bags again and head for New York. It was then that Columbia tested her for the title role in the movie version of Chic Young's comic strip character, *Blondie*.

At the time the charming young star was a brunette, her natural coloring. She made the test without even a blonde wig. The rest is film and history. In the past 10 years

she has brought *Blondie* to life in 26 pictures and hundreds of radio scripts. Her latest film in the series is *Blondie's Hero*, in which she is co-starred with that perennial youth, Arthur Lake.

Penny is married to Robert S. Sparks, RKO producer, who held the rank of Major in the Marine Corps during the war. They live in a charming San Fernando Valley home set in fruit trees and wide lawns, with a playhouse in the backyard. This is

the delight of the star's two daughters, 14-year-old Dorothy Grace and eight-year-old Robin Susan.

Their home is charmingly furnished in an easy, comfortable style and it is one of Penny's delights to attend to every detail of house management herself. When she is not working, she does all the cooking and shopping.

Miss Singleton and her daughters, on occasion,

dress alike in crisp pinafores, and with identical hair-bows the threesome make a bewitching picture.

Though her days are full, Penny manages to keep fit by playing tennis, riding and practicing ballet dancing. She likes to watch such sports as ice hockey and football and, as a hobby, collects stamps — a pursuit she shares with her husband. She is five feet four inches tall and weighs 116 pounds.

Her trim figure and her good taste in clothing help explain the fact that in a recent poll taken by the New York Fashion Academy, she was named one of the country's "Ten Best Dressed Women." ■



Penny Singleton

*Tune in TWTD August 3 to hear Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton in a Blondie radio broadcast.*

# Arthur Lake

...continued from page 17

ring Franklyn Farnum.

Later, he became a child fixture in the *Sweet Sixteen* comedies.

His first talking picture role was in *Air Circus* in 1928, which was followed by Arthur's entrance into the "big time" — the title part in *Harold Teen*. The years spent in vaudeville trouping had given the young actor a natural flair for comedy, which was evidenced in his *Teen* characterization.

Hollywood then cast him in a succession of comedies such as *Cradle Snatchers*, *Dance Hall*, *Annapolis Salute*, *Everybody's Doing It* and *There Goes My Heart*.

When Columbia decided to make the *Blondie* pictures, all signs pointed to Arthur Lake for the Dagwood role. Originally intended as only a short series, the pictures became a nationwide institution.

Then radio sponsors decided that *Blondie's* success on the screen should be extended to the airwaves, and Lake was signed to play the same role. The program continues as one of the top radio shows.

Though his picture and radio commitments make him one of the busiest stars in filmdom, Arthur finds time to manage a company of his own, engaged chiefly with the production of household gadgets made out of plastics. He claims that Dagwood's screen difficulties actually aid him in avoiding similar situations in real life, especially in the business world.

Lake is married to Patricia Van Cleve, a non-professional. They have a son, Arthur

Patrick, now four and a half, and a daughter, Marion Rose, two and a half. The family lives in Santa Monica, near the beach. Arthur, whose favorite sport is swimming, planned it that way. He believes it's the perfect spot for youngsters to grow up. Arthur also goes in for surfing and sailing.

His gastronomical idiosyncrasies (apart from those famous Dagwood sandwiches) include a passion for fried chicken and hot

biscuits — "just about any sort of Southern dish."

Though Arthur really grew up in the proverbial actor's trunk, his birthplace was Corbin, Kentucky, and he thinks of himself as a Southerner.

Lake's favorite playwrights are Hecht and MacArthur and George S. Kaufman. Lynn Fontanne and Alfred

Lunt are his favorite stage actors. Clark Gable, he thinks, remains the top male star in pictures.

His pet hate is people who say, "long time, no see." He has great difficulty getting around to writing letters, though he tries to answer all the fan mail he receives. Arthur's most treasured possessions are old stills of his father, mother and sister, taken during their early days in vaudeville.

He's an avid newspaper reader, subscribing to all the Los Angeles dailies. Arthur reads all the film gossip columns faithfully every day, and tries to keep well-posted on everything that goes on.

One thing he makes a point of never missing — reading as many comic strips as he can get hold of. Which, of course, always includes a particular one called "Blondie." ■





Chuck Schaden's

# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WDCB • 90.9 FM • SATURDAY 1 - 5 PM

## AUGUST 2002

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 3

**BLONDIE** (5-27-45) Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake star as the Bumsteeds. Blondie has social aspirations. Cast includes Tommy Cook as Alexander, Hanley Stafford and Elvia Allman as Mr. and Mrs. Dithers. AFRS rebroadcast. (31 min) *Read the articles about Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton on page 17.*

**YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR** (3-22-59) "Lake Meade Mystery Matter" starring Bob Bailey. A search for good fishing leads Johnny to murder. Multiple sponsors, CBS. (23 min)

**GRAND OLE OPRY** (7-26-42) From the stage of the Grand Ole Opry and station WSM, Nashville, George D. Hay (the Solemn Ole Judge) introduces Roy Acuff and his Smoky Mountain Boys, Cousin Minnie Pearl and others. Prince Albert Tobacco, NBC. (30 min)

**LUX RADIO THEATRE** (10-14-40) "The Littlest Rebel" starring Shirley Temple, Preston Foster and Claude Rains in a story set in the Old South at the time of the U.S. Civil War. A

little girl tries to protect her Confederate officer father from the Union Army. Cecil B. DeMille hosts. Lux Soap, CBS. (21 min & 23 min & 17 min) *Read the article about Shirley Temple on page 35.*

**SUSPENSE** (6-26-47) "Phobia" starring Eva LaGallienne with John McIntire and Jeanette Nolan. An elderly woman, confined to her wheelchair, has an aversion to metal. Roma Wines, CBS. (30 min)

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

**THE SHADOW** (3-19-39) "Can the Dead Talk?" starring William Johnstone as Lamont Cranston with Agnes Moorehead as the lovely Margo Lane. Mr. Voltan (House Jameson), a mentalist, determines the true identity of the Shadow. Blue Coal, MBS. (30 min)

**ADVENTURES OF OZZIE AND HARRIET** (11-21-48) The Nelsons have been bitten by the curiosity bug. Cast features Tommy Bernard, Henry Blair, John Brown, Lurene Tuttle, Mary Jane Croft. International Silver Company, NBC. (28 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO** (2-17-75) **Barbara Luddy** and **Olan Soulé** talk about their radio careers in a conversation with Chuck Schaden recorded in Woodland Hills, California, at the home of Olan Soulé. Miss Luddy died in 1979 at age 71; Mr. Soulé died in 1994 at age 84. (16 min & 16 min & 12 min)

**FIRST NIGHTER** (1-29-48) "A Writer in the Family" starring **Barbara Luddy** and **Olan Soulé** in a romantic comedy about a case of hidden identity as a writer of western stories meets a highway surveyor. Broadcasting from the "Little Theatre Off Times Square," the cast includes Hugh Studebaker, Paul Freed, Arthur Q. Brian, Frank Worth and the orchestra. Campana Products, CBS. (30 min)

**SINGING LADY** (6-2-36) **Irene Wicker** with an episode of her popular children's show. The Singing Lady tells a story about some American children and their adventures in Yokohama,

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Japan. Kellogg's Cereals, NBC. (14 min)  
**ACADEMY AWARD** (5-4-46) "Stagecoach"  
starring Randolph Scott and Claire Trevor. Pas-  
sengers traveling west on a stagecoach con-  
front each other and an Indian attack. House  
of Squibb, CBS. (29 min) *Read the article  
about Randolph Scott on page 13.*

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 17 AFRICAN-AMERICANS ON OLD-TIME RADIO

*Read the article on page 26.*

**DUFFY'S TAVERN** (5-19-48) Ed Gardner stars  
as the manager of the tavern, with **Eddie Green**  
as Eddie the Waiter, Charlie Cantor as Clifton  
Finnegan, Sandra Gould as Miss Duffy. When  
Duffy won't give Archie a raise, he fakes an  
injury and takes his case to court, using Eddie  
as his star witness. Vitalis, Ipana, NBC. (30  
min)

**BEULAH** (6-27-50) First of four connected and  
related episodes. **Hattie McDaniel** stars as  
Beulah with **Ernie "Bubbles" Whitman** as Bill,  
**Ruby Dandridge** as Oriole, and Hugh  
Studebaker and Mary Jane Croft as Harry and  
Alice Henderson. Beulah is having trouble  
making plans for her summer vacation. Dreft,  
CBS. (11 min)

**BEULAH** (6-28-50) Second of four related epi-  
sodes. Dreft, CBS. (11 min)

★ **JUDY CANOVA SHOW** (8-24-43) Judy  
stars with **Ruby Dandridge** as Geranium, Mel  
Blanc as Sylvester, and singer Eddie Dean. Ken  
Niles announces. Judy needs a new dress  
because she has a date with Mickey Rooney.  
Colgate, CBS. (25 min)

**BEULAH** (6-29-50) Third of four connected  
episodes. Dreft, CBS. (11 min)

**BEULAH** (6-30-50) Last of four related epi-  
sodes; last show of the season. Dreft, CBS.  
(12 min)

**GREAT GILDERSLEEVE** (6-3-53) Willard  
Waterman stars as Throckmorton P. Gilder-  
sleeve, with **Lillian Randolph** as Birdie, Walter  
Tetley as Leroy, Mary Lee Robb as Marjorie.  
Gildy thinks Marjorie, now married and with  
twins, wants Birdie to work for her. AFRS re-  
broadcast. (26 min)

**BEULAH** (1953) First of two connected and

related episodes. **Amanda Randolph** stars as  
Beulah with **Ernie "Bubbles" Whitman** as Bill,  
Hugh Studebaker and Mary Jane Croft as the  
Hendersons, and **Ruby Dandridge** as Oriole.  
The latest issue of Flash Magazine arrives at  
the Henderson household. AFRS rebroadcast.  
(14 min)

**BEULAH** (1953) Second of two related epi-  
sodes. Beulah and Bill help with the landscap-  
ing to make the house nice for the Flash maga-  
zine layout. AFRS rebroadcast. (14 min)

—plus—

Excerpts from *The Jack Benny Program* fea-  
turing **Eddie "Rochester" Anderson** and from  
*The Red Skelton Show* featuring **Wonderful  
Smith**.

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 24

**A DATE WITH JUDY** (5-4-48) Louise Erickson  
stars as Judy Foster with John Brown as her  
father and Richard Crenna as her boyfriend  
Oogie Pringle. It's a beautiful spring day and  
everyone is feeling great, so Oogie and Judy  
decide to skip school. Tums, NBC. (30 min)

★ **LUX RADIO THEATRE** (10-13-41) "Buck  
Privates" starring Bud Abbott and Lou Cos-  
tello, making their Lux debut in a radio ver-  
sion of their hit screen comedy. Reluctant  
draftees Bud and Lou are not much help to a  
spoiled, rich young man who learns responsi-  
bilities in the Army. Cecil B. DeMille hosts.  
Lux Soap, CBS. (20 min & 21 min & 19 min)  
*Read the article about Abbott and Costello on  
page 4.*

**PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW** (2-6-49)  
Phil's sponsor wants Phil to shape up his band  
by replacing five of his musicians, including  
Remley (Elliott Lewis). Gale Gordon as Mr.  
Scott, the sponsor. Rexall, NBC. (29 min)

**FORT LARAMIE** (3-11-56) "Hattie Pelfrey"  
starring Raymond Burr as Captain Lee Quince  
of the U.S. Cavalry on the Wyoming frontier.  
Quince and Sgt. Gorce (Vic Perrin) find them-  
selves at the mercy of a salty old woman (Vir-  
ginia Gregg). Sustaining, CBS. (28 min)

**GUNSMOKE** (3-11-56) "Bringing Down Fa-  
ther" stars William Conrad as U.S. Marshall  
Matt Dillon. A Texas herd of cattle arrive in  
Dodge along with a murdered man. Chester-  
field Cigarettes, CBS. (22 min)

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# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WDCB • 90.9 FM • SATURDAY 1 - 5 PM

**AUGUST--SEPTEMBER 2002**

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 31 BIG BAND SINGERS

**COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA** (11-3-37) Remote broadcast from the Meadowbrook in Cedar Grove, New Jersey. Selections include "One O'clock Jump," "I Can't Get Started," "John's Idea," and "Good Morning Blues." Vocals by **Billie Holiday** and **James Rushing**. Sustaining, CBS (25 min)

**ALVINO REY AND HIS MUSIC** (11 10 39) Broadcast from the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena, California, with vocals by **Dick Morgan** and "Radio's Queens of Swing" the **King Sisters**. Tunes include "The Little Man Who Wasn't There," "Moonlight Serenade," "The Lamp Is Low," and "Farewell Blues." Sustaining, MBS-Don Lee Network. (30 min)

**ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER FAMOUS ORCHESTRA** (1-25-40) Excerpt. Remote broadcast from the Savoy Ballroom in New York City. Selections heard are "Limehouse Blues," "This Changing World," and "Oh! Johnny, Oh!" with vocals by **Ella Fitzgerald** and **Dick Vance**. Sustaining, NBC. (12 min)

**CHESTERFIELD MOONLIGHT SERENADE** (2-27-41) Glenn Miller and his Orchestra broadcasting from the stage of the Palace Theatre in Cleveland Ohio, with vocalists **Dorothy Claire**, **Tex Beneke**, **Ray Eberle** and the **Modernaires**. Songs include "Ida, Sweet As Apple Cider," "Keep An Eye On Your Heart" and "Oh! So Good." Chesterfield Cigarettes, CBS. (13 min)

★ **DOWNBEAT #22** (1942) Host **Dick Joy** presents **Ozzie Nelson** and his Orchestra, along with vocalist **Harriet Hilliard**, in this broadcast for servicemen around the world. Tunes include "You' Be So Nice To Come Home To," "Why Don't You Fall In Love With Me," "The Eyes Of Texas," and "I'm Looking For A Guy Who Plays Alto and Clarinet, Doubles On Baritone And Wears A Size 37 Suit." Special Service Division. (30 min)

**CHESTERFIELD TIME** (12-2-43) Harry James and his Music Makers present "That Old Feeling," "How Sweet You Are," and "Mexico City." Vocals by **Helen Forrest** (in her last broadcast with James) and **Buddy Moreno**. Chesterfield Cigarettes, CBS. (13 min)

★ **VICTORY PARADE OF SPOTLIGHT BANDS #643** (4-7-45) Les Brown and his Band of Renown, in a broadcast from Clinton, Iowa. Selections include: "My Dreams Are Getting Better All The Time," "One Meat Ball," and "Sentimental Journey." Vocals by **Doris Day** and **Butch Stone**. AFRR rebroadcast. (15 min)

**FREDDY MARTIN AND HIS ORCHESTRA** (6-13-49) Excerpt. "Music in the Martin Manner" from the Marine Room of the Edgewater Beach Hotel, "overlooking Lake Michigan in Chicago." Songs heard are "1400 Dream Street," "A Portrait Of Jenny," and "So Tired."



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Vocals by **Merv Griffin** and the **Martin Men**. Sustaining, NBC. (11 min)

**OUR SPECIAL GUEST** is big band historian **Karl Pearson** who will talk about big band vocalists and offer clips and excerpts of various broadcasts and recordings.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 RADIO AND WORLD WAR II SEPTEMBER, 1942

★ **WILLSON-NESBITT SHOW** (9-1-42) Summer replacement for *Fibber McGee and Molly* features **Meredith Willson** and his orchestra and story-teller **John Nesbitt** who tells of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, "the most terrible story of modern history." Johnson's Wax, NBC. (29 min)

★ **FIRESIDE CHAT** (9-6-42) President **Franklin D. Roosevelt** speaks to the nation on the eve of Labor Day, nine months after Pearl Harbor. FDR presents the Congressional Medal of Honor to a naval hero who fought in the Coral Sea; says the people at home in America are not doing enough to help the war effort; talks about inflation, taxation, the war in the Pacific, and the German offensive. CBS and all networks. (31 min)

★ **THEY LIVE FOREVER** (9-6-42) *Excerpt*. Vignettes tell of the heroic efforts of the U.S. and its Allies, offering "...the truth about the men who are fighting this war... cold facts for an angry people." Stories about the daylight raid on the German occupied port of Dieppe; the sinking of a Japanese submarine. Sustaining, CBS. (16 min)

★ **THEY LIVE FOREVER** (9-13-42) *Excerpt*. Vignettes offer a tribute to the men who fought and died since the war began. "...valiant men who will live forever." Stories of Marines in action including a priest from Chicago— at the Solomon Islands; one of the pilots who bombed Tokyo with Col. James Doolittle. Sustaining, CBS. (16 min)

★ **BIG TOWN** (9-23-42) "Escape from Paris" stars **Edward G. Robinson** as **Steve Wilson** with **Ona Munson** as **Lorelei Kilbourne**, both of the Illustrated Press. Steve and Lorelei are in war-torn Europe, aboard a plane hijacked by the Nazis. Rinso, CBS. (29 min)

★ **BEN BERNIE WAR WORKERS' PROGRAM** (9-24-42) The Old Maestro himself in a program of music and chatter from Chicago for

people who work in wartime industry. Wrigley's Gum, CBS. (14 min)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (9-29-42) In this first show of the season, the McGees are back from vacation only to find that their camera with all their wonderful snapshots— is missing. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (30 min)

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 FRED ALLEN AND THE SON OF THE SILVER-MASKED TENOR

**FRED ALLEN SHOW** (3-16-47) Nine-year-old **Bobby White**, son of **Joseph M. White**, known in the early days of radio as "The Silver-Masked Tenor" sings "My Wild Irish Rose." Later, Fred welcomes guest **Beatrice Lillie** and they team up for "Picadilly," a parody of **Rogers and Hammerstein's "Oklahoma"** First of two consecutive and related broadcasts. Shefford Cheese, Tenderleaf Tea, NBC. (28 min)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO** (10-26-99) Classical tenor **Robert White**, the son of radio's Silver-Masked Tenor, talks about his father's career and his own, as a young performer on radio and as a nationally known concert artist, in a conversation with **Chuck Schaden** recorded in New York City. (27 min)

**FRED ALLEN SHOW** (5-23-48) *Excerpt*. In a sketch, Fred wants to make a movie about the life of guest **Bing Crosby**. The skit features 11-year-old **Bobby White** as a 10-year-old **Bing Crosby**, **Minerva Pious** as **Bing's** mother, and **Peter Donald** as **Barry Fitzgerald**. Bobby sings "Too Ra Loo Ra." (13 min)

**FRED ALLEN SHOW** (1948) *Excerpt*. Fred presents a Western musical sketch about love and hardship, featuring guest **Shirley Booth**, with 11-year-old **Bobby White** in a comedy role as "Little Joe." (8 min)

**ARTHUR GODFREY'S TALENT SCOUTS** (12-19-49) For his Christmas program, Arthur presents a program of young talent, including **Bobby White**, son of radio's Silver-Masked Tenor. The "Talent Scouts" are youngsters, too. Lipton Tea, CBS. (29 min)

**FRED ALLEN SHOW** (3-23-47) Guests are **Richard Rogers** and **Oscar Hammerstein**, who show up to take Allen to court for stealing their music on Fred's show last week. The Allen's Alley question is "What invention could you do without?" Second of two consecutive and related broadcasts. Shefford Cheese, Tenderleaf Tea, NBC. (28 min)

★ INDICATES A WORLD WAR II BROADCAST OF SPECIAL INTEREST



# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

## SEPTEMBER 2002

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

**CRIME CLUB** (6-19-47) "Hearses Don't Hurry," the story of a political "clean-up campaign" messed up by murder. Sustaining, MBS. (29 min)

**THE GUIDING LIGHT** (7-15-40) *The first of three isolated and unrelated episodes in the long-running series created by Irna Phillips in 1937. This year marks the 65th Anniversary of the program, which had a 19 year run on radio, moved to television and continues to this day.* In this episode, Rose and Charles have a serious discussion about their relationship. P&G Soap, NBC. (13 min)

**ALDRICH FAMILY** (10-28-48) Ezra Stone stars as Henry Aldrich with Jackie Kelk as Homer Brown. Henry tries to avoid getting an after-school detention period from his manual training teacher. Jell-O, NBC. (29 min)

**THE GUIDING LIGHT** (1941) *Another isolated episode:* Norma Greenman is in poor spirits, and a bit suspicious, about her husband Edward's business trip. Camay Soap. (12 min)

**KRAFT MUSIC HALL** (10-16-47) Al Jolson stars with guest Bing Crosby as the two are joined by Oscar Levant for a medley of George Gershwin's music. Kraft Foods, NBC. (29 min)

★ **PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT** (9-16-42) On the anniversary of the Lend-Lease Act, The President of the United States, honoring one of its sisters of the United Nations, presents the sub-chaser PC-467 to the Norwegian government. Crown Princess Martha of Norway accepts. CBS. (16 min)

**MR. PRESIDENT** (11-13-47) Edward Arnold stars as the nation's chief executive whose vice president schemes to take over the presidency. The identity of the president being portrayed is not revealed until the close of the

broadcast. Sustaining, ABC. (29 min)

**THE GUIDING LIGHT** (1950) *One more isolated episode to mark the show's 65th anniversary:* Meta is concerned that something has happened to her six-year-old son Chuckie. Duz, CBS. (13 min)

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

#### The FRANK SINATRA—GENE KELLY RADIO CONNECTION

**LUX RADIO THEATRE** (12-29-47) "Anchor's Aweigh" starring **Frank Sinatra**, **Gene Kelly** and Kathryn Grayson, all in their original screen roles from the 1945 musical romance. It's the story of a pair of sailors on leave and their romantic adventures in Hollywood with a movie extra and a waitress. Lux Soap, CBS. (16 min & 23 min & 21 min)

**SUSPENSE** (1-18-45) "To Find Help" starring **Frank Sinatra** and Agnes Moorehead. A woman hires a handyman who proves to be a threat to her. AFRS rebroadcast. (25 min)

**JACK BENNY PROGRAM** (1-8-50) Jack and the gang present a sketch, "Murder at Romanoff's" starring his guests **Frank Sinatra**, **Gene Kelly**, Rosalind Russell, and Michael Romanoff. *During this broadcast, Don Wilson makes his famous flub, "Dreer Poosen."* Lucky Strike Cigarettes, CBS. (24 min)

**SUSPENSE** (1-6-49) "To Find Help" starring **Gene Kelly** and Ethel Barrymore. A handyman, hired by an elderly woman, appears strange and possibly dangerous. AutoLite, CBS. (30 min)

**SONGS BY SINATRA** (10-17-45) **Frank Sinatra** welcomes guest **Gene Kelly** as the two have fun talking about their new film together, "Anchor's Aweigh." Old Gold Cigarettes, CBS. (28 min)

*...and for more good listening...*

**SATURDAY SWING SHIFT--** Bruce Oscar is host for this two-hour show featuring swing music on record performed by the big bands, pop singers and small groups. *WDCB, 90.9 FM, Saturday, 11 am-1 pm.*

**MIDWEST BALLROOM--** John Russell hosts a big band program featuring Chicago area orchestras and dance bands. *WDCB, 90.9 FM, Saturday, 5-6 pm.*

# "When Radio Was" -- WBBM-AM 780

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

### August, 2002 Schedule

THU/8-1	Stan Freberg 8-25-57 Pgm 7/15 Pt 2; Jeff Regan 11-30-49 <i>Five Hundred Santas</i>
FRI/8-2	The Shadow 5-23-56 <i>Blind Beggar</i> ; Johnny Dollar 1-23-56 <i>Duke Red Matter Pt 1/5</i>
MON/8-5	Screen Guild 9 7:50 <i>Twelve O'Clock High</i> ; Jack Benny 4-30-39 <i>7th Anniversary Pt 1</i>
TUE/8-6	Jack Benny Pt 2; Boston Blackie 6-30-44 <i>Fifty Hunter Street</i> Chester Morris
WED/8-7	Sherlock Holmes 9-28-47 <i>Dog Who Changed His Mind</i> ; Abbott & Costello 5-3-45 Pt 1
THU/8-8	Abbott & Costello Pt 2; Nero Wolfe 4-27-51 <i>Case of Room 304</i> Sidney Greenstreet
FRI/8-9	Suspense 11-13-47 <i>Riabouchinska</i> ; Johnny Dollar 1-24-56 <i>Duke Red Matter Pt 2/5</i>
MON/8-12	Dragnet 1 11 53 <i>The Big Small</i> ; Burns & Allen 11-9-43 <i>Blackmailing Jack Benny Pt 1</i>
TUE/8-13	Burns & Allen Pt 2; Frontier Gentleman 2-23-58 <i>Kendall's Last Stand</i> John Dehner
WED/8-14	Dimension X 7-7-50 <i>Mars is Heaven</i> ; Fibber McGee 12-5-39 <i>Department Store Pt 1</i>
THU/8-15	Fibber McGee Pt 2; Inner Sanctum 1-15-46 <i>Edge of Death</i>
FRI/8-16	The Shadow 7-3-38 <i>Power of Mind</i> ; Johnny Dollar 1-25-56 <i>Duke Red Matter Pt 3/5</i>
MON/8-19	Murder By Experts 7-11-49 <i>Prescription for Murder</i> ; Our Miss Brooks 2-20-49 Pt 1
TUE/8-20	Our Miss Brooks <i>The Frog Pt 2</i> ; Dangerous Assignment 8-9-50 <i>Trouble in Africa</i>
WED/8-21	Tales of Texas Rangers 9-30-51 <i>Death Shaft</i> ; Great Gildersleeve 4-30-44 Pt 1
THU/8-22	Great Gildersleeve <i>Engaged to Eve Pt 2</i> ; Lights Out 4-6-38 <i>Cat Wife</i> Boris Karloff
FRI/8-23	Suspense 12-30-48 <i>Break-Up</i> ; Johnny Dollar 1-26-56 <i>Duke Red Matter Pt 4/5</i>
MON/8-26	Gunsmoke 3 25-56 <i>Hanging Man</i> ; Lum & Abner 10-17-48 <i>Lum's Broken Leg Pt 1</i>
TUE/8-27	Lum & Abner Pt 2; The Saint 11-19-50 <i>Prison Murder Plot</i> Vincent Price
WED/8-28	Lone Ranger 7-21-54 <i>Matter of Life or Death</i> ; Stan Freberg Show 9-1-57 8/15 Pt 1
THU/8-29	Stan Freberg Pt 2; Escape 4-25-48 <i>Fourth Man</i>
FRI/8-30	The Shadow 6-5-38 <i>Hypnotized Audience</i> ; Johnny Dollar 1-27-56 <i>Duke Red Pt 5/5</i>

### September, 2002 Schedule

MON/9-2	Philip Marlowe 6-25-49 <i>Key Man</i> ; Red Skelton 10-8-50 Red gets a physical Pt 1
TUE/9-3	Red Skelton Pt 2; Green Hornet 9-6-41 <i>Hot Guns For Sale</i>
WED/9-4	The Whistler 9-9-46 <i>Witness at the Fountain</i> ; Burns & Allen 3-7-44 Alan Ladd Pt 1
THU/9-5	Burns & Allen Pt 2; Richard Diamond, Private Detective 8-6-49 <i>Protection</i> Dick Powell
FRI/9-6	Suspense 4-20-53 <i>Public Defender</i> ; Sgt. Preston 5-11-44 <i>Outlaw Dog</i>
MON/9-9	Lone Ranger 7-23-54 <i>Paleta Diamond</i> ; Phil Harris-Alice Faye 11-13-49 <i>Home Repairs Pt 1</i>
TUE/9-10	Phil Harris-Alice Faye Pt 2; Big Town 11-16-48 <i>Death by Plan</i>
WED/9-11	Escape 3-28-48 <i>Shipment of Mute Fate</i> ; Jack Benny 5-2-43 Eddie Cantor Pt 1
THU/9-12	Jack Benny Pt 2; Casey, Crime Photographer 7-3-47 <i>Acquitted</i>
FRI/9-13	The Shadow 8-21-38 <i>Murder on Approval</i> ; Strange Dr. Weird 12-5-44 <i>Everglades Death</i>
MON/9-16	Tarzan 1-18-51 <i>Hooded Death</i> ; Life of Riley 10-22-44 <i>Honeymoon flashback Pt 1</i>
TUE/9-17	Life of Riley Pt 2; Gunsmoke 5-6-56 <i>The Photographer</i>
WED/9-18	X Minus One 12 19-56 <i>Reluctant Heroes</i> ; Fibber McGee 10-15-40 <i>Screwdriver Lost Pt 1</i>
THU/9-19	Fibber McGee Pt 2; Pat Novak, For Hire 8-10-47 <i>Bookie Outfit</i>
FRI/9-20	Suspense 5-18-53 <i>Vial of Death</i> Lloyd Nolan; The Unexpected 9-19-48 <i>Silver Fox</i>
MON/9-23	Dragnet 1-25-53 <i>The Big Layout</i> ; Stan Freberg Show 9-8-57 9/15 Pt 1
TUE/9-24	Stan Freberg Pt 2; Rocky Jordan 11-13-49 <i>Strange Death of Van Dorn</i>
WED/9-25	Nightbeat 5-29-50 <i>Stamp Dealer</i> ; Charlie McCarthy 1-12-47 Edward Arnold Pt 1
THU/9-26	Charlie McCarthy Pt 2; Tales of Texas Rangers 1-13-52 <i>Clip Job</i> Joel McCrea
FRI/9-27	The Shadow 10-9-38 <i>Death Stalks the Shadow</i> ; Bill Stern 5-24-46 Lucille Ball
MON/9-30	Mysterious Traveler 6-6-50 <i>Killer at Large</i> ; Fred Allen Show 5-16-43 Frank Sinatra Pt 1

# African-Americans & Old-Time Radio

BY BILL OATES

Throughout old-time radio's tenure as the primary source for home entertainment, occasional problems cropped up that caused the public to question certain artistic choices. Occasionally, words or innuendos made sponsors and network brass uneasy. Once in awhile, as was the case with Orson Welles' famous *War of the Worlds* broadcast, the airwaves manipulated some members of the audience in ways not originally intended by the creators. However, the longest-running controversy about old time radio involves the portrayal of African-Americans on programs.

In order to appreciate the reasoning behind offering less than favorable characterizations of the African-American on radio, we need to look at the origins of such practices. Understanding these early practices helps us to appreciate the times in which the original transgressions occurred. The starting place is the pre-Civil War stages, which offered audiences early stereotypes of blacks on stage.

The minstrel show is wholly an American theatre genre; however, the practice of exaggerating stereotypes for comedic purposes is centuries old. Frequently, characters like the buffoon Harlequin in Italian Renaissance comedies or Shakespeare's Shylock, the Jewish moneylender, appeared in plays much to the anticipation of the crowd, who recognized the parts as soon as familiar costumes entered from the wings.

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*Bill Oates, of Kouts, Indiana, is a high school English teacher and author.*

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Even early British depictions of Yankee Doodle represented American types as moronic hayseeds in cartoons or on stage. Carrying on the tradition of providing audiences with reliable but derogatory stereotypes, American theatrical producers began crafting variety shows with characters based on those who had been stolen from their African homes and enslaved.

The minstrel show began circa 1830, when whites began blackening their faces to assume exaggerated and derogatory roles. Two popular characters, Jim Crow and Zip Coon, represented different characters that both established and reinforced negative stereotypes. The former was a slave, who told tall tales, the latter was a haughty city type, and both attempted to con others with their ill doings. Moreover, they satisfied white audiences by portraying dishonorable buffoons, while creating unrealistic representations of the black race. So popular were these two characters that the last name "Coon" became a derogatory term for African-Americans.

Ironically, one story intended to shed some light on the misfortunes of slaveholding evolved into just another minstrel show. Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* attempted to awaken sensitivities, so that all living under the American flag might achieve respect and equality. Unfortunately, when dramatists adapted her story, the play became just another melodrama, replete with predictable characters and stereotyped black parts.

White actors often donned the blackface to play the maligned slaves and ex-slaves in the show. Not only did the play ruin a

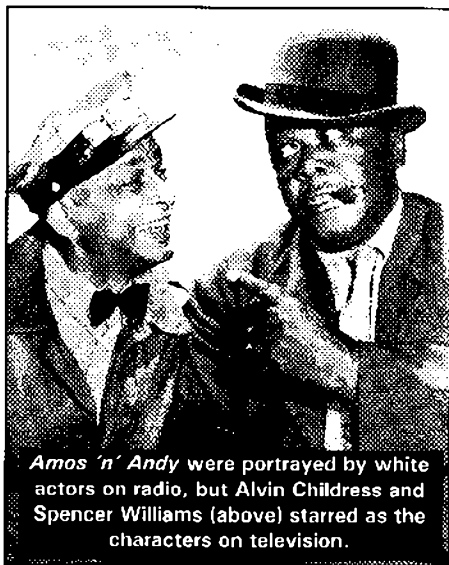
well-meaning didactic story, but it also did so for years, easily becoming America's most popular play. Finally dying off in the 1930s, blackface shows like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* provided experiences for white actors about to enter the medium of radio.

Radio became a mass medium during the 1920s, and early programs relied on vaudeville acts to provide some of the early entertainment. As a result, Jewish, Dutch, Irish, and black-faced stereotypes continued to move from the vaudeville stage to early radio stations. Not all of the aforementioned categories had real members of the race or religion playing the parts. The last group definitely came up short in having its "characters" actually played by African Americans. (Strangely enough, at least one entire minstrel troupe made up of African-Americans and famed Ziegfeld comedian Bert Williams donned blackface to augment their tanned Negro faces.)

Though politically incorrect nearly a century later, numerous actors continued making money on the radio by playing the "shyster Jew," "drunken Irishman," or slow-witted black man. As a result, the first popular radio comedians, Amos and Andy, made a very successful career in blackface, while they also fuelled a fire of controversy that would eventually lead to the characterization's downfall.

Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll did not intend on creating a derogatory stereotype when they first appeared on the radio as Sam and Henry. Local stations such as Chicago's WGN had to develop or find their own talent in their early years, because network programming would not provide stations with shows until the late 1920s.

Correll was a hometown boy from nearby Peoria, and Gosden, on the other hand, migrated to Chicago years after his birth in Richmond, Virginia. What brought the two together was their mutual vocation as traveling minstrels, the black-faced kind.



Amos 'n' Andy were portrayed by white actors on radio, but Alvin Childress and Spencer Williams (above) starred as the characters on television.

To make a long story short, the two men met when they both worked for Joe Bren's theatrical company. After several years on the road, the chance to locate at the Bren headquarters in Chicago offered Gosden and Correll a more stable life and eventually led to their radio career.

This successful black-faced team made an early appearance on radio when the Bren troupe visited New Orleans during the 1920-21 season. Several guest visits on Chicago stations such as KYW created for the duo weekly appearances with Bren and company on WLS and occasional visits as singers on WEBH in 1925.

Later that year they began appearing on WGN with increased frequency. When the station offered them a chance to develop a show based on the *Tribune* comic strip "The Gumps," the team instead proposed characters more familiar to them, and they debuted in "blackface" as Sam and Henry on January 12, 1926.

Correll and Gosden soon after began their meteoric rise to fame. Only one major change needed to occur before their nationwide success would begin. Not content with staying at a local station that re-

fused to circulate the programs via transcription disk, the two left for WMAQ in Chicago, where they began on March 19, 1928.

At first, the newly renamed show, *Amos 'n' Andy* (the *Tribune* company, owner of WGN, retained the rights to the names Sam and Henry), began to grow as remote stations replayed recordings of the shows. A year and a half later, on August 19, 1929, NBC Blue began broadcasting fifteen-minute *Amos 'n' Andy* episodes six nights a week. Correll and Gosden continued with a network program through 1960.

(Even though the subject matter of this article is intended as an examination of African-Americans on radio, beginning with *Amos 'n' Andy* seems to be an insult. Unfortunately, these two immensely popular white actors playing black parts eventually became responsible for many great African-American actors' appearances on old-time radio.)

Americans heard real black voices from radio's early inception. Unlike some theaters that isolated audiences by color, radio floated into homes with equal accessi-

bility. For example, popular vaudeville and film personality Flourney Miller and his partner Aubrey Lyles appeared on radio as early as 1920. A talented black harmonica player worked on Nashville's WSM in 1926, and prominent musician Duke Ellington became the first black bandleader to have his own program when he began broadcasting from Harlem's Cotton Club for CBS in 1927.

During the 1930s, actor Paul Robeson began appearing on radio, and singer Ethel Waters debuted her own show on NBC. Musicians became the first successful African-Americans on radio; however, they appeared in a framework dictated by whites. Of a greater significance was the fact that non-musicians, if allowed to appear instead of black-faced whites, usually came to the mike as servants or porters.

By the late 1930s and early 1940s, and especially as a result of actors such as Eddie "Rochester" Anderson's addition to the cast of the popular *Jack Benny Show*, roles for African-Americans increased dramatically. Once again, they had to appear usually in subservient parts. Nonetheless, opportunities presented themselves.

Hattie McDaniel joined the cast of the *Eddie Cantor Show*, Lillian Randolph appeared on *The Great Gildersleeve* and *The Billie Burke Show*, Ruby Dandridge worked with Judy Canova, Nick Stewart (Nick-O-Demus who later played Lightnin' on television's *Amos 'n' Andy*) took a role on Rudy Vallee's show, while Mantan Moreland and Ben Carter both supported Bob Burns on his program.

As has already been mentioned, starting in 1943, when *Amos 'n' Andy* became a weekly thirty-minute situation comedy, many blacks became regulars, among them: Ernestine Wade, Amanda Randolph, and Johnny Lee. These three have been singled out, because they also made the transition to the television version of the



Paul Robeson

PHOTO: LSI



Ethel Waters

PHOTOFLIX

black movie houses.

Perhaps the most successful African-American producer was Oscar Micheaux, whose Micheaux Film Corporation employed many black actors for thirty years. Not as widely known as MGM or Warner Brothers, his and other black film companies such as Sepia, Lincoln, Million Dollar, and Creative, turned out low-budget productions through the 1950s. This medium allowed many radio stars steady employment without having to bow and scrape or talk

program, which featured an all-black cast.

Rather than examine the lives of all mentioned above, several black radio actors could serve as examples of the triumphs and tragedies of those who made it in the medium. Not only would it be too time-consuming to include many more biographies, but also finding a great deal about many of these players can be a daunting task. Much has been written about white stars and supporting cast members, but sometimes very little can be found about the origins and later lives of their black counterparts. One place to begin to understand how black actors came to radio would be to examine a very special segment of a sister medium, the motion picture.

Minstrel show stereotypes, segregation, and racial prejudices in general kept African-Americans from playing the good parts in movies for decades. The first great American epic film, *The Birth of a Nation*, inflamed racial hatred. Ironically, whites in blackface played the key "Negro" parts in the film. Only the minor, supporting roles were given to real African-Americans. However, to give members of their own race a chance to be doctors, lawyers, and cowboys with love interests and to be involved in detective dramas or mysteries, black-operated motion picture companies began making films for primarily inner city

in an unnatural dialect.

James Baskett became a favorite with white Americans after a stint in black films. He worked in movies with Eddie Green, Bill Robinson, Ethel Waters, and Count Basie before landing a spot as Gabby Gibson, the fast talking lawyer on *The Amos 'n' Andy Show*. The Indianapolis native forsook a career as a pharmacist when the acting bug bit. Eventually, he became part of the famed Lafayette players in Harlem. While on a visit to California, Charles Correll and Freeman Gosden



Jack Benny and Eddie Anderson



**Great Gildersleeve**  
Harold Peary, Lillian Randolph,  
Walter Tetley, Earle Ross

PHOTOFEST

its on *Amos 'n' Andy* when he developed the character of Stonewall.

Green entered radio, as did many African-Americans, in subservient roles. *Maxwell House Showboat*, the variety show that offered numerous acts reminiscent of a bygone era and transportation mode, originally included black-faced acts such as the popular 1930s duo Pic and Pat. However, by the end of the show's run, Green and Hattie McDaniel assumed parts on special versions of the show before the coffee company changed formats.

During the late 1930s and early '40s, Eddie played in many short films and features, primarily for Sepia Productions, and even starred in his own *Eddie Green's Laugh Jamboree* for Toddy pictures. He also played many radio roles, albeit in some short-lived series like *The Gibson Family* (he and Ernie "Bubbles" Whitman were billed as "The only colored comics" in network radio), *Tommy Riggs and Betty*

*Lou*, and *The Fabulous Mr. Tweedy*.

His longest-lasting stint on radio occurred when Ed "Archie" Gardner cast Green as a wisecracking waiter on *Duffy's Tavern*. This last radio role represented how the African-American, though still not equal to his white bosses, often outsmarted them.

One more major African-American male actor needs recognition, if for no other reason than his topsy-turvy career. Perhaps the most illusive actor in this study, Wonderful Smith was once a very successful supporting player on a very popular radio show.

He became a member of Hollywood's black inner circle, even accompanying Hattie McDaniel to the Oscars, when she won best supporting actress for *Gone With*

offered him a role on their radio show. Even though his inclusion on the newly revamped and rejuvenated *Amos 'n' Andy* ensured success, Baskett's greatest claim to fame resulted when Walt Disney Studios cast him as Uncle Remus in the 1946 classic *Song of the South*. Despite Baskett's stellar performance in the title role and as the storyteller in the Brer Rabbit animated inserts, few in the later "politically correct" years will see his creation. Just as James Baskett became Disney's first black star, decades later he was decried for playing a part that many felt would be better left forgotten. Unfortunately, he died at age forty-four, two years after the film's release.

Eddie Green, who starred with Baskett in black films such as *Comes Midnight*, became the next lawyer of questionable mer-

*the Wind*. Somewhat younger than those in the aforementioned group, Smith landed a plum position on *The Red Skelton Show* in 1941. He even received special recognition on the May 18, 1943 program, when during a salute to new aircraft recruits at the Shrine Auditorium, Corporal Wonderful Smith received special mention as a member in the crowd. Unfortunately, according to Smith, he was eventually bounced from the show, because "I had difficulty sounding as Negroid as they expected."

After Wonderful Smith left the Skelton program, his appearances on radio and movies diminished. He likewise did not make a noticeable presence in television until the 1970s. No longer a target for civil rights groups, who believed that he and so many other black males encouraged the stereotypes originated by whites, his visits both on TV and in movies increased. Among his stops, he appeared on *Happy Days*, *Ellery Queen* and *CHiPs*, as well as several made-for-TV movies.

He also had supporting parts in the films *Oh, God!* (1977) and *This Is Spinal Tap* (1984). In the later, he steals a scene in Rob Reiner's rockumentary about a fictitious rock group. When the band cannot find the stage in Cleveland, janitor Smith directs the hapless musicians in the right direction and then rolls his eyes in disbelief as they continue to return to him without getting to their venue on time.

As for the ladies, several represent the great strides that their sex made after ra-

cial stereotypes began to crumble. Many of the male players belonged to an unfortunate lot, whose careers were decimated for what groups such as the NAACP believed fostered negative images of black Americans, and the continuation of their participation in film, radio, and television after the early 1950s became non-existent. Besides, a new generation of black actors, most notably Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, and James Earl Jones, appeared ready to assume roles in a rapidly changing entertainment world.

Hattie McDaniel figures as an African-American actress who succeeded in the white man's entertainment world as none other had during the pre-civil rights '50s. She also bore the brunt of her own race for doing so.

A self-taught actress, McDaniel went to California in 1931, and shortly thereafter took a featured role on a Los Angeles radio program. Sadly, most of her film opportunities brought her to audiences



*Duffy's Tavern*  
Eddie Green, Charlie Cantor, Ed Gardner, Florence Halop

PHOTOFFST



through the servants' door, and her most prestigious triumph resulted when she played the wise "Mammy" part in one of the greatest films of all time, *Gone With the Wind*. Content to do so, she provoked groups such as the NAACP and its leader William White, who believed that she did her race a disservice for taking the kinds of roles that he and his organization thought were demeaning. She responded, "What do you want me to do, play a glamour girl on Clark Gable's knee? When you ask me not to play the parts, what have you got in return?"

Eventually, when she could get no more such parts in film, radio beckoned. As has been already mentioned, Hattie appeared on several shows in her usual subservient role. However, when Proctor and Gamble decided not to use a white male actor to play the maid Beulah, McDaniel answered the call.

Parenthetically, the popular role began on the *Fibber McGee and Molly* radio show in 1944. White male actor Marlin Hurt originated the maid's very popular catch phrases "Somebody bawl fo' Beulah?" and "Love dat man." Hurt was so popular that in 1945, the spin-off *The Marlin Hurt and Beulah Show* premiered. Sadly, he died near the end of its first season and was replaced by another white man, Bob Corley.

When Dreft soap became the sponsor in 1947, Hattie McDaniel took the part. Although she agreed to play what had been a stereotypical part, the actress insisted that she not speak in derogatory dialects and that she would have script approval.

Taking the role for \$2,000 per week, more than double her income from *Gone*



*Beulah*  
Hattie McDaniel, Ernie Whitman

PHOTOFEST

*With the Wind*, Hattie McDaniel's *Beulah* evolved into a more realistically sympathetic character.

So successful was the actress's portrayal and acceptance that when television sought good programs for adaptation, the show made the transition, this time with Ethel Waters in the title role. Hattie continued on radio until 1952, when she moved over to take the television part, but after only a couple of episodes, she fell terminally ill.

Louise Beavers finished *Beulah* on TV, while Amanda Randolph completed the radio run. Hattie's fight with the NAACP ended with her death in the fall of 1952, and, despite strong ratings, the TV show left the air the following year when Beavers departed the show.

Both on the radio and television *Beulah*, Ruby Dandridge played the lead's best friend Oriole. Like so many black actors, she came to Hollywood seeking a chance to act in films, but most of the jobs avail-

able to her involved speaking in dialect and taking traditional stereotypical roles. At a young age she played radio parts such as Mammy Brown in the serial *The Gallant Heart* and Geranium on the *Judy Canova Show*.

Finally, like Ruby Dandridge, Ethel Waters became one of few figures to span the time when she had to appear with a bandana on her head and speak with the stereotypical "Negro" entertainment accent to an era when racial equality seemed guaranteed, on paper at least. From the humblest of beginnings, her poverty forced her to steal in order to eat. Eventually, she took a job as a chambermaid, but this avenue did not lead to the position of permanent servant, rather it opened a path to the stage.

After winning an amateur contest in Philadelphia, she got the chance to sing and dance for \$9 a week. Eventually, "Mama String Bean," as she was then known, worked her way to the Cotton Club in Harlem. While there, Irving Berlin heard her sing her signature "Stormy Weather," and he subsequently cast the entertainer in his 1933 hit *As Thousands Cheer*.



Amanda Randolph

PHOTOFEST

Also during that year, she starred in American Oil's *The American Revue* on CBS. However, her visits to radio came more as a guest star than as a regular on a series. She frequently visited the Armed Forces show *Jubilee* and also appeared on *Command Performance*.

Her greater claim to fame resulted from her movie career. Unfortunately, most of her roles came as a servant. After her triumph in *Member in the Wedding* (1952), critic Brooks Atkinson praised her as the epitome of "Negro cook and symbol of maternity ... rich and eloquent performances that lay such a deep spell on any audience that sees her."

Late in her life, Ethel Waters dedicated her appearances to singing primarily religious songs. She preferred acting to singing in the early years, because she often had to sing more suggestive and vulgar songs in nightclubs. During the 1950s, the reluctant singer fervently rededicated her life to Jesus at a Billy Graham crusade and became a vocal contributor to his work. Her trademark song became "His Eye Is on the Sparrow," a hymn taught to her by



Ruby Dandridge

PHOTOFEST

her grandmother many decades earlier. Ethel Waters died at age 80 in 1977.

Looking back on the quest to understand how African-Americans began to make inroads into popular entertainment required a great deal of digging. Because they were regarded as a second thought in the industry, and the likelihood of their achieving stardom was non-existent, little was written about them.

Outside of some musicians and Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, few received much recognition. As the NAACP decried members of its race who took parts that reinforced stereotypes and the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum, many of the aforementioned actors were outright boycotted from acting or shunned by their own community. As a result, many just faded away without the fanfare that accompanied aging white actors. Besides, when an increased acceptance of African-Americans began to filter over the airwaves and onto the movie screens, a younger generation entered the scene.

By 1956, Nat King Cole became the first African-American to host a network television program, and in 1968, singer Diahann Carroll became the first black female to star in a situation comedy not based on racial stereotypes. As for radio, the old shows were gone, but African-Americans filled the airwaves with the sounds of Motown music and the comedy albums of Bill Cosby, which delighted young audiences of a variety of colors.

As an editorial comment, this author appreciates the contributions that African-American performers made to popular culture despite the circumstances under which they were forced to perform. Fortunately for old-time radio buffs, the listeners can see how "Stepin' Fetchit" type parts gradually evolved into more savvy roles, like those enjoyed by Eddie Anderson, Eddie Green, or Wonderful Smith.

Unfortunately, by the time the Civil Rights movement picked up steam, old-time radio was dead, and only a few examples from the '50s show the direction that the medium was heading. Sadly, not many of the older performers were given a chance to act realistically.

Yes, *Amos 'n' Andy* reinforced stereotypes that, for the most part, required African-American entertainers to play the buffoons that their black-faced predecessors established during the minstrel show days.

On the other hand, programs such as *Amos 'n' Andy* also gave a number of black entertainers work and a chance to display their talents, albeit in restricted and white-prescribed characterizations.

Examining that which African-Americans did before a microphone in the 1930s and 1940s does less to fuel stereotypes years later than it does to stand as a tribute to those who worked under very trying, prescribed circumstances. ■

*Tune in TWTD August 17 for an afternoon of African-Americans on Old-Time Radio.*



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# Shirley Temple: Take a Bow, Curly Top

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BY RANDALL G. MIELKE

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Bright-eyed and curly-topped, Shirley Temple was loved by almost every moviegoer of the 1930s. Guided early on in her career by her mother, Shirley's most charming and endearing films were the ones she made before she was 10 years old.

At the tender age of three, Shirley began making 10-minute short pictures that were take-offs of current films with kids playing the adult roles. *The Runt Page* (1932), a spoof on the popular Ben Hecht-Charles MacArthur newspaper story, *The Front Page*, is an example.

Shirley sparkled in these early films. She had a glint in her eye and tiny dimples that brought a smile to those who saw her, most of whom were going through the grim times of the Depression.

Shirley made several more one-reelers; several short features that had longer, 22-minute formats, and did some bit parts in several feature films. By the end of 1933 Shirley was steadily employed, but she and

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*Randall G. Mielke of Aurora, Illinois is an author and free-lance writer.*

---

her mother were still looking for that Big Break.

Part of the Big Break arrived in the form of a Paramount two-reeler titled *New Deal Rhythm* (1934). Shirley came alive in this



Shirley Temple

short film. She radiated charm, sang one song alone and another with Charles "Buddy" Rogers, and did a tap-dance routine. The studios were starting to take notice. Her appearance in the film *Stand Up and Cheer* (1934) helped her rise to stardom.

The plot of *Stand Up and Cheer* revolves around a Secretary of Amusements who is to im-

prove the morale of the country by organizing a series of vaudeville acts. Shirley's number "Baby, Take a Bow," with James Dunn, did not come until the end of the picture, but it was a delight. After Shirley's appearance in *Stand Up and Cheer*, The Fox Corporation signed her to a seven-year contract.

Fox immediately added Shirley to the cast of two films already in production (*Now I'll Tell* and *Change of Heart*) and then lent her to Paramount to make *Little Miss Marker* (1934).

The story revolves around "Marky" (Shirley), who is left by her father (Edward Earle) with a bookmaker, Sorrowful Jones (Adolphe Menjou), as security on a racetrack ticket. When the horse loses the race, the father commits suicide and Marky is taken in by the bookmaker.

Shirley made three more films in 1934:

*Baby, Take a Bow*, her first starring vehicle in which she does a charming rendition of "On Accounta, I Love You"; *Now and Forever*, in which Shirley reforms a criminal father (Gary Cooper), and *Bright Eyes*, in which she sings "The Good Ship Lollipop."

Things were really taking off for the child actor. By 1935, Shirley Temple was the number one box-office attraction in America. Her success was a combination of her own charm and talent, her mother's ambition, the world's condition, and film stories that placed her in a position of being "Little Miss Fix-It" in the lives of adults. With her star on the rise, Shirley's films in 1935 all proved to be crowd-pleasers.

In *The Little Colonel*, Shirley is up against her crusty grandfather (Lionel Barrymore) who is on the outs with Shirley's mom (Evelyn Venable). As her sidekick in the film, Shirley has the legendary Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, and the two of them are sheer magic together, especially in the famous staircase dance.

Another crowd-pleaser was *Curly Top* (1935), one of Shirley's most charming movies. In it, Shirley and her older sister (Rochelle Hudson) are orphaned (a frequent Temple story device) and rescued from the orphanage by a rich bachelor



Stand Up and Cheer! (1934)  
Shirley with James Dunn

PHOTOFEST

(John Boles), who eventually marries the sister.

In many ways, *Curly Top* is the quintessential Shirley Temple film. She is bright, lively, and made audiences alternately laugh and shed a tear. *Curly Top* was the film in which Shirley sang "Animal Crackers (In My Soup)" with a chorus of 60 orphans, as she danced up and down the aisles of the orphanage dining room.

*Curly Top* was followed by *The Littlest Rebel* (1935), a Civil War story in which her father (John Boles) goes to the front to fight and Shirley is cared for by her ailing mother (Karen Morley) and the family's black servants. In the film Shirley was again teamed with Bill Robinson and the two have a terrific time performing a sidewalk dance to "Pollywoolly Doodle."

The Hollywood studios were on a hot streak with Shirley Temple and several other successful films followed, including *Captain January* and *Poor Little Rich Girl*, both released in 1936.

For *Captain January* Shirley plays a little waif called Star. Lighthouse keeper Captain January (Guy Kibbee) raises Star when her parents' boat capsizes and they are killed. Buddy Ebsen was Shirley's new dancing partner, and they did a stunning

turn to "At the Codfish Ball."

Perhaps one of Shirley's finest films is *Poor Little Rich Girl* (1936), in which she plays the daughter of a soap tycoon (Michael Whalen). After an auto accident, Shirley wanders off and ends up working in the act of the vaudeville team Dolan and Dolan (Alice Faye and Jack Haley). The new team lands a radio contract and Shirley's dad finds a new mom (Gloria Stuart) for her. Shirley sings "Oh My Goodness" in the film, which was thereafter always identified with her.

In 1936, Shirley's hold on the public started to weaken a bit. *Dimples* (1936), in which she plays the granddaughter of an actor (Frank Morgan) in the 1850s, did not fare as well as other Temple films had.

Shortly after *Dimples* came *Wee Willie Winkie* (1937), one of the best of Shirley Temple's features. *Wee Willie Winkie* is an adaptation of a Rudyard Kipling tale, an adventure story about a young widow (Junc Lang) and her daughter (Shirley) who travel to India in the late 1800s to join the child's grandfather (C. Aubrey Smith), a colonel of a regiment stationed on the frontier. The possibility of native uprisings provided the drama in the film.

Shirley's next film was *Heidi* (1937). The story remained fairly loyal to the original tale of an orphaned child brought up by her grandfather (Jean Hersholt) in an Alpine hut. *Heidi* was followed by *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1938). The

film reunited Shirley with Bill Robinson, and the two of them updated their stairway routine to "Toy Trumpet" (based on "The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers.")

The story features Randolph Scott as a radio executive searching for a child performer. Shirley, an orphan being raised by her stepfather (William Demarest), auditions and is accidentally turned down.

Demarest takes her to Sunnybrook Farm, which is adjacent to Scott's country retreat. Scott discovers Shirley, and Shirley and Robinson become radio stars.

By the time Shirley approached her 10th birthday, she had been doing the same things on screen for several years. It was wearing thin, but studio heads decided to stick with the formula with *Little Miss Broadway* (1938).

In *Little Miss Broadway* Shirley is yet again an orphan, adopted this time by George Murphy, the owner of a theatrical hotel. Shirley saves the hotel from bankruptcy and, along the way, dances with Murphy and clowns with hotel guest Jimmy Durante.

But even reuniting Shirley and Bill Robinson could not save her next film, *Just Around the Corner* (1938). The plot had Shirley's widowed father (Charles Farrell), an architect, with financial woes that force him to live with his motherless daughter in a dreary basement flat. It was the first Temple film to struggle at the box office.

Shirley rebounded a bit with *The Little Princess* (1939). Shirley plays Sara Crewc,



*The Littlest Rebel* (1935)  
Shirley with Bill Robinson

PHOTOFEST

a daughter of a captain in the Army. She is placed in a girls' school where she is treated like a princess until word comes that the captain has been killed and his fortune lost (at which time she is relegated to servant girl). Sara never gives up hope that he is still alive, and that creates much of the suspense of the melodramatic story.

With the success of *The Little Princess* there was hope that Shirley would be able to make the transition from child star to adolescent performer. Her next film, *Susannah of the Mounties* (1939), however, did not do very well. In *Susannah of the Mounties*, Shirley is the lone survivor of an Indian massacre, rescued by the Canadian Mounties (led by Randolph Scott). The story was rather dull, and Shirley's character was the least sympathetic that she had ever played.

As the new decade began, the realities of World War II were starting to emerge and moviegoers started looking to more realistic films. Shirley's next two films, *The Blue Bird* (1940), an extravagant fantasy featuring Shirley as a spoiled brat who looks for happiness by leaving her parents' home, and *Young People* (1941), a show-business saga with Shirley cast as the daughter of ex-vaudevillians who have trouble resettling in a rural community, were inappropriate for their time and both fared poorly. It was shortly after these two films that Fox severed her contract.

The next few years Shirley alternated between attending high school and making movies, but the two or three movies she made failed to impress audiences or critics. She did succeed in a mini-come-



*Since You Went Away* (1944)  
Shirley with Monty Woolley

PHOTOFFST

back of sorts in *Since You Went Away* (1944) in which Shirley plays Claudette Colbert's daughter, Brig. The film is a simple, contemporary story of an American family living under daily restrictions as a result of the war.

Shirley made another 10 films for various studios and her 57th and final film was *The Story of Seabiscuit* (1949). Her role in this story about the famous racehorse, Seabiscuit, was that of an Irish girl --- the first time she ever had to use an accent for a character. As the niece of Seabiscuit's trainer (Barry Fitzgerald) and the fiancée of the horse's jockey (Lon McCallister), Shirley did not bring any depth to the part. The film received devastating reviews.

As a charming and engaging youngster, Shirley Temple was the idol of millions of moviegoers. Although the plots of her films were simplistic; almost interchangeable, no one at the time was going to the movies to be intellectually stimulated. People went to the movies because they knew that the films that Shirley made offered escape. Despite her inability to catch on as an adult actress, her films as a youngster delighted audiences and will continue to do so for years to come. ■

*TUNE IN TWTD August 3 to hear Shirley Temple in a radio version of her film, The Littlest Rebel.*



## WE GET MAIL

**NORTH AURORA, IL--** Your tribute to Jay Andres (*TWTD* March 23) reminded me of an incident that showed what a really good sport he is. Back when he was doing "Morning Song" on WNIB, he used to play marches on the hour, and he wasn't adverse to accepting requests. This must have been about 16 years ago. My younger brother was going to be home on leave from the Marine Corps one Christmas, so I had written Jay Andres to ask if, for one of those hourly marches, he could play something "Marine-y." Much to my surprise, he referred to my note on the air, and played "Semper Fidelis" in honor of the occasion. My parents and I thought that was tremendously nice of him. Jay Andres is a broadcaster who appreciated his "family" of listeners.

--**SARAH COLE**

**GLEN ELLYN, IL--** I have been a listener of your radio program for so many years. If I need not be somewhere else on Saturday, you can be sure I am close to my radio. It was with utter delight that I heard your salute to Jay Andres. In my humble opinion, he was the very best of the radio musical hosts. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed listening to him when he was on Chicago radio, and how many nights I stayed up listening to his all-night program, just because it was too good to turn off. I want to thank you profusely for your salute to him and I sincerely hope we will hear it again in the future.

--**MARJORIE MC LAIN**

**PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA--** You, sir, are a genius in your work. To be able to string together that tribute in a comprehensible

manner must have involved many hours of work. As we both know, it is difficult to listen to one's self, but once I began listening to the tapes (you sent), I basked in a remembrance of so many years. I am sorry they are now at an end, but we did live at the ending of the golden age of radio; it was an unforgettable ride filled with many fine remembrances. You are the ideal and superb historian as witness your WDCB program. You are the essential part of radio today.

--**JAY ANDRES**

**ROCKFORD, IL--** I read the article about Gloria Van and Lynn Allison (Oct-Nov, 2001). I worked with him at the Crawford Store in Rolling Meadows. (They also had one in Chicago on Devon Avenue.) He worked in the Men's Department. He was the epitome of a gentleman and I liked him very much. Thanks much for making me aware of his "previous life." He was a wonderful man.

--**DEBBIE ZELEWSKY**

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL--** A footnote to the Parkyakarkus/Harry Einstein bio (April-May, 2002). It you

look on the second page you will find that he had a son less than a month before the bio was originally released in 1947-- Albert Lawrence Einstein. A coincidence that he named his son after the famous physicist. When Harry's son Albert Einstein grew up he wanted to go into the movies, but knew his name would be a handicap. He changed it and became Albert Brooks, and a success.

--**JACK FELDMAN**

**NORTHBROOK, IL--** I've noticed that after these many years, you no longer list Art Hellyer's show in Joliet in your "...and for more good listening" listings. Did he finally retire?

--**PHILLIP SCHWIMMER**

**{ED. NOTE--** Sorry to report that after 14 years on WJOL (and a career that spanned 54 years) the station decided to pull the

### THE WDCB TOWER

As we go to press (in mid-June), radio station WDCB continues broadcasting at greatly reduced power while awaiting the completion of the new transmitter tower in DuPage County.

Once again, we ask *Those Were The Days* listeners to bear with us as we wait for the resumption of the station's full-strength signal, although we are unable to predict a completion date.

It's our plan to repeat, in the coming months, significant vintage broadcasts and features from *TWTD* during the "reduced power" period.

Thanks very much for your patience.

--**Chuck Schaden**





## MORE MAIL

plug on Art and his program and "go in another direction" -- news and talk. Too bad for all of us who enjoyed Art on the air. We can only hope that, if he wants to, he'll turn up on another dial one of these days.)

**COMMERCE, GEORGIA**-- I noticed in the credits at the end of the *Screen Guild Players'* "China Seas" (TWTG May 25) the music was credited to Wilbur Hatch. I find it interesting that he was also the music conductor for both *My Favorite Husband* and for the *I Love Lucy* TV series. He also is credited with composing the theme music for *Our Miss Brooks* and providing the music for *Broadway is My Beat* and *The Whistler*. Thanks for a great Lucille Ball Month! I sure do enjoy the newspapers that Ken Alexander brings up from his basement. Keep them coming. --LINDSAY CLEVELAND

**CRADDOCKVILLE, VIRGINIA**-- I am elated that you are back on the Internet. I caught the last 45 minutes last Saturday and the connection was perfect. I am looking forward to those Fall and Winter afternoons listening like I did long, long ago back in Evanston. --JOHN LANGE

**OAK LAWN, IL**-- I have been listening to you since the Evanston days, at which time you were on during morning drive time. While the four-hour stint on Saturday provides enough time for a great program, I am usually deep into the "Honey-Do" list, so I record the entire program and then listen to it the next week while commuting. When WNIB was sold and you moved to WDCB I had to find a more powerful antenna, but that was relatively easy and inexpensive. Then in December WDCB lost their antenna. That presented a more difficult and costly problem, but at least amenable to solution -- I bought another stereo system and put it in the den where the computer resides so I could tape from the Internet feed. I hope that the new tower will soon be up and stability will return; each of these perturbations gets more expensive to overcome, at an exponential rate, so I certainly do not wish to see another one. --PETE SCHIPMA

(ED. NOTE-- We hope that the next step, which would be to check on available housing in Glen Ellyn, will not be necessary.)

**PALOS HILLS, IL**-- We won't knock WDCB or do anything to rile 'em up since they agreed to carry the best radio show around. Anyway, soon you'll be back (at full strength) and we'll forget the inconvenience because the glory days of old-time radio will have returned. --DON & PAT COUTTS

**CARY, NORTH CAROLINA**-- I have been reading in the Book of Job. In chapter 29, verse 1 Job, in his misery, says, in the New Living Translation (published by Tyndale House in Wheaton), "I long for the years gone by." And, what do you know, Chapter 29, verse 7 begins: "Those were the days..." Chuck, you have received the greatest recognition. Your program is mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. --ROBERT PEACH

**E-MAIL**-- I have been a loyal listener since 1987 and I never took the time to say "thank you" for your radio show. My parents listened to the show and I remember how they used to laugh and reminisce about the good old days. Since that time they both have passed away so each week when I listen to your show I can still recall their laughter. Every Saturday when I tune in I believe my parents are still laughing with me. --TOM DENZ

### NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

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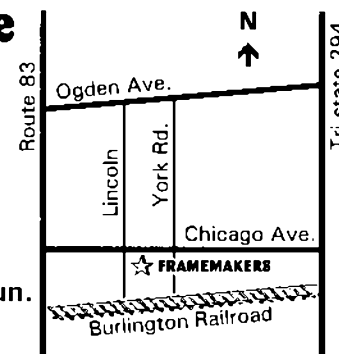
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Not RAINmakers! **FRAMEMAKERS!**





PHOTOGRAPH

← **HATTIE MC DANIEL**

was one of many African-Americans who appeared on old-time radio programs. Read Bill Oates' article on page 26.

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