

December 2000



THE SEVEN  
**Lum and Abner®**  
MOVIES

are available on video!

*Dreaming Out Loud • The Bashful Bachelor*  
*Two Weeks to Live • So This Is Washington*  
*Goin' To Town • Partners In Time*  
*Lum & Abner Abroad*

---

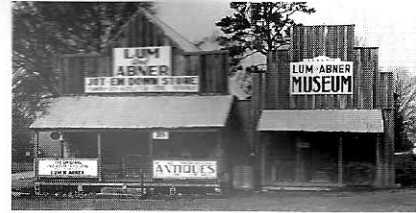
**\$29.95 each**

---

Order from  
**Lum & Abner Associates**  
135 Circle Drive  
Hot Springs, AR 71901

VISIT

The Jot 'Em Down Store &  
Lum & Abner® Museum



Located on Highway 88  
(the "Lum & Abner Highway")

**PINE RIDGE, ARKANSAS**

---

For further information, contact  
LON & KATHY STUCKER  
P.O. BOX 38  
PINE RIDGE, AR 71966  
(870) 326-4442

## NLAS CONVENTION VIDEOS

For those of you who may have come in late, we should remind you that we offer VHS tapes of our past conventions. Each one features a special guest who worked with Lum and Abner either on their radio show or in their movies. Surprise an L&A fan with one of these for Christmas! Eleven volumes are now available, with more coming soon:

**1985** - With writer **Roz Rogers** and Clarence "Ben Withers" Hartzell

**1986** - With **Ethel Huddleston** ("Dick's Gurl") and Pine Ridge historian **Kathy Stucker**

**1987** - With actor **Jerry Hausner**

**1988** - **Jerry Hausner** returns, with **Elmore "Phinus Peabody" Vincent**

**1989** - With announcer **Wendell Niles**

*December 2000 - Page 2*

**1990** - The 50th anniversary of *DREAMING OUT LOUD*, with **Bobs Watson**

**1991** - Lum and Abner's 60th anniversary, with **Les Tremayne**

**1992** - The 50th anniversary of *THE BASHFUL BACHELOR*, with **Louise Currie**

**1993** - With "Great Gildersleeve" **Willard Waterman**

**1994** - With **Shirley Lauck**, daughter of "Lum"

**1995** - With character actor **Parley Baer**

Tapes are **\$10.00** each. Send orders to the *Executive Secretary, 81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, AL 35062*

The Jot 'Em Down Journal,  
 Volume 17, Number 3 (Whole  
 Number 99), December 2000.  
 Published bi-monthly by the  
 National Lum and Abner Society.  
 Membership, including a subscrip-  
 tion to the *Journal*, is \$15.00 per  
 year. Send editorial and subscrip-  
 tion correspondence to the  
 Executive Secretary, Tim Hollis,  
 #81 Sharon Boulevard, Dora, AL  
 35062.

# THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

## December 2000

\*\*\*\*\*

**THE NATIONAL  
 LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY**

*Zekatif Ossifers*

**PRESIDENT**

Donnie Pitchford

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Sam Brown

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Tim Hollis

\*\*\*\*\*

**Cover:** Chet "Lum" Lauck and  
 Tuffy "Santa Abner" Goff go  
 Christmas shopping with their chil-  
 dren, Chet Lauck Jr. and Gretchen  
 Goff, circa 1942.

**Back Cover:** Four classic *Jot 'Em  
 Down Journal* Christmas covers of  
 the past. 1984 and 1988 art by  
 Uncle Donnie Pitchford; 1991 by  
 Gary Stivers; 1992 by Harold  
 Petersen.

---

LUM AND ABNER is a registered  
 trademark. Used by permission of  
 Chester Lauck, Jr.

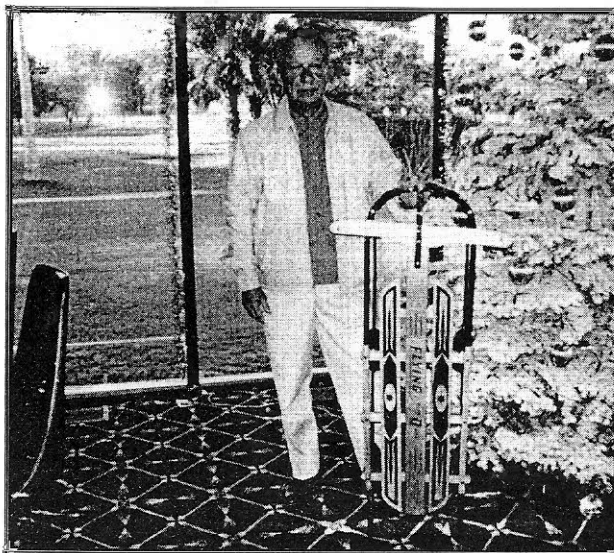
---

### *In This Issue:*

- "Dreaming Out Loud: The Rest of the Story" ..... 4**  
 The movie continues making headlines in late 1940.
- "A Letter From Lum" ..... 7**  
 An unusual stunt to promote L&A's syndication.
- "And Now" ..... 9**  
 L&A happenings from here, ther, an' everwher.

### *"Just What I Always Wanted"*

This photo ap-  
 peared in a 1970  
 newsletter from  
 the Indian Wells  
 Golf and Country  
 Club, where Norris  
 (Abner) Goff spent  
 his retirement.  
 The accompanying  
 story told the tale...



A Christmas gift  
 arrived here at the  
 Clubhouse for  
 Tuffy Goff, and  
 caused many of us

to be quite curious, as it was marked SLED. After anxiously await-  
 ing Tuffy's daily visit, we found it really was a sled. Enclosed with  
 the sled was a note: "You Just Never Know!" Liz and Tuffy are  
 spending New Year's in Hawaii, and I suggested they take the sled  
 with them and if anyone questioned them about it, tell them it's an  
 Indian Wells surfboard.

# Dreaming Out Loud: The Rest of the Story

**FEBRUARY 19, 20, 21 & 22**

**2 OF THE SEASON'S FINEST FEATURES!**

In the October issue of the *Journal* we saw the frantic flurry of activity that surrounded the September 1940 premiere of *Dreaming Out Loud* in four different Arkansas cities within a week's time (Little Rock on September 5, Mena on September 6, Hot Springs on September 7, and Fort Smith on September 10). Less information has survived on the movie's career once it broke out of Arkansas and went into general release, but there are at least a couple of interesting pieces that should be presented before we leave off our discussion of this milestone in L&A history for the next ten years.

On October 8, 1940, *The Mena Star* published the following report, which indicates about as well as possible the reception the first L&A movie was getting in other states:

## Do "Wise Guys" Know What the Public Wants?

*How a couple of small town boys have seemingly astounded the wise ones in Hollywood's film circles is revealed through a recent publication in the LOS ANGELES TIMES of "Hedda Hopper's Hollywood," a daily column feature of the big west coast newspaper.*

*This talented young woman writer has mighty nice things to say of "Dreaming Out Loud," first flicker production by Chester H. Lauck and Norris Goff:*

*"Hollywood prides itself on knowing what the public wants, but sometimes I wonder if they know anything about the likes and dislikes of this vast American audience. They do a picture called 'Abraham Lincoln,' which was swell. It starred Raymond Massey, a Canadian. It lost \$500,000. Critics loved it, the public stayed away in droves. 'Our Town' was a little gem. The public didn't go to see it.*

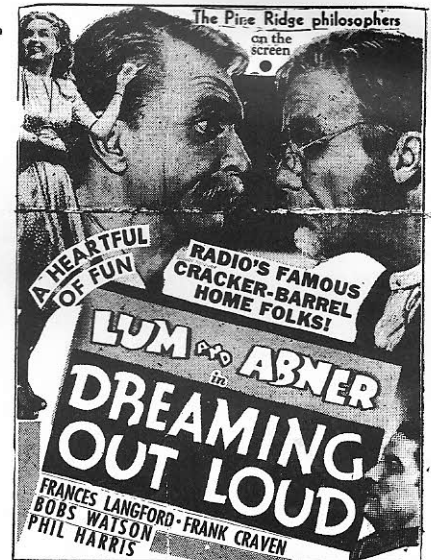
*"Now along come a couple of guys who've never made a picture, 'Lum and Abner.' For three years Jack Votion tried to sell them to the studios, and studios turned a deaf ear. So Votion mortgaged his ranch and produced a picture called "Dreaming Out Loud." And they're just back from their opening in the little town of Mena, Ark., where the boys were born.*

*"They were hoping they could sell out the theatre, which holds 600, twice. Well, it was packed six times, with the boys making a personal appearance at each performance. The same thing*

**December 2000 - Page 4**



↔  
P  
L  
U  
S  
↔



**Added Wednesday and Thursday – FOX NEWS**

**Friday and Saturday – UNIVERSAL NEWS**

*DREAMING OUT LOUD was still playing theatre dates during the early months of 1941. This flyer comes from the Linden Theatre, 63rd and Halsted Streets, but we do not know what city or state!*

*happened at Little Rock and Hot Springs. The towns went wild. They didn't have ballyhoo, special planes, Hollywood stars, or press flying from east to west. They paid their own expenses. But there's such a demand for the picture that a distributor in Memphis has booked it solidly in 140 theatres. And Hollywood now asks, 'Who ARE these guys?'*

*"Well, for 10 years they've built up a steady following on the air, they're known by at least 25,000,000 people who've grown to love 'em but never saw them on the screen or in person. So could it be that 'these guys' know what the public wants?"*

We don't know very much about the various locales where *Dreaming Out Loud* played during the late fall and early winter of 1940, except for the ads you see reproduced here. However, an in-depth report on L&A's reception in at least one city appeared in the November 18 edition of *The Mena Star*, again picked up from another newspaper:

## Lum and Abner Interviewed in North Carolina

*That North Carolina movie patrons like "Dreaming Out*

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, MARCH 21-22

**PITTS THEATRE**  
CULPEPER, VA.

IRVING MARTIN, Mgr.—MRS. R. B. FRAY, Treas.  
MATINEE DAILY AT 3:30 P. M., 10c-25c  
EVERY NIGHT, 7:15-9:15 P. M., 10c-25c  
SATURDAY MATINEE, 2:00 and 3:45 P. M.

WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY, MARCH 19-20

It's the **FUN-FIGHT** of the **CENTURY!**

**Jack BENNY vs. FRED ALLEN**  
in **Love Thy Neighbor**  
with **MARY MARTIN**  
**The Merry Macs and ROCHESTER**  
Paramount Pictures

Radio's feudin' funsters bring you the screen's scream of the season!

Added **LATEST NEWS** And **COLOR CARTOON**  
Plus, **TRAVELTALK** IN COLOR

Loud," that Chester Lauck is more talkative than Norris Goff, and that Mena can be spelled like this — Mena — are among the interesting facts that have resulted since the Mena radio stars recently visited Raleigh, the capital city of this eastern

The two leading citizens of Pine Ridge move to Hollywood!

**Lum and Abner**  
in **DREAMING OUT LOUD**

Also, **WALT DISNEY LATEST CARTOON**  
Plus Chapter 3, "KING of the ROYAL MOUNTED"

Lum & Abner were in good company in Culpeper, Virginia, where **DREAMING OUT LOUD** was preceded by another radio-related picture, **LOVE THY NEIGHBOR**. Notice, however, that the Pitts Theatre did something of a hatchet job on the L&A ad, leaving only Lum's head and no Abner!

state.

Being as 'twas the first time the pair had ever made personal appearances in North Carolina, they were interviewed by Sturgis May of the **RALEIGH NEWS-TOPIC**, and he as a good newspaper reporter got lots of facts that should interest Mena friends of the famous pair. For instance, the **NEWS-TOPIC** story includes these paragraphs:

"Lum and Abner, radio's famed comedians, appeared for the first time in North Carolina Saturday night on the stage of the State theatre here. It was their first visit to eastern North Carolina. Four appearances throughout the day featured the theatre entertainment in the capital city where men, women, and children of all classes gathered to hear and see two of the greatest comedians of our time.

"The appearance in Raleigh Saturday night was one of the first appearances the stars have made in the South.

"In conversation with the radio personalities after their last performance of the day at the theatre, we learned many interesting facts about them not brought out over the radio.

"Chester Lauck, Lum to the radio audience, is by far the most talkative of the pair. Norris Goff, Abner to the radio listeners, is on the "shy" so to speak, dodging interviewers and anyone else who happens to try and detain him from catching a few winks at his favorite hotel.

"Off the stage, Lum does the talking, Abner the listening. After hearing Lum tell of their travels, trials and tribulations during the past ten years, Abner was leaving for his hotel.

"Lum and Abner hail from Mena, Arkansas, where their entire act originated a decade ago from street corner chats and a black-face act the pair started for the various clubs in town.

"When asked which he liked best — motion pictures or radio — Lum was quick to reply, 'Radio... it's my old love and I believe there will be nothing ever to take its place with Lum and Abner. W did enjoy doing our first movie, however.'

# LUM AND ABNER

10c

RADIO'S cracker-barrel favorites are now on the screen! The Pine Ridge philosophers in a homey, homespun drama of Main Street in your old home town!

15c



All Week Starting  
**MONDAY**

**RIALTO**  
DIRECTION LUCAS & JENKINS

Also Cartoon  
and  
"Dr. Satan"

We do not know in what city this Rialto Theatre was located, but it is interesting that they accompanied DREAMING OUT LOUD with the adventure serial THE MYSTERIOUS DR. SATAN... actor Robert Wilcox appeared in both productions!

"Lum's only hobby is horses. He is co-owner of the L&A Stables in Hollywood. Don Ameche is the other partner in the L&A Stables. Abner also goes in for horses, has several show horses at his place in California.

"Both Lum and Abner are happily married. They make their home at present in Hollywood, where they recently finished their initial motion picture. On December 15, they will return to Hollywood to do their second full-length motion picture.

"Back to their family life, as Lum puts it, 'I am the proud father of three children while Abner can boast of a couple.' With reference to his wife, he said they were just as happy as could be. No divorce in Lum's family, and that's another way he differs from the rest of the Hollywood 'Pop and Moms.'"

If the above article is to be believed, L&A were supposed to have begun production on their second movie in mid-December 1940, but apparently something happened to change those plans. The second L&A screen epic, *The Bashful Bachelor*, was filmed either in late 1941 or early 1942, being released in April 1942.

On Christmas Day 1940, L&A took time out from promoting *Dreaming Out Loud* to appear on radio once again, this time on the CBS network's holiday special known as *The Christmas Caravan*. The Pine Ridge pair appeared to once again perform their annual Christmas show, and back to do the narration chores was Lou Crosby, late of their 1938-40 Postum series. Crosby's mellow voice delivered the background information:

CROSBY: *Holiday greetings from Hollywood! As a special of the Christmas Caravan, the Columbia Broadcasting System presents the eighth annual yuletide broadcast by those two lovable old fellows from Pine Ridge, LUM AND ABNER.*

THEME: "Auld Lang Syne"

CROSBY: *It was in 1933 that Lum and Abner first told their simple story of nativity... the tale of a humble event in Pine Ridge which reflected the glory of Bethlehem's wondrous miracle. And since 1933, they have answered the requests of their many*

*friends by retelling this story each Christmas Day. As Christmas 1940 rolled around, Lum and Abner were taking a well-earned leave of absence from their long series of broadcasts. But they were more than happy to accept Columbia's invitation to appear again, and to extend their Christmas greetings in the way which has become a tradition. So, for Lum and Abner's annual Christmas story, let's go see what's happening down in Pine Ridge....*

After the 15-minute parable's moving conclusion, L&A returned to the microphone for some banter with their old friend:

CROSBY: *And so we take leave of Pine Ridge. And on behalf of the Columbia Broadcasting System, I want to thank you, Lum and Abner, for coming down here tonight to bring us your Christmas story.*

LUM: *Grannies, don't thank us, Lou... we was jist proud ta do it.*

ABNER: *Why shore, shore...*

LUM: *Facts is, hit jist wouldn't seem like Christmas without all of us gittin' together agin thissaway. Gives us a opporn-tunnity ta thank all our friends fer the many nice letters they've wrote us since we went off th' air. An' ta wish each an' ever one of ya a merry Christmas.*

ABNER: *An' a happy New Year!!*

CROSBY: *And the same to you, Lum and Abner. I know we're all anxiously waiting for you to get that Jot 'Em Down Store open for business again. This is Lou Crosby speaking... This is the Columbia Broadcasting System.*

THEME: "Auld Lang Syne"

And with that thought in mind, we will leave our friends in a jolly holiday mood for now. YOU have a merry Christmas too, and join us next time to see what 1941 held in store for them!

- Tim Hollis



This Strand Theatre was in Birmingham, Ala. By strange coincidence, during the 1920s this theatre attracted attention with a personal appearance by future L&A/Opie Cates supporting actor Francis X. Bushman, at the height of his matinee idol days.

# A LETTER from LUM

## Or, More L&A Syndication Escapades

Back in the June 2000 issue of the *Journal*, we gave an overview of how the L&A recordings first made it into syndication in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As you know, if it had not been for the incredible success of syndicating the show, much of what has taken place in Lum & Abner/NLAS history since might never have occurred.

While the syndicated package of shows was very popular for approximately 15 to 20 years, nothing could compare with the white-hot interest it provoked in the very early 1970s. This, of course, was due to the fact that there were very few, if any, dealers in OTR recordings at that time... plus the fact that Chet Lauck and Tuffy Goff were both still alive and in reasonably good health, so promoting the show came quite naturally for them. (Admittedly, Chet was more active in this than was Tuffy, but Goff did participate in at least a few promotional events during that time.)

Somewhat oddly, one of the real centers of activity during the early syndication days was not Arkansas, as one might expect, but Iowa. It could be that this had something to do with the fact that L&A hyper-fan George Lillie was living in Cedar Rapids, and was tireless in his efforts to promote the show (thanks for the early help, George!), but the characters' ultimate success there must be attributed to a number of undocumented factors. (In 1984, when the NLAS first began, an announcement on one Iowa radio station brought a flood of members that threatened to overwhelm the still-embryonic organization.)

In the last quarter of 1970, a promotion took place in the Hawkeye State that was unparalleled by any other locale. Robins, Iowa, lies just north of Cedar Rapids, and according to Rand McNally has a population of only 875. However, in the NLAS archives is a promotional packet that was apparently mailed out by some radio station in the area that was running the *Lum and Abner* package, and it is quite intriguing. "Jarring" might be a better word for the initial impression it makes, because the return address on the envelope reads "Lum and Abner Jot 'Em Down Store, Radio Shows, LP Records and Promotions,



*This giveaway version of the 1941 L&A publicity photo differs from the original when it comes to the facsimile autograph. The 1941 version reads "Kindest regards, Lum and Abner," and is signed by both actors. The 1970 reprint above features Chet Lauck's signature for both names.*

Robins, Iowa 52328." Contained within this particular example is a cheaply-printed copy of the well-known 1941 L&A promotional photo, plus a form letter on 8 1/2" x 14" paper. We have reproduced the letter on the following page, although it had to be reduced in size to fit our publication format.

The handwritten note is supposedly from Lum (it is definitely not Chet Lauck's handwriting, however). In it, he thanks the recipient for writing, then launches into a sales pitch for a *Lum and Abner* record album containing the annual Christmas show, the "Chester the Turkey" Thanksgiving episode from 1946, and an edited conglomeration of episodes from the April 1946 "Clyde the Mouse" continuity. These albums turn up occasionally in collectibles sales even today.

The most unique part of the promotion comes at the very end of the letter. According to this blurb, each album sold was assigned a number, and on January 1, 1971, a number was to be drawn at random. The winner would receive an "all-expense paid" trip to Arkansas "to meet me, Lum Edwards, have dinner with me, and get to know all about Lum and Abner firsthand." At least this indicates that this whole promotion was indeed done with Chet's approval, although it is a little inconsistent that the winner was to travel to Arkansas when the signature on the letter reads (again), "Lum and Abner, Robins, Iowa."

We do not yet know the outcome of this 30-year-ago contest. How about it, George? Did you have anything to do with it? Does anyone know who the ultimate winner was, and what happened when they went to Arkansas to meet Chet? We'd like to know, so we can wrap up this little-known chapter in L&A history!

**On page 8, see the complete "Letter from Lum," printed at 76% the size of the original.**

Dear Radio friend,

Grammie, it sure was good to hear from you. Thanks for your letter. Abner just keeps reading and talking in my ear, and it gets a bit hard to write, but the little feller is so happy I aint got the heart to bowl him out.

We drove up to the County Seat the other day, and we talked to a feller about recording a long-play record album for us. Abner and I got to talking, and we thought you might like to have a record of our Thanksgiving and Christmas shows, so we just went ahead and recorded them for you. And while we was about it, we recorded another show all about Clyde, the mouse. He's a little old mouse that's around the Jt-Em-Down store that Abner won't let me get shut of, though goodness knows I've tried. You know how bullheaded Abner can be.

I've got to say one thing for Abner, though. He stood right up to that man at the recording company and made him give us a fair price. The price for each record is only \$3<sup>00</sup>, including shipping and handling, which we thought was real fair. So, if you'd like a record, just send us your check or money order, and we'll mail it to you. If you'd like to order 3, to give a couple to your friends, we can send them to you for only \$10<sup>00</sup> for all 3.

One other thing I've got to tell you. Each record is specially numbered. On January 1, 1971, we'll hold a special drawing, and the winning number will get an all expense paid trip down to Arkansas, to meet me, Lenn Edwards, have dinner with me and get to know all about Lenn and Abner firsthand.

Anyway, let us hear from you again. Your cards and letters is what keeps us on the radio.

P.S. Abner says he'll write to you next time.

Sincerely,  
Lenn and Abner  
Robins, Iowa



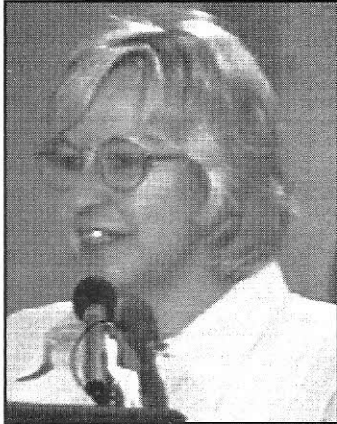
# “AND NOW...”

...let's see what going on in the “wonderful world” of Lum and Abner. Well, as we look in on Little Rock today... You know where Little Rock is, don't you? Why it's the “county seat” of the whole state of Arkansas! At any rate, we find “our old friends” being the subject of a **Lum and Abner Film Festival**, conducted on Friday, September 9, at the Little Rock Public Library! The event was the brainchild of library personnel **Bobby Roberts** and **Jan Emberton**, and featured comments by **Chet “Lum” Lauck**'s grandsons **Scott Lauck** and **Chet Lauck III**, with **Chet Lauck Jr.** and wife **Karen** in attendance.

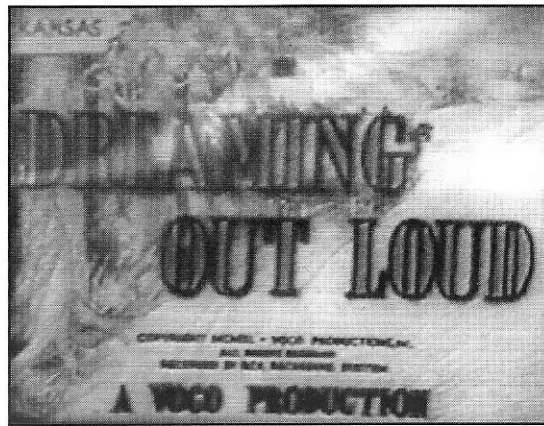
On display were such priceless artifacts as the original stopwatch used by Chet Lauck to time their broadcasts, a guest book from the Lauck home containing the autographs of numerous visiting celebrities, and several historic photographs, some never published. Additionally, **Linda Pine** and **John Jackson** of the **UALR Archives** provided a wealth of material in a special display case for the attendees to enjoy.

**Bobby Roberts** opened the event with a series of introductions, and explained his close ties with the Lauck family. Mr. Roberts became acquainted with Chets Sr. and Jr. years ago when he was associated with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, making arrangements for the **UALR Archives Special Collections** department to receive a set of the Lum and Abner radio syndication tapes. While archiving the recordings, Mr. Roberts fell in love with the characters from Pine Ridge and the warmth and humor of the series. “They were two of America's greatest humorists,” he stated with obvious admiration, “and jewels of Arkansas.”

**Jan Emberton** spoke of Lum and Abner - Lauck and Goff - as “great ambassadors for the state of Arkansas.” She was kind enough to mention the work done by the **NLAS**, and informed the audience of the **Lum and Abner Museum** operated in the real Pine Ridge by **Lon and Kathy Stucker**, and the availability to radio stations of the syndicated *Lum and Abner* programs from **Program Distributors**. This event saluted the 60th anniversary of *Dreaming Out Loud*,



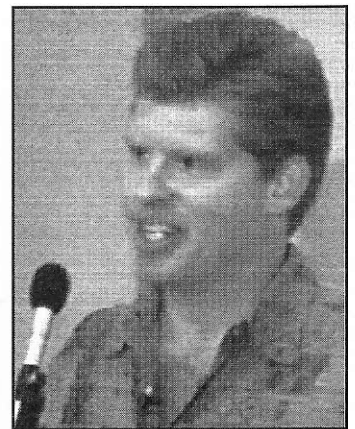
*Jan Emberton*



the first Lum and Abner feature film, and the audience enjoyed a complete screening of the landmark production.

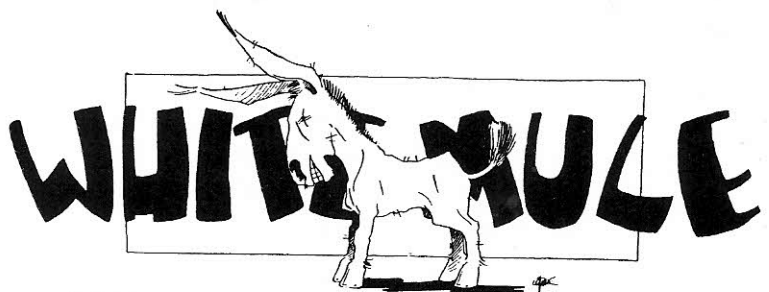
**Scott Lauck** took center stage

for an informative discussion of the history of the *Lum and Abner* series, with nice doses of the humor that prevailed off-mic in the lives of Chet Lauck and Norris “Tuffy” Goff. Scott knew his grandfather as “Pops,” and has many pleasant personal memories in addition to learning of L&A history from his father and a variety of research sources, including the guests at several of our own **NLAS Conventions**.



*Scott Lauck*

Scott discussed an aspect of “Lum's” non-character talent that is often overlooked, that of his artistic ability. While a student at the University of Arkansas, Chet Sr. redesigned the razorback hog mascot logo, converting it into the now-familiar “running razorback.” Had he thought to copyright or trademark the design himself, one can only imagine the royalties that may have been forthcoming from the repeated uses and sales of items with the image! (No doubt that thought would not have occurred to



*This 1924 WHITE MULE masthead is more than likely the work of college-aged Chet Lauck.*

**December 2000 - Page 9**

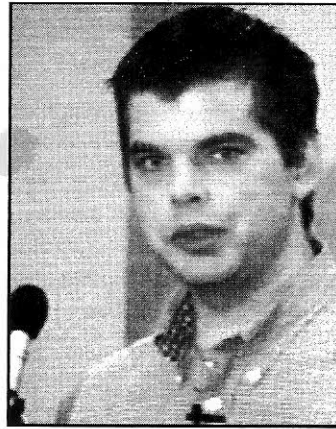
a student and/or an alumni of the university creating the art only out of a sense of school spirit.) Scott shared an even lesser-known story involving the university's *White Mule* humor magazine, for which Chet Sr. was an editor, providing cartoons: "White mule was another name for moonshine, and the magazine was so controversial, it was shut down after its third and last publication, and all remaining copies were put under lock and key!"

Another humorous aside involved his grandmother, "Lum's good womern" **Harriet**, who recalled an early date in which Chet brought her flowers. At the time, she lived next to a cemetery, and she later stated she wondered if her suitor had purchased the bouquet or merely "borrowed" it from one of her "neighbors"!

Also discussed were the early details of L&A history, from the origin of Norris Goff's nickname "Tuffy" (his small stature and his amazing 98-yard high school touch-down), to the first *Lum and Abner* broadcasts at KTHS in Hot Springs, to the Chicago Quaker Oats auditions, and on to Hollywood, where Lauck and Goff shared stages, microphones and film footage with the likes of **Bob Hope**, **Don Ameche**, **Andy Devine**, **Phil Harris**, **Tennessee Ernie Ford**, **Cliff (Charley Weaver) Arquette**, **Jack Benny**, **Zasu Pitts**, **Jim Backus**, **Bing Crosby**, and so many others. Scott related many of Lauck and Goff's historic "firsts," such as the first Transatlantic broadcast by a comedy team ("Lum" via short-wave from London speaking to "Abner" in Chicago), appearing in the first broadcast from Radio City in New York, performing in the first radio marathon for charity, and being among the first programs involved in the formation of the Mutual Radio Network, an event in broadcasting history generally linked with WXYZ's *The Lone Ranger*. For the state of Arkansas, perhaps nothing was more historic than the 1936 ceremony on the steps of the state capitol in which Waters, Arkansas (the home of **Dick Huddleston**, and the inspiration for the fictional locale in the program) officially became Pine Ridge. Scott quoted Tuffy Goff, who explained, "We called it Pine Ridge, because Waters sounds more like a swamp than a mountain town."

Chet Lauck III spent a turn at the microphone discussing the Lum and Abner program itself, explaining Lum's fre-

**December 2000 - Page 10**



*Chet Lauck III*

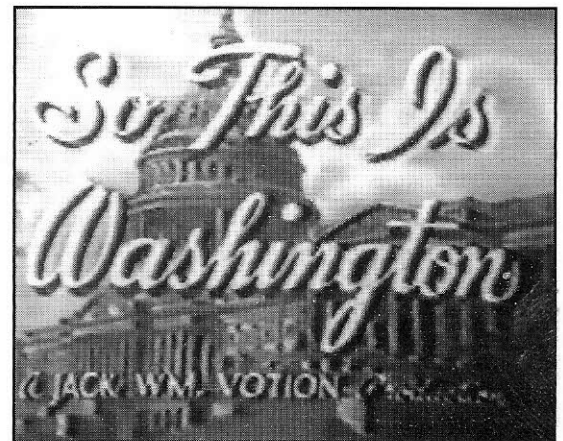
quent schemes for fame and wealth, and his ability to coax Abner into assisting in the various misadventures. Such L&A witticisms as "I doggies," "Well, dog bite my cat," "I'll be a polka-dotted possum," "Purtier'n a speckled pup under a new wagon," and "I grannies, I'm wore to a frazzle - WORE to a FRAZ - ZULL" evoked chuckles from the delighted audience. It must have been especially pleasing hearing them from

a member of the Lum and Abner family! Chet offered a discussion of the seven motion pictures, and observed the Lum and Abner depiction of rural life as a much more accurate portrait of people in Western Arkansas. "They were good, wholesome, down-to-earth people," he commented, adding that the generic image that often came to mind in other parts of the country was that of the barefoot and illiterate hillbilly type. Thankfully, Lum and Abner did much to dispel this stereotype. "They were two of the hardest working people in show business," Chet added, illustrating this by relating their seemingly non-ending schedule of performing for the motion picture cameras and performing two network broadcasts daily in addition to personal appearances and taking time out for their families.

Chet's speech led into the screening of the second and final feature of the event, *So This is Washington*, his personal favorite. A little-known fact about this 1943 film: It was nominated for an Oscar in the field of sound recording! Had it only won, we L&A fans could boast of our "Oscar-winning" storekeepers! (Another bit of even more obscure and useless trivia... the art director listed in the credits of *So This is Washington* was one **Hans Peters**. 20 years after this film was made, Peters was the artist responsible for designing the "look" of the Six Flags theme parks in Texas and

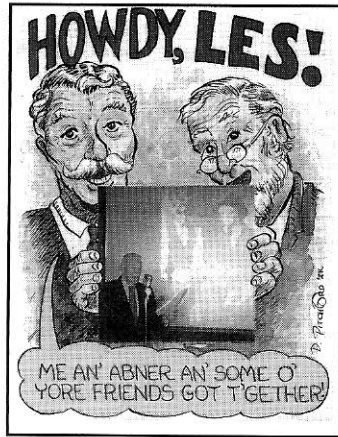


*At the Los Angeles railroad station, 1939: L&A secretary Velma Hausner (left), Chet Lauck (partly hidden), and Mary Livingstone (right).*



Georgia.) Many thanks to the staff of the Little Rock Public Library and the Lauck family for this wonderful event.

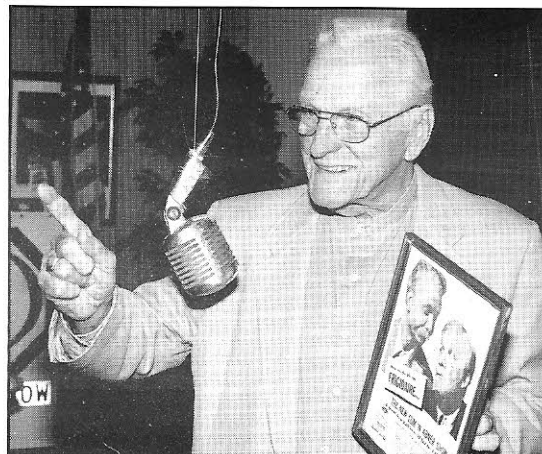
We backtrack a bit to enable us to update you on the health of longtime NLAS friend **Les Tremayne**, our guest of honor for the 1991 NLAS Convention. Just prior to the 2000 Convention, we learned the distressing news that Les had suffered a stroke. His loving wife Joan assists him daily, and miraculously, Les has regained his ability to speak! "Uncle Donnie" crafted a "get well" card, which was signed by several in attendance at the convention, and upon its receipt, Joan and Les called to thank everyone responsible. Les' speech was improved tremendously, and he commented that he could "feel the prayers of so many friends," which contributed mightily to his ongoing improvement. We continue to offer prayers and best wishes for a complete recovery for Les.



*The NLAS's get well card for Les Tremayne.*

Our good friend **Parley Baer** has suffered a loss. His wife of many years, affectionately known as "Ernie," passed away in August. As many of you know, Parley was our guest of honor in 1995, and was an absolute delight. Sadly, he had a stroke in 1997, and has been unable to fully regain his speech. Not long after Mrs. Baer's passing, Parley was stricken with a heart attack, and the most recent word is that he is recovering in the Motion Picture Country Home. We of the NLAS wish for Parley a comfortable recovery, and request your prayers for him and his family. Get well, Parley!

**Fred Foy**, our special guest star for 1999, will receive one of broadcasting's highest honors not long after this issue of *The Jot 'Em Down Journal* goes to press! Fred informed us that, for him, "Christmas came early this year!" On November 18 (past tense by the time you read this), Fred Foy will be inducted into the **Radio Hall of Fame** in Chicago, Illinois! In an August 1 letter, **Bruce DuMont** informed Mr. Foy, "Ballots were sent to radio executives, historians, academicians, and members of the Radio Hall of Fame from across the nation. In addition to yourself, the Radio Hall of Fame Class of 2000



*Fred Foy*

includes Oldies radio innovator **Dick Bartley**, legendary comedian **Eddie Cantor**, veteran New York broadcaster **John A. Gambling**, and **Milo Hamilton**, the voice of the Houston Astros. The nationally broadcast induction ceremony will take place on Saturday, November 18, from 9 pm to 10 pm (CT) from the landmark Chicago Cultural Center. **Casey Kasem** of AMFM Radio Networks will host this year's black-tie ceremony, which will be carried live coast to coast on many of America's leading radio stations." Mr. DuMont added, "America's only Radio Hall of Fame is pleased to add your name to its distinguished list of inductees." CONGRATULATIONS to Fred Foy from the National Lum and Abner Society! It is an excellent honor to a most deserving professional and a fine gentleman!

Our 2000 guest, **Barbara Fuller**, seems to have become the unofficial West Coast "booster" for the NLAS. We hear that she has been tirelessly making very positive comments on her visit with us this past June to all of her fellow performers in the **Pacific Pioneer Broadcasters** organization, which should help a lot when the time comes for us to call on some of them for future meetings. Thanks, Barbara... we were delighted to get to know you, too!

Speaking of past convention guests, we should probably mention here some of the tentative plans for the 2001 meeting. As we hinted back in August, the 2001 NLAS Convention will be held in Mena on either June 15-16 or June 22-23. Why aren't we sure? We can answer that in one four-letter word: REPS.

The **Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound (REPS)** convention and ours have had conflicting dates for years, both for members who want to attend and (especially) when it comes to obtaining guests. We have learned that the 2001 REPS meeting will be June 29-30, so that is why we are considering backing our event up to June 15-16, two weeks ahead of theirs. (The NLAS convention was actually held on that weekend from 1985-89, so it would really be nothing new.) Obviously it is too early yet for us to be lining up guests, but hopefully by the time our February issue of the *Journal* is published we will have a better idea of what we are going to do. The 2001 convention will be celebrating the **70th Anniversary** of the *Lum and Abner* program, so plan to be with us, whatever date it happens to be!

- "Uncle Donnie" Pitchford

