

NOSTALGIA DIGEST ^{AND} RADIO GUIDE



DEANNA DURBIN

BIG BANDS FROM CHICAGO!

Now Available on Compact Disc

Here's That Band Again!

A collection of fourteen complete remote broadcasts of the 1930s, '40s and '50s from Chicago as the nation's big bands send music coast-to-coast from ballrooms, hotels and restaurants in the Windy City.

DIGITALLY REMASTERED

Big Bands From Chicago

- DICK JURGENS (1950) Aragon Ballroom, WBBM
EARL "FATHA" HINES (8-3-38) Grand Terrace, NBC
JAN GARBER (1950) Melody Mill, WGN
KAY KYSER (2-6-37) Trianon Ballroom, MBS
JERRY GRAY (6-8-51) Edgewater Beach Hotel, NBC
BENNY GOODMAN (8-10-41) Hotel Sherman, NBC
EDDY HOWARD (1955) Aragon Ballroom, AFRS
DUKE ELLINGTON (6-24-53) Blue Note, NBC
GRIFF WILLIAMS (3-5-47) Palmer House, WGN
WOODY HERMAN (3-27-45) Hotel Sherman, CBS
FRANKIE CARLE (8-12-50) Edgewater Beach Hotel, NBC
JOE SANDERS' NIGHTHAWKS (3-25-37) Blackhawk, MBS
TED WEEMS (2-10-37) Trianon Ballroom, MBS
COUNT BASIE (2-8-53) Blue Note, NBC
- 14 DIGITALLY REMASTERED Original Remote Broadcasts

SIX FULL HOURS OF BIG BAND SOUNDS

Compilation by big band historian Karl Pearson includes 16 Page Booklet with detailed broadcast information, program notes, interesting history about the bands and the locations plus complete song list with credits.

SET OF 6 COMPACT DISCS \$39.95 plus tax

SET OF 6 CASSETTE TAPES \$34.95 plus tax

METRO GOLDEN MEMORIES

1-800-538-6675

CALL FREE DURING DAYTIME STORE HOURS

Hello, Out There in Radioland!

This year the Fourth of July falls on a Saturday and so our *Those Were The Days* program will actually be broadcast on Independence Day.

Naturally, this calls for a theme show, with the theme being the holiday itself.

So I checked our collection of available programs and almost immediately found a number of shows, two of which were dated July 4, 1948. Hmm. That's exactly 50 years ago. A little more searching found quite a few shows with a holiday storyline from that same date. Ah ha! We had our theme: "Independence Day 50 Years Ago."



**CHUCK SCHADEN
IN 1948**

You can see the result when you turn to page 22 and you can hear the result when you tune in on July 4.

Some additional research on the celebration of 50 years ago turned up these facts:

In 1948, Independence Day fell on a Sunday and Chicago was experiencing a big three-day weekend. There would be a big parade at 2 p.m. Sunday, the 4th, beginning on Michigan avenue at Randolph and featuring units of the Illinois National Guard and several veterans' organizations. On Monday, the 5th, the Freedom Train was scheduled to arrive with its cargo of invaluable historic documents.

Singer Peggy Lee and comedian Jack Carter were appearing on the stage of the Chicago Theatre with Henry Brandon and the orchestra and over at the Oriental Theatre the Three Stooges (Moe, Shemp and Larry) and Jack Benny's Sportsmen Quartet were headlining, with Carl Sands and the orchestra.

Comedian Joe E. Lewis was starring at the air conditioned Chez Paree, 610 Fairbanks Court; Professor Backwards, "stage and radio comedy riot," was appearing at Helsing's Vodvil Lounge, Sheridan and Montrose; Billie Holiday was starring at the Blue Note, Madison and Dearborn; and Eddie Foy, Jr. and Audrey Meadows were in the Loop at the Great Northern Theatre in "High Button Shoes."

Chief Ton-Tobee, Chickasaw, and Chief Thundercloud of the Ottawa Indians were entertaining with native songs, tribal customs and feats of archery at the Olson Rug Company Rock Garden and Waterfalls, Pulaski at Diversey.

Riverview, "the world's largest amusement park" at Western and Belmont was going to have a "brilliant nite fireworks display" on the Fourth and the American Legion was also staging a spectacular fireworks display, in Soldier Field.

What a weekend, fifty years ago! Doesn't seem so long ago, 1948.

I wondered what I was doing that weekend. I do remember seeing the Three Stooges at the Oriental, but I don't know if it was on the Fourth of July weekend.



HELLO OUT THERE...1948

I may have gone with my parents and brother to the Olson Waterfall. We often went there; they gave away free color post-cards of the waterfall display! I doubt if I went to Riverview. No two cent days or five cent nights on a holiday weekend!

Then it dawned on me. 1948. That's the year I graduated from grammar school! Omigosh! Has it been 50 years?

I forgot about the Fourth of July and started thinking back to my eight years at James Giles Elementary School. The school was located at the corner of Oriole and Cullom avenues in what was then an unincorporated area of Norwood Park Township (later, in 1948 in fact, to become the Village of Norridge). It was just a block from our home which was in the 4300 block of Ottawa avenue.

Miss Taylor was my first grade teacher and I can remember that she was very pretty and that she sent everyone in her first grade class a card on Valentine's Day. The card had a squirrel on it, eating an acorn.

My first couple of years at Giles School were rather uneventful, but I do remember the best parts— recess and lunch. I still like lunch.

There was a little candy store right next to the school on Oriole avenue. It was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Johnson and we could go there at recess or during the lunch period to buy candy. Later Johnson's store was torn down to build a house and one of the teachers sold candy in the school. I always thought that was odd— you could *buy* candy in school but you couldn't *eat* it in school! Anyway, I think Mr. Leigh, the principal, permitted the candy sales because he wanted to use the profits to buy school supplies that weren't in his school budget.

When I was a Giles student, the school had eight rooms in a brick building at Ori-

ole and Cullom, and a three room Annex in a terribly old building at Ozanam and Irving Park. Parts of fourth and fifth grades were held in the Annex.

Miss Fingerhut had the middle room — a very small room with no piano. But she had a pitchpipe. I'll never forget Miss Fingerhut and her pitchpipe. She would blow and we would sing. "My Country 'tis of Thee" never sounded better.

Another room in the Annex belonged to Mrs. Leigh, the wife of our principal. I always wondered he gave his wife a room in the Annex, eight or ten blocks away from his office in the main building.

We had good times at the Annex. World War II was in full swing and we spent many hours buying and selling Defense Stamps and War Bonds. There was a competition between rooms and we all saved our pennies to buy stamps so our room could be the winner. I don't remember which room was the winner, but we all joined in to do our part to help win the war.

(A number of years later the Annex burned down, a sad day for those who fondly remember studying there.)

Meanwhile, back at the main building...

I moved into sixth grade and became an Eraser Boy. It was my job to clean the erasers at the end of each day. School ended at 3:15 and I collected the erasers at 3 o'clock. I took them outside and cleaned them by banging them together. This was a swell deal because I got out of class 15 minutes early. This adventure lasted until the first report card of the semester came out and my grades weren't good enough to let me be Eraser Boy. It seems I needed that extra 15 minutes of school!

The next semester I was Milk Boy. Ten minutes before recess I would leave my classroom and deliver milk to all the other rooms in the school. I did this until the first report card came out. ZAP! Back to class.

My most exciting extra duty came when



RECEIVING DIPLOMAS in the thirty-fifth commencement exercises of the James Giles school were, **FRONT ROW** from left: Arthur Koble, Phyllis Rothschilder, Lois Lichter, Elaine Schoefarnacker, Jeanette Slinkman, Irene Klima, Janet Boeing, Phillip Keesee. **SECOND ROW:** John Leigh, principal, Betty Carlson, Martha Marchel, Edmund Wolff, Edward Lick, John Groves, Charles Schaden, Dorina Oldham, Carolyn Braun, Miss Hubick, graduates' home room teacher. **THIRD ROW:** Marilyn Harder, Wanita Seidel, Mary Mortensen, Jean Beasley, Donna Rae Mayers, Alice Workman, Geraldine Adams, Pearl Kehart, Dawn Dube. **TOP ROW:** Clifford Johnson, Francis Kenyon, Robert Nickl, Phyllis Grenke, Auguste Lehman, Barbara Allan, Richard Nemeth, Gerald Schreiber, Ronald Venturini.

I was made a Patrol Boy in seventh grade. A big shot! Wow! Was I important! Then the report cards came out again. ZAP!

Life at Giles School was really a lot of fun. We had flower shows and hobby shows and fire drills.

And Fire Prevention assemblies. Every October Chief Schoenfeld and his men from the Norwood Park Township Volunteer Fire Department would come to school and show us some fire fighting equipment and distribute pamphlets on fire prevention. Once the students put on a fire prevention assembly and I got to wear a fire helmet and wear a heavy fireman's coat on the stage. Then I went home and checked our

basement oily rags, etc., to be sure we wouldn't be the victims of spontaneous combustion.

One of the biggest events of the year at Giles School was Field Day. This was Mr. Leigh's pride and joy and Mrs. Greig played a big part in it, too. For weeks we would practice and on the big day the whole student body would be dressed in white shirts or blouses and blue trousers or skirts. We would be in the field doing exercises in unison: jumping jacks, sit ups, knee bends. The whole bit.

There would be volley ball games and baseball games and races and broad-jumps and all kinds of activities. The ladies of

the PTA —my mother included— prepared hot dogs and hamburgers and sold them at lunch time.

As I said, this was a big production as far as Mr. Leigh was concerned and, actually, it was a pretty big deal for all of us.

I'll always remember the year when Mr. Leigh wanted to open the day's events with the song "Oh What a Beautiful Morning." He sent a note around to each room asking if anyone had a recording of that song, which he could borrow. Funds were short, I guess, and the school couldn't afford to buy the record.

But my parents had such a recording and I promptly offered to let Mr. Leigh use it. Then I found out it was a favorite of my folks and my mother told me to ask Mr. Leigh to be very careful with it. I did, and he promised to be careful. "Don't worry, Charlie my boy," said Mr. Leigh, "if anything happens to it, I'll buy you a new one."

On Field Day morning, the record was on the phonograph, outside, next to the field, waiting for the proper cue. When Mr. Leigh announced on the public address system, "It's a beautiful morning, folks," the record was to be started. But just at that moment a wind came up and lifted the record from the turntable and smashed it against the wall of the school building.

Immediately I raced up to Mr. Leigh and informed him of what he already knew — that he broke my record and would have to buy a new one.

Victory for a student. Defeat for a principal.

I'll never forget it.

Another big event at James Giles School was the annual Halloween Parade.

Everybody would get into costume during lunch time and when school resumed at 1 o'clock, the teachers struggled to teach until 2 o'clock when we would line

up by rooms and parade around the school building.

All the mothers would come to school for the parade. They had to. Most of them made the costumes and they wanted to see how well they held up during the parade.

Mr. Leigh always wore some sort of silly moustache or beard or fright wig and the kids got a big charge out of it, especially because most of the teachers frowned at his doing so.

After the parade we were dismissed and the neighborhood was filled with Trick or Treaters from Giles School.

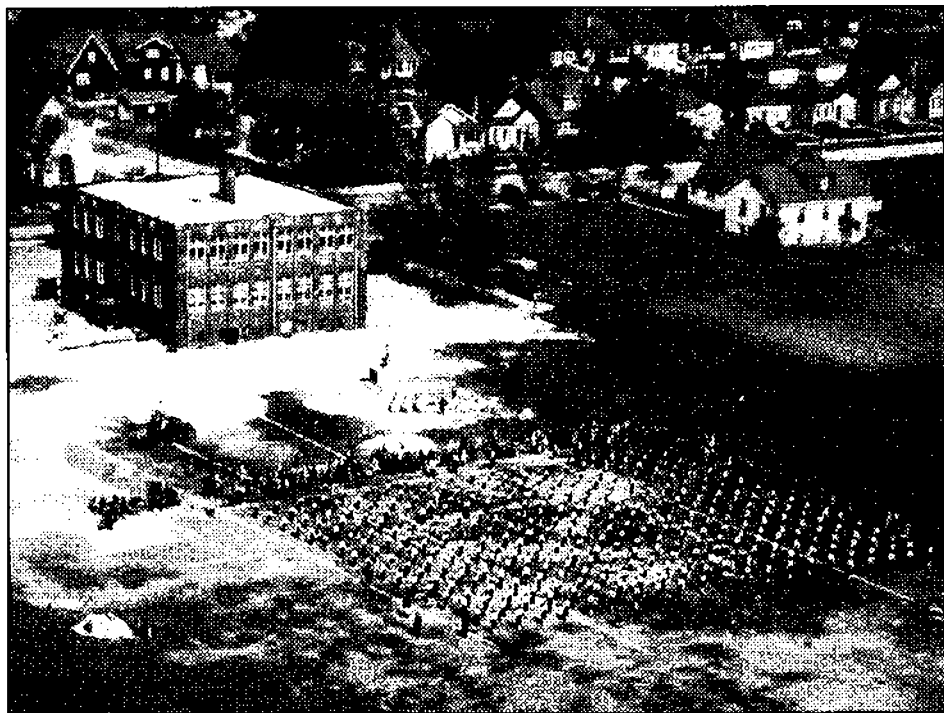
Next day, lots of kids were absent from school because they had eaten too much candy and junk on Halloween.

When we went to Giles we didn't have a gymnasium or a gym teacher or any real athletic program. When I was in seventh or eighth grade some of the boys —myself included— were dismissed early to help Mrs. Greig, who was sort of a part-time gym teacher. We were to teach some organized sports to the girls and boys in the lower grades. We led them in exercises, races, and other games.

This was Giles School's first attempt at a sports program and I was part of it — until the first report card came out that semester and then — ZAP! You know what!

The best time of the year at Giles was Christmas. The school went all out. We had decorations everywhere and for weeks before Christmas our art periods were spent making paper chains and ornaments to hang on the trees which were placed in each room. The trees, incidentally, were not on the school's budget and the resourceful Mr. Leigh managed to get them from one of the nearby cemeteries. I don't know what he had to promise in return... and I'm not asking.

I can remember a lot of things about my eight years at James Giles School. I remember the Friday afternoon movies, the



FIELD DAY at JAMES GILES SCHOOL.

paper drives during the war, and when we sold magazines to raise money to buy equipment for the school.

And I remember my Graduation... fifty years ago.

I was a member of the "Best Graduating Class Giles School Ever Had!" At least that's what Mr. Leigh told Miss Hubick's eighth graders. We didn't know that he said that every year to every class as we stood on stage on our big night, eagerly awaiting the big moment when the diplomas would be distributed—scared to death that we wouldn't get one... and scared to death when we had to walk across the stage to receive it.

It was a pretty important night for us, that May 28, 1948. (Our school system ended its year a lot earlier than the Chicago Public School system. Of course, we didn't take time off in the spring for "Clean-Up Week" like the Chicago

schools did!)

On Graduation Night our 35-member class sang "Waltz of the Flowers" and "The House I Live In" and Miss Hubick taught us a choral recitation called "The Voice of America." We were very patriotic.

Everyone in the class had a part in the recitation. The girls had big parts, naturally, because they were the smartest. Some of them had whole paragraphs to say.

And even some boys had a sentence or two to say. I had one word. The chorus asked "Who were the greatest Americans?" One boy answered "Washington," Another said "Lincoln." I called out "Jefferson."

I guess I had to do something to get that diploma fifty years ago.

Fifty years. Egad! That's a half-century!

It can't have been that long since I was a part of the "Best Graduating Class Giles School Ever Had!"

—Chuck Schaden

The Aura of Deanna Durbin

BY ED KNAPP

In a small French village 35 miles outside Paris sits a lovely ivy-covered farmhouse. The rustic structure typifies an old world look, encircled by a high wall brick fence. Inside the picturesque dwelling sit an elderly couple seated about an oaken table in a moment of respite, each with a cup of steaming tea.

The early morning sunlight spills over through lattice-lined windows coloring everything in the room with a warm honey glow. The couple, caught in dappled sunlight and shadow patterns speak to one another in rapid French dialoguc. Their muted voices barely break the silence of their quiet surroundings.

MM. and Mme. Charles David stationed in the light flooded kitchen of their cheerful home are discussing plans for an occasioned trip to London. They seem to be planning a timely visit to catch a traveling exhibit of classic European paintings to be on display at the National Gallery at Trafalgar Square.

The typically dressed French couple married nearly fifty years have shared a common bond of interest in the rich cultures of the world. In their retirement years they have found time to consume the fruitful rewards bestowed on them with the study of art, plays and music.

On multifarious occasions they have

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

traveled every corner of Europe's continent, the British United Kingdom and the United States in that gratifying quest.

The passing of the years have deepened soft character lines in the bespectacled face of MM. David facing his wife across the table — casting her a pixie-like glance from warm eyes that twinkle. Mme. David's cool blue eyes reflect his gaze as she looks up, her eyes meeting his in shared understanding.

We become aware of a change in the subject of their conversation as the modulated level of their French terms rise in pitch. That private word exchange becomes increasingly jubilant. They are now discussing an up coming visit from their son, Peter. Peter David, a skilled physician, is flying from the States where he holds practice, to be with them.

The couple look forward to their son's infrequent visits with clan. Mme. David particularly looks forward to Peter's sojourn, since he is also an excellent pianist. When at this home of his birth, Peter delights in accompanying his mother on the parlor piano as her lilting voice is raised in song.

Considerable time has passed since they last had this most welcome reunion to allow them another delightful family, private, living room concert.

Charles, always marveling at his wife's notes of bell tone clarity, is also pleased and he is certain to hear some of his favorite French ballads.

This warm gathering gives Mme. David a much desired opportunity to exercise her

full vocal range and she enjoys sharing her God-given gift of song with her family. She welcomes the accelerated lift it brings.

There was a time over a half-century ago when, as Deanna Durbin, her extraordinary vocal talents were shared with the world, enriching the lives of the multitudes who gloried in her beautiful soprano notes.

The aura of D. D. (as her studio co-workers affectionately called her) began early with her birth on December 4, 1921.

She was the second child born to Ada and James Durbin. She was born in Winnipeg, Canada and named Edna May.

The Durbin family moved to Southern California's warmer climate in 1922 when Edna May was but one year old. She was a happy child and would often be found singing to herself during playtimes. Her older sister Edith recognized the singular quality of Edna May's rare voice and was instrumental to insisting that her younger sister receive valuable music training as she grew.

Edna May had a God-given gift in a lovely voice that was exceptionally mature for her youthful years.

While still in her teens, Edna May appeared frequently in school programs in

which she usually had a singing part. At one such recital, Jack Sherrill, a Hollywood talent agent, happened to stop by. He often stepped into out of the way places neglected by many scouts in his search for



new and unusual talent. Sherrill, with a keen eye and ear for hidden ability, was there when Edna May sang a recital number. Immediately he noted her excellent vocal range and winsome way with a song.

Seizing on her future potential, he approached Edna May and her mother with an offer to be in the movies. The fourteen year old girl was overwhelmed with the glamorous

vision of becoming a movie star as if it were a dream come true.

In 1936 Edna May made her first screen appearance in an M-G-M film short entitled *Every Sunday*. She co-starred with another new singing juvenile, Judy Garland.

That now historical reel of film caused no waves of interest for either girl at the time and was soon forgotten.

Several months later her promotional-minded agent, Jack Sherrill, approached Universal Studios representing his new discovery. Universal was experience some hard times, but the casting office, well

THE AURA OF DEANNA DURBIN

aware of Sherill's remarkable ability to foster star material, gave Edna May a screen test that resulted in signing her to a movie contract.

Among the studio's first strategies was to replace her first name with one that had more star-like quality and, after much discussion, selected "Deanna."

Almost at once the studio placed Deanna Durbin in a low budget film, *Three Smart Girls*. During production of this 1936 film, the flower of her beautiful voice, pretty appearance and wholesome manner encouraged director Henry Koster to increase her part.

Deanna was given an "introductory" star billing in this, her very first feature film — a giant step for any potential star.

While she was making the film, her marvelous singing voice and sparkling personality came to the attention of Eddie Can-

tor, famous comedian of the *Ziegfeld Follies*. Cantor was always on the lookout for key talent to inject into his popular radio show sponsored by Texaco. The first night she appeared on Cantor's program he introduced her by saying, "With open arms you'll greet her. There's no one any sweeter than delicious, delightful, delovely Deanna Durbin."

Deanna's exposure on that highly rated half-hour program brought rave responses from professionals, critics and thousands of regular listeners. Her network appearances became a windfall of advance publicity for *Three Smart Girls*.

Charmed radio listeners flocked to see Deanna when her film was released to the nation's theatres, giving Universal Pictures a box-office income of over two million dollars, an astronomical figure in those days when adult tickets were priced at twenty-five cents.

Universal had a gold mine in their new star and she was able to put the faltering studio's ledger back into the black. From that time forward, D. D.'s career rose through starring roles in twenty other feature films. Over the next decade she averaged two blockbuster movies a year.

Producer Joe Pasternak worked with Deanna on her first and many other Durbin films. The Pasternak—Koster team created a whole series of magic formula pictures with their new star. They painstakingly wrapped each of Deanna's films in a fairy tale charisma that theatre audiences took to their hearts. Pasternak related that Deanna Durbin never showed wild moods or flashes of temperament so common to most successful stars on studio pro-



DEANNA DURBIN, age 13, with Eddie Cantor on his *Texaco Town* program (1936).



DEANNA DURBIN

Scenes from her sensational motion picture successes
 Figure 101 - 1937 *Man of the Hour*
 Credits: *Man of the Hour*, *She's a Wonderful Girl*, *That Night in Rio*, *Every Body Has Secrets*, *Three Smart Girls*, *Three Smart Girls II*, *Love's Luck*, *Three Smart Girls*

THINK LOVE

INSIDE COVER of 78 rpm Decca record album of Deanna Durbin songs from her Universal Studio movie hits (1940).

duction sets.

Three Smart Girls was nominated for Best Picture of the Year by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, but it lost out to *The Great Ziegfeld*.

In 1937, her second feature *One Hundred Men and a Girl* was nominated for Best Musical Score and Deanna was happy when Universal's music department won the Oscar.

Over the years, many songs made popular by Deanna's enchanting soprano earned Academy Award nominations and, in 1938, the Academy recognized Deanna Durbin for "significant contributions in bringing to the screen the spirit and personification of youth." She received a miniature Oscar for her wholesome performances.

Deanna's extraordinary articulation had Metropolitan Opera tenor Lawrence Tibbett praising her as a "modern day Jenny Lind."

She was equally comfortable with a popular song or serious music that extolled the purity of musical tone and clarity that was amazing.

Her name soon became a watchword among her following of dedicated fans. The D. D. appellation was used to endorse a large number of consumer products such as facial soap, chewing gum, ladies wear, laundry flakes, and many other everyday items.

The Durbin name was used to promote an entire line of new products, reaching the youth market. There were Deanna Durbin

THE AURA OF DEANNA DURBIN

dolls, books, paper dolls, sheet music, long hair ribbons, dress wear, coloring books, and other assorted output.

She became a popular recording artist and recorded exclusively for Decca Records, producing five 78-r.p.m. "souvenir" albums and dozens of popular singles.

Deanna was asked to place her hand and foot prints in the forecourt of Grauman's Chinese Theatre and was awarded Silver Screen Magazine's Gold Medal Award.

In 1938 the Film Critics Award recognized her role in *That Certain Age* as "best performance of the month by a cinema actress."

She rated front page headlines and an exciting picture spread in *Life Magazine* when she received her first screen kiss from handsome newcomer Robert Stack in the 1939 film *First Love*.

Studio heads preferred to keep the maturing Deanna in light-hearted, "Cinderella" parts, not wanting to tamper with proven box office formulas. Much to her chagrin, her roles were eternally sweet and youthful.

Silent screen star Mary Pickford's screen roles had her playing children's parts when she was a married adult in real life. But Deanna overcame this problem in 1944 when she insisted upon breaking that mold and appeared in a straight dramatic role in *Christmas Holiday*, sharing star billing with a relatively unknown Gene Kelly. Acting the part of a torchy night club performer, Deanna sang only two songs. Until then, her starring vehicles usually featured at least four songs by Deanna. *Christmas Holiday* received mixed reviews from her faithful fans, but admirer Walter Winchell gave her "orchids" for her performance.

During World War II, Deanna devoted considerable time and talent to the war ef-

fort. She made regular appearances at the Hollywood Canteen, entertaining and catering to servicemen. She appeared on Armed Forces Radio's *Mail Call* and *Command Performance* broadcasts and made frequent visits to stateside military bases.

Recently she recalled those days. "I remember being hoisted up on the back of a GI truck where I sang without musical accompaniment to a bunch of boys who were going overseas." She described the bitter-sweet experience as "Wonderful, exciting and fun — though sad at times."

In the 1943 film *Hers to Hold* she introduced the wartime song "Say a Prayer for the Boys Over There." It was nominated for an Academy Award.

Deanna Durbin had two unsuccessful marriages between 1941 and 1948. Both ended in divorce but her screen personality remained untarnished. Her first marriage to Vaughn Paul was childless. She became the proud mother of two children, born to her and second husband Felix Jackson. Her son Peter was born in 1951 as a result of her successful third marriage to French film director Charles David (pronounced *Day-veed*). She met him when he directed her 1945 comedy who-done-it, *Lady on a Train*.

Much of Deanna Durbin's continuing screen triumphs could be attributed not only to her singing and personality, but to the image on the screen created by her cameraman.

Those motion picture portraits of her flawless oval face, rich auburn hair, startling blue eyes, her full mouth and dazzling white teeth were divinely photographed by ace studio cameraman Joe Valentine. He filmed her every alluring feature in the full-screen close-ups that made love to mesmerized theatre audiences.

In 1945 and 1947 she became the highest paid female movie star in the country. During ten years of movie-making, Deanna



ONE HUNDRED MEN AND A GIRL (1937)
Deanna Durbin stars with Leopold Stokowski

earned over two million dollars, much of which was invested wisely.

But in 1948, after her film *For the Love of Mary*, while she was still a top attraction, she abruptly chose to retire from the screen, coincidental with the end of her contract at Universal Pictures. She decided to seek some privacy in a life that had not known any privacy since childhood.

Leaving Tinsel Town, she sailed for Europe and rented an apartment in Paris, where she had the opportunity to live a quiet, carefree life, far removed from the glitz of spotlights, pressures, and the hustle and bustle of the make-believe world.

In Europe she became reacquainted with her former film director Charles David and

they were married December 21, 1950. The couple, finding many common interests, have lived in relatively private seclusion in a slow-paced French village with less than 1,700 inhabitants.

In their retirement years they have traveled, seeking cultural refinements and recreation. Deanna occasionally returns to the United States, attending to business matters in the country of her former screen triumphs. She makes her Stateside journeys in total anonymity.

Mmc. David refuses to grant interviews and has declined all offers to re-enter professional life. She continues to utilize the enchanting voice that has grown richer and fuller with her maturing years, but it is heard only in the privacy of that little French farmhouse.

The Davids continue to live a life of fulfillment,

charm and togetherness in their 48 years as loving man and wife. When they married they entered into a mutual pact that is as strong today as the day it was vowed. As Deanna has related, "My husband agreed that he would protect me from spiders, mosquitoes and reporters, and my job is to protect him from lions, tigers and dinosaurs."

In her shield of guarded privacy, Deanna Durbin David expresses this feeling: "Let the magic of the young Durbin image perform while the not-so-young Durbin enjoys a happy, peaceful, obscure life." ■

(NOTE-- Tune in to TWTD July 25 for a four-hour salute to Deanna Durbin.)



SONG OF THE WOODPECKER

BY CURTIS L. KATZ

“Ha-ha-HA-HA-Ha... Ha-ha-HA-HA-HA’, That’s *The Woody Woodpecker Song*.”

For 50 years this tune has introduced Walter Lantz’s two-headed cartoon funny bird on movie screens and on TV. But few people recall that when this novelty number debuted a half-century ago, it became a zany nationwide fad that drove patrons of malt shops and juke joints to distraction.

Animation pioneer Walter Lantz had been in the cartoon business since before World War I, and Woody Woodpecker had been his biggest star for several years before the advent of his theme song. Walter’s woodpeckin’ wiseguy was introduced in the 1940 Andy Panda cartoon *Knock Knock*, and was an immediate success.

Initially, rising voice actor Mel Blanc gave speech to the woodpecker, complete with the lunatic laugh that would become Woody’s trademark, a vocal gimmick Blanc had retained in his repertoire since high school, from which he was nearly expelled for trying it out in a resonant hallway. However, Mel recorded only four voice tracks for Walter Lantz before Warner Brothers cartoon producer Leon Schlesinger compelled him to sign an exclusive contract. Thereafter, Woody’s creator, animator Ben Hardaway, and subsequently Lantz’s wife, singer Grace

Curtis L. Katz, an authority on the art of movie animation, is a free-lance writer, cartoonist, comedian and Ranger of the Rails.

Stafford, provided the voice of Woody Woodpecker, though for many years Mel’s recordings of Woody’s laugh were interpolated into the cartoon soundtracks.

One day late in 1947, Walter Lantz received a phone call from George Tibbles and Ramey Idriss, pianist and guitarist respectively in the orchestra of Darrel Calker, then associated with the Joan Davis radio program, and which also provided music for Walter Lantz cartoons. Over the phone they played for Lantz a song about Woody Woodpecker that, in the best Tin Pan Alley tradition, had taken the duo but a half hour to write. Featured in the song was Woody’s signature “Ha-ha-HA-HA-Ha” laugh, set to the tune of a trumpet call used to round up musicians at rehearsals. Lantz liked the song, and gave Tibbles and Idriss his blessings to get it published and recorded. Leeds Music readily agreed to publish the piece, but the publicity to be accrued from a prestige recording proved more difficult to obtain.

At that time, James Caesar Petrillo, imperator of the American Federation of Musicians, announced a strike against the recording industry. Mindful that Petrillo’s previous strike had lasted from 1942 into 1944, record companies and their contract artists hastened to stockpile recordings before Petrillo’s midnight, New Year’s Eve deadline.

In this frenzied atmosphere, Tibbles and Idriss caught up with Kay Kyser during a marathon December 31 recording session at Columbia Records. Kyser agreed to record their *Woody Woodpecker Song... if*

he could finish off a prodigious pile of music before the clock struck twelve. According to the show biz legend, Kyser distributed the parts for *The Woody Woodpecker Song* to his band only ten minutes before 1948.

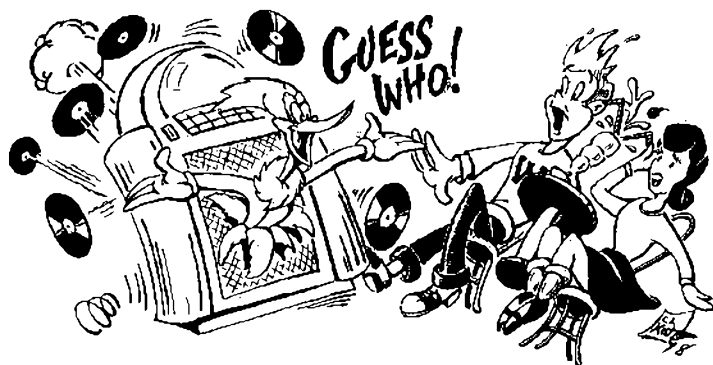
After a single run-through, the recording of the song was accomplished in just one take, completed at the stroke of midnight. What a way to start the new year! Gloria Wood provided the vocal. Various members of the Kyser organization have claimed the dubious honor of supplying the giddy woodpecker laugh.

As things worked out, Petrillo's strike lasted only a few weeks. It was not until

jumped to Number 1, where it remained for most of the summer, ultimately becoming one of the *Hit Parade's* longest-lived attractions, and Kyser's most successful record in five years.

Anticipating the success of this unlikely novelty tunc, Danny Kaye and the Andrews Sisters waxed a recording of it hardly two weeks after the release of Kyser's Columbia etching. By summer's end, there were nine different recordings of *The Woody Woodpecker Song*, which together would sell nearly two million discs. Leeds sheet music sales topped out at 5,000 copies a month.

In the summer of 1948 there was not a



late May of 1948 that Columbia worked through its backlog of recordings, and finally issued *The Woody Woodpecker Song* as the "B" side of a disc featuring *When Veronica Plays Her Harmonica*. But it was the "B" track that caused a national sensation.

Kay Kyser's recording of *The Woody Woodpecker Song* had been out only four weeks when Time Magazine reported, "kids were driving their parents crazy with it. Waitresses in jukebox joints were going frantic. The whole U.S. seemed to be gurgling itself silly with the laughing gassiness of a goofy song called *Woody Woodpecker*."

Kyser's Columbia recording was already Number 3 on *Your Hit Parade* and quickly

middlesex, village, or farm where *The Woody Woodpecker Song* could not be heard emanating from a radio, phonograph, or jukebox. On the air, *Breakfast Club* host Don McNeill made Woody the mascot of his satirical run for the White House, and used a parody of *The Woody Woodpecker Song* as a campaign anthem. A man more accustomed to romantic ballads, Frank Sinatra was compelled to croon the Woodpecker number on his *Your Hit Parade* radio slot, with palpable misgivings.

Meanwhile, back at the cartoon studio, Woody Woodpecker's popularity soared to unprecedented heights, and Walter Lantz found himself besieged with requests for licensing agreements for Woody Woodpecker products. United Artists, Lantz's

SONG OF THE WOODPECKER

current distributor, was caught flat-footed with a pathetic supply of prints of only three Woody Woodpecker cartoons that were hardly sufficient to meet the sudden burgeoning theatrical demand. Universal, Lantz's long-time previous distributor, filled the breach by re-releasing many of *their* Woody cartoons.

Lantz hastened to put *The Woody Woodpecker Song* into his next cartoon, *Wet Blanket Policy*, thus qualifying the melody for a "Best Song" Oscar nomination. The gold statue ultimately (perhaps mercifully) went to *Buttons and Bows*, but for ever after *The Woody Woodpecker Song* became Woody's theme in every one of his cartoon shorts, and subsequently for his TV show.

The heart of *The Woody Woodpecker Song* mania was, of course, the infectious "Ha-ha-HA-HA-Ha" refrain. Millions of Americans walked the streets gleefully imitating it, while millions more desperately strove to shield themselves from its raucous insanity.

Not even Walter Lantz was safe from the craziness. "People call me up on the telephone and instead of saying hello they laugh," Lantz complained good-naturedly. "The caddies on the golf course all heehaw at the top of my backswing. It's added 15 strokes to my game."

Not everyone was so easy-going about such assaults on America's sensibilities. *The Woody Woodpecker Song* figured in dozens of lawsuits, mostly variants on "disturbing the peace." Tibbles and Idriss were ecstatic. "We're in!" they told *Down Beat*. "This is the real mark of success. A songwriter is never really established until he has a flock of suits tossed at him."

Considerably less amused by all the laughter was Mel Blanc, who was understandably miffed that he was not being compensated as the creator of a cacopho-

nous cackle from which others were profiting handsomely. While somewhat assuaged by the fact that his own recording of *The Woody Woodpecker Song*, made for Capitol with the Sportsmen Quartet, quickly jumped to Number 2 on the charts behind Kay Kyser's record, Mel Blanc nonetheless brought suit against Tibbles, Idriss, Lantz, et. al. for compensation, "as a matter of principle," in July, 1948.

Some wags suggested Blanc be awarded his claim, then he fined the same amount for the madness he inflicted upon an unsuspecting public. But Mel didn't even get that much satisfaction; he simply lost the case. Though bitter about the outcome, he bore no ill-will against Walter Lantz ("Walter's a wonderful guy.") Right after Blanc announced his intention to appeal, he and Lantz reached an amicable out-of-court settlement. Perhaps symbolic of Mel's continued friendly relationship with Walter was the 1963 recording of *The Woody Woodpecker Song* Mel made in collaboration with the "other" voice of Woody Woodpecker, Walter's wife Gracie.

With all this publicity of the "money-can't-buy" variety, one would think Walter Lantz would have been rolling in financial success, but ironically such was not the case. The inherent diseconomies of cartoon production and distribution, which had been a source of contention with Universal, were now exacerbated by postwar inflation, the impounding of European assets, and United Artists' chronic impecunity. *The Woody Woodpecker Song* madness had hardly subsided when, at the end of 1948, the Walter Lantz Studio was closed. At the height of his popularity, Woody Woodpecker's delirious laugh could be heard reverberating from radios, phonographs, and juke boxes... but not from movie screens.

Happily, in 1950, Universal took Lantz and Woody back into their fold, and there

WOODY WOODPECKER

FEATURED AND RECORDED BY

KAY KYSER

(COLUMBIA NO. 38197)

BY GEORGE TIBBLES
RAMEY IDRIS

FROM THE

Walter Lantz
CARTOONS

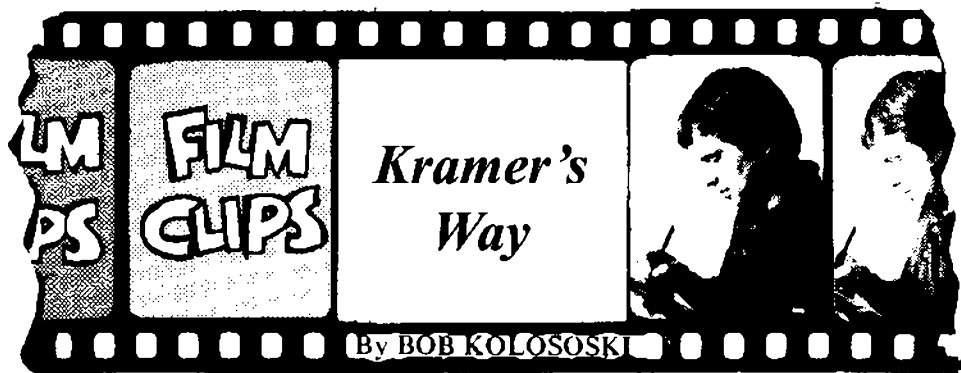
BY PERMISSION OF WALTER LANTZ

they remained for the ensuing two decades. When he finally closed up shop in 1972, Walter Lantz was the last producer of theatrical cartoon shorts. *The Woody Woodpecker Song* continued to find favor with such diverse recording artists as the Baja Marimba Band in the 1960s, and the Nitty

Gritty Dirt band in the 1980s.

Walter Lantz lived on into the 1990s, becoming animation's well-loved elder statesman, and an international ambassador of good will.

Indeed Walter — and Woody — had the last laugh. Ha-ha-HA-HA-Ha! ■



By BOB KOLOSOSKI

Last March, independent producer/director James Cameron basked in the glory of his controversial film *Titanic*. The controversy was not due to his tackling political or social issues, but rather the film's two hundred million dollar price tag. Cameron wrote a very conventional love story and wove it with the historic event of the sinking of the *Titanic*. He struck gold at the box office and at this year's Academy Award ceremonies. The film is grand entertainment and reinforces the fact that independent production is thriving in Hollywood.

Fifty years ago there were only a few young men bold enough to challenge the mighty studio system and make movies "their way." One of those young bucks was Stanley Kramer.

Kramer was a New Yorker who arrived in Hollywood in the mid-thirties. He worked at various studios as a writer, film editor and, eventually, as an associate producer.

He volunteered for military duty during WW II and spent four years in the Army Signal Corps.

When he left the service he formed a company called Screen Plays, Inc. His goal was not only to produce films outside of the studio system, but to present the public with films that challenged social issues. He was sure the movie-going public was tired of the soft-serve entertainment the

studios had been cranking out during the war, and he was going to give them an alternative.

His films would take tough stands on racial prejudice, mental and physical illness, and political corruption. Kramer believed that the way to solve the nation's problems was to face them with determination.

But first he had to find someone with enough money to financially back his kind of film.

Kramer had an associate who had an uncle with a lot of money and wanted to make more by producing films. Kramer had an option on the Ring Lardner story, "So This is New York" and it appealed to his friend's rich uncle. Kramer signed radio comedian Henry Morgan as the star and that, too, appealed to the wealthy gentleman.

The uncle was happy, Kramer was happy, Morgan was happy, but the public hated the 1948 film and it was quickly replaced at neighborhood theatres by films from the major studios. The benefactor was disappointed, but willing to try again.

Kramer knew that his next film had to be something that would grab the audience. He had a gritty boxing story, another Ring Lardner gem, that had a complete rat as the main character. He needed an actor with a strong back and personality to play the ambitious prizefighter, Midge Kelly.

Kirk Douglas needed a role to make the big producers notice him, so he pursued Kramer and got the "part of a lifetime."

Douglas trained so hard and looked so good as the egotistical fighter it was hard to determine where Kelly stopped and Douglas began.

The movie *Champion* (1949) made Douglas a star and Kramer a producer with a hit under his belt.

Kramer's next film was *Home of the Brave* (1949) with actor James Edwards playing a soldier who faces racial prejudice during the second world war. Although the film wasn't a blockbuster hit, it made enough of a profit for Kramer to start his next project.

The problem of war veterans who were physically handicapped was a tricky subject for 1950. There were thousands of ex-servicemen physically and emotionally scarred by the war and, in general, the public chose to ignore them. Kramer wanted

to bring the plight of these American heroes out into the open and he had a powerful story ready to film.

He needed a powerful actor to play an ex-GI paralyzed from the waist down. Kramer had seen Marlon Brando in the Broadway production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and knew that Brando was the actor he sought.

Before production of *The Men* (1950) began, Brando spent three weeks with paralyzed vets at a veterans' hospital. When production began Brando was so ready that audiences raved about the paralyzed actor they had seen in the Stanley Kramer film. Kramer had brought Brando to the movies and they would never be the same.

In spite of his winning track record, Kramer's finances were still less than spectacular. He signed a five year deal with Columbia in 1950 and by 1955 he had produced nine strike-outs and one super hit.

The hit was *The Caine Mutiny* (1954)



STANLEY KRAMER and FRED MAC MURRAY -- *The Caine Mutiny* (1954)

PHOTOFEET

KRAMER'S WAY

but the box office flops included *Death of a Salesman* (1951), *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1950), *Eight Iron Men* (1952), and *The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T.* (1953).

He produced *High Noon* in 1952, but at the insistence of Columbia's boss Harry Cohn, Kramer took the adult western to United Artists, who ended up with a big hit. Cohn regretted his decision.

In 1955 Kramer fulfilled his dream of directing by taking the reigns of the medical drama *Not as a Stranger*. He quickly followed with *The Pride and the Passion* (1957), an overblown exercise in cinema fluff with Frank Sinatra and Cary Grant discovering that "war is Hell."

After producing two big hits, the racial drama *The Defiant Ones* (1958) and the ominous *On the Beach* (1960), Kramer

went slapstick, in a big way.

He pulled together most of the funniest people in the universe and added Spencer Tracy, just for fun, and put all of them in *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World* (1963). It's not the wittiest film ever made, but any movie that has Mickey Rooney, Sid Caesar, Buddy Hackett, Milton Berle, Jonathan Winters, Ethel Merman, Dick Shawn, Terry Thomas, and Edie Adams all in the same scene is capable of dishing out a few hearty laughs.

In 1967 Kramer again challenged America to take a hard look at the racial prejudice it had swept under the carpet. *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* presented interracial marriage in an honest, straightforward story that was all the more enhanced by its cast. Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, Sidney Poitier, and Katharine Houghton all rose above the



PHOTOES1

IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD (1963) with a gaggle of gag men: Dick Shawn, Sid Caesar, Peter Falk, Mickey Rooney, Spencer Tracy, Jonathan Winters, Terry Thomas, Phil Silvers, Milton Berle, Eddie Anderson, Buddy Hackett.



PHOTOFEET

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER (1967) Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, Katharine Houghton, Sidney Poitier, and Stanley Kramer

material and Kramer was rewarded for their efforts with Oscar nominations for best picture and best director.

Stanley Kramer either lost his way or didn't give a darn after *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. His career began a downhill slide that would be a challenge for a younger man.

But he wasn't the young buck anymore. He was now a seasoned veteran and an old man in the industry. His film *Bless the Beast and the Children* (1971) had critics wondering what cause he was tackling. *Oklahoma Crude* (1973) was an edgy mixture of comedy, adventure and drama that should have done better at the box office.

He was discouraged and tired when *The Runner Stumbles* (1979) failed miserably to find an audience or a friendly critic.

He knew when to quit and that's what he did in 1980 after 30 years of bucking the system. The problem was that, in 1980, there was no system; there was hardly a Hollywood. Film production was down and if a film didn't have *Star Wars*-class special effects or a whip-cracking hero like Indy Jones, it didn't have an audience. Lucas and Spielberg were the new kids on the block and Kramer was ready to fade to black.

Stanley Kramer retired to Seattle to teach and reflect on a distinguished career. He helped put a conscience on the big screen and, although his films may not have put an end to prejudice or suffering, he put his fortune and his career on the line in film after film trying to awaken a nation to its perpetual blind spots. ■

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

JUNE 1998

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 6th

SUSPENSE (4-24-47) "Win, Place and Murder" starring Richard Conte as a detective accused of murdering a bookie. Roma Wines. CBS. (29:17)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (5-6-72) Ned Locke, who starred on radio in "Uncle Ned's Squadron" and **Eloise Kummer**, actress who appeared in many daytime dramas, including "Guiding Light" talk with Chuck Schaden about their broadcast careers in this *excerpt* from *Those Were The Days*. WLTD, Evanston. (22:12; 5:36; 17:13; 9:34)

UNCLE NED'S SQUADRON (2-17-51) Ned Locke stars in this Saturday morning kids' show keyed towards aircraft and fliers. Hugh Downs stands by in the "Ready Room." Sustaining, WMAQ, Chicago. (29:20)

GUIDING LIGHT (10-28-43) Isolated episode of the long-running (1937-1956) daytime drama. **Eloise Kummer** appears as Clair Marshall. Announcer is Ed Prentiss. General Mills, NBC. (9:34)

FRED ALLEN SHOW (10-21-45) Frank Sinatra joins Fred, Portland Hoffa, DeMarco Sisters, Al Goodman and the orchestra. The Allen's Alley question is "How can we solve the nation's traffic problem? Fred and Frank sing

Hillbilly-style in a Barn Dance spoof. Tenderleaf Tea, Blue Bonnet Margarine, NBC. (27:00)

SATURDAY, JUNE 13th
SPOTLIGHT ON SOUND EFFECTS

NICK CARTER, MASTER DETECTIVE (9-9-45) "The Talking Tree" starring Lon Clark as Nick, Charlotte Manson as Patsy. To solve this mystery, Nick Carter tries to tie together two murders, a missing map, and a mysterious talking tree. **Sound effects by Barney Beck.** Lin-X Home Products, MBS. (29:48)

SPEAKING OF RADIO (4-19-97) **Barney Beck**, veteran radio sound effects man, (who worked on the Mutual Broadcasting System from 1946-1989) talks about his career in a conversation with Chuck Schaden at the 1997 Cincinatti Old Time Radio Convention. (31:15)

BOBBY BENSON AND THE B BAR B RIDERS (8-15-50) "The Three Wise Monkeys" hold clues to an estate left for three cousins. **Sound effects by Barney Beck.** Sustaining, MBS. (28:50)

THE SHADOW (11-11-45) "Spider Boy" stars Bret Morrison as Lamont Cranston with Lesley Woods as the lovely Margo Lane. A lonely young man who weaves cloth for a living decides to weave a web strong enough to capture a friend. **Sound effects by Barney Beck.** MBS. (23:57)

ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN (3-28-46) Final episode in the Dragon's Teeth series. Lois Lane, kidnapped by Nazi agents, is rescued by the Man of Steel. **Sound effects by Barney Beck.** Kellogg's Pep, MBS. (14:25)

MURDER AT MIDNIGHT (12-2-46) "The Man Who Died Yesterday" with Stuart Grody and Mandel Kramer. A man who was born on a ship while it passed the International Date Line has the ability to see 24 hours into the future. **Sound effects by Barney Beck.** Sustaining, MBS. (25:48)

FOR AN
AUDIO TRANSCRIPT
OF ANY COMPLETE 4-HOUR
THOSE WERE THE DAYS
BROADCAST

Reproduced on two, C-120
audio cassette tapes

Send \$25 plus \$5 S&H

TOTAL \$30.00

TWTD TRANSCRIPTS
Box 421

Morton Grove, IL 60053

For further information
Call (847) 965-7763

SATURDAY, JUNE 20th

SUSPENSE (5-1-47) "Lady in Distress" starring Ava Gardner as a woman who picks up a hitch-hiker who has just escaped from prison. Cast includes Howard Duff and Joe Kearns. Announcer is Truman Bradley. Roma Wines, CBS. (28:25)

LASSIE (9-18-48) "Lost Dog." Marvin Miller tells the story of Laddie, a scotch collie (played by Lassie) who gets lost... and then found. Story is introduced by Rudd Weatherwax, Lassie's owner and trainer. Red Heart Dog Food, NBC. (14:20)

PHIL HARRIS—ALICE FAYE SHOW (1-2-49) Phil gets a draft notice from the government. Elliott Lewis is Frankie Remley. Cast features Walter Tetley, Robert North, Alan Reed. Alice sings "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm." Rexall, NBC. (29:17)

THOSE WERE THE DAYS (3-8-75) *Excerpt.* John V. Leigh, former principal of James Giles Elementary School in Norridge, Illinois reminisces about school days in the 1940s with one of his former students, Charles Schaden. WLTD, Evanston. (29:27; 12:20) *See the article on page 1.*

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (4-2-46) Jim and Marian Jordan star as the residents of Wistful Vista. McGee has a great invention: a device to eject the automobile ignition key when you shut the motor off. Cast includes Arthur Q. Brian (Doc Gamble), Bea Benadaret (Mrs. Carstairs), Bill Thompson (Horatio K. Boomer), Gale Gordon (Mayor LaTrivia) and Harlow Wilcox. King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (29:30)

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA (5-30-43) "Mr. Lincoln's Wife" starring Helen Hayes in the personal story of Mary Todd Lincoln. Clayton Collyer narrates. Don Voorhees and the orchestra. duPont, NBC. (29:15)

Read the article about the Cavalcade of America on page 30.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27th OLD TIME (CHICAGO) RADIO

HOWARD MILLER SHOW (10-29-55) The Chicago disc jockey interviews Liberace who is in town at the Chicago Theatre for the premiere of his new film "Sincerely Yours." Wrigley's Gum, WBBM/CBS. (14:30)

AUNT RITA'S CHILDREN'S HOUR (7-27-48) *Excerpt.* For the kids in their listening audience, "Aunt" Rita Ascot and "Uncle" Jack

Brinkley read the Sunday newspaper funnies, including Joe Palooka, Mickey Finn, The Captain and the Kids. WLS, Chicago. (19:15)

HERE'S NORMAN ROSS (9-2-49) *Excerpt.* Music on records with the popular radio personality. Bubblated Fazt, WMAQ, Chicago. (16:15)

GOLD COAST RHYTHM (6-30-48) George Venebles and Jack Sexton with a "mystery spoof without Peter Lorre!" Commercials are woven into the storyline. WBBM, Chicago. (14:56)

SKELLY NEWS (3-5-46) Alex Drier from Chicago with the first network news commentary of the day. Drier speculates that if a visitor from another planet comes to Earth and reads the front page of the Chicago Sun, "...he would be expected to draw the conclusion that the world was going crazy, was crazy, or was about to initiate another global war." Skelly Oil Co., WMAQ/NBC, Chicago. (14:28)

THE NORTHERNERS (1-4-54) Richard Shores conducts the orchestra and chorus in "A Panorama of Winter" on this first commercial broadcast in stereophonic sound (via simulcast on AM and FM in Chicago). Guest Charlton Heston reads excerpts from "The Cruel Sea." Musical selections include "The Sleigh," "Ebb Tide," "Beyond the Sea" and "Song of Norway." Announcer is John Weigel. Northern Trust Company of Chicago, WMAQ/NBC. (29:00)

MASTER RADIO CANARIES (1940s) Musical selections for the birds as canaries "Sonny Boy" and "Frankie" are joined by "Gloria, our lovely organist and Gene with his romantic violin." Jess Kirkpatrick announces. Hartz Mountain Pet Food, WGN/MBS. (13:19)

EDDIE HUBBARD SHOW (4-1-50) The popular disc jockey puts aside the platters to present a program of music and patter before a studio audience. Eddie, with his ukelele, sings "Three Little Words," "Candy and Cake," and "Ukelele Style." WIND, Chicago. (17:37)

CALLING ALL DETECTIVES (9-11-47) Paul Barnes plays private detective Jerry Browning and *all* the other characters in this mystery-quizz program during which listeners are invited to answer a question about the story to win a cash prize. Announcer is Jack Callahan. Sealy Mattress Co., WGN, Chicago. (14:16)

11:60 CLUB (10-13-48) *Excerpt.* Dave Garroway plays records and offers low-key comments to listeners who tune in at midnight (11:60). Participating sponsors, WMAQ, Chicago. (Approx. 15:00) *Read the article about 'old time (Chicago) radio on page 32.*

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

JULY 1998

SATURDAY, JULY 4th
INDEPENDENCE DAY
50 YEARS AGO

YOU ARE THERE (7-4-48) "Philadelphia, July 4, 1776" offers coverage of the final debate on the Declaration of Independence and the vote of the American colonies. Reporting are John Daly, Ken Roberts, Maj. John Fielding Elliott, Ned Calmer, Bud Collier. Sustaining, CBS. (27:06)

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT (7-4-48) Garry Moore presents the quiz show with the \$64 Question. Members of the radio studio audience try to answer questions about animal names in sports, plays with famous stars, ladies names in song titles, and presidential nicknames. The Jackpot Question is worth \$640. Cookie Fairchild and the orchestra, announcer Ken Niles. Eversharp, NBC. (30:34)

QUIZ KIDS (7-4-48) Chief Quizzer Joe Kelly has some topical questions about the Fourth of July for kids Joel Kupperman, Lonny Lunde,



GARRY MOORE

Rennie Templeton, Nancy McLeary, and Nannette Hexler. Alka Seltzer, NBC. (28:23)

ROBERT TROUT AND THE NEWS (7-4-48) News items concerning Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia; United Nations terms for permanent peace between the Arabs and Jews; a burglary in Paris; politics in the United States; and a great baseball inning for the Boston Red Sox. Pillsbury, NBC. (4:38)

LIVING — 1948 (7-4-48) Ben Grauer presents a "Self Portrait of the United States on Independence Day." A drama-document about the typical American in 1948 as revealed by many years of poll-taking by the American Institute of Public Opinion and Dr. George Gallop, its president. Sustaining, NBC. (24:51)

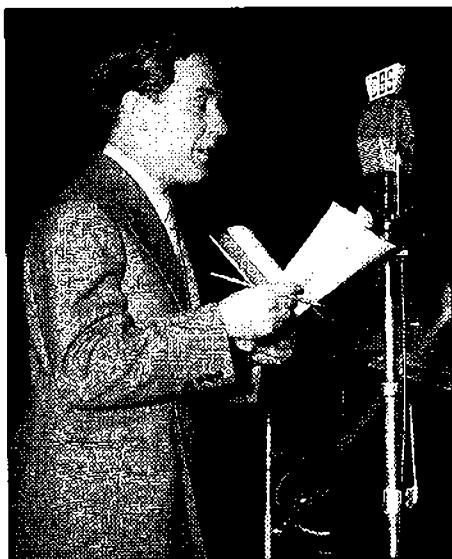
SHEAFFER PARADE (7-4-48) Eddy Howard and his orchestra present "an Independence Day salute to the good old USA." Selections include "Down By the O-H-I-O," "Missouri Waltz," "America the Beautiful," and "You're a Grand Old Flag." Cleve Kirby announces. Sheaffer Pen Co., NBC. (29:50)

ESCAPE (7-4-48) "A Tooth for Paul Revere" by Steven Vincent Benet. "You are spurring a lathered horse through darkened streets, trapped by two hostile armies, with a kit of magic in your pocket and the American revolution in the balance." Cast features Harry Bartell as Large Butterwick, Parley Baer as Paul Revere, Barry Kroeger as narrator. William Conrad announces. Sustaining, CBS. (28:25)

SATURDAY, JULY 11th
REMEMBERING
BURGESS MEREDITH

EDDIE CANTOR SHOW (12-5-45) Cantor prepares for a confrontation with actor **Burgess Meredith** after Eddie was seen with Burgess' wife, Paulette Goddard. Cast includes Bert Gordon, the Mad Russian, Thelma Carpenter, Leonard Seuss and the orchestra. Announcer is Kenny Delmar. Sal Hepatica, Trushay, NBC. (28:24)

RUDY VALLEE SHOW (2-11-37) *Excerpt*. Rudy



BURGESS MEREDITH

introduces guest **Burgess Meredith** who appears in a scene from his current Broadway stage success, Maxwell Anderson's "High Tor." NBC. (12:50)

THEATRE GUILD ON THE AIR (5-8-49) "Of Mice and Men" starring **Burgess Meredith** and June Havoc with George Matthews and John Hamilton. Radio version of John Steinbeck's morality tale about George Milton, a migrant worker, and Lenny Small, his feeble-minded pal who try to live peacefully on a ranch. Roger Prior hosts. U.S. Steel Corporation, ABC. (21:25; 18:14; 15:52)

JUST ENTERTAINMENT (4-15-56) Variety show from Chicago with host **Burgess Meredith**, Felicia Sanders, Somethin' Smith and the Redheads, and Melvin Douglas, all currently appearing in Chicago. Cesar Petrillo and the orchestra. Wrigley Gum, CBS. (23:44)

READER'S DIGEST RADIO EDITION (5-13-48) "A Hound Dog Man" starring **Burgess Meredith** in "a rip-snortin', blood-chilling, red-blooded story from real life about a Texas wolf hunt." Announcer is Jay Jackson. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (29:18)

BURGESS MEREDITH READS (Unknown) "There Shall Come Soft Rains." **Burgess Meredith** tells the futuristic story of a futuristic house with no living inhabitants. "The voice clock announces, 'Today is August 4, 2026 in the city of Allendale, California.'" (17:20)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST is *Nostalgia Digest* columnist and film historian **BOB KOLOSOSKI** who

will join us for a look at the stage and screen career of **BURGESS MEREDITH**, who died September 9, 1997 at the age of 89.

SATURDAY, JULY 18th RADIO'S BIG BAND SOUND

CAB CALLOWAY AND HIS ORCHESTRA (7-27-40) Remote broadcast from the Outdoor Gardens of Frank Dailey's Meadowbrook in Cedar Grove, New Jersey. The "Hi-De-Ho Man" presents "Limehouse Blues," "I Can't Resist you," "Boog It," and "Cupid's Nightmare." Vocals by Cab and the boys in the band. Bill Abernathy announces. Sustaining, NBC. (29:30)

NBC BANDSTAND (11-1-56) *Excerpt* starring emcee Bert Parks and featuring Shep Fields and his Rippling Rhythm. Vocals by Jackie Austin and guest star Johnny Desmond. Selections include "I Get a Kick Out of You," "Tip-toe Thru the Tulips," "September in the Rain," and a mambo medley. Various sponsors, NBC. (21:05)

CHESTERFIELD MOONLIGHT SERENADE (12-4-40) Glenn Miller and the rochestra with vocals by Marian Hutton and Ray Eberle. Tunes include a "something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue" medley, plus "Long Time No See, Baby" and "Limehouse Blues." Chesterfield, CBS. (13:35)

EDDY HOWARD AND HIS ORCHESTRA (12-5-45) Remote broadcast from the "far-famed Aragon Ballroom, Lawrence and Broadway, on the North Side of Chicago." Vocals by Eddy Howard and Kenny Myers. Selections include "Thou Swell," "Old Fashioned Love," "Ragtime Cowboy Joe." Sustaining, MBS/WGN. (25:00)

NBC BANDSTAND (11-13-56) *Excerpt* starring Bert Parks whose guests are singer Julius LaRosa and Les Brown and his Band of Renown. Julius sings "I Got Rhythm," and the band plays "Ramona," "Canadian Sunset," "Ridin' High." Band vocals by JoAnn Greer and Butch Stone. NBC Radio and TV. (20:15)

FITCH BANDWAGON (5-23-42) *Excerpt* from Hollywood with Bob Crosby and his orchestra as "guest band of the week." Music includes "Jersey Bounce," "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree," and "Smoky Mary." Vocals by Bob Crosby. Host is Tobe Reed, announcer is Dresser Dahlstead. Fitch Shampoo, NBC. (16:30)

OUR SPECIAL GUEST is big band historian and *Nostalgia Digest* contributor **Karl Pearson** who will talk about the bands and the era from whence they came.

Chuck Schaden's

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

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

JULY 1998

SATURDAY, JULY 25th
REMEMBERING DEANNA DURBIN

LUX RADIO THEATRE (4-18-38) "Mad About Music" starring **Deanna Durbin** in the radio version of her 1938 Universal film. Joining Deanna (age 15) are other members of the original screen cast: Herbert Marshall, Gail Patrick, William Frawley, Jackie Moran. A comedy with music about a spirited American girl in a Swiss boarding school, neglected by her mother, so she creates a make-believe father. Deanna sings "Ave Maria," "Chapel Bells," and "Serenade to the Stars." Guest host is Walter Huston, announcer is Melville Ruick. Lux Soap, CBS. (23:20; 12:34; 22:37)

COMMAND PERFORMANCE #140 (9-30-44) **Deanna Durbin** is hostess for this variety show featuring Jack Benny, James Cagney, Ginger Rogers, Martha Tilton, and Tommy Dorsey and the orchestra featuring Ziggy Elman, Lionel Hampton, Les Paul and Buddy Rich. Don Wilson announces. AFRS. (28:25)

TEXACO TOWN (1-3-37) Eddie Cantor stars

with guest Al Jolson, plus regulars **Deanna Durbin**, Harry Einstein as Parkyakarkus, Sidney Fields, Jacques Rennard and the orchestra, announcer James Wallington. Deanna (age 14) sings "Kiss Me Again." Cantor sings "Mammy," Jolson sings "Margie" and Eddie and Al join up for "Dinah." Texaco, CBS. (28:20)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (2-7-44) "His Butler's Sister" starring **Deanna Durbin** who repeats her screen role in the radio version of her 1943 Universal film. Co-stars are Pat O'Brien (also from the film) and Robert Paige. Cecil B. DeMille hosts this comedy about a hopeful singing star who tries to get an audition with a noted theatrical impresario. Deanna (age 22) sings "Embraceable You" and "In the Spirit of the Moment." Lux Soap, CBS. (18:42; 18:20; 19:00)

Read the cover story about Deanna Durbin on page 6.

...and for more good listening...

ART HELLYER SHOW-- Music of the big bands and the big singers with lots of knowledgeable commentary and fun from one of radio's legendary personalities, **now in his 51th year on the air!** *WJOL, 1340 AM, Saturday, 9 am-12 noon.*

DICK LAWRENCE REVUE-- A treasure trove of rare and vintage recordings with spoken memories from the never to be forgotten past. *WNIB, 97.1 FM, Saturday, 8-9 pm.*

JAZZ FORUM-- Chicago's foremost jazz authority, Dick Buckley, presents an entertaining and enlightening program of great music by noted jazz musicians. *WBEZ, 91.5 FM, Monday thru Thursday, 8:30-9:30 pm; Sunday 1-4 pm.*

REMEMBER WHEN-- Host Don Corey's "nostalgia fest" with the emphasis on old time radio variety shows, plus show tunes and interviews. *WAIT, 850 AM, Saturday, 9 am-12 noon.*

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

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

THE SATURDAY SWING SHIFT-- Bruce Oscar is the host for this two-hour program featuring swing music on record as performed by the big bands, popular singers and small groups. *WDCB, 90.9 FM, Saturday, 10 am-Noon.*

"When Radio Was" -- WMAQ-AM 670

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

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
June, 1998 Schedule				
1 Have Gun Will Travel Burns & Allen Pt 1	2 Burns & Allen Pt 2 Dimension X	3 Green Harnet Fibber McGee Pt 1	4 Fibber McGee Pt 2 Sherlock Holmes	5 The Shadow Superman
8 Dragnet Jack Benny Pt 1	9 Jack Benny Pt 2 Escape	10 This Is Your FBI Charlie McCarthy Pt 1	11 Charlie McCarthy Pt 2 Black Museum	12 Suspense Superman
15 Gunsmoke Great Gildersleeve Pt 1	16 Great Gildersleeve Pt 2 Mercury Theatre	17 Gangbusters Life of Riley Pt 1	18 Life of Riley Pt 2 Tales of Texas Rangers	19 The Shadow Superman
22 Lights Out Favorite Husband Pt 1	23 Favorite Husband Pt 2 Lone Ranger	24 Third Man That's Rich Pt 1	25 That's Rich Pt 2 Boston Blackie	26 Suspense Superman
29 Rocky Fortune Duffy's Tavern Pt 1	30 Duffy's Tavern Pt 2 Frontier Gentleman	OUT OF TOWN LISTENERS PLEASE NOTE: <i>"When Radio Was" is a syndicated series heard throughout the country. If you're unable to tune in WMAQ, call (847) 524-0200, Ext. 234 and ask which station in or near your town carries the program.</i>		
July, 1998 Schedule				
		1 The Whistler Burns & Allen Pt 1	2 Burns & Allen Pt 2 X Minus One	3 The Shadow Superman
6 Philip Marlowe Fibber McGee Pt 1	7 Fibber McGee Pt 2 Directors' Playhouse	8 Hermit's Cave Jack Benny Pt 1	9 Jack Benny Pt 2 Green Hornet	10 Suspense Superman
13 Dragnet Charlie McCarthy Pt 1	14 Charlie McCarthy Pt 2 Black Museum	15 Escape Great Gildersleeve Pt 1	16 Great Gildersleeve Pt 2 The Saint	17 The Shadow Superman
20 Gunsmoke Life of Riley Pt 1	21 Life of Riley Pt 2 Gangbusters	22 Third Man Favorite Husband Pt 1	23 Favorite Husband Pt 2 I Was A Communist/FBI	24 Suspense Superman
27 Boston Blackie Father Knows Best Pt 1	28 Father Knows Best Pt 2 Tales of Texas Rangers	29 Broadway Is My Beat Milton Berle Pt 1	30 Milton Berle Pt 2 Have Gun, Will Travel	31 The Shadow Superman



"Here We Are Again" Remembering the Magic of Kukla, Fran and Ollie

BY JERRY WARSHAW

From the summer of 1947 until the summer of 1949, while attending the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, I worked a night job as an usher at WBKB, then Chicago's only commercial TV station.

All through high school (Senn), I had worked as an usher at the Uptown Theatre, rising to the exalted position of balcony captain. So, when I needed a job downtown to help pay for school, the WBKB position was offered, and when Captain Bill Eddy, director of the station, found out I was studying cartooning, I was in.

Because this was early television, there were no unions and not much money. I was able to do drawings for some of the TV shows, especially those produced and directed by Beulah Zachary. My daughter kids me about my lack of vision, saying that I could possibly have been one of the first art directors in TV (there was no such position at WBKB at the time).

But noooo ... I wanted to be a cartoonist and work on a comic strip, which I did; but

Jerry Warshaw of Evanston, Illinois is a professional illustrator who volunteers as an Interpreter for the Chicago Historical Society and the Museum of Broadcast Communications.

who knows???

But I was there at WBKB when *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* first went on the air!

And I became a fan for life!

Now I am a volunteer interpreter at the Chicago Historical Society, and one of my tours is the current "Kukla, Fran and Ollie" exhibit.

There's a lot to the *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* story, but I thought I would like to recall their beginning:

"This won't last a week; who's going to watch a puppet show?" remarked a stagehand at a pre-broadcast run-through of *Junior Jamboree* at the WBKB studio in October of 1947.

He was talking about puppeteer Burr Tillstrom's new television show, with a cast of eight puppets, known as the Kuklapolitans, and the girl out front, Fran Allison.

The show premiered on October 13, 1947, Tillstrom's 30th birthday.

It was an instant success, and the interplay between Fran and the Kuklapolitans was so dynamic that within a few months, *Junior Jamboree* became *Kukla, Fran and Ollie*.

It was a one-camera show, originally sponsored by RCA Victor. The first year it ran locally every day from 4 to 5 p.m. The

godfather of the show was Captain Eddy. The station was owned by Balaban and Katz, the people who operated many motion picture theatres in Chicago.

Burr Tillstrom had related in an interview that Captain Eddy believed that "nobody would buy television if all you saw was wrestling and roller skating, which was all that was on then, so he wanted us as a kind of family show."

(Eddy, incidentally, was one of the great creative innovators of early TV. He held over a hundred TV, radio, and electronic patents, in addition to being a very professional cartoonist.)

Radio and TV veteran Beulah Zachary was named producer and, with a slight spelling change, became the namesake for the puppet Beulah Witch. Louis (Gommie) Gomavitz directed. Musical director Jack Fascinato wrote all the music for the show, including the beloved theme song "Here We Are Again."

Tillstrom's assistant Joe Lockwood had

the most important job: making sure the puppets were ready for Burr to slip his hands into, at the right times.

This was, of course, black-and-white TV, live, and—except for the musical numbers—totally unrehearsed and adlibbed.

Burr and Fran would get together before the show and discuss an outline of sorts for that day's script, usually based on some personal experience.

The beauty of the show was the synergy of Burr and Fran and their creative abilities. When something unexpected happened—a misplaced prop, a sudden noise, a gaffe by a crew member—it would often send them off and running in a different direction; but their sense of timing was such that they always got off the air on time.

Since it was a one-camera show, there was no break for commercials, so the commercials were integrated into the story line, in the manner of radio shows such as



BURR TILLSTROM with KUKLA, FRAN, OLLIE and musical director JACK FASCINATO

KUKLA, FRAN AND OLLIE

The Jack Benny Program and Fibber McGee and Molly.

Late in 1948, the coaxial cable, connecting the East Coast to the Midwest was completed. In January 1949, the fledgling NBC television network picked up the show, which was now aired live from 6 to 6:30 p.m., CST.

It was sponsored by Sealtest Ice Cream on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and by RCA the rest of the week.

However, if you lived west of the Mississippi River, your station would receive the show on kinescope.

The process was simple; a movie camera was aimed at a TV screen during a live show and the picture was filmed. Before the invention of video tape, this was the only way to distribute a program nationwide.

This method created problems, of course. A producer never knew when his show would be telecast in some cities. Ollie once remarked during a Thanksgiving telecast, "If you live in Seattle, you are probably watching us around Christmas. So, Merry Christmas!"

By 1951, after *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* moved to the NBC studios in the Merchandise Mart, an impressive list of sponsors joined the show—Proctor & Gamble, Life magazine, and Ford Motor Company.

The Kuklapolitans were wonderful!

Burr and Fran's friends were:

KUKLA— The leader and the most calming and focused character, always available to set things right. (*Kukla* is the Russian word for doll; the puppet was named by a Russian ballet dancer friend of Burr's.)

OLIVER J. DRAGON (OLLIE)— The exuberant, vain, self-appointed "star" who "handled most of the dramatic roles

and all major singing parts" but was Kukla and Fran's best buddy.

FLETCHER RABBIT— Official *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* mailman, an electronics expert who made sure everything was cleaned up and put away, and starched his floppy ears.

MADAME OPHELIA OOGLEPUSS— Cultural expert, prima donna, and director of the Kuklapolitan Light Opera Company.

COLONEL RICHARD H. CRACKIE— Beau of Madame Ooglepuss, an elegant southern gentleman and master of ceremonies.

BUELAH WITCH— Pilot for Broomstick Airlines, brewer of potions, and all-around gad-about.

CECIL BILL— Stage manager who spoke a nonsense language ("Tooie-ta-tooie!") that only Kukla seemed to understand. (Cecil Bill, as I remember it, was named after WBKB crew/floor director Bill Ryan.)

And last, but not least, there was Ollie's young cousin, **DOLORAS DRAGON**. There was an occasional appearance by Ollie's mother, who ran an early bread and breakfast in Vermont called "Dragon Retreat!"

Burr did all the voices and, as far as I know, never got mixed up. He was so good that when they sang together, you thought you heard three voices.

The believability of the show and the characters was based on faith.

What you saw on the show was fact and you accepted that, or as Buelah Witch once put it, "If I say it's a kitchen, it's a kitchen!"

And, of course, Fran considered them to be real. So as not to destroy that illusion for her, the puppets were never seen by her except when they were performing.

Burr had once been backstage at the *Howdy Doody Show* and had been

appalled at seeing the marionette Howdy just hanging lifelessly. Tillstrom was very protective of "his friends." There was never any merchandising of the puppets. After all, there was only one Kukla and one Ollie!

According to Burr Tillstrom's Will, only Burr's hands could manipulate the puppets so no one else is permitted to put their hands inside the characters.

When the current exhibit at the Chicago Historical Society was mounted, padded hand-like armatures were devised to give the illusion that Burr was working the puppets. Mark Larson, Burr's last assistant, and Jack H a c k m a n , former art director at NBC,

positioned the puppets in a way that gives you the feeling of a "frozen moment in time."

Kukla, Fran and Ollie spent ten years at NBC.

In 1949, *Life* magazine reported that the audience was made up of about 60 per cent adults. In 1951, *Collier's* magazine confirmed that, according the Hooper Rating, 15 to 25 per cent of "in-use" TV sets were tuned to the program."

Among the fans of the show were Marlon Brando, Jim Henson, Katherine Hepburn, Judy Garland, and Lilian Gish.

Margaret Truman never accepted a date earlier than 7:30 p.m. (EST), and Tallulah Bankhead and Fred Allen never ate dinner until the show was over.

At the height of the show's popularity, in the early 50s, *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* was getting over 8,000 letters a week.

Fans were always sending "tooth cozys"

for Ollie's tooth, and when Kukla sneezed on one winter show, 250 handkerchiefs arrived.

Would such a simple format work today?

Judging by the reaction of people of all ages who watch segments of the show in the recreation of a 1950s living room at the Chicago Historical Society, I'd say YES!

Would it get on the air?

That's another story. I doubt if a present-day TV executive could, as they used to say, "see the possibilities," and would probably echo the words of that anonymous stage hand at WBKB in 1947, "Who's gonna watch a show about puppets?"

We know who, don't we? ■

(NOTE-- "Here We Are Again," a 50th anniversary exhibit honoring Burr Tillstrom runs through August 5, 1998 at the Chicago Historical Society, Clark Street and North Avenue.)



THE FOURTH OF JULY RADIO PROGRAM

Cavalcade of America

BY RICHARD W. O'DONNELL

Former President Herbert Hoover, a Republican, once called it the "Fourth of July radio program." And most Democrats probably agreed with him.

Our thirty-first president reportedly was a regular listener to the *Cavalcade of America* after he left the White House, and tuned in weekly, as often as his schedule allowed, during its eighteen year run from 1935 to 1953.

Ironically, *Cavalcade* was probably never beamed out over the airwaves on Independence Day. Most big name regular radio shows — and it certainly was one of them — enjoyed a hiatus during the warm weather months. Summer replacements took over from July to September.

Nevertheless, *Cavalcade* was a program that embraced the true spirit of the United States, was filled with red, white and blue gusto, and made you proud as punch to be a citizen of this great nation.

Without a doubt, it was probably the most patriotic show ever beamed our way on radio. And on television, too, for that matter. The show tested TV, but never became too involved with it.

There were stars galore to attract the radio listeners. They included Paul Muni, Charles Laughton, Loretta Young, Edward G. Robinson, Dick Powell, Tyrone Power, Spencer Tracy, Bette Davis, to name a few.

Cavalcade of America was a top drawer production, from its start on CBS, and later, in 1940, when it switched to NBC. Every effort was made to make certain the de-

tails of the various dramas were historically accurate.

Toward this end, a panel that included Yale scholar Frank Monaghan, and authors Marquis James and Carl Carner was established. They combed history books especially the astericks, searching for authentic slices of American history listeners had never heard before.

And if this wasn't enough, literary heavyweights of the caliber of Carl Sandberg, Thornton Wilder, Maxwell Anderson, Robert Sherwood, among others, were hired to turn out scripts far superior to the humble subject matter broadcast on lesser programs.

Every once in a while, it should be noted, American history was left waiting in the wings for something special. During the Christmas season in 1942, for example, a drama called "A Child is Born" was penned for *Cavalcade* by Steven Vincent Benet, no less. It was a retelling of the story of the birth of Christ. Who were the stars? Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontaine, the king and queen of Broadway, no less.

The following week, it should be noted, it was back to Valley Forge again. *Cavalcade* was strictly American history. Raymond Massey was heard several times playing Lincoln on the radio show. He owned the part after his great performance in "Abe Lincoln in Illinois" on Broadway.

Originally, when the show started out, the emphasis was on Washington, Lincoln, Franklin, Jefferson, and all the big names in our history books. As time went by, the programs were updated into the forties and featured modern day stories. Those were

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



CAVALCADE OF AMERICA dramatized incidents from American history and literature. Shown in the studio just prior to a broadcast are frequent *Cavalcade* actors, from left, Burgess Meredith, Agnes Moorehead, Jeanette Nolan, Ed Jerome, John McIntire, Ain MacAllaster and Ted deCorsia.

the World War II years and the patriotic theme had to come through loud and clear.

The Cavalcade of America was sponsored by duPont, famous for making things "for better living through chemistry." The sponsor spent an estimated \$10,000 a week on the half-hour shows. That was considered a high price in those radio days.

As time went by, despite its claim of historic authenticity, *Cavalcade* did loosen up a bit. Its writers were able to use a bit of poetic license.

Purists may not agree, but twisting the facts ever so slightly did, to a great degree, made the show more enjoyable. *Cavalcade*, at times, was on the stodgy side and a bit of a bore. History can be like that, as any person who has read a weighty tome on bygone matters is well aware. In later

years, *Cavalcade* did stretch the truth a bit.

The Cavalcade of America was produced by Jack Zoller, and Roger Prior and Paul Stewart were the announcers. Musical directors were Donald Voorhees and Robert Armbruster. Homer Fickett was the long-time director of the show.

In any serious discussion about radio, *The Cavalcade of America* has to rate a place of honor. It represented American patriotism at its best and it was indeed a class product from start to finish.

Without a doubt, *Cavalcade of America* truly made history. ■

(NOTE— "Mr. Lincoln's Wife" starring Helen Hayes, the first in a series of *Cavalcade of America* broadcasts on TWTD will be presented June 20.)

*Ken Alexander
Remembers . . .*

Old Time (Chicago) Radio



Can you remember a time when the man on the radio read the Sunday funnies to the kids? Can you recall the program with canaries singing in the background? How about the announcer who used to talk endlessly in an effort to get listeners to send in for a plastic glow-in-the-dark orchid?

You are undoubtedly familiar with the network shows of radio's Golden Age. *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *The Lone Ranger*, *The Lux Radio Theater* — these programs are well remembered and, indeed, still heard and enjoyed today.

But what did the stations broadcast at times of the day when the networks weren't originating any programs? And what about the stations that were not affiliated with a network?

The stations had to produce their own programs. These were not big-budget shows with a cast of actors along with orchestra, chorus, soloists and sound effects people — such programs would have cost far too much to produce. But working with the available resources — and a modicum of creativity — a station could provide good radio entertainment.

Let's recall a few of those old programs that could be heard on Chicago radio back in the '30s and '40s.

One early morning program in the late '30s comes to mind: *The Musical Clock*,

which was on WBBM (780 kHz) from 7 to 8 weekdays. The program host was a woman named Hallowe'en Martin who played recorded music interspersed with time checks and weather reports. The music she played was what we might call semiclassical, and the show's theme music was a piece called "In a Clock Store."

Skip Farrell and Dinning Sisters 'Bowman Musical Milkwagon'

In the late '40s, at 11:30 in the morning, the Bowman Dairy Company sponsored *The Bowman Musical Milkwagon* on WMAQ (670 kHz). This was a half-hour program of live popular music featuring vocals by Skip Farrell and the Dinning Sisters with piano and organ accompaniment. Ed Prentiss announced the show, whose theme song was the Alec Wilder tune, "It's So Peaceful in the Country."

(Just as the stations used to switch during the day from one type of program to another, I'll ask your permission to do the same here.)

Play-by-play broadcasts of the Cubs and White Sox games were carried by local stations — some originating at the ballpark, others coming from the studio. For these broadcasts, an announcer would read an account of the game supplied by a sports wire service via teletype. Making his ac-

count of the game sound as exciting as possible, the announcer would relate every pitch, every swing, every hit, every play as it came in on the ticker tape. Recorded ballpark sounds sometimes would be played to heighten the illusion.

Some stations would broadcast horse races in the same way — the announcer would describe the race as the account came in over the wire.

Announcer Linn Burton used to tell of the time, early in his broadcasting career, when he was called upon for the first time to call a race in this manner. It took him eight minutes, and afterward his boss told him, "No more horse races for you."

Subsequently, though, Burton got the hang of it and developed the fast delivery necessary in describing a horse race; he did it often as a staff announcer on the old WAIT (820 kHz).

Sometimes a station would advertise a product that could be ordered by mail or phone from the station. In these cases, the sponsor would pay the station not according to the number of commercials aired, but by the number of items sold. Thus, it behooved the station to sell as many as possible of whatever was being advertised.

One example of this could be heard on WAAF (950 kHz) in the early '40s. The product was a glow-in-the-dark orchid, a plastic orchid which, after being exposed to light, would glow in the dark. The announcer Bob Briar was his name — would run on for several minutes pleading with his listeners to order one of these plastic marvels. He would beg. He would implore. He would beseech. Briar gave a new meaning to the term "hard sell."

Another item pitched in the same manner was the glow-in-the-dark crucifix.

Sundays at noon on WGN (720 kHz), children could tune in *The Funny Paper Party* — the comics in the Chicago Sunday Tribune read by Quin Ryan and Russ

Russell. Kids too young to read, or just learning to read, could follow the happenings in "Gasoline Alley," "Dick Tracy," "Winnie Winkle," "Harold Teen" and all the rest:

Now, in the next picture, Harold Teen is sitting on a stool at the soda fountain, and he's saying to Pops, "Wonder where she is. She said she'd meet me here at two o'clock."

"Li'l Abner" and the other comics in the old Chicago Daily News, an evening paper, were read each weekday afternoon on WENR (890 kHz) at 5:15 by Malcolm Clair. Uncle Mal, as Clair called himself, had a gentle voice and a soft southern accent.

Dick ("Two Ton") Baker, the Music Maker, was a talented pianist and singer who could play and sing from memory just about any popular song one could suggest. Whether speaking or singing, Baker always sounded happy and friendly. He was a personality familiar to listeners to WGN.

Another local singer who was well known was the "Redheaded Music Maker" Wendell Hall, whose theme song was "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More." Hall accompanied himself on the ukulele.

Eddie and Fannie Cavanaugh 'Radio Gossip Club'

Two popular personalities in Chicago radio in those early days were the husband-and-wife team of Eddie and Fannie Cavanaugh. The Cavanaugh's joined the staff of KYW in the spring of 1922 and remained on the local radio scene through the '20s, '30s and '40s.

They joined WGN in 1940 with their Radio Gossip Club, which they had originated a decade earlier and which WGN fed to the Mutual network.

On the Gossip Club, the Cavanaugh's interviewed many of the brightest stars of the entertainment world, including Jack

OLD TIME (CHICAGO) RADIO

Benny, Eddie Cantor, Kate Smith, Les Tremayne, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Rudy Vallee, Gene Autry, and Dick Powell.

A man who could speak, without notes, for a half-hour on any number of subjects was Paul Gibson. And he did just that at 4:00 each weekday afternoon on WBBM. He was also heard early in the morning.

Having been married several times — and divorced an equal number of times — Paul Gibson appeared to take a dim view of womankind, and his misogyny revealed itself in snide comments; however, he had a large following among men and women both. He was a fixture at WBBM for many years.

Another unusual program on WBBM in those days was *The Gold Coast Show*, heard in the morning and again in late afternoon. What this show amounted to was a succession of transcribed commercials ingeniously woven together with spoken commentary in such a way that they told a story. The King's Jesters, a male vocal trio, provided live musical entertainment, and the announcer who narrated the show was usually George Watson or Ollie Ramon.

At 9:30 a.m. on WGN, listeners were able to *Keep Fit to Music*. This show was conducted by a man who went by the single name of Wallace and led his radio audience through a series of calisthenics to the rhythm of recorded music. One of the records that enjoyed popularity at the time was Frankie Masters' "Scatterbrain," and Wallace often used that music as he barked his instructions: "Up, down. Breathe deep. Keep...that...tummy...in. One, two..."

Northern Trust Company *'The Northerners'*

The Northern Trust Company sponsored a half-hour program on Tuesday evenings on WGN featuring The Northerners, a male

double quartet who sang songs such as "Seeing Nellie Home" and "Brown October Ale."

Although broadcasting of records or transcriptions was not permitted on the networks in those days, it certainly was permitted on individual stations. Indeed, on many of the smaller stations, the bulk of the programming was recorded material. The stations, however, did not play the same type of music all day long, but would vary it every 15 minutes or half-hour or hour. There might be 15 minutes of waltzes, then a half-hour of big-band music followed by an hour of symphonic music.

'Make Believe Danceland' *'Tea Time Musicale'*

If you were to read a newspaper's listings of radio programs offered during those years, you would find such program titles as these: *Make Believe Danceland*, *Say it with Music*, *Rhythm Review*, *Painters of Melodies*, *Accent on Rhythm*, *Matinee Serenade*, *Tea Time Musicale*, *Music in the Air*, *Hawaiian Echoes*, *Harvest of Song*, *Melody Time*, *Piano Novelties*, *Waltz Time*, *Melody Mart*, *Music Room*, *Afternoon Serenade*, *Music in the Modern Manner*, and so on. All of these programs featured recorded music, but each was at least a little bit different from the others.

Because Bing Crosby was possibly the most popular recording artist, some stations would devote a 15-minute program each day to his records. Crosby had made such a large number of records that a station could go on for many weeks without repeating a song.

Some disc jockeys were on the staff of a particular station, while others were free-lance performers who did shows on more than one station. You might hear a free-lancer for a 15-minute show on one station and then encounter him a half-hour

later at another spot on the dial. Some of the free-lancers did dozens of shows a week on a number of stations.

Bill Anson, Linn Burton, Art Hellyer, Eddie Hubbard, Howard Miller — these are a few of the men whose voices come to mind when I recall those days.

At radio stations that were union shops, the record turntables were operated by people who were members of the American Federation of Musicians. (After all, they were playing music.)

On a program of recorded classical music, a station would often play a work running eight or nine minutes — an overture, a Strauss waltz, or a short tone poem. This work would occupy both sides of a 12-inch, 78-r.p.m. disc. If you were playing the record at home, when Side 1 ended you would flip the record over and play Side 2.

On radio, in order to avoid several seconds of dead air while the record was being flipped, the station would have two copies of the record. While Side 1 was being played on one turntable, Side 2 of the second copy was cued up on the second turntable. When Side 1 ended, the turntable operator would segue to Side 2.

In the case of a long work, such as a full-length symphony, several such segues would be involved, and the operators were so adept that they were able to blend the sides, literally, without missing a beat.

Norman Ross *'The 400 Hour'*

Many stations did set aside an hour or so each day for classical music. One of the most popular of these programs was *The 400 Hour*, hosted by Norman Ross, Sr. It was broadcast on WMAQ from 7:00 to 7:55 each weekday morning, sponsored by the old Chicago and North Western Railway, route of the "400" trains.

Uncle Normy, as Ross sometimes called himself, took a breezy approach to the

music he played. For instance, he might say, "Now, here's the Introduction to 'Faust.' ... Folks, meet Faust."

And he would play the Introduction to "Faust."

Norman Ross had been an Olympic swimmer in his younger days. During the war, he served on the staff of General Dolittle in the Pacific.

WAAF had a *Symphonic Hour* each weekday at noon, and WIIFC (1450 kHz) in Cicero offered an hour of classical music hosted by Frank Sterling at 3 p.m.

The *Promenade Concerts*, programmed and announced by George Stone, were broadcast late Sunday nights on WMAQ.

WIND (560 kHz) offered the *Stineway Symphonic Hour* each evening around 9:00. Listeners could pick up a free pamphlet listing the show's programs for a month by visiting any Stineway drug store.

Jack O'Dell *'Goldenrod Music Lovers' Hour'*

At 10:15 p.m., WCFL (1000 kHz) broadcast *The Goldenrod Music Lovers' Hour*, presented by Goldenrod ice cream. Jack O'Dell was the host, and his mellifluous voice and low-key delivery were well suited to the program. Even now, I can almost hear him as he spoke of "...Goldenrod raspberry ripple ice cream — in the pencil-striped package, of course."

Earlier in the day — at 4 p.m. — also on WCFL, Chas. A. Stevens, the women's clothing store, presented *The Music Lovers' Matinee*. This half-hour show was devoted to shorter selections. The host was Norman Pierce, and his commercials created the impression that "Julie," the fashion model, had entered the studio to display an outfit being featured at Chas. A. Stevens. Pierce would describe in great detail the frock, or suit, or gown that "Julie" was wearing.

Of course, there was no "Julie" — Pierce

OLD TIME (CHICAGO) RADIO

was merely reading a script. But he certainly fooled me.

We listeners were fooled in other ways as well. Here are a couple of examples:

The Hartz Mountain 'Canary Serenade'

The producers of Hartz Mountain bird seed sponsored a series of shows featuring music — sometimes orchestral, sometimes organ selections — accompanied by the singing of canaries: *The Hartz Mountain Canary Serenade*. The audience was led to believe that the healthy, happy, Hartz Mountain-fed birds were there in the studio. What the listener actually heard were recordings — the music was on records, the singing of the canaries on a 16-inch transcription.

Bernie Allen, who worked at WIND at the time, tells me that visitors to the station would often ask to see the studio where the canaries were kept.

Don Artiste 'Warehouse 39'

Another harmless ruse was practiced on shows sponsored by Warehouse 39, a purveyor of pianos. On these programs, we were led to think that the broadcasts emanated from the piano warehouse, where the pianist, a man called Don Artiste, would demonstrate several instruments on each program.

The announcer would say, "Now, Don Artiste moves to a beautiful Kimball spinet piano going for just \$198. Listen to the lovely tone as Don Artiste plays "Orchids in the Moonlight."

These shows originated not at warehouse 39, but in the WCFL studios, and all the musical numbers were played on the same piano. Further, "Don Artiste" did not exist. The station had a stable of pianists,

and it would engage whichever one happened to be available for a particular broadcast. On the air, all of them were called Don Artiste.

In certain other matters, though, the stations were scrupulously honest. For example, before a station presented a recorded program, an announcer was required to advise the audience, "The following program is transcribed."

There were no traffic reports on the air — we didn't need them. There were no expressways — we didn't need *them*. Only a relatively small percentage of the people owned cars, and traffic congestion was hardly a problem — except perhaps on State Street in the Loop.

Although there were no call-in talk shows in those days, the telephone did play a role in a few programs. One was the *Hirsch Telephone Quiz*, sponsored by the Hirsch Clothing Company on WGN on weekday evenings. Rather than inviting listeners to phone in, the program host — Marvin Miller — would place a call to a randomly selected number. If the person called correctly answered the question asked, he or she would win a prize.

When a program host spoke with a contestant over the phone, the radio audience could hear only the host's voice; for the benefit of the listeners, the host would have to repeat virtually everything the contestant said:

"You say you haven't the vaguest idea?... Care to make a guess?... You say you're too nervous?... Oh, come on. Make a guess... John Quincy Adams?... Oh, no, I'm sorry..."

Randy Blake 'Supertime Frolic'

A program of live country music filled the airwaves weekday evenings when WJJD (1160 kHz) presented *The Supertime Frolic*. This show was devoted

to instrumental country music — fiddles, guitars, and banjos — and was hosted by Randy Blake.

Ralph Ginsbergh and his string ensemble often could be heard on WGN as they played for diners in one of the elegant rooms in the Palmer House.

Morris B. Sachs 'Amateur Hour'

The Morris B. Sachs Amateur Hour was a popular Sunday afternoon show. As its name implies, the program featured brief appearances by amateur performers competing for a prize. The sponsor, Morris B. Sachs, was a clothing store on the South Side.

The winners were chosen by listeners, who were invited to cast their vote by mailing in a postcard.

There was a late-afternoon program on WMAQ on which a woman would give recipes for homemakers in the radio audience.

A larger station might have an electric organ in one of its studios, and a staff organist might be featured in a daily quarter-hour program. And when an emergency — technical or otherwise — arose, the organist could be pressed into service to provide a musical interlude until regular programming could be resumed. Harold Turner, Len Salvo, and Jesse Crawford were three organists whose names and music were familiar to radio listeners.

In a man-on-the-street program, an announcer with a microphone would position himself on a downtown street corner and ask passersby their names and occupations and their opinions on some topic of general interest.

To anyone who listens to radio in the 1990s, all of this must sound a bit quaint. But it was good entertainment and the people loved it.

We must remember that commercial

broadcasting had just begun in 1920; in the '30s and '40s, radio was still a young medium and broadcasters were still experimenting.

Today, radio is much different from what it was 50 or 60 years ago, partly because of technological advances — FM transmission, tape recording, stereophonic broadcasting, and satellite communication, for example.

A major difference between radio of the 1930s and '40s and radio of today is that while the old-time radio stations tried to appeal to everybody (broadcasting), the typical present-day station targets one particular segment of the population (narrowcasting).

Most stations today are formatted; that is, they present just one kind of programming, be it country music, rock, classical, "adult contemporary," all-news, sports, easy listening, or any one of a number of other formats. A station might aim to capture an audience of men age 18 to 24, for example, or men and women age 25 to 49, and all of its programming — all day and all night — will be designed to appeal to that demographic segment of the populace.

With all the different formats, there's quite a bit of variety on the radio these days; but, generally speaking, you won't find much variety on any one station. Fifty years ago, *each station* offered a variety of entertainment.

To put it in other terms: A typical radio station of today presents programming that's all cut from the same cloth, whereas in the old days a station's broadcast schedule was like a patchwork quilt made up of 15-minute, 30-minute, or one-hour segments, or programs.

Another factor in the evolution of radio was the change in people's listening habits.

Prime time for radio used to be the period between dinner time and bedtime —

OLD TIME (CHICAGO) RADIO

from about 7 to 10 p.m. With the advent of television, that medium supplanted radio as the evening home entertainment of choice.

Nowadays, prime time for radio is "drive time" — from about 6 to 10 a.m. and 3 to 7 p.m. — when people are in transit to and from work. A very significant portion of these people are tuned in to radio, either in their cars or on public conveyances.

In the old days, a radio in an automobile was considered an "extra"; besides, not nearly as large a segment of the population drove as do today. And until the invention of the transistorized personal radio, people could hardly listen to radio as they commuted to and from work by streetcar, bus, or train.

Today, most radio stations offer what they consider to be their most attractive programming — and charge advertisers the highest rates — during drive time rather than in the evening, as they did in the old days.

As you can see, radio has adapted to the changing times, and it remains a thriving, dynamic force in American life.

Everyone listens to radio today, just as everyone listened to radio in the 1930s. There is one basic difference, though, in the way we regard radio. In its early days, radio had an aura of mystery about it — those voices emanating from that box as though the people talking were right there in the room with us. It was uncanny. But in this age of heart transplants, computers, and men on the moon, the technology of radio no longer fascinates us. We take it all for granted now, whereas it used to be an adventure. ■

(NOTE: Tune in to TWTD June 27 for some old time Chicago radio broadcasts including Norman Ross, The Northerners, and the Hartz Mountain Radio Canaries.)



Our Readers Write

WE GET LETTERS

GARY, INDIANA — I remember listening to the radio when I was twelve (1948). We moved to a bigger house that year and my mother (who passed away last February at the age of 98) had a new rocking chair. In the evening she would sit on the couch and I would sit in the rocking chair listening to the radio: Lux Theatre, Fibber McGee and Molly, Suspense, and many others. When the rocker stopped rocking, she would tell me to go to bed. I would protest that I hadn't fallen asleep and start rocking again, until I would finally give up. I loved the radio programs then and I still love them now.
—FRANK KAPLON

PAW PAW, IL — Would you like to ride one of "Chicago's Old Red Streetcars" (April-May, 1998 *Digest*)? You can still recapture a little of the thrill when you visit the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, about a half hour northwest from Chicago, taking I-90. It's open through October and you'll not only get to ride a Chicago Surface Lines car, but you'll also get to ride other trains on the museum's five and one-half mile demonstration track, or around the museum loop track. You'll also be able to wallow in nostalgia as you see steam engines from the past, some of them even restored and in working order. On weekends through September you'll be able to take rides on a steam train. This is a must-see museum for all us "nostalgia types," even if you aren't a rail fan like myself. I've enjoyed listening to your programs since 1978. It's hard to believe that it's been 20 years already. Thanks for the memories. —WARREN D. SWAN

PEORIA, IL — Clair Schulz' article on Bob Hope (April-May, 1998) was masterful. Without his name on it, the reader would think that Bob Hope himself wrote it. —FR. ROBERT A L'HOMME

MADISON, WISCONSIN — I very much enjoyed the article on "Radio's Small Sponsors" (April-May, 1998). The reference to one particular product certainly brought back strong memories. It was the Evening in Paris perfume. It was my mother's favorite

beauty product. During the Great Depression of the 1930s money was scarce for my parents. Yet this item was relatively cheap, and an indulgence my mother could afford. The blue-colored bottle was attractive and I distinctly remember, as a child, buying her a bottle of the stuff as a Christmas present. For all these years I had completely forgotten about that perfume, and those memories, until Bill Elwell in his fine article refreshed my memory. —**RAY MC COOL**

DES PLAINES, IL-- Really enjoy your magazine and radio show and have for many years. The section in the magazine entitled *...and for more good listening...* (usually on page 24) really adds to my family's enjoyment of old time radio! Do you know of a listing of stations across the country, with their frequencies, that carry old time radio programs? We do a fair amount of traveling by car and it would be fun to see what's out there! Thanks. --**BOB RACZKA**

(ED. NOTE)-- We aren't aware of such a listing and doubt that one exists. Although a few stations around the country carry local OTR shows with local hosts, the majority of radio stations featuring old time radio shows carry "When Radio Was" hosted by Stan Freberg. Some stations carry that series five times a week, some spread out the five shows over two weekend days, and a few carry all five shows--one after the other-- at a single time. Local newspapers often carry highlights of the OTR shows, so when you drive into a new city, you might check them out. But if you want to be absolutely certain that you have old time radio as a companion when you travel, try packing some cassettes of the vintage shows. You can be your own program director and, if you have some younger folks not previously exposed to the art form known as old time radio, you might

win over that captive audience in your car!

RICHLAND, WASHINGTON-- While on a visit to my brother-in-law's home in Lansing, Illinois, they had several back issues of *Nostalgia Digest* waiting for me to read. My expressed interest resulted in Christmas gift subscriptions. Even though I can't pick up your broadcasts 1500 miles away, I *do* enjoy each issue. The write-ups on old radio shows bring back lots of memories from 60 years ago, as do the "memory" type articles by Ken Alexander. Maybe one day I'll get to see the Broadcast Museum. --**BOB BUSH**

CHICAGO-- I continue to enjoy your publication. Ken Alexander's story "The Old Neighborhood" (February-March, 1998) was of particular interest. I deliver mail out of Garfield Park Station. His boyhood home at 201 North Karlov is now served by route 36. —**STEVE BAHNSEN**

GLEN ELLYN, IL— I've been meaning to write for some time regarding Ken Alexander's outstanding work in the *Digest*, but I feel he really outdid himself in "The Old Neighborhood." It just so happened that I grew up about six blocks to the south of Ken's home, and about 15 years later than he did. But reading his article really was like taking a tour of the old neighborhood — it's been so long since I heard or read of anybody reminiscing about the Madison/Crawford area. Ken always writes something unique that makes you think and remember. He opens up the world just before I was born so that I can get a feeling of what it was like to be alive then. Don't you agree it's time for a book of Ken Alexander's articles? —**GEORGE LITTLEFIELD**

(ED. NOTE)— Yes. We're trying to see if it's a possibility. Stay tuned.)

NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

COPYRIGHT© 1998 Chuck Schaden. All rights reserved.

The Nostalgia Digest is published six times a year by
THE HALL CLOSET, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60053
Phone/Fax (847) 965-7763

Annual subscription rate is \$15 for six issues. A two-year subscription (12 issues) is \$25.

Your subscription expires with the issue date noted on the mailing label.

A renewal reminder is sent with the last issue of your subscription.

ADDRESS CHANGES

PLEASE NOTIFY US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

The Post Office **DOES NOT** forward the *Digest* which is sent by bulk mail.



Museum of Broadcast Communications

museum pieces

Reported by Margaret Warren

Larry Gelbart is a funny man, but we knew that.

He brought us *M*A*S*H*, one of television's most celebrated series. And we found out just how funny a guy Larry Gelbart is in-person when he stopped by the Museum last Spring.

He chatted about his long career as a comedy writer and, despite the fact that *M*A*S*H* is probably his major claim to fame, the bulk of the conversation (with producer Michael Hirsh who was host for the event) centered more on his many other achievements.

Over the years Gelbart wrote for Bob Hope, Red Buttons, Sid Caesar, Danny Thomas, for *Duffy's Tavern* and was the creative genius behind the Broadway hit, "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum."

He is a Chicago native and made frequent reference to his early childhood on Chicago's West Side. His father was a barber and moved the family to Los Angeles when Larry was in his teens.

Larry Gelbart is a delight and the tape of that special evening, along with 11

*M*A*S*H* episodes are on the MBC archives shelves waiting to be watched.

Check the archives a bit further, and you'll find a more serious side to Larry Gelbart when he appeared on Tom Snyder's *Tomorrow* program in December, 1975.

On that broadcast, Snyder took his program to Gelbart's Beverly Hills home for a conversation about television's "family hour," (6-8 p.m., Central Time) when the networks agreed to air only wholesome, non-controversial programming.

Among those joining in the discussion was Sheldon Leonard speaking this time as a TV producer. You'll see two television's funniest men talking about the serious side of programming, censorship, government intervention, the

good shows that got cancelled, and the bad ones that stayed on.

It might have been December, 1975, but they could have held that conversation last week.

Stop by the Museum archives and take a look. There are many wonderful television --and radio-- programs in the collection. You'll have a great time.



LARRY GELBART

Museum of Broadcast Communications

Chicago Cultural Center

Michigan Avenue at Washington Street

Chicago, 60602

Phone (312) 629-6000



Come In and Browse!

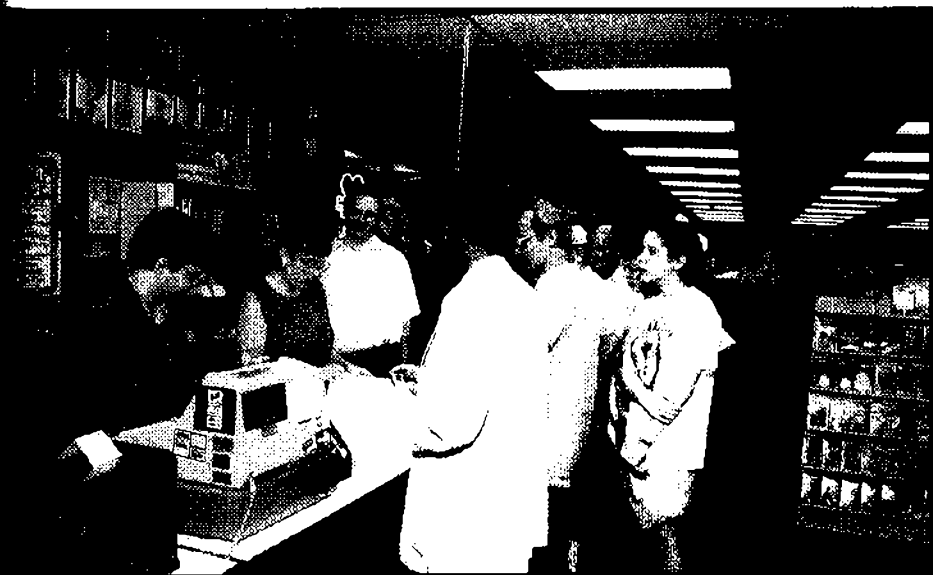


PHOTO BY JEFF BROWN

RANDY, LISA AND JOHN SAY, "YOU CAN SPEND A COUPLE OF DECADES GOING THROUGH ALL THE GOODIES YOU'LL FIND AT OUR STORE. LOTS OF GREAT GIFT IDEAS, LOTS OF COLLECTORS' ITEMS." WE ACCEPT VISA, DISCOVER, MASTERCARD, AMERICAN EXPRESS



5425 W. ADDISON STREET, CHICAGO, IL 60641

TWO MILES WEST OF KENNEDY EXPRESSWAY
TWO BLOCKS EAST OF CENTRAL AVENUE

1-800-538-6675

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

We buy and sell old time radio premiums and magazines, movie magazines and stills.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

Morton Grove, Illinois
Permit No. 21

← **KUKLA, BURR, FRAN AND OLLIE**

The magic of a milestone television show is recalled by someone who was there at the start of it. Read the article by Jerry Warshaw, page 26.

REMEMBERING 1948

By Chuck Schaden
Page 1

STANLEY KRAMER'S WAY

By Bob Kolososki
Page 16

WE GET LETTERS

Our Readers Write
Page 38

**THE AURA OF
DEANNA DURBIN**

By Ed Knapp
Page 6

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA

By Richard W. O'Donnell
Page 30

MUSEUM PIECES

By Margaret Warren
Page 40

**SONG OF THE WOOD-
PECKER**

By Curtis L. Katz
Page 12

OLD TIME (CHICAGO) RADIO

By Ken Alexander
Page 32

PLUS WNIB *THOSE WERE THE DAYS* LISTINGS Pages 20-24
WMAQ *WHEN RADIO WAS* CALENDAR Page 25

