

CHUCK SCHADEN'S
NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND
RADIO GUIDE ©

JUNE-JULY, 1987



BRET MORRISON

Come In and Browse!



COME VISIT US IN OUR BRAND NEW HOME! WE'RE ONLY A MILE FROM OUR FORMER SPOT AND WE'RE BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER, WITH LOTS MORE GOODIES FROM THE GOOD OLD DAYS.



Metro Golden Memories



5425 W. ADDISON STREET, CHICAGO

TWO MILES WEST OF KENNEDY EXPRESSWAY — PHONE 736-4133

**WE'RE OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK
MONDAY thru SATURDAY — 10 AM to 6 PM
SUNDAY — NOON to 5 PM**

We buy and sell movie magazines, one-sheets, lobby cards, stills, LP records

NOSTALGIA DIGEST. ©

HELLO, OUT THERE IN Radioland!!

BOOK THIRTEEN CHAPTER FOUR

JUNE-JULY 1987

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SPEAKING OF RADIO	2
Conversation with Bret Morrison	
CHARLIE MC CARTHY	9
Reprint ad from 1944	
SO YOU WANT A RADIO JOB AS AN ANNOUNCER	10
Reprint from 1937	
SO YOU WANT TO BE A SPORTS ANNOUNCER	13
Reprint from 1937	
RADIO CLASSICS	16
June-July Schedule	
THOSE WERE THE DAYS	18
June-July Schedule	
I REMEMBER IT WELL	22
Mellow Musical Memories	
TRIVIUS NOSTALGIUS TRIVIUS	26
Guess Who	
WE GET LETTERS	28
Our Readers Write	
FILM CLIPS	31
Murder In Hollywood	

COPYRIGHT © 1987

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Chuck Schaden's NOSTALGIA DIGEST is published six times a year by THE HALL CLOSET, Box 421, Morton Grove, Illinois 60053 (312/965-7763).

Annual subscription is \$10 for six issues. Your subscription expires with the issue date noted on the mailing label. A renewal reminder is sent with the last issue of your subscription.

We have over 45,000 programs in our collection of vintage radio broadcasts and, eventually, every one of them will be part of the new Museum of Broadcast Communications which opens to the public on Saturday, June 13.

We've been gathering these shows from hundreds of sources for nearly 25 years and, as our collection has grown, we've kept a good, but informal filing system, maintaining a cross-reference for each show and detailed information on those we've broadcast over the past 17 years.

Now, as the collection moves to what will be its' permanent home in the Museum (under our guidance, care and watchful eye, of course), the time has come for old time radio to enter the age of computers.

It's going to be a massive job to do whatever it takes to transfer all that information to the electronic wizards so that Museum patrons will be able to select programs for listening pleasure or study. We're working on it all right now and initially hundreds of vintage shows will be available in the Museum's A. C. Nielsen Research Center. Each month, more programs will be added and the plan is for the Museum to have one of the most complete archives of radio broadcasts in the world.

Add this to an outstanding collection of important television shows, classic radio-TV commercials, plus an impressive schedule of exhibits, programs and special events, and you'll find that the new Museum offers something very, very unique.

Share the experience. Join the Museum of Broadcast Communications, 800 South Wells St., Chicago, IL 60607. Call (312) 565-1950 for membership information.

— Chuck Schaden

SPEAKING OF RADIO



Chuck Schaden's Conversation with BRET MORRISON



*It doesn't seem like such a long time ago, but we were in California in December, 1973, when we had the opportunity to meet Bret Morrison, the actor who starred on radio as *The Shadow* and as *Mr. First Nighter*. Mr. Morrison died in 1978 and we will always remember with fondness our visit with him at his home in the Hollywood Hills.*

He did a lot of radio work in Chicago and we commented that he certainly must have been a member of the now famous "Bridge Up Club."

Yes, yes, that's the club that all the Chicago actors—we call it the "Bridge Is Up Club." It's a sort of a dutch-treat club. We get together on Wednesday afternoons for luncheon and, oh, discuss the old days and our friends and exchange information about various people in the business and what they're doing and one thing or another.

And you're called the "Bridge Is Up Club" because you share one thing in common with each other—you all got stuck somewhere along the line when the bridge was up in Chicago!

Yes. In order to get from the Merchandise Mart to either the Wrigley Building or the Tribune Tower, where the Mutual Network was, we had to cross the Michigan Avenue bridge. So, if it was open at an inopportune time, we were apt to be late. As you know in radio everything had to be down to the second and there's some very strange and amusing excuses—but that was always a very good excuse to use if you were unavoidably detained. And one actor, I don't know who it was, came in and said, "I'm terribly sorry I'm late today, but just everything went wrong. The bridge died and my landlady was up!"

Did you, indeed, ever get caught by the bridge?

Oh, yes, yes!

*You were on radio's *First Nighter* program. Did you ever get on-the-air credit as Bret Morrison, the *First Nighter*?*

I don't remember whether we had air credit at that time or not. I did *First Nighter* from 1937 until World War II and I don't know whether I—I don't think our union at that time had a mandatory clause that we would be given air credit.

Did that come about because of the union? The air credit?

Yes, yes. I think it came about a little bit later, like in the late 40s, shortly after the war when a lot of the actors sort of complained about the fact that they were doing important roles on shows and were getting no identification. Some of the advertising agencies were using this as a wedge, also, to threaten the actors so that if they made demands for an increase in salary, the agency said, "Well, we can just fire you and get somebody else, and after a few days nobody's going to know the difference anyway." So we sort of asked, you know, that this be included in new contract negotiations and it finally was.

You were the genial "First Nighter"—the host welcoming—

Mr. First Nighter, yes.

You never took tickets. . .

No, no. I was always ushered to my favorite seat. I was on the aisle, down in front I guess it was.

This, of course, was in Chicago. You were quite busy as an actor in Chicago in the late 30s and early 40s.

Yes. Chicago was really, I think, probably more active even than New York, and certainly more active than the West Coast in those days. Being centrally located and being so near so many of the major sponsors. You know, General Mills and others, being located pretty much in that area, felt they had a little more control of their shows from Chicago rather than New York. After the war, however, things just sort of shifted, and then they came out to New York and Hollywood.

You were on all of the big shows in Chicago.

I started in radio in Chicago way back in 1929 when I was still in high school.

Where did you go to high school?

Nicholas Senn. We have a lot of alumni from there that have done some great things in theatre and pictures. Burr Tillstrom from *Kukla*, Fran and Ollie was just after me. Jerry Lester was in my class—in the dramatics class. Hugh Marlow, who has done a great deal in films, and—oh, gosh, there were just loads of them, it seemed, that came from that particular era.

You say you were in a dramatics class, so you had an interest in drama and the arts in high school.

Yes, that really started me. I didn't really go out for it until I was in my junior year at Senn, and then I saw a performance of Beau Brummel and I thought this would be kind of fun. I was majoring in art and history of architecture and painting, and

CLARK SCHAFFEN'S
NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND
RADIO GUIDE

JUNE-JULY 1987



BRET MORRISON

so they were sort of allied arts to me. I've always been interested in theatre, so I decided I'd try out for it and I broke a precedent. You had to have two semesters of preparatory work before you could become a *Player*, which naturally meant that it would be one year of what they call "B and A" dramatics before you became a *Player*. Well, inasmuch as I was in my first semester of my junior year, that meant that I would only have one semester in *Players*, I mean, to do anything. So, I found I had enough English credits that I could skip the "B" dramatics and go right into "A", which I did.

That same year they were doing a play at Senn called "Happy Go Lucky" or "Tillie of Bloomsbury" and it seemed that we used to give two performances and we'd have a different cast at each performance, because the casts were usually large enough to give everybody a chance to play. But there were always more women than men, as a rule, and you had to meet certain scholastic standards in order to be able

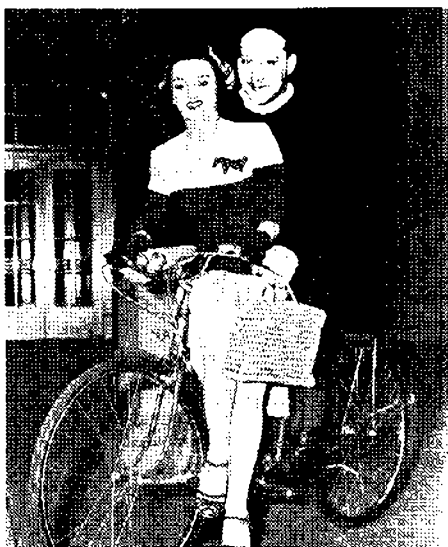
SPEAKING OF RADIO

to qualify for a *Players*. So, for some reason or other, they only had one lead to play, you know, both nights. So, for protection they called on the "A" dramatics class to understudy and finally, about a week or so before the actual performance, our director said, "I'm going to announce something that's unprecedented in the history of our dramatics class, but I think he's earned it. Bret Morrison is going to play the lead on Friday night." So that gave me my extra semester as a *Player* and then I took a years' post-graduate course, or an extra semester's post-graduate course so that I'd have an additional chance to play.

You mentioned that you first got involved in radio in 1929.

Right. That was at WCFL, the Voice of Labor, in Chicago. I had my own poetry hour there. And then later, as a result, we formed a little theatre group with a nucleus of players that we had at Senn, under the same director. We used to do one-act plays on the air. Then, eventually, I did some publicity work for Universal Pictures and we did across-the-board—five, half-hours a week—and did the complete version of "Dracula," which they had just filmed, and on the basis of this I came out to the West Coast to work in a picture called "The Road Back" which was the sequel to "All Quiet on the Western Front." That was in the early 30s, 1931 or 32 I believe it was, and I was here until about 1937. I got into radio out here on the West Coast and I did Hollywood Hotel, Lux Radio Theatre and a lot of the big shows and a lot of other shows that came up. We had mostly half-hour shows out here. We didn't have the big-time soap operas on the West Coast at all.

Was it tough to get an acting job on the major shows on radio out here, back in those days?



PUBLICITY PHOTO from the early 1940s shows "two members of the Chicago Theatre of the Air operetta cast — Bret Morrison and Marilou Neumayer — who have forsaken all other forms of transportation and are now riding bicycles from their homes to the WGN studios. Here Morrison gives Marilou a ride from WGN because her bike is temporarily out of commission. The cars are in the garage, the actors point out, because of the tire and auto rationing plans now in effect in the United States."

Well it was, of course. This was the height of the Depression and the average price for a radio show in those days was five dollars. And some paid as little as three dollars. And some of the recordings we did, some of the series paid, you know, like three dollars for a fifteen-minute recording.

Did that include your rehearsal time?

Oh, yes, that was the whole business. Hollywood Hotel and the Lux Radio Theatre, when they started, paid the most. They paid fifty dollars, but you had to rehearse all week for that. I mean, you were at their disposal for the entire week. But, as I said, this was the height of the Depression and fifty dollars a week was a lot of money in those days.

Right, right.

I was out here in California—this was 1937—and I was visiting some friends, sort of bemoaning the fact that things were not too good in radio. I mean, I was making a living, I was getting by, but I felt sort of stifled. My family was still back in Chicago and I was sort of anxious to go back. My friends mentioned the fact that they knew someone who was in town from Chicago, looking for some other type of talent—writing talent, actually. But they said, “Why don’t you call and find out what the situation is in Chicago?” So, I called this man and I asked him what the leading-man situation was and he said, “Well, there’s always room for one more, if they’re any good.” So he said, “I’ll tell you what I’ll do. I’ve got to catch a plane back to Chicago late tomorrow afternoon, but if you want to meet me at—” there was a recording company out here called Freeman Lang at that time, where we did a lot of our shows for radio in those days—and he said, “If you want to come out and cut an audition record, I’ll take it back. I can’t promise anything,” he said, “but at least I’ll see what can be done.” So I went down with him, and his wife very graciously read with me on the script and I sat down at the piano because I discovered they were going to do a musical. He picked up the record and off he went and I thought, well, you know, I won’t hear anything more about that. Then I got a wire saying, “I can’t really guarantee you anything, but the chances are very good, if you want to come out on speculation, that you can get something on this show.”

So I decided to take the jump and I pulled up stakes here and went back to Chicago into the agency for my interview on the show. They seemed to be very impressed with the audition that I had done and the fact that I could do both the singing and acting. It made it that much better. They were, originally going to split it up and have someone do the acting and



BRET MORRISON IN LATER YEARS

somebody else do the singing. So they asked me how much I wanted for the show, and of course, I was thinking in terms—we didn’t have strip shows as we call them here in those days—five days a week. They were mostly half-hour shows, “costume-drama” things, “Peter the Great,” “Catherine the Great,” things of that kind. And, so all I was thinking in my mind at this time was fifty dollars, ‘cause that was the highest price that you could get out here for a show. So I said, “Well, if you pay for all the arrangements, everything else—” “Oh, yes, we’ll take care of that.” I said “Well, fifty dollars a show.” And he said, “Well, that’s two hundred fifty dollars a week.” And I just gulped and I said, “Yes, it is.” And he said, “Well, I guess that’s satisfactory.” I nearly dropped dead because I didn’t expect that, of course, in those days—1937—two hundred fifty dollars a week was considerable!

Have you ever thought what you might have asked for that? You know, three dollars for this show and five dollars for

SPEAKING OF RADIO

that one and the top was Lux, and this was not Lux, so what might you have asked? Ten dollars for the show?

I don't know, I really don't know. I had just one figure in mind and I figured that fifty dollars—in those days—if I could average fifty dollars a week, I could get by. And this is all I was looking for. We've come a long way since then.

What was that show?

It was called "Love Song" and it sort of died an early death because it was a very bad show, actually. It sort of developed into a burlesque sort of thing. And finally they did away with the dramatic show idea and it resolved itself into Vincent Pelletier and myself. I sang and Vinnie read poetry. And we were on for quite a while with that format.

You were rather versatile because you had announcing jobs as well as acting jobs. You were able to do both?

Yes, I specialized in dialects, too. I'll tell you, a lot of the actors in the early days—you had to be versatile. Because in order to make enough money to make a living—even at the height of the Depression, when a few dollars went a long way—you had to be versatile, because if certain areas sort of petered out, you had to be able to step into something else and do it. You couldn't be a specialist, really, because there was no room for specialization. You had to be as versatile and flexible as you possibly could if you wanted to work steadily, which fortunately I always have.

You were on a lot of the soap operas from Chicago.

Oh, yes, yes. And then in New York. I don't think there's one on the air that I haven't played in at sometime or another.

Did you have the lead in any of them, any of the soaps? I know you were on Woman in White and Guiding Light. . .

And Big Sister, Helen Trent, Ma Perkins, Stella Dallas.

You had an important role in The Light of the World.

Yes, I was the announcer on The Light of the World, or rather the narrator.

You were the one who came on and said . . .

"The Light . . . of the World!"

You mentioned New York. How did you get to New York from Chicago?

I was in Special Services during the war and they were utilizing my talents as far as the theatre and radio was concerned and they approached me and said, "We have been screening people and your name keeps constantly coming up. You seem to be the only one who is familiar with all of these various phases of theatre and show business which we require for this specific job that we have in mind" which was the "WAC Caravan." It was the recruiting of WACs throughout the New England states primarily and then, also, I went up to Canada and organized the same thing up there.

My job was to produce and direct a 15-minute radio show every day with all Army personnel, including myself, and then be stage manager and emcee a three-hour stage show every night, to be familiar with any kind of a light board, or to improvise as far as settings and lighting and so forth was concerned, depending upon where we were playing and what we had to do. So, this was very interesting work. I enjoyed it tremendously. There were 125 people in our company and we were all stationed in Boston for Service Command. Anyway, when I completed my work with them, I went to New York from Boston and I'd no sooner arrived in New York when—I was just working steadily that first year I was here, 1944—I got The Shadow.

I was called down to audition for something. I was doing another broadcast and they were losing the studio at 2 o'clock and I was called in. I didn't get off the air until a quarter of two. So, I said, "Well,



THE SHADOW PUBLICITY PHOTO

I'm not sure that I can make it, but I'll sure try my best." So I got there about three minutes to two and I thought, you know—. But they said, "Well, we're losing the studio at two o'clock," but they handed me this thing and said, "Just read this. It's the opening and closing of this thing." And that was it. I looked at it and it was the opening and closing of *The Shadow*.

And you didn't know the audition was for The Shadow?

No, I didn't know what it was for. So I just read it as I'd always remembered hearing it, you know, because we used to follow *The Shadow*—us First Nighters. And so I always heard the closing signature. So that was that, you know. I read it and forgot about it. We were constantly doing auditions and some we get and some we don't. About a week or so later, I got a call that said, "Oh, you're it." And so I did it from then until it went off the air. I did *The Shadow*, I guess, longer than anyone.

From 1944 until the end?

Until it went off the air in the middle 50s.

And there were brand new shows being presented every Sunday. Sunday afternoon with The Shadow—

"Five O'Clock Shadow" I was called!

Did you have to take a trip to the Orient to learn how to cloud men's minds?

No, I managed to do that without having to go to the Orient! I did the opening and closing signature. the "who knows—"

Do you think that—

Oh, yeah. It won't sound the same because I worked on a special microphone which gave it a filtered effect, but I'll do it for you.

"Who knows . . . what evil lurks . . . in the hearts of men . . . The Shadow knows. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha—"

And at the end there was—

"The weed of crime bears bitter fruit. Crime does not pay. The Shadow knows." It's sort of a mixed metaphor, I guess.

And it was a great, great radio show! You had the longest run as an actor playing The Shadow. Who preceded you?

Bill Johnstone and Orson Welles before that. Originally, well, there was a Robert Hardy Andrews who was before Orson Welles. This went on in the very early 30s, I'm not sure. And he was just like Raymond on *Inner Sanctum*. He was merely a host. And then the story had nothing to do with *The Shadow* until Orson Welles stepped in and then he became a central character in the story itself. Bill Johnstone followed him and then, as I say, in 1944 I followed Bill Johnstone.

What was the reason for the switch? Was Johnstone just tired of it or was he—

I don't know. I never had any idea. I didn't know what the reason was.

SPEAKING OF RADIO

When you were playing Lamont Cranston, The Shadow, who was your lovely friend and companion, Margo Lane?

Well, I had four, Marjorie Anderson was the first, then Gertrude Warner. Gertrude was actually the last one. Grace Mathews and Leslie Woods, and then Gertrude Warner was the last one. I think Gertrude did it longer than anyone else. And then Agnes Moorehead did it with Orson Welles.

Did you enjoy doing The Shadow?

Yes, I did. I did. When I first did it, you know, we were "live." We used to work from the Longacre Theatre in New York. I don't believe radio shows should be watched, but the audiences seemed to enjoy it. But it's such a small percentage of the listeners that it doesn't, I guess, destroy the illusion.

Well some of the radio shows, such as First Nighter for a good example, had the actors "dress" for the performance.

Oh, yes, We always did ours "live" before an audience, yes, and we dressed. We

even took it on vaudeville. We had a vaudeville turn with First Nighter. I don't think there's anything I haven't done!

What about television?

I did television in the early days, you know, when television was "live." I did City Hospital, or General Hospital.

Did you do anything on the screen?

Oh, yes, yes. I've done—well, I did some pictures 'way back in the 30s, some things back then. I was in "Cavalcade," that's the Noel Coward thing. And, the remake of "Tess of the Storm Country" with Janet Gaynor and "Hell Below" with Clark Gable, and a few others.

There were a couple of Shadow movies. Were you in those?

No, no. That was before. I think they only did two pictures on that. No. The Shadow, they've never been able to do anything with it on television. I know the reason why. Because they wouldn't accept the fact that it's sort of an adult fairy tale. It was fantasy and it should have been treated like Topper was done, with special effects and on film. And the few times that they tried to do something with it, they've always tried to rationalize it, you know, and make it believable and it just never came off.

Wouldn't you say, too, that The Shadow is really radio material, because the listener had to add his imagination?

It is, right, right.

It's really been a treat to talk to the man who was The Shadow and the First Nighter and the voice of so many great characters on radio.

Well, it's nice to see someone from the old home town and I hope radio comes back and the time will come when every radio set will be a color set.

Thanks for sharing some memories with us.

Chuck, thank you.

Chuck Schaden's



SPEAKING OF RADIO

Conversations with . . .

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dennis Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Edgar Bergen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rudy Vallee | <input type="checkbox"/> Harold Peary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kate Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> Elliott Lewis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don Ameche | <input type="checkbox"/> Jack Benny |

. . . and many others

may be obtained on custom cassette tape recordings. For a list of interviews available, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

SPEAKING OF RADIO
Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053

McCarthy Goes Fishin'

DURING BURGESS SWING IN COFFEE HISTORY



CHARLIE MC CARTHY was the super-salesman for Chase and Sanborn Coffee in this advertisement from the September 12, 1944 issue of the Chicago Times. The coffee company was, of course, the long time sponsor of the Charlie McCarthy radio show and it was natural that they asked their star to appear in a series of print ads. Rebroadcasts of the Charlie McCarthy Show — with Edgar Bergen, Mortimer Snerd and guests — are heard regularly on Radio Classics, weeknights on WBBM, Newsradio 78, Chicago. Check the schedule on page 16 and 17.

So You Want

a Radio Job!

REPRINT from STAND BY Magazine.
January 23, 1937
PHOTOS from *Nostalgia Digest* collection

by JOHN BAKER

As An Announcer

"SO you're a radio announcer. Isn't that wonderful!" Well, it is, in a way, but it's hard work, too.

In the radio business, the announcer is the "front" man, the one who is in the public eye, the one whose words start the performance, connect its different parts, and wind it up with a gracious farewell. His words also convey the sponsor's sales message to the listeners, a necessary part of most programs if radio is to survive.

In the minds of most people, a person in radio is an announcer. As a matter of fact, writers, actors, musicians and executives greatly outnumber the announcers, but the fact remains that each of the more than 600 radio stations in the country must have at least one announcer or someone who can combine announcing with other duties. And the average young man who is interested in radio as a career thinks first of announcing as his opportunity, and asks "What do I need to do to be a good radio announcer?"

Everett Mitchell, chief announcer of the central division of the National Broadcasting company, an announcer since radio wore swaddling clothes, outlines some of the qualifications for radio announcers as measured by NBC standards.

The first thing an announcer needs in his training is an intensive course in English. Anyone who has listened to auditions of prospective announcers at a radio station knows how many candidates are awkward in the handling of their principal tool, the English language. Correct pronunciation, good grammar, use of the correct words; those are primary requirements, but many would-be announcers fail to meet them.

Then, an announcer should be conversant with at least three foreign languages, preferably French, Italian and German, according to Mitchell. Even though the announcer is on a small station which plays records for most of its music, he will have occasion almost every day to announce musical numbers with foreign titles, written by foreign composers.

A knowledge of music of all types is important, in order that the announcer may be able to introduce a musical selection and give his listeners more than the mere name of the number to be played or sung. Studying the famous operas and becoming familiar with the arias from them will enable the announcer to discuss them with intelligence and understanding. Listeners who are unfamil-

iar with the selections will appreciate this addition to their fund of information; on the other hand those who do know the operas will be inclined to discount any remarks of the announcer who shows himself ignorant of his subject.

Rhythm in Speech

Along with the study of music should go a study of the pronunciation of composers' names. Musical dictionaries and reference books are indispensable in this line of education. The competent announcer has a rhythm to his speech which is pleasant to the ear, and which carries the listener's thoughts along with his words. This can be developed in only one way—by reading aloud. Most radio programs are read from manuscript, and so it is necessary for the announcer to develop the ability to read aloud and make it sound as free, natural, and convincing as though he were talking.

The smoothness of an announcer's speech and the quality of his voice can be improved greatly by proper breathing. Many announcers have entered radio as singers, and their vocal training, including the development of proper breathing, has been a factor in their success. The announc-



GRAHAM MC NAMEE



BOAKE CARTER

er who learns to breathe from the depths of his lungs can control his breath so that his speech comes smoothly and without effort.

The voice itself should be easy to listen to. The good announcing voice has a certain something which Mitchell calls "sparkle"; some voices have it naturally; others can be trained to develop it; while still other voices seem destined to remain forever outside the class of pleasant speaking voices. In his announcers' school for page boys at NBC headquarters in Chicago, Mitchell has helped the prospective announcers to find the best range for each voice. In some cases, the voice needed to be lowered from the usual speaking range; in others it needed to be raised.

Budding announcers are taught that every syllable of a word deserves the honor of pronunciation. "National" is not "nash-nul"; our nation has a "pres-i-dent", rather than a "pres-dent".

SO YOU WANT A RADIO JOB AS AN ANNOUNCER

Some persons talk in their throats and consequently muffle their words. This can be corrected by "thinking" each word up to the front part of the mouth, where the tongue, palate and teeth may enunciate it distinctly.

Several of Mitchell's proteges among the NBC page boys have overcome flaws in speech which would have prevented their becoming satisfactory announcers, simply by recognizing those weaknesses and working to overcome them.

And finally, Everett Mitchell stresses the fact that announcers need brains. "I'd rather have a boy with brains and a high school education than one with a college degree and a sluggish mind, to train in the field of announcing," he says.

The field of announcing is becoming more competitive every year. Alert, keen young announcers are coming up to the networks from smaller stations. "The only way to get ahead and keep ahead," Mitchell says, "is to study constantly. Listen to radio programs with a critical ear, read good books and good magazines of all kinds; keep up with world events by reading the newspapers and news magazines. This will help to keep the mind active and make words come more easily, if there are two things which an announcer needs they are an active mind and a ready command of words."

Mitchell's experience with announcers and listeners from all parts of the country convinces him that the Middle West produces the best announcers, because Middle Western speech has less trace of accent than that of any other part of the country. The Southerner may have a mellowness to his drawl, and the Easterner may have sophistication in his broad A's and dropped R's, but the Middle Westerner is more likely to give full value to each syllable of a word and will be more easily understood over the country as a whole. And on a network, being understood everywhere is important.

Harold Safford, program director of WLS and once chief announcer of



JAMES WALLINGTON

the station, emphasizes friendliness and sincerity as necessary characteristics of an announcer. In his opinion, careful diction is desirable, but is not so necessary as those human traits which will enable an announcer to "sell" himself to an audience made up of common, everyday folks.

Announcing is essentially a young man's game. There are a few announcers who have been in the game as long as 15 years. Some of the "free lance" announcers, who are good enough to have commercial sponsors demanding their talents, are able to make handsome salaries from announcing alone. Announcing on NBC, Columbia, or Mutual networks either as a free lance or staff announcer represents probably the pinnacle of achievement in the announcing field, and it is toward that goal that many announcers on independent stations are working. In the network announcing staffs themselves, most of the announcers have their goals established at some point outside the announcing field; perhaps as advertising men, program directors, or as owners and managers of smaller stations.

So You Want to be

a Sports Announcer

"THE count is three and two, so Dizzy's got to put this one right over. Hartnett's waiting for the pitch . . . and two men are on base. This pitch may decide the ball game . . . and here it comes! It's a long fly—way out in deep center. The fielder goes back . . . back . . . it's over his head . . . and the runner on second rounds third and heads for home. The runner from first is coming all the way around . . . and he hits the dirt and slides across home plate . . . and Hartnett pulls up on second."

Probably the most glamorous job in the radio business is that of announcing sports. And every sports announcer in the country gets dozens of letters a year from boys who want to know how they too can climb the ladder to this pinnacle of fame: where you get paid for watching a ball game.

Hal Totten, sports announcer for NBC in Chicago makes some observations based on 11 years of announcing sports of all kinds.

Small Field

"In the first place," says Hal, "the field in announcing sports is smaller than any other type of announcing. There are so many dull seasons in the sports world that announcing sports cannot be a full time job. The sports announcer must be able to do something else.

"Some of the good sports announcers also are capable studio announcers; some of them are writers. Quin Ryan of WGN is station manager; Ty Tyson in Detroit is assistant-manager of the station; Huley Hall and

REPRINT from STAND BY Magazine,
February 6, 1937
PHOTOS from *Nostalgia Digest* collection

Clem McCarthy are newspapermen primarily. I did my first sports announcing while I was on the sports



MEL ALLEN

SO YOU WANT A RADIO JOB AS AN ANNOUNCER

staff of a Chicago paper. And now that I'm in radio entirely I'm a member of the special events department; during the winter months, especially, I spend more time on other events than I do on sports.

Not All Roses

"The number of sports announcers in the country is considerably smaller than the number of radio stations; so it's a limited field of opportunity.

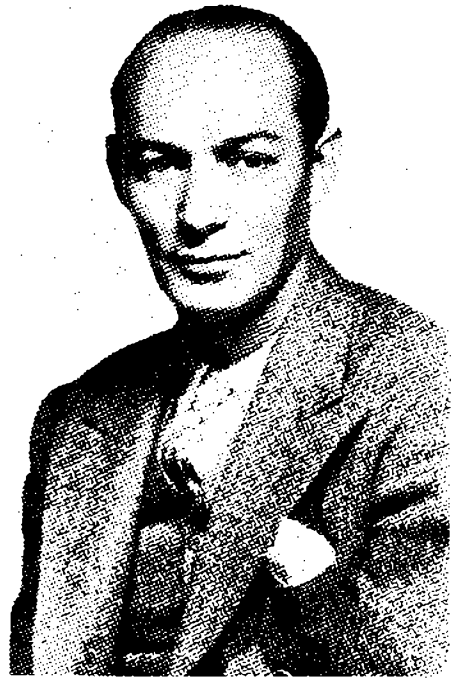
"But now that you know it's not a full time job, and not all roses after you get it, we'll proceed:

"The sports announcer is first of all, a reporter. He must be alert to see just what is happening on the field, floor or rink, and then put what he sees into words. It is necessary, too, for him to report without prejudice.

"In order for him to do an accurate and intelligent job of reporting, he must know the sport which he's telling about. If he's played it, so much the better. There are some men who announce as a side-line, and who more or less specialize in their sports. Ted Husing is at his best in football, and also takes a turn at track, golf, and yachting. Clem McCarthy started out as an announcer of horse races, and then branched out as a boxing announcer.

"But if anyone wants to wear a title of sports announcer, he needs to be familiar with a wide variety of sports, because he may be called upon to announce a game of ping pong in the afternoon and a hockey game at night; he may have to take his turn at jai alai, yacht racing, a hike race, golf, as well as baseball and football. When air races come along, he needs to know something about flying. And it even helps to know something about husking corn.

"The announcer needs to vary his vocabulary and his method of description with each sport. Of course, he must know all the special terms of each sport and use those terms in the right place. His listeners at each broadcast include people who are familiar with the sport he's discussing,



TED HUSING

and woe be unto the sports announcer who acts as though he doesn't know what is happening and why.

"But there's more to it than using the right term. There's a different attitude to be adopted for the different sports, mostly out of consideration for the listening audience. The baseball audience expects a little slang and a breezy delivery; the football audience expects enthusiasm but not so many slang terms. Golf and tennis listeners expect more polish. So the sports announcer needs to suit his vocabulary to the sport.

"An important part of sports announcing is interviewing sports personalities. This necessitates getting acquainted with the athletes personally, and gaining their confidence. Why is their confidence necessary? The best interviews are ad libbed. If the coach or athlete knows that the interviewer thoroughly understands the game and its ethics, he'll willingly submit to an interview on the air. One Big Ten football coach was always willing to help a sports announcer in distress. One time he left

a banquet for a brief interview and was asked questions which no experienced interviewer would have asked: 'Who do you think will win the game tomorrow?' 'Do you think Jones is a better punter than Brown?' And so on. Since that time, he's insisted that every interview be written out.

Impromptu Interview

"One evening an athlete sent me word that he couldn't appear for an interview due on the air in about 20 minutes. The interview was an important part of the program, and I had to have someone. I knew a girl swimmer was in town, training for a meet. I'd known her ever since she was a kid, and so I called her and explained my predicament. 'Gee—I just came out of the pool and haven't even dried off yet. I'll throw on some clothes and be right over.' She grabbed a taxi and arrived three minutes before we went on the air, and we talked about swimming for 15 minutes, absolutely without preparation. If I hadn't had her complete confidence, she wouldn't have been willing to risk her standing with the public and with other athletes by being interviewed without having an idea of what she would be asked.

"There's no set formula for becoming a sports announcer, but there are some things that are necessary: becoming familiar with sports of all kinds is one, and that can be accomplished by participating in as many of them as possible. Watching as many as possible is a help, and reading the sports pages of the newspapers is important. Getting acquainted with athletes will be a great aid to any prospective sports announcer. And, who knows? You might be able to learn something about the business by listening to sports announcers on the radio."

Watch For
Chuck Schaden's
NOSTALGIA
on your Cable TV Channel
Check Local System
for Day and Time

SHARE YOUR GOOD TIMES!

GIVE A
GIFT SUBSCRIPTION
TO THE

NOSTALGIA DIGEST. ©

AND
RADIO
GUIDE

—SIX TIMES A YEAR—

**BIGGER AND BETTER
THAN EVER BEFORE!**

- ★ More Articles
- ★ More Features
- ★ More Vintage Photos
- ★ More Information
- ★ More Good Reading
- ★ More Fun

- ★ One Year Subscription \$10
- Two Year Subscription \$18

Send your check along with the name, address and zip code of the person who gets the gift subscription and we'll send them a note telling of your thoughtfulness. Send to **NOSTALGIA DIGEST, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053.**

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

JUNE		RADIO CLASSICS — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.		
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Box Thirteen Charlie McCarthy	2 Green Hornet Black Museum	3 Damon Runyon Theatre Jack Benny	4 Six Shooter Lone Ranger	5 Burns and Allen This Is Your FBI
8 Black Museum This Is Your FBI	9 Have Gun, Will Travel Dragnet	10 Charlie McCarthy Green Hornet	11 Clayton Moore Interview Lone Ranger Flashback	12 Radio Classics Special To Be Announced
15 Challenge of the Yukon Black Museum	16 Six Shooter Charlie McCarthy	17 Dragnet This Is Your FBI	18 Jack Benny Green Hornet	19 Lone Ranger Burns and Allen
22 Black Museum Burns and Allen	23 Box Thirteen This Is Your FBI	24 Have Gun, Will Travel Six Shooter	25 Charlie McCarthy Challenge of the Yukon	26 Dragnet Lone Ranger
29 Six Shooter Black Museum	30 Green Hornet Jack Benny			

JULY		RADIO CLASSICS — WBBM-AM 78 MONDAY thru FRIDAY 8:00-9:00 P.M.		
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 Burns and Allen Dragnet	2 Damon Runyon Theatre Gunsmoke	3 Challenge of the Yukon Lone Ranger
6 Green Hornet Have Gun, Will Travel	7 Black Museum Jack Benny	8 Six Shooter Gunsmoke	9 Charlie McCarthy Dragnet	10 Challenge of the Yukon Third Man
13 Jack Benny Black Museum	14 Dragnet Green Hornet	15 This Is Your FBI Burns and Allen	16 Charlie McCarthy Box Thirteen	17 Challenge of the Yukon Gunsmoke
20 This Is Your FBI Damon Runyon Theatre	21 Burns and Allen Six Shooter	22 Green Hornet Charlie McCarthy	23 Black Museum Jack Benny	24 Challenge of the Yukon Have Gun, Will Travel
27 Third Man Black Museum	28 Six Shooter Burns and Allen	29 Charlie McCarthy Dragnet	30 Jack Benny Green Hornet	31 Challenge of the Yukon This Is Your FBI

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

JUNE

PLEASE NOTE: The numerals following each program listing for *Those Were The Days* represents timing information for each particular show. (9:45; 11:20; 8:50) means that we will broadcast the show in three segments: 9 minutes and 45 seconds; 11 minutes and 20 seconds; 8 minutes and 50 seconds. If you add the times of these segments together, you'll have the total length of the show (29:55 for our example). This is of help to those who are taping the broadcasts for their own collection.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6th LOVE AND MARRIAGE

BRIDE AND GROOM (6-30-47) Emcee John Nelson presents a young couple who have agreed to get married on this program. Hillary Brooks describes the bride's gown. Bayer Aspirin, ABC. (15:15; 14:20)

GRAND MARQUEE (8-6-46) "Wedding in Columbia" stars Jim Amache and Beryl Vaughn with Herb Butterfield. A taxi driver falls in love with a tourist who has traveled to Columbia with her father, who objects to their relationship. Sustaining, NBC. (15:00; 15:00)

SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE (2-1-51) "Take A Letter, Darling" starring Fred MacMurray and Rosalind Russell with Arthur Q. Brian and Jim Backus. Advertising executive Roz hires Fred as her secretary and a platonic relationship develops into romance. Radio version of the 1942 film comedy. RCA Victor, Anacin, NBC. (14:30; 13:05; 16:50; 11:15)

SUSPENSE (12-1-42) "The Bride Vanishes" by John Dickson Carr. Aboard a ship bound for the Isle of Capri, a newlywed couple on their honeymoon hear the strange story of a bride who vanished mysteriously. Sustaining, CBS. (13:35; 16:05)

COSMOPOLITAN PLAYHOUSE (1940s) "Father of the Bride" featuring Barry Thompson and Joan Alexander. A father, preparing to give his daughter away in marriage, recalls the events leading up to his impending divorce. Sustaining, WOR Mutual. (14:50; 13:30)

SATURDAY, JUNE 13th

MUSEUM OF BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS OPEN HOUSE



As this issue of the *Nostalgia Digest* and *Radio Guide* goes to press, the new Museum of Broadcast Communications is scheduled to open to the public on June 13th at River City, 800 S. Wells Street, Chicago.

We'll have a special program observing the occasion as we present our first *Those Were The Days* broadcast from the Pierre Andre Memorial Studio in the Museum.

As the opening date draws closer, we'll have more news about this special event and the material we'll broadcast on our opening show. Stay tuned to our Saturday afternoon programs for all the details.

TURN YOUR SLIDES AND HOME MOVIES INTO VIDEO TAPE MEMORIES

Turn the slides and home movies of your dearest memories into superb, broadcast quality videotapes for VHS or Beta VCR recorders. Master Charge and Visa accepted.

For complete information, call
(312) 674-4466



FILM-TO-VIDEO LABS

SATURDAY, JUNE 20th
TRIBUTE TO ARCH OBOLER



ARCH OBOLER

LIGHTS OUT (4-6-43) "Superfeature." A traveling projectionist and his sidekick visit tank towns to put on movie shows. While the audience is engrossed in the film, they rob the town. Written and narrated by Arch Oboler. Ironized Yeast. CBS. (16:00; 14:40)

CHASE AND SANBORN HOUR (12-12-37) **EXCERPT** from the variety show featuring Mae West and Don Ameche in the famous "Adam and Eve" sketch, written by Arch Oboler. (8:45)

FIRST NIGHTER (3-29-44) "The Chinese Gong" by Arch Oboler stars Barbara Luddy and Olan Soule. A young couple relate their strange experience with a souvenir gong which had mysterious powers. Campana Balm, MBS. (10:55; 10:20; 9:40)

ARCH OBOLER recalls his fascinating career in a conversation with Chuck Schaden recorded in Oboler's Studio City, California home on August 5, 1976. (43:05)

LIGHTS OUT (4-6-38) "Cat Wife" starring Boris Karloff in Arch Oboler's classic story of a man whose wife turns into a human-sized cat. Sustaining. NBC. (7:20; 20:50)

DROP DEAD! An Exercise in Horror! written and directed by Arch Oboler. The complete commercial recording, now out of print, features a fine cast of radio performers: Edgar Barrier, Bea Benadaret, Larry Dobkin, Sam Edwards, Virginia Gregg, Jerry Hausner, Jack Johnstone, Jack Krushen, Forrest Lewis, Junius Matthews, Ralph Moody, Mercedes McCambridge, Harold Peary, Barney Phillips, Bill Phipps, Olan Soule, Chet Stratton.

Part 1 — Introduction to Horror; I'm Hungry; Taking Papa Home; The Dark. (16:45)

Part 2 — A Day at the Dentist's; The Posse; Chicken Heart; The Laughing Man. (19:50)

With this program we remember Arch Oboler who died March 19, 1987 at the age of 78.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27th

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (10-13-46) Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy pay a visit to Jack and the gang; Mary Livingstone, Phil Harris, Eddie Rochester Anderson, Dennis Day, Frank Nelson, Artie Auerbach. Jack tries to get Edgar to hire the Sportsmen Quartet. Lucky Strike Cigarettes. NBC. (9:00; 8:10; 9:15)

BULLDOG DRUMMOND (1-17-47) "Case of the Atomic Murders" stars Ned Weaver as Drummond with Luis Van Rooten as Denny. Drummond is mistakenly given money and a claim check by a man who later turns up dead. Sustaining. MBS. (12:30; 17:30)

LIBERACE PROGRAM (4-24-55) The famous pianist, back from a recent illness, offers his thanks to those who sent wishes and books and presents a program of musical favorites. Syndicated (5:05; 8:05; 14:30) *With this program, we remember Liberace who died February 4, 1987 at the age of 57.*

ACADEMY AWARD (5-4-46) "Stagecoach" starring Randolph Scott and Claire Trevor. Radio version of the 1939 film about an assortment of stagecoach passengers under pressure from an Indian attack. House of Squibb, CBS. (15:16; 14:00) *With this program we remember Randolph Scott who died March 2, 1987 at the age of 89.*

PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW (1-9-49) Phil accidentally drops Willie's engagement ring down the drain. In an attempt to retrieve it, Phil and Frankie Remley flood the kitchen! Elliott Lewis, Walter Tetley, Robert North. Rexall, NBC. (9:45; 8:35; 13:25)



LIBERACE

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

JULY

SATURDAY, JULY 4th
INDEPENDENCE DAY

COMMAND PERFORMANCE (2-15-45) "Dick Tracy in B Flat," a fun-filled musical comedy starring Bing Crosby as Tracy, Dinah Shore as Tess Trueheart, Harry Von Zell as Old Judge Hooper, Jerry Colonna as the Police Chief, Bob Hope as Flattop, Frank Morgan as Vitamin Flintheart, Jimmy Durante as the Mole, Judy Garland, as Snowflake, the Andrew Sisters as the Summer Sisters, Frank Sinatra as Shakey, and Cass Daley as Gravel Gertie. One of the all-time classic broadcasts. (11:05; 9:10; 7:35; 8:50; 9:50; 8:35. Total: 55:05)

YOU ARE THERE (7-4-48) "Philadelphia, July 4, 1776" features CBS newsmen at the scene of the signing of the Declaration of Independence: John Daly, Ken Roberts, Ned Calmer, George Fielding Elliot, Bud Collyer. Sustaining. CBS. (13:00; 13:35)

STAN FREEBERG PRESENTS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1961) An original musical revue with Stan Freberg, Paul Frees, Jesse White, Peter Leeds, Walter Tetley, June Forary, Marvin Miller, Barney Phillips and many others. Music by Billy Mills and the orchestra with the Jud Conlon Singers. Freberg spoofs Columbus Discovering America, the Thanksgiving Story, the Sale of Manhattan, the Boston Tea Party, Betsy Ross, and the Battle of Yorktown. A classic production from the commercial recording, presented in its entirety. (12:13; 12:16; 14:08; 10:47)

MR. PRESIDENT (3-28-48) Edward Arnold stars as the President of the United States with William Conrad as his Secretary of State. The President has problems with members of his Cabinet when the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of State have a disagreement. Sustaining. ABC. (12:32; 16:38)

NOSTALGIA DIGEST BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

A limited number of back issues of the *Nostalgia Digest and Radio Guide* are available for \$2 each. For a complete list, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

NOSTALGIA DIGEST ARCHIVES
Box 421
Morton Grove, IL 60053

SATURDAY, JULY 11th
TRIBUTE TO DANNY KAYE



DANNY KAYE

DANNY KAYE SHOW (5-24-46) Guest Arthur Treacher agrees to appear in Danny's operetta, "King Danny the Kaye of Brooklyn." AFRS rebroadcast. (8:15; 14:05; 6:30)

COMMAND PERFORMANCE #134 (1940s) Hostess Judy Garland introduces Danny Kaye, Lauritz Melchior and Helen Forrest. As Melchior sings "Home on the Range" Danny translates the song into Russian. "Modern Travel" is the subject of a comic opera. AFRS. (8:00; 8:00; 13:10)

GI JOURNAL # 93 (1940s) Danny Kaye is Editor-In-Chief of this edition of the Armed Forces "newspaper" with Linda Darnell, Mel Blanc, William Gargan, Connie Haines, and Mel Torme and the Mel Tones. The entire staff has quit and Danny has to run the Journal by himself. AFRS. (7:55; 6:50; 14:20)

PLUS we'll have lots of sounds from Danny's fabulous film career and other appearances on radio and records, including the Lobby Number from "Up In Arms" and "Tubby the Tuba"

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be *Nostalgia Digest* columnist and movie buff **BOB KOLOSOSKI** who will help us recall the career of the famous entertainer who died March 3, 1987 at the age of 74.



LUM AND ABNER
Chester Lauck and Norris Goff

SATURDAY, JULY 18th

ADVENTURES OF OZZIE AND HARRIET (10-17-48) Ozzie, who has promised his sons a hike in the woods, is torn between that activity and a football game. International Silver Company, NBC. (14:40; 15:30)

VIC AND SADE (10-16-43) Art Van Harvey stars as Vic, Bernadine Flynn is Sade. Vic tries to do office work at home amid a procession of "different ones." This is an unusual half-hour broadcast. NBC. (14:00; 15:24)

MURDER AT MIDNIGHT (1940s) "Trigger Man" stars Bill Quinn. A holdup man schemes to become the trigger man for the gang. Sustaining, MBS. (13:12; 12:40)

IT PAYS TO BE IGNORANT (9-4-42) Tom Howard and a panel of "experts" provide the fun. Harry McNaughton, Lulu McConnell, George Shelton. Music by the Corn Cobblers. Peil's Bear, MBS. (8:20; 13:50; 7:57)

THE SHADOW (9-12-48) "Murder at Dead Man's Inn" stars Bret Morrison as Lamont Cranston with Grace Matthews as the lovely Margo Lane. Cranston is asked to help solve a murder at a haunted hotel. Sustaining. MBS. (15:15; 13:19)

LUM AND ABNER (11-7-48) Chester Lauck and Norris Goff as the boys from Pine Ridge, Arkansas with Clarence Hartzel and Cliff Arquette. Lum brags about his experience as a cowhand and winds up in a rodeo bulldogging contest. Frigidare, CBS. (9:45; 8:50; 10:55)

SATURDAY, JULY 25th
THE BIG BIG BANDS

ARTIE SHAW AND HIS ORCHESTRA (10-19-39) Remote broadcast from the brand new Cafe Rouge of the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City. Ben Grauer announces. Sustaining. NBC. (14:55)

HENRY BUSSE AND HIS ORCHESTRA (1935) First program in a transcribed series from Hollywood. Ken Carpenter announces. Vocals by Carl Grayson and Steve Bowers. Syndicated. (14:35)

GLEN MILLER AND HIS ORCHESTRA (12-30-38) Remote broadcast from the Paradise Restaurant in New York. Sustaining. NBC. (13:30; 15:30)

GRIFF WILLIAMS AND HIS ORCHESTRA (1938) Remote broadcast from El Patio Ballroom, Lakeside Park, Denver, Colorado. Vocals by Buddy Moreno, Monty Kelly and Julie Sherwin. Sustaining. MBS. (11:20)

SUNDAY EVENING WITH TOMMY DORSEY (7-19-42) Excerpt from a studio show from Chicago. Vocals feature Frank Sinatra, Jo Stafford and the Pied Pipers. Treasury Department, NBC-Blue. (14:30)

HARRY JAMES AND HIS ORCHESTRA (6-18-54) Remote broadcast from the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago, featuring Buddy Rich on the drums. Sustaining, WBBM. (11:40; 13:10) *With this broadcast we remember Buddy Rich who died April 2, 1987 at the age of 69.*

OUR SPECIAL GUEST will be *Nostalgia Digest* columnist and big band historian **KARL PEARSON** who will bring along a stack of tapes, recordings and stories from and about the big band era.

CUSTOM CASSETTE SERVICE

A custom cassette tape recording of any of the old time radio programs broadcast on *THOSE WERE THE DAYS* currently or anytime in the past — is available for a recording fee of \$6.50 per half hour.

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

HALL CLOSET CUSTOM TAPES
Box 421
Morton Grove, IL 60053

If you have any questions,
please call: (312) 965-7763



I REMEMBER IT WELL

MELLOW MUSICAL MEMORIES

BY DAN MCGUIRE



Husband: "I wanted terribly as a boy to play the piano."

School Teacher Wife: "Your grammar needs work, but you got your wish."

—variation on a Joe Miller joke

Norman Rockwell often portrayed freckled face youth trapped in music lessons and yearning to join friends outdoors. That undoubtedly happened occasionally. But none of my peers in Rockwell's *Saturday Evening Post* days had their arm twisted to begin or continue lessons.

Larry actually had to plead for trumpet lessons. His father initially said no. He worked a graveyard shift and slept days. With Mom coaxing, though, Pop relented and produced a borrowed horn from somewhere.

Larry agreed to practice only in the evening. The lessons went well for about six months. One day during summer vacation Larry planned to see a Sox night game with friends. That morning he began practicing at 10 am. Pop awoke and threatened to fix his lip so he could not blow bubble gum.

Larry stuck to the agreement for another month. Then he tried to cheat again, but softly, in the basement. This time Mom quickly shut him off, but Pop could be heard grumbling in the bedroom. That night, when he left for work, the trumpet eventually went with him. Wise for his

years, Larry never asked whence it disappeared.

Len may have been a prodigy who missed his calling. At a young age he yearned to play violin. Skeptical, his parents urged him to start by joining the school band.

Bands do not include violins, of course. Len became a cornet player, which seemed to satisfy his musical bent.

In high school he was tested on several brass instruments. The band director was thrilled to find that he had a talent for the sousaphone. It became Len's instrument throughout high school and a tour of duty with an Army marching band.

The horn named in honor of John Philip was a source of enjoyment and frustration. When Len told people he played a sousaphone they would look puzzled until he described it. Then they would say, "Oh, you mean a tuba."

"No," Len insisted indignantly, "it ain't a tuba. It's a *sousaphone!*"

Kathy attended a parochial school. After classes, she and her brother Cy took piano lessons (separately) with one of the nuns. Classical only—none of that raucous "pop" music here.

Kathy suffered near mortal embarrassment when Sister scheduled them for a recital and Cy refused to play a duet with her. She suspected Cy kept up his lessons only because Sister never applied a ruler to the knuckles of one of her future Paderewskis.

During lessons, if Kathy hit a clinker she

froze with fingers poised over the ivories. She shook her head in exasperation, searched frantically for the right keys, and muttered, "Wait! Wait! Wait!"

Sister sat patiently, hands clasped in the folds of her habit. Straight-faced she replied, "I'm *not* going anywhere, Katherine."

Kathy had considered becoming a classical pianist. But in high school she discovered a new extra-curricular activity called dating. Alicia de Larrocha's path to the concert stage became more secure as Kathy bowed out of the competition in favor of romance.

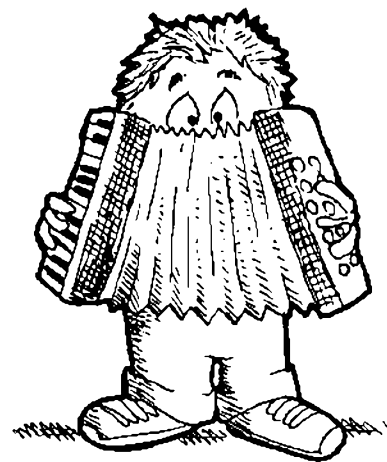
In the days of five-cent candy bars, boys seldom received singing lessons except as part of a choral group. Sam was an exception.

Sam's mother tutored in French. She had worked out a barter arrangement with the local spinster who gave voice lessons. Since Sam had to accompany his mother to Miss Preston's home, he ended up being trained in both subjects. He rather enjoyed the singing, but it was 40 years before he could put his French to practical use.

Miss Preston required seemingly endless scales, sung in English and Italian, in half notes. She provided piano accompaniment and patient words of encouragement. Gradually, Sam progressed from simple songs to such classics as "Road to Mandalay."

Recitals by Miss Preston's pupils were given in her parlor. During one of these sedate gatherings, some inattentive ladies began giggling as Sam performed. He was certain they were laughing at him and had to choke back tears to finish his song.

Enduring and overcoming such adversity helps to build self-confidence. Sam eventually joined the ministry. He later observed that without Miss Preston's



recitals and her insistence on breathing and projection exercises, he probably would not have passed the public speaking requirements.

Dick's choice of instrument was the accordian. "The old go-to-me, come-from-me," or "Polish piano" his Uncle Stosh called it. While still in short pants, Dick began learning on a 12-base model. As he grew, he moved up to the full size 120 base.

Many of Dick's relatives were musically inclined. At family gatherings they entertained each other. Grandpa, another accordianist, once joined Dick at a birthday bash. After several tunes, Dick asked, "Gramps, how come you don't look at the music?"

Gramps shrugged. "These old standards I know by heart," he replied.

Playing from memory was yet unknown to Dick. He was awed.

For one of his recitals, Dick and a female student played a duet. Halfway through "Lady of Spain" Dick's middle C key fell off. The spirited tune afforded no pause to retrieve it. Dick gamely finished the piece without it.

Such showmanship prompted Dick's mother to take him downtown to try out for Morris B. Sach's television amateur

Cartoon illustrations by Brian Johnson

I REMEMBER IT WELL

hour. From stage left, the producer and a secretary conducted the low budget auditions. Dick played up a storm and thought he'd done well. But the producer just shook his head once.

As Dick left the stage, the secretary scratched his name from the list on her clipboard and said sweetly, "Sorry, hon."

Dick's mom shared his disappointment and asked, "What's wrong. Didn't he play beautifully?"

The producer nodded. "The kid's good," he agreed. "But he's too stone faced."

TV's rebuff didn't deter Dick from joining a small band in his teens. They landed numerous jobs in the local area. Most "gigs" ended at midnight. One of the fathers dropped the boys off and picked them up in a station wagon.

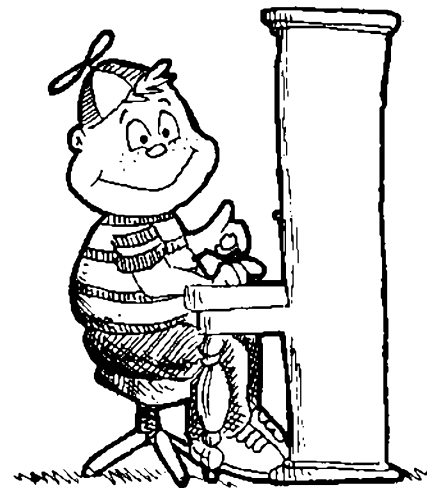
Once the band was hired for a party near

the lakeshore that would last until 2 am. This was the big time! They were promised transportation home, but something went wrong.

At 2 am, no one in the band wanted to call his parents for help. So they hauled all their equipment, including music stands and a full set of drums, across town on the Chicago Surface Lines. Fortunately, they had one of the famed Red Rocket streetcars almost to themselves.

Speaking of transfers (streetcar, transfer—get it?), I was almost 12 when my family acquired a used upright piano. With juvenile logic, I enrolled at a music studio that catered mostly to guitar and accordion pupils, and required a half-hour bus ride from my home.

The school's token piano teacher was an elderly fellow who had played in the nickelodeon and burlesque theatres years ago. Mr. Grady could still play a mean honky-tonk piano.



His teaching method involved the use of chords for the left hand. It was a short cut to playing simple tunes. However, it meant not learning to sight read the bass notes. That becomes a handicap when you progress to more sophisticated sheet music on which chord names aren't printed above each measure.

The first year Mr. Grady provided over 100 mimeographed sheets of pop standards (public domain genre). Once I began buying sheet music from the school's huge rack, the cost of lessons almost doubled. My taste ranged over such Hit Parade memorables as "Harbor Lights," "Gone Fishin'," "Halls of Ivy," "St. Louis Blues," "Foolish Heart," "Orange Colored Sky," "Bewitched" and "Too Fat Polka."

During my fourth year, I realized my training had plateaued. Mr. Grady had honed my modest talent to its fullest. Now, he mostly sat back and enjoyed listening.

Out of loyalty to my teacher, I stayed on until the next school recital. I practiced for weeks my own jazzed up rendition of "Maple Leaf Rag."

I was prepared but, as always, nervous on recital day. It didn't help to find that, as Mr. Grady's oldest and favorite pupil, he'd arranged to schedule me last on the program. I paced backstage with sweaty

palms for two hours.

Stage fright notwithstanding, Scott Joplin would have enjoyed my performance. The audience's applause echoed sweetly in my ears as I donned my coat backstage, my heartbeat returning to normal.

Suddenly, Mr. Grady scurried backstage. Spying me, he grinned. "Wait, Danny," he ordered. "Take off your coat. The folks want an encore from you."

Encore my clavicle! I'd only rehearsed *one piece*. I'd have run in panic, but my teacher already was pushing me back onto the stage.

What should I play? My mind was doing a Mortimer Snerd imitation. Thank goodness my back was to the audience. They couldn't see my hands shaking. I closed my eyes and did an introductory chord run.

In that last instant, my subconscious latched onto "Body and Soul." I'd been practicing it lately, embellishing with fancy trills and crosshand rolls. Somehow I got through it with no flubs, although the tempo was a bit fast.

The audience rewarded me with warm applause. A deep bow; a hasty retreat; and my public performing ended on that high note.

Since my teen years, I play infrequently and usually in private. Being able to play for my own entertainment is ample reward for four years of lessons. What's more, when stresses build up, it's a wonderful way to unwind.

Good reason for all of us who were "enriched" by music lessons in our youth to thank the folks who juggled budgets to pay the bill and endured those hours of dissonant practice. Reason, too, to be openminded when one of our offspring asks, "Mom and Dad, can I get a set of drums?"

Editor's Note: Speaking of sour notes, the streetcar transfer pun which appears above deserves to be conducted away via rapid transit and barned.

LIONEL® THE GREATEST NAME
IN MODEL RAILROADING



**ALL ABOARD
FOR FUN AND EXCITEMENT**

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

THE
SUPER
STORE!

**Home
TV & Appliances**

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

MILWAUKEE AT OAKTON
NILES • 470-9500



GUESS WHO

This is a great photo, taken many years ago at an informal gathering of some of the greatest comedians of all times. If you can identify all of these stars, you might win a \$100 Gift Certificate from Metro Golden Memories



TRIVIUS • NOSTALGIUS • TRIVIUS



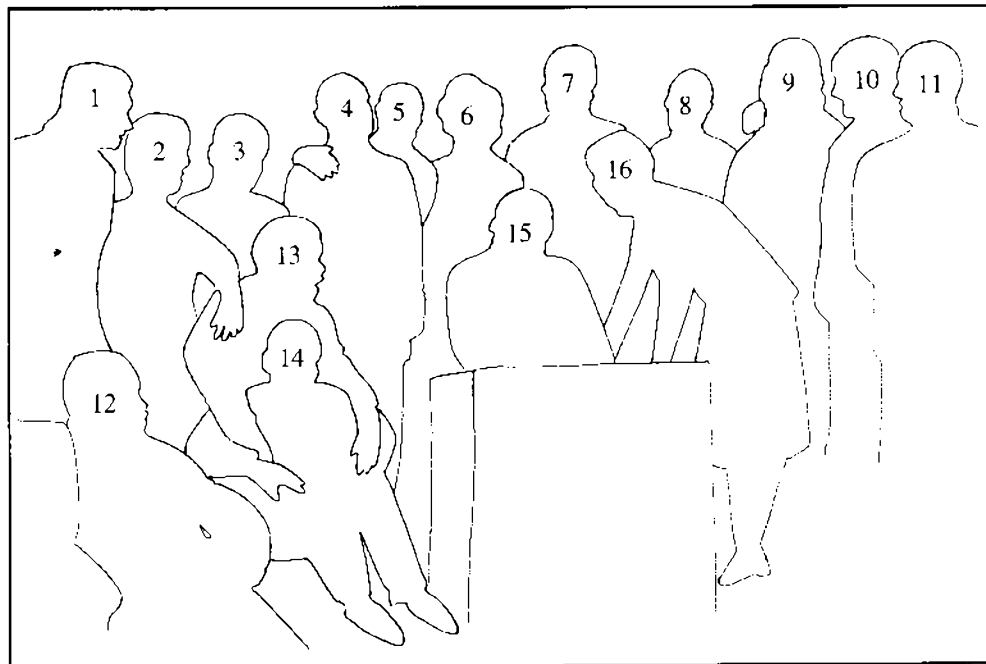
Any reader of the *Nostalgia Digest* is eligible to submit an entry. Just clip this page and send it or a reasonable facsimile to GUESS WHO, *Nostalgia Digest*, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053.

The entry with the most correct identities wins. In case of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine the winner. One entry per reader, please.

Entries must be received by the *Nostalgia Digest* no later than June 15, 1987 so we can print the name of the winner — and identify the stars — in our next issue.

Have fun!

WHO ARE WE?



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

WE GET

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CALIFORNIA — We moved from the Chicago area to the Sacramento, California area. Our only regret is that we can't get your radio program here and miss it very much. Also, there isn't any all big-band stations here. So, we thought we'd sign back up for the *Nostalgia Digest* and keep in touch that way. Keep up the good work!

— VICTOR AND BERNADENE NOWOGURSKI

LUDINGTON, MICHIGAN — I thoroughly enjoy *Nostalgia Digest* and happy to say it is even better than when I first subscribed to it. Your latest issue — April-May — is particularly good. Keep up the features on old radio programs and personalities.

— PAUL S. PETERSON

LISBON, OHIO — Enclosed find my renewal fee for the *Nostalgia Digest*. I really look forward to receiving it in the mail. I enjoy the magazine so much I read it over and over waiting on the next issue. I just looked at all my old copies earlier in the day and I noticed something in the August-September 1984 issue that I think needs to be checked on. The trivia question in the back. The two seagulls Red Skelton talks about, I think were Gertrude and Heathcliff, not Gertrude and Sylvester.

I sent WBBM management a letter telling them what a good program you have and how we enjoy receiving it here in Ohio. I also suggested they increase your air time. I received a nice letter from them, thanking me for writing and listening. I thought it was nice of them to answer it.

— WILLIAM HUMPHREY

(ED. NOTE — Thanks for writing to us, too. You're right about Red Skelton's seagulls. They were Gertrude and Heathcliff. Old errors in print stick around to haunt an editor!)

TAVERNIER, FLORIDA — I enjoy *Those Were The Days* very much. Hats off to you and WNIB for carrying this breath of fresh air in this age of ever worsening "bubble gum for the eyeball." I enjoyed your nostalgic "visit" with Buddy Black and the insight into how it all began. The personalization and feeling you contributed left me with a very warm feeling. Thanks. After enjoying your program for a long time now, I'm "hoisting anchor" and setting sail for the Florida Keys. I'll miss your shows very much. I wish there was a way I could still listen, but I guess that would take a hell of an antenna! Please note the address change for my *Nostalgia Digest* subscription. Best Wishes.

— DONALD D. KOPP

WILMETTE, IL — The tribute was wonderful. It brought back so many memories I had almost forgotten. It was taped for me so I can hear it again and again. Thank you for the honor.

— ELLIE (MRS. BUDDY) BLACK

SCHERERVILLE, INDIANA — Just wanted to commend you on a fantastic month of Jack Benny. My

father and I both agree that this was the best Jack Benny month yet. I hope there is never a question in your mind about honoring the king of radio. We're already looking forward to next February. — MIKE JONAS

RANTOUL, IL — I am a long time listener of yours, even before you left the other radio station, WAIT. I wish to say that I have appreciated listening to the old-time radio programs. They surely do bring back some good memories of my childhood, when I used to sit glued to the radio. I really do enjoy Jack Benny programs. He was the best there was. I tape most of the programs that you broadcast. I now have about 325 programs in my own library.

— JOHN D. ANTHONY

CHICAGO, IL — I've been listening to you from the very beginning and I can't imagine a Saturday afternoon without TWTD. I met you once on one of my visits to the MGM shop. I just returned from seeing "Radio Days." I was planning on seeing it eventually but, due to your enthusiasm, I pushed it up on my calendar. What a picture! It's obvious that Woody Allen feels about radio the way you and your listeners feel. How about that scene depicting the rescue of the little girl who had fallen in the well? Didn't that show the power that radio had in drawing people together? How about that scene during the blackout that showed the searchlight beams with the snow coming down? Beautiful. And the last line of the movie when Woody Allen, as narrator, says, "I can still hear those voices although they're starting to fade." I had a lump in my throat. Was he referring to the voices of his family or the voices of the "radio days?" At least we'll continue to hear our radio days, thanks to you. Chuck. — TOM DE FRIES

PALATINE, IL — I agree with Bob Kolososki's thoughts concerning a sequel to "Gone With The Wind." Sooner or later it will happen, but new cast choices will be difficult. My choices for Rhett Butler are Pierce Brosnan, George Hamilton or Robert Wagner; Cybill Shepherd, Elizabeth Taylor or Lee Remick as Scarlett; William Hurt in the role of Ashley Wilkes; and Oprah Winfrey as Mammy. Actors and actresses are only as good as the script, so hopefully the writers will give careful thought to this.

— MRS. ROBERTA A. SKINNER

CHICAGO—In 1961 my girlfriend Aileen and I went downtown to see a movie. We were 12 years old at the time. We never picked our movie for the day until we walked up the State St. subway stairs and looked at all the theatre marqueses to make our choice.

A ready a diehard Gable fan, my choice was "Gone With The Wind" and Ai wanted to see something else,

LETTERS

so we flipped for it and I won the toss. We were mesmerized from the opening credits to the last scene. Our hearts broke for Scarlett. We could not believe the story ended there. So I went home and read the book. There were some blank fly-leaf pages at the end of the book so I rewrote the ending, in pencil, bringing Rhett back to Scarlett even before he got to the end of his driveway.

I do think a sequel is in order here. It would resolve those final frustrating moments of the closing scenes. I hope. I was terribly disappointed when Anne Edwards' novel was scratched. Movie executives and the politics surrounding this story not withstanding. I believe all GWTW fans would like to see what happened after Rhett left.

Looking for Gable and Leigh replacements could be the biggest search since they scoured the country for a Scarlett. And by the way, I'd give anything to read that Edwards book.

—CHRISTINE MORLEY

WESTMONT, IL — Just a few lines to tell you how much we enjoy your monthly TV show on cable. We really enjoyed the program about model electric trains and the one about antique radios and Dr. Muchow of Elgin and his great radio equipment museum. Fabulous! Congratulations on your new telecasts and continued success on your weekly and daily radio shows on WNIB and WBBM-AM.

— MARY AND HERB ROYSTON

NORTH RIVERSIDE, IL — We saw your show last night on cable TV and must say we thoroughly enjoyed it. The segment on comic books was extremely interesting and the fact that you gave it enough time to develop really held our attention. We found the program by chance, but you can be sure we will watch it again.

— CHARMINE K. ZAWILA and
JOHN D. O'KEEFE

MT. PROSPECT, IL — Just a note to say how much I enjoyed your cable TV program, *Nostalgia*. I especially liked your segment on Riverview. It brought back memories! The film on comics (I immediately phoned my son to watch) and of course the West End Jazz Band, which was delightful. This type of program has been much needed — don't let it die! I have four married children and out of our five homes, three watched the program and enjoyed it!

— DOROTHY R. MENKE

BARRINGTON HILLS, IL — Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness in sending the tape of my father-in-law, announcer Bob Murphy. The family has enjoyed the memories and we enjoy your show.

— BARBARA MURPHY

CHICAGO, IL — A *Nostalgia Digest*, April-May Issue, correction. There is no "K" in the Italian alphabet. Luigi Basko's last name is spelled "Basco." The issue was great, as always, even with the "K." I have been listening, faithfully, to your show for so many, many years.. I sometimes feel like "his faithful dog, King." (Sergeant Preston's dog, not Luigi's!) — FRANK A. BONELLI

(ED. NOTE — Thanks for the correction . . . and thanks for listening!)

WEST CHICAGO, IL — Today I was working in the yard and didn't want to come in, but just as I got in you played Lux Theatre's "It's a Wonderful Life." What a wonderful treat! What a good job they did! And you talked about that lovable, delightful man Danny Kaye. When I was a senior in high school in Plainfield, Illinois, I had a few special records — Stan Kenton, Johnny Mercer, and among my favorites — no, that has to be just about my favorite — was Danny Kaye with "Tubby the Tuba." My friends thought I was odd for that, I guess, but it was such a standout. And then after we were married and had six children, they all loved the record. Of course, we wore it out. But they still talk about "Tubby the Tuba." Would you please include it in your tribute to Danny Kaye? I remember your playing it once as a Christmas treat and surprise. You really surprised me and I missed taping it.

You have one of the best programs on radio. There are few "musts" on my listening list anymore. "Prairie Home Companion" is one and it's going to end. Both my husband and I have your evening programs on our "must" list and if he were here on Saturday he would listen to you too. (He doesn't like PHC) We listen together every night you are on. Those were the days, you're right!

— NANCY STROEBEL

(ED. NOTE — Thanks for your kind words. Check the *Those Were The Days* listing for July 11th. Our Tribute to Danny Kaye will, indeed, include "Tubby the Tuba."

PALATINE, IL — Have been a faithful fan for a dozen years. You set the standard for the rest. Why is your one-hour weeknight show on CBS radio so limited in choice compared to your Saturday WNIB show? Is it because you're limited to shows that originated on CBS?

— JIM HARRING

(ED. NOTE — On our WBBM *Radio Classics* program we're limited to playing vintage shows that are offered in syndication, rather than programs from our own collection as we do on WNIB. The syndicated shows are not necessarily programs that were originally heard on CBS. The Lone Ranger, Green Hornet and Sgt. Preston were from Mutual. This is Your FBI was heard on ABC. Gangbusters, Dragnet, Six Shooter, and Charlie McCarthy were NBC shows. Gunsmoke, Burns and Allen, and Have Gun, Will Travel were CBS shows. Jack Benny was originally broadcast on NBC, then he moved to CBS.)

WE GET LETTERS

SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA—I got your latest issue of *Nostalgia Digest* featuring the article about Gosden and Correll aka Amos n' Andy. Naturally, I've got something to say.

My father bought our first radio—a Fleishman superheterodyne, six tube console floor model—in 1927. At first I didn't think much of it because the only other radio I had ever seen during my five years of existence had been the one my uncle had that covered a couple square yards of his living room wall. Came Christmas and I discovered that my uncle had turned in all his equipment for a box about three feet, by one foot, by one foot with a horn on top. I liked ours better.

Sam 'n Henry quickly became favorites at our house, along with The Sisters Of The Skillet (why can't I remember the names of those two guys?) I had the good sense to absolutely hate Wendell Hall, but in time grew to like Billy Jones and Ernie Hare, and The Three Doctors, and some others whose names I can't remember.

The article about Amos 'n Andy reports that they bought the Fresh Air Taxi Company. After Gosden and Correll left WGN the very first Amos 'n Andy broadcast found them in Amos' Model T Ford bound from Alabama to New York seeking their fortunes. Soon after reaching New York this Ford, which they already had, became the one and only taxi in their fleet. There was no need to buy it since they already had it. Amos Jones became the driver, and Andrew H. Brown became president of the company. (The "H." stood for Hog.)

It should also be known that Sam 'n Henry was very, very popular before they left WGN. As a matter of fact for at least the last year at WGN there was a candy bar on the market—most likely only in Chicago—named for them. I have a vague memory that this candy bar was in some way related to the Chicken Dinner candy bar, and I'm almost, but not quite, sure that the Sam 'n Henry candy bar was renamed Oh Henry after being reborn as the O. Henry bar. The reason for the change from O. to Oh was the law suit that was brought over the naming of another candy bar, Baby Ruth. It was easier to switch than fight.

The cars going back and forth across the lagoon on the Skyrider at the Century of Progress were all named for Amos 'n Andy characters. I made the trip between the towers on the Madam Queen.

The impression is that all Amos 'n Andy broadcasts interrupted the movies. Not so. It was only the climax episodes such as the time Amos was on trial for murder, and the birth of Amos' daughter.

Much more memorable were the broadcasts made after some of Joe Louis fights. Everyone in the world knew that Joe Louis was destined to be world champion. Amos 'n Andy lived in Harlem and were, of course, proud of Joe. Gosden and Correll didn't live in Harlem, but they followed Joe's career closely as did millions of others of us. Gosden and Correll made arrangements to make remote broadcasts from a hotel

room near Madison Square Garden after some of Joe's more important fights. Amos 'n Andy would go to the fight and as Joe's opponent was being revived they would rush to the hotel room and instantly go on the air with an unscripted report on the proceedings. Radio was never greater.

—LARRY LAVIERI

(ED. NOTE)—Thanks for your interesting letter. Glad you were around then and now to report on the antics of Amos 'n Andy. To refresh your memory, the Sisters of the Skillet were Ed East and Ralph Dumke and they satirized radio's household hints programs.)

CHICAGO—I am a constant listener of yours every evening and also on Saturday from 1 to 5. I am 58 years old and it brings back good memories for me. If there were more people like you, all of us would have a lot less trouble.

—EUGENE WILAND

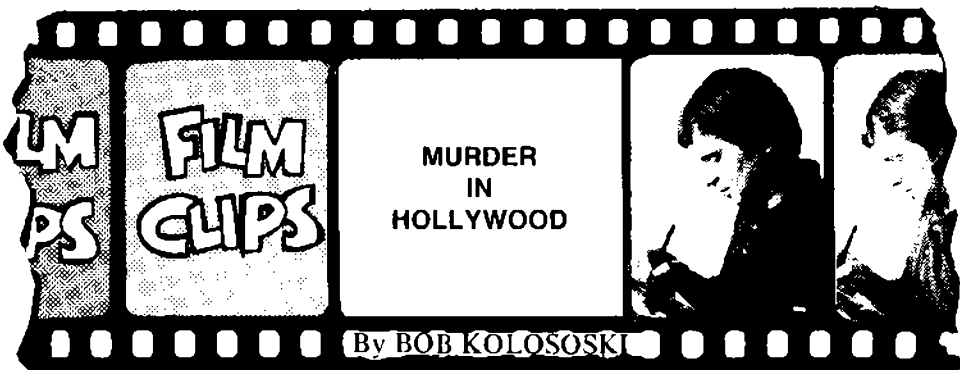
AURORA, IL — Uh-uh-uh-uh! Don't touch that dial! Hello there. How's the golden voice of The Radio Theater?

I was disappointed years ago when CBS Radio dropped The Mystery Theater. Others were as well. Then, along comes Chuck Schaden. Way to go, Guy! You fill the niche and do it well. Your intros and comments are interesting and informative. This helps to shape the program. Good job! Please keep it up.

In case you're interested, I tape the Radio Theater and listen to one show each morning when I primp in the bathroom. It definitely beats the news. I have a Blackhawk schedule, a wrist watch alarm, a stereo, and two 120 (two hour) tapes. On weekdays, when The Hawks don't play, I punch up the alarm (which is set for 8:00 p.m.) when I put on my watch. When it beeps I go to my stereo (if I'm home, that is) and fire up the gadgetry. At 9:00 the tape deck shuts off with a loud snap and I have two more shows to listen to. Then I shut off the gadgets, flip the tape, and do it again the next time you're on. Even my dog likes it. I feed him at 9:00 p.m. anyway and he has learned to associate the snap of the tape deck with suppertime. He can't wait for you to get off the air because he also hears the alarm at 8:00 and starts licking his chops. It's cute.

What are my favorites? I thought you'd never ask. I like four the best: Dragnet, Challenge of the Yukon, The Six Shooter, and The Lone Ranger. The comedies are good too, although Benny and Burns and Allen were all funnier on TV, in my opinion, because of the visual stunts and facial expressions (like Benny's classic stare). Then there's The FBI (full of hype, advise and bureau propaganda) and The Green Hornet (with that screwy premise — everybody thinks he's a bad guy, but he's actually a good guy doing bad things for good reasons, and, anyway, he runs the newspaper... whew!). However, each of the shows is a favorite of somebody's and every show is worth listening to.

I'm glad you're there doing what you're doing. It is enjoyed and appreciated. — SCOTT PATTERSON



This year Hollywood, California became one hundred years old and a series of TV specials and grand celebrations marked the event.

In February of 1887, a Kansas Prohibitionist — Harvey Wilcox — registered the map of his 120 acre dream suburb, Hollywood, with the Los Angeles County Records Office. It remained an alcohol-free, sleepy little town until 1914 when Eastern film makers (Cecil B. DeMille included) discovered this slice of Paradise and began making movies on the dusty dirt roads of Hollywood. The rest, as they say, "is history". However, the city of dreams has had its share of nightmares and scandals and even a juicy murder or two.

Two of the greatest unsolved mysteries in Tinsel Town involve murder with backdrops of deceit and corruption so awesome that a seasoned scriptwriter couldn't have conceived more intriguing plots. The first is the murder of film director William Desmond Taylor in 1922 and the second is the unexplained death (by shooting) of MGM producer (and husband of Jean Harlow) Paul Bern in 1932.

The death of Paul Bern is still a mystery; however, startling new information has come to light to cast shadows on the conclusion that he committed suicide approximately two months after his marriage to MGM's bombshell star Jean Harlow. Bern had been a successful MGM producer (Grand Hotel was one of his productions) when he met and married Harlow in 1932.

Although he was Jean's senior by more than twenty years, their marriage seemed to be on solid ground. He had given her the lead in "Red Headed Woman" the movie that made her a star and one of MGM's most valuable actresses.

Two months after their marriage he was found shot to death with a note by his side addressed to his wife stating that he had done her a "frightful wrong" and "you understand that last night was only a comedy". The police defined it as a suicide note and since Jean Harlow was with her mother the day and night of Bern's death no suspicion was cast on her. Of course, MGM's publicity and legal departments worked overtime to keep Miss Harlow's name out of the investigation and consequently out of the newspapers. Thus Paul Bern's death was classified as a suicide and neatly forgotten until 1960 when writer-producer Ben Hecht made claims that Paul Bern had indeed been murdered and that the murderess was Jean Harlow. Hecht failed to produce evidence to prove his claim and Bern's death was again shelved.

What the police didn't know in 1932 and what was privileged information to only a few of MGM's top executives was that Paul Bern had been married to another woman when he married Jean Harlow. In the 1920's, while living in New York, Bern met and fell in love with a young actress named Dorothy Millette. They lived together for over five years and established a legal common-law marriage. One day,

FILM CLIPS

without warning, Miss Millett lapsed into a coma. She was placed in a Connecticut sanitarium and Bern moved to California. There he found success and Jean Harlow.

But, shortly after their marriage, he was shocked by the sanitarium doctors when they informed him that Dorothy had awakened and wanted her "husband". Bern was desperate and agreed to meet Millette in San Francisco but postponed their rendezvous at the last minute.

On the night of Bern's death, a mysterious woman was seen entering and leaving his home. Was the woman Harlow, Millette or another secret lover?

Millette was never questioned because she committed suicide days after Bern's death and her very existence was masked by MGM executives. To date Paul Bern's death remains a mystery.

The other murder, however, seems to have come to a conclusion due to the efforts of the late director King Vidor. The shooting murder of director William Desmond Taylor in 1922 shocked the Hollywood community so badly that twenty years later the Los Angeles police still had

it in their active files. In 1966, Vidor set out to solve the mystery of the director's death and then write a screenplay and direct a film based on the famous case. The main suspects were Mabel Normand, the silent screen comedienne, Mary Miles Minter, a silent screen heroine, and Minter's mother Charlotte Shelby—all of whom were romantically linked to the victim.

Vidor's investigation lead him to academy award winning art director George Hopkins as well as reporters and police officers involved in the original investigation. The deeper he dug the more "dirt" he began to uncover. He learned of false evidence planted by Taylor's studio to hide the director's homosexual affairs as well as romances with numerous actresses.

Vidor was shocked when he pieced together evidence that three Los Angeles District Attorneys accepted bribes to suppress and dispose of incriminating evidence. He finally eliminated most of the suspects including Mabel Normand and had at the top of his list Charlotte Shelby who had died years earlier. The final bit of proof he needed could only come from Shelby's daughter, Mary Miles Minter. Vidor surmised that Minter had seen her mother shoot William D. Taylor and was then carefully coached by the killer to provide both of them with an alibi.

In 1967 Vidor arranged a meeting with the once beautiful and vibrant actress and was astonished at the obese, mentally disturbed woman she had become. His conversation with her (his first in over forty years) lead him to believe he was right in his belief of who the murderess was. But the meeting left him so dazed that he locked away his notes and findings and altogether abandoned the idea of filming the project.

Note: Sidney D. Kirkpatrick, a writer and documentary filmmaker, has written the book "A Cast of Killers" based on King Vidor's notes.

**MANY
OLD TIME
RADIO SHOWS
ARE AVAILABLE ON
CASSETTE TAPE**

**For a complete list of all
the tapes in our
CASSETTE COLLECTION**

**Send
a long, self-addressed
stamped envelope to
THE HALL CLOSET
Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053**

CASSETTE TAPE SPECIALS \$ 5.50

SAVE 20% — REGULARLY \$6.95 EACH PLUS TAX

JUNE

Each
Plus Tax

SUSPENSE #3

"The Burning Court"

This is *the first show* in the long running series of tales, "well-calculated to keep you in suspense!" Ted Stevens finds a picture of his wife, Marie, portraying her as an infamous arsenic poisoner. After a few more arsenic poisoning deaths we discover who Marie really is. Starring Charlie Ruggles. 6/17/42.

"Devilstone"

This is *the last Suspense Show!* Tim Martin inherits some strange property from a long-forgotten uncle. Tim visits the property when learning that "ghosts" are present and he makes an unusual discovery. Parliament cigarettes, 9/30/62.

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Judy Garland stars in this marvelous radio adaptation of the movie she made famous. It's an absolute charmer that takes you right down that Yellow Brick Road with Dorothy, her dog, Toto, and her friends, the Tin Woodman, the Scarecrow and the Cowardly Lion. With the Wicked Witch of the West in hot pursuit of Dorothy's ruby slippers, the little group finds many obstacles on the way to Emerald City to see the Wizard of Oz. Can the Wizard give the Scarecrow brains, the Tin Woodman a heart, the Cowardly Lion courage, and Dorothy ... the way back to Kansas and her Aunt Em? And don't forget the Munshkins ... and Judy's vibrant singing of "Over the Rainbow." Lux.

5.50

Each
Plus Tax

JULY

FIBBER McGEE & MOLLY #2

"Uncle Sycamore McGee"

Fibber works hard to repair, and repair, and repair his radio so he can hear a radio program about Uncle Sycamore McGee. This is the first show of the McGees' 9th season on the air for sponsor, Johnson's Wax. 4/13/43.

"Collecting a Debt"

Fibber gets a neighbor to contact Manila on his short-wave radio so he can collect a \$7.00 debt from an old friend. Fibber's famous Hall Closet is opened with a bang in this broadcast! Johnson's Wax, 2/24/48.

THE BLACK MUSEUM ORSON WELLES

This is Orson Welles, speaking from London. Here in the brownstone structure, which houses Scotland Yard, is the Black Museum, a warehouse of Souvenirs ... a candlestick, a china doll, a broom ... all are touched by murder.

THE BRASS BUTTON. Jean Morgan, known locally as the Swamp Girl, is murdered. The town people, the vicar, the army and the Inspector all help solve the mystery.

THE SASH CORD. A stagehand is shot through the heart after he is dead! Why? A private and special play gets the murderer. The "why a dead man is shot" actually makes sense.

GET YOUR TAPES at the Metro-Golden-Memories Shop in Chicago or the Great American Baseball Card Company in Morton Grove. BY MAIL, send \$6.50 (includes postage and handling) for EACH tape to HALL CLOSET, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053.

Here's a Photo for your Radio Scrapbook:
It Pays to Be Ignorant

It was a classic spoof of all the radio quiz and intellectual panel shows.

For seven years *It Pays to Be Ignorant* was a popular feature, first on Mutual in 1942, then to CBS from 1944 to 1949.

Master of ceremonies was ex-vaudevillian Tom Howard. The panel consisted of Howard's former partner George Shelton; old-time musical performer Lulu McConnell; and Harry McNaughton, a British entertainer whose radio claim to fame was as a stooge for comedian Phil Baker.

The show was tightly scripted, using a great collection of old gags and tired routines, compiled and written by Howard's daughter and son-in-law, Ruth and Bob Howell.

On the weekly broadcasts, the gags seemed fresh and spontaneous. The four old pros who delivered the laughs knew how to respond to one another and give their audience — in the theatre and at home — a fine half hour of comedy entertainment.



Howard, Shelton, McConnell, McNaughton