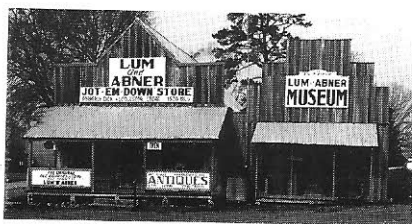


**SUMMER 2005**

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**THE NATIONAL  
LUM AND ABNER  
SOCIETY**

*Zekatif Ossifers*

**PRESIDENT**

Donnie Pitchford

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Sam Brown

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Tim Hollis

\*\*\*\*\*

*Front Cover: Kay Linaker of TWO WEEKS TO LIVE with NLAS Ossifers Uncle Donnie Pitchford, Tim Hollis, and Singin' Sam Brown and the cake commemorating the 20th NLAS Convention. See report on page 14. (Photo by Chuck Anders)*

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# THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL


## SUMMER 2005

### *In This Issue:*

**70 Years of Lum and Abner ..... 4**

**Lum & Abner's "Dead Sea Scrolls" ..... 8**

**The 20th Annual NLAS Convention ..... 14**



FROM THE DESK OF  
**FRANK BRESEE**

May 2.

Hi Tim:


Just leaving for Europe for vacation, so time for a quick note to 'thank you' for the L&A page from their script.

I will be using it with a display of L&A material I am putting together for the Thousand Oaks Library Radio Museum.

As you no doubt know, I save all the L&A Journals, and in reviewing them, I want to congratulate you on such a fine job of production.

The articles, photos and the creation (plus the quality) make it the BEST fan magazine of all.

Best to you, Donnie and Sam.

  
Frank

*We recently received this letter from our pal (and 1998 convention guest) Frank Bresee of GOLDEN DAYS OF RADIO fame. Thanks for the kind words, Frank!*



# 70 YEARS OF LUM AND ABNER<sup>®</sup>

And now... let's see what was going on in Lum and Abner's "wonderful world" during the summer months of 70 years ago...

In listening to old radio shows on tape, CD, or MP3, it is sometimes easy to forget that, despite their lasting popularity, they were originally intended to be heard only once, on a specific date. Sometimes references to current events of the time are so obscure that we do not even realize that listeners would have picked up on such things immediately.

That brings us to our first topic of discussion for this installment. Although it would seem to have little or nothing to do with L&A, the following news item appeared in *The Mena Star* on May 2, 1935:

## "Chain" Letter Reaches Mena

**Others May Have Received One but Only One Has Been Reported**

*The "Chain Letter" system that has swamped the Denver post office, and required adding 100 new postal clerks, has reached this section, at least one Mena resident receiving a letter, the local party's missive coming from Kansas City. The letters are unsigned, so no one knows from whom they come, except the last name on the list is supposed to be that of the sender. After giving six names at the top of the letter, these each to be sent a form letter, the letter reads as follows:*

*"This chain was started in the hope of bringing prosperity to you. Within three days make five copies of this letter, leaving off the name at the top and adding your name and address at the bot-*

*tom, and mail to five of your friends to whom you wish prosperity to come. In omitting the top name, send that person 10 cents in stamps wrapped in a piece of paper as a donation to said party. In turn as your name leaves the top you will receive 15,625 letters with donations amounting to \$1,562.50. Now is this worth a dime to you? Have the faith your friend has and this chain will not be broken."*

*The Mena party would like very much to get the \$1,562.50, but has not decided to "keep the chain unbroken," as it is said the system is in violation of postal regulations and inspectors are making search for the originators of the plan.*

Now, it was only five days later, on May 7, that Lum receives a chain letter postmarked from Denver. As most of you will recall, it gives him the brilliant idea of starting a chain letter of his own, only having the recipients ship hogs to each other instead of dimes or postage stamps.

Meanwhile, back in real life, on May 9 the Mena paper printed an update on the chain letter craze, with these opening statements:

## The Chain Letters Are Helping Some

*When a Mena man of business got mail from the post office Wednesday morning, he counted the assortment of envelopes and remarked, "Only thirteen chain letters this time."*

*The incident is typical and indicates the widespread interest in what is happening to most everyone nowadays while the wave of "Prosperity Clubs" is sweeping over the USA. This mail-order method of soliciting dimes, which started in Denver less than two weeks ago, is spreading faster than a dust storm and having an entirely different effect. It's a fad with some, and a racket with others. Regardless of individual returns, it's helping boost the postal returns, for most everybody is buying stamps these days.*

It was a day later, on May 10, that Dick Huddleston informs L&A that it is technically illegal to start a chain letter, and that as postmaster of Pine Ridge he has been asked to investigate any such activity. The "hog chain letter" idea is dropped, although L&A spend the next several weeks trying to figure out what to do with all the hogs they have accumulated.

Because Lum & Abner's popularity was growing at a prodigious rate during this time, more and more tourists were discovering their former stomping grounds in western Arkansas. Frequently, visitors did not learn of this connection until they were already in the area for some other purpose. Take this piece which appeared in the *Star* on May 30, 1935:

## Lum and Abner Fan Here

*A business trip to Mena brought pleasant results to R. O. Lohberg, sales manager for Sharpe & Dohme, nationally known*



*Chain letters were a national fad in the first week of May 1935, and L&A latched onto it for their storyline.*





**Member Randal Hall located this better-quality version of a photo we ran in wretched quality in the Spring issue of the JOURNAL. You will recall that it purportedly shows L&A looking at the orders received for THE PINE RIDGE NEWS. However, the fact that it is a faked shot can be confirmed by comparing the figures of Lum & Abner with the 1931 NBC publicity photo below.**



manufacturers of pharmaceuticals. Though he travels over seven states, it was the first trip to Mena for Mr. Lohrberg. In addition to finding business good, and especially pleasing part of the initial trip was Mr. Lohrberg's discovery that Mena was the home town of "Lum & Abner." He is an ardent fan for the "Piney Ridge" funmakers and believes they are among the top notchers of radio entertainers and destined for even higher honors. Before returning to his home in Kansas City, Mr. Lohrberg secured pictures of "Chet" and "Tuffy" and mailed them to friends.

In another example of an article that had no direct connection with L&A, but which would

debunk a rumor that is still connected with their background today, on June 13 the newspaper set a certain record straight: "While there is only one Mena in all of the 48 states, there are many other post offices in the USA that have similar names, without any being exactly like it. Mena gets its unusual name from a Holland woman, Mrs. Mena de Goeijen, and not from the final syllable of Queen Wilhelmina of Holland."

There are people who continue to insist that Mena and Queen Wilhelmina share a common name, an idea probably bolstered by the presence of the nearby state park of the same name. The rumor has even been stretched further to say that Wilhelmina's name was the inspiration for the town of DeQueen, Arkansas, which is hardly in the same neighborhood.

In our last installment of this series, we saw that L&A had apparently hired a publicity man to "plant" news items about them in the print media. He strikes again in the June 20 edition of the Mena paper, which elsewhere contains a minor note that Harriet Lauck and her two daughters were visiting relatives in her hometown of Hot Springs, and made a trip over to Mena to see relatives there. While the wimmen fokes were EN-joyin' theirseves sompin' wunnerful, here is what the press agent was throwing out about the husbands:

## Lum and Abner Have Own Ideas About Life Insurance Agents

*Lum and Abner have just pulled a reversal of the usual order of things by insisting that the insurance salesman must be a good health risk before they buy a new policy. The Ozark philosophers were in the market for some new life coverage, but they discovered that the salesman whom they had called in was looking a bit under the weather. Lum and Abner got curious about his health. How many games of golf had the fellow played in the last two years? The answer was "Not any." Well, how many ball games had he seen? The insurance man broke down and admitted that he had seen one. Lum and Abner went into a huddle over the matter and came out of it with the decision that the insurance seller had to see nine ball games before Lum would buy a policy, and he had to play nine games of golf before Abner would sign his name on the dotted line. According to his report, the salesman this week has seen two major league clashes, and has hammered a ball around a golf lot three different days.*

You can tell that this blurb was concocted by a publicity man, and not the Mena paper, because of its misplaced reference to L&A being from the Ozarks. As we have seen before, and will see again, few things made residents of Mena's Ouachita Mountains get as hot under the starched collar as the confusion between their range and the far-away Ozarks of northern Arkansas.

The press agent had something to crow about... or, to use the popular terminology, to put the proper spin on... when *RADIO GUIDE* held a contest for fans to name their favorite entertain-

ers. Lum & Abner might not have been in first place, or second, or third even, but by jacks, their publicist was going to make the best of it regardless. Here we are on June 27, 1935:

## Lum and Abner Show Up Well in Final Returns

### In Radio Guide Contest They Are in Fifth Place Among Teams

According to final reports of a nationwide poll of favorite radio artists recently conducted by the Radio Guide, Mena's own radio stars, Lum and Abner, ranked fifth place in the team classification, in which group there were sixty teams voted on.

Those who won the first four places in the poll are as follows, ranking in the order named: Amos 'n' Andy, Burns and Allen, Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone, and Myrt and Marge.

Under the Dramatic program classification the old fellows from Pine Ridge also placed, but further down the line. In this bracket they were awarded twentieth place in a field of sixty.

When it is considered that Lum and Abner have been heard on only five stations, their showing is remarkable. The four teams above them are on national hookups of many more stations.

In saying that L&A were heard on only five stations, the publicist ignored the fact that the Horlick's transcription disks were being "bicycled" to stations that were not part of the Mutual Network chain. We may never know just how many sets of these recordings were actually circulating, but their existence is what makes it possible for the NLAS to offer our CD sets of the digitally-restored episodes (SHAMELESS PLUG).

Most radio series took a 13-week break during the summer months, but it would not be until the late 1930s that L&A would have a couple of official summer vacations (previously, they were off the air only because their sponsor had taken the show off and they had not yet lined up a replacement). Horlick's Malted Milk had no intention of stopping its radio ads during the hot summer months, when listeners might be tempted to reach for a frosty glass of its product ("in either natural or chocolate flavor"). While the country celebrated Independence Day on July 4, 1935, the *Mena Star* was saying:

## Lum and Abner Will Continue to Be On the Air Throughout Summer

The fans are keeping Lum and Abner on the air for the summer. This is the main fact behind an announcement from the program

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sponsor this week that from July 1 on, the team from the Ouachitas of Arkansas will be available via a four station set-up, including WLW, WGN, KNX and KFRC.

Recently the object of much speculation about a major network change, Lum and Abner will probably be made available to a larger listener audience starting in the fall. Whether or not the team will be heard via NBC, CBS or an independent group depends on the availability of time. But listener reaction indicates that the team will be going to a bigger net starting September 1, and it seems probable that 6:30 p.m. CST will be the hour for fall broadcasts.

In announcing its decision to keep the Arkansawyers on the air for the summer, the sponsoring company revealed the fact that radio listeners in 60 key cities throughout the country had been consulted in the matter. The universally favorable response settled the question.

Not all the news in L&A land originated with the press agent or the local paper. On July 11, the *Mena Star* reprinted this short piece from the *Southern Pharmaceutical Journal*:

## Twins Named for Lum and Abner

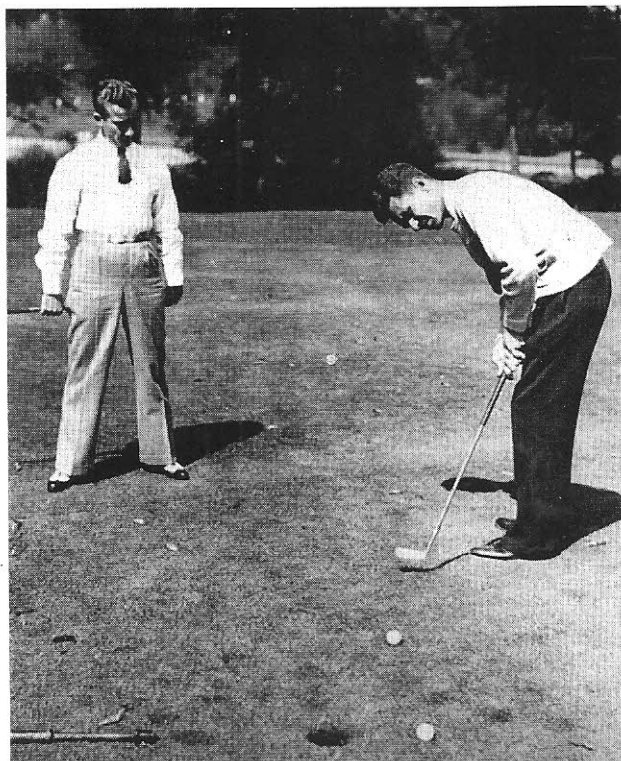
Horlick's Malted Milk corporation's rustic radio team have had the second pair of twins named for them. Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Lee of Southgate, Kentucky, have appointed the entertainers godpapas of their twins. Lum and Abner presented the namesakes with complete layettes and a case of Horlick's Malted Milk. Schools in ten different states invited this popular pair to speak at their commencement exercises. It would take one year to fill all these engagements.

So, if any of you members in Kentucky can locate 70-year-old Lum Lee or Abner Lee of your state, tell 'em about the NLAS! (And ask 'em if they ever drank up all that Horlick's when they wuz babies.)

Some news that would come to have an effect on which L&A recordings we are able to hear was published on July 25:

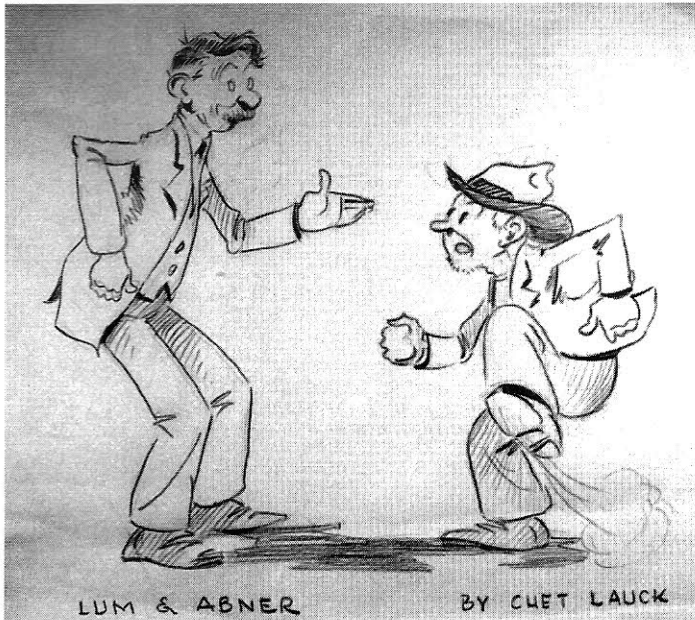
## Lum and Abner Will Join NBC

Following weeks of negotiation for proper time and outlets, sponsors of Lum and Abner, the well known Arkansas team, have signed contracts that will bring the doings of the Pine Ridge pair to the radio audience via NBC starting September 2. WJZ and other powerful Blue Network stations, with WLW, will carry the show. There is good likelihood that another outlet or more will be added to the net before the season is well underway. The two Pacific coast stations, KFRC and KNX, are scheduled to carry



Lauck & Goff's passion for golf manifests itself in more than one newspaper story from the summer of 1935.





*A press release stated that Chet Lauck enjoyed making sketches of people he met on the bus; he was also responsible for this fine drawing of Lum & Abner.*

on as heretofore.

According to advance time schedule, the program will be heard on the NBC net at 5:30 p.m. CST. WLW is the sole exception, and during the first month of the fall broadcast Lum and Abner will be heard from the Cincinnati superpower station WLW at 8:15 p.m.

The switch to NBC will come at the end of a year of broadcasting via the MBS and limited summer network of four stations. The shift is being made in an effort to bring the program back to a clamoring listening audience that had been gathered to Lum and Abner during previous years of broadcasting. Always rated well up in every popularity poll since they entered radio, Lum and Abner are credited with one of the most consistent audiences in radio today.

Once the show returned to NBC, that meant there was no more need to save a transcription disk of each day's broadcast, which means our existing shows end soon after that network switch. However, during this same period, the *Mena Star* began running a syndicated "Radio News" column, and made sure any of the blurbs about L&A were highlighted in bold. The first installment, seen in the same July 25 paper, had this brief item: "Mrs. Chet Lauck got back from a vacation at Hot Springs, Ark., to find that her husband (Lum, of Lum and Abner) was swinging the baton over a little German band that he had corralled to meet her."

Interesting from hindsight is another reference from the same day's column: "Francis X. Bushman is just plain Frank to his radio associates. Incidentally, he's one of the best dressed men around Chicago studios."

Of course, Bushman would later become a semi-regular on *Lum and Abner* in the late 1940s, and performed hilariously on the "prequel" series *The Opie Cates Show*. The July 25 radio column also repeated the oft-told story of how L&A auditioned for Quaker Oats by making the board of directors face the wall so as not to be distracted by their youthful appearance.

The press agent's name was finally revealed on August 8, when for the first time Jack Ryan received a byline for an otherwise-undistinguished piece headlined "Lum and Abner End

Fourth Radio Year." (In a tradition that continues today, if a story isn't newsworthy, at least make it sound as if it is.) The August 15 and August 22 *Mena* papers continue the radio column, with Ryan now credited for the whole thing, but with the following bits of L&A trivia interspersed with those concerning other stars:

*Lum and Abner, the Pine Ridge philosophers, have just signed contracts for a personal appearance at the Indiana state fair for the night of August 31. The Ouachita team is scheduled to produce an amateur radio show for the fair, which will probably be shot out over WLW.*

*Lum draws caricatures of people who ride on buses, while Abner spends his spare time digging new recipes out of old cook books.*

*Sponsors of Lum and Abner have just insured the Ouachita team for \$100,0000 [that's how the newspaper printed it, so it must have been either \$100,000 or \$1,000,000] against any possible mishap that may befall the two Pine Ridge storekeepers during the period of their recently-signed two-year contract. With perhaps one or two exceptions, this is the largest policy ever issued to a sponsor for protection on the lives of radio performers.*

*Abner of Lum and Abner reports on the activities of a new maid in his household. He swears that after she had cleaned up the place with an unusual amount of snap and efficiency, he discovered her in the act of dusting off the water in the goldfish tank.*

*For the first time since the start of their radio career, Lum and Abner attempted to negotiate a song number on one program recently, thereby bringing out a type of fan response that has them frankly puzzled. To date, the Arkansas team has received a number of offers to join this or that glee club, and now Lum and Abner are wondering if the folks who wrote the letters were serious.*

(This last piece was no doubt referring to their premiere performance of "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree" on the broadcast of July 26.)

*Lum and Abner, soon to be heard over the NBC network, are planning an extensive personal appearance tour to take place some time this fall. The itinerary of the Ouachita philosophers would include a group of larger cities extending east through Ohio and possibly as far west as Little Rock.*

*Lum and Abner, after listening to a salesman who declared that a new set of golf clubs would cut ten strokes from their scores, found that the new ball-swatters were actually adding about twenty strokes for every eighteen holes.*

And with Chet and Tuffy out on the links, we leave the *Mena Star* for the summer. Join us in the fall when we will see L&A's triumphant return to NBC and what sort of publicity gimmicks were cooked up for the remainder of 1935!

- Tim Hollis



# LUM and ABNER'S® "DEAD SEA SCROLLS"

## Part One of a Series

Okay, friends and neighbors, we know you always listen to what we have to say (HUH?), but this time you should pay extra close attention. You will recall that some dozen or so years ago, a set of Lum and Abner's scripts from the 1930s turned up. The NLAS was unable to purchase the collection outright, but we were able to borrow the scripts in order to publish our series of books reprinting them. The scripts in that collection began in 1934.

Here's the news... within the past year, a second set of scripts has been unearthed. This in itself should not be surprising, as there were obviously two copies of every script Lauck and Goff typed. This most recently-discovered set begins, incredibly enough, in January 1932, only six months after *Lum and Abner* first moved from local radio to the NBC network.

Now, the NLAS has been unable to obtain the scripts themselves for our purposes. However, one of our members, who must remain as anonymous as the scripts' current location, was able to access them and take a series of notes. While this is not as good as being able to read the complete scripts, at least the notes give us a grand idea of what a sometimes drastically different program *Lum and Abner* was during its first fiscal year.

Beginning in this issue, we are going to print the synopses and notes just as they have been given to us. This time, we will cover January to June 1932, where there is a logical stopping place (as you will soon see). You will notice that many elements of these early shows were not carried over into the series as we know it; Lum has an adult daughter and grandchildren, while Abner is illiterate even though he knows how to drive an automobile. Even the community in which they live apparently had a different name in the beginning.

One of the most surprising aspects of the show is how dark and frequently violent it could be... no doubt a more realistic portrayal of life in the rugged Arkansas mountains than the later Mayberry-type small town that Pine Ridge eventually became.

We hope you enjoy these tantalizing glimpses into L&A's formative years. Now, here we go...

### January 11, 1932

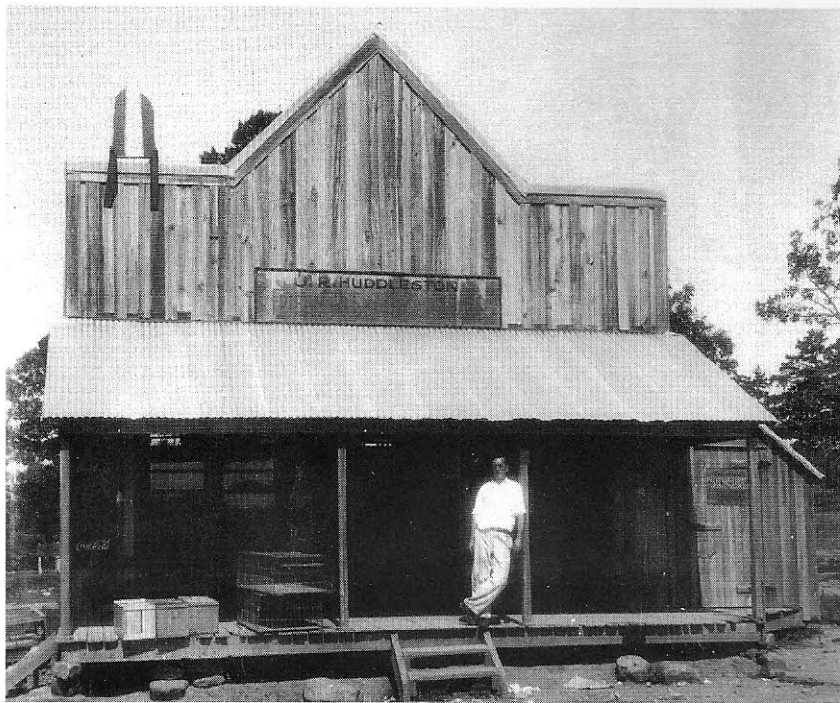
The first script after Lauck and Goff returned to Chicago after their Dallas/Ft. Worth stay.

Lum comes up to Abner's house and is scared by "old Lead" the dog. Establishes Abner as constable looking for who robbed Dick Huddleston's store. Talk about the almanac and when the signs are right for butchering hogs.

At every mention of the town, the typed word is "Shady," but it is crossed through and "Pine Ridge" or "Pine Ridge Community" is handwritten in pencil. This would indicate that the town was originally named Shady before they began broadcasting in Chicago for the second time.

Abner talks about using disguises to look for robber.

**LUM:** *I've lived clost nabors here with you too long fer you to fool me though.*



*Dick Huddleston's store in Waters, Arkansas, as it looked in 1932.*

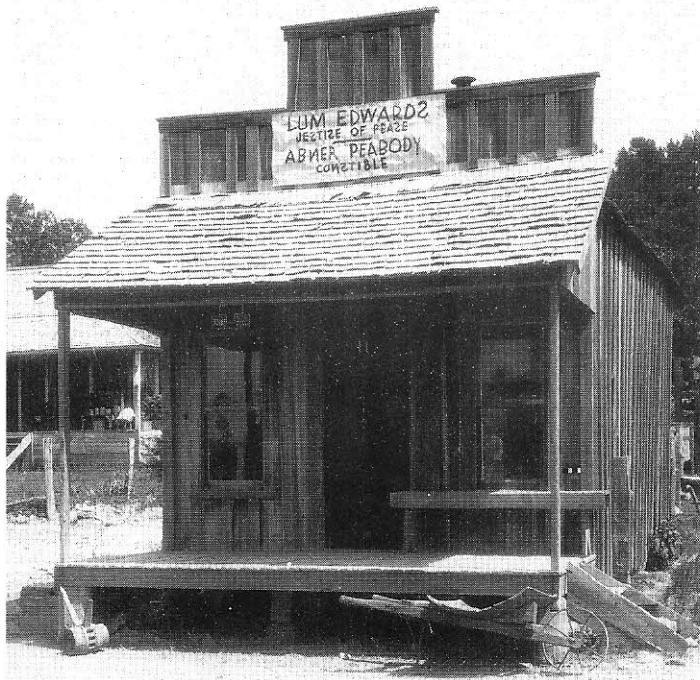
### January 14, 1932

Lum goes by Dick's store:

**LUM:** *Oh, only tolably Dick only tolably. You aint got no mail fer me ther I don't reckon.*

**DICK:** *Yea, you got a post card here from your gurl Maudy. She says they're all up now.*

**LUM:** *They air huh. Well I'm proud to hear it. Last hearin I*



**The Waters post office substitutes as Lum & Abner's law and constable office. On the show, the post office was located inside Dick's store.**

had from her she said some of her youngins was took down, sorter foundered therseves on that Christmas candy I sent em. Was that all she had to say?

Talks about Grandpap as the former constable of Cloverleaf Township.

**January 15, 1932**

Setting is the office that Lum and Abner share, but it's separate from the jail, which seems to be right next to the office. It's the "Eddards and Peabody's Law and Constable Office."

Abner has arrested Grandpap for robbing Dick's store and the town is up in arms. Abner has renamed Lead as Watson because he's been reading about Sherlock Holmes. Dick and Lum convince Abner Grandpap didn't do it, but when they go to release him, Grandpap has escaped.

**January 18, 1932**

Oscar Fields comes by, has speaking part. Thinks Grandpap did it since he's still hiding out.

Grandpap returns; has been hiding in barn of Oscar Fields, where he saw the loot. Fields did it, they think.

**January 19, 1932**

Lum calls Spears household but hears Evalener in background on the party line saying she's busted up with

Jake Means.

**ABNER:** Lum Edards you caint fool me, you're still in love with that woman.

**LUM:** No I dont beleave I'd go so fer as to say that, whilst I will admit, she's about as fine a little woman as I ever knowed.

Evalener stays with Sister Simpson. Abner is refusing to go look in Oscar's barn because he's afraid of him.

**January 20, 1932**

Plan to lure Fields to the jail by asking him to help figure out how Grandpap got out. Fields does carpentry work.

**January 21, 1932**

Lum comes in late because he was out till ten with Evalener at a party and had applied some of the tips from a "pycology" book "on how to develop yer personality." Tries to explain to Abner what a personality is.

They catch Fields by the ploy of figuring out what's wrong with the cell, but Abner locks Lum up with him.

**January 22, 1932**

Abner lets Lum out in the morning while Fields is asleep. Lum missed a date with Evalener, who's now mad. Fields admits to Dick that he robbed the store, and Dick feels sorry for him and agrees to turn him loose.

**January 24, 1932**

Establishes that Abner has a car, but Lum does not.

**ABNER:** Well the woman and Pearl's afeard to ride with me since I run over that heifer of Ezra Seestrunks and I dont keer nuthin bout drivin round by mysef.

**LUM:** If you dont aim to drive it you ort to git shud of it. Got it settin out ther in yer yard thataway takin the weather, hit wont be no count fer nuthin first thing you know.

**ABNER:** Oh, I wouldn't take nuthin fer it. That was sumpthin I allus wanted was a automobile.

**LUM:** Yea, but if you dont aim to use it none, whats the good in havin it?

**ABNER:** Well, Elizabeth and Pearl gits so much comfort outa jist havin one sos the others round here thats got em caint put on a batch of airs in front of em.

Lum plans to make Evalener jealous by writing to a matrimonial bureau in Kansas City that Levi Singleton has used to find a wife. Abner is going to ask Dick Huddleston for the address of the company Levi used.

**January 25, 1932**

Lum is filling out his application for the matrimonial bureau.

**LUM:** What nationality? Meanin I reckon if you're a Indian or irshman



**Local sawmill operator Marion Bates poses as town tough guy Oscar Fields in 1932.**



or german or what.

**ABNER:** You aint nuthin air you.

**LUM:** Nope, I'm jist a Arkansawer. I reckon though I ort to put somethin down ther to make it look right.

**ABNER:** Put down ther that yer a Chinese.

**LUM:** I dont look like no Chinese. I'll jist say I'm a Arkansawer. Now lets see. Next un here is Race.

**ABNER:** Race?

**LUM:** Yea, jist plain race. RACE question mark.

**ABNER:** What kind a race they talkin bout, foot racin or horse racin?

**LUM:** I dont know I'm jist goin to set down "no" here.

### January 27, 1932

Abner and Grandpap play checkers while Lum reads a book about developing his personality.

**ABNER:** I doggies I'm goin to git me one of them books if hits the last thing I ever do.

**LUM:** Oh hits a fine thing alright. I can tell a big improvement in myself already and I aint nigh through the book yit.

**ABNER:** Now that settles it maybe if I'd take a course in that personality business, I'd git to be sheriff of the county.

Dick took a picture of Lum and Abner in front of their office and Lum is sending it to the Happy Home Matrimonial Bureau.

**LUM:** I was jist lookin at this pitcher here. Me and Abner both is on ther, reckon they'll know which 'ns me?

Abner talks about making something himself to patch the flat tire on his car.

**DICK:** You figgerin on making some stuff yerself to patch it with?

**ABNER:** Yea, agin I git time to go down ther in them sweet gum bottoms.

**DICK:** Sweet gum? Is that what you use?

**ABNER:** Well sweet gum and some other things I mix together and heat on the stove.

**DICK:** (Laughing) Why, you caint make nuthin yerself to patch rubber with.

**ABNER:** That's jist all you know about it. Abody can take sweet gum and stretch-berries and pine rosen and a little bit of tar and cook it up together and hit'll patch any kind of rubber.

### January 29, 1932

**LUM:** Why, we been talkin bout gittin up a company and jist loud maybe you'd like to jine in with us.

**DICK:** A company? What kind of a company?

**ABNER:** A rubber company. Start in makin rubber boots and tires and sich as that.



In 1932, Snake Hogan was introduced as the corrupt county sheriff.

### February 1, 1932

**ABNER:** That sounds like a big company alright. Polk County Rubber Company.

### February 4, 1932

**DICK:** I ort to had it up long ago but I got to redin bout this fightin they're doin over ther in Chiny in the paper here and jist never got done.

**LUM:** I was readin bout that in the weekly last week. Air they still at it?

**DICK:** Oh yea, they're goin at it right now. They's a article here tellin bout the United States sendin some battleships over ther to sorter look after the Americans over there.

**LUM:** Well I do know. I never knowed hit was gittin that bad. If they want my notions, we'd better stay way from over ther. Let them Chinamens and Japanamans settle twixt therseves.

### February 9, 1932

**LUM:** Yea, I reckon thats Dick. I'm glad he's comin over, I wanted to ast him if he's got any onion sets down to the store yit.

**ABNER:** Wellsir, hit sounds funny to me ever time I hear you make mention of

anything about a garden.

**LUM:** I dont see nuthin so funny bout it.

**ABNER:** Well course you aint got no woman to look after them things but hit allus strikes me funny fer a man to be doin womans work thataway. Why I wouldn't no more think of breakin ground fer a garden or settin out onion sets than I would to see after milkin the cows or splittin up the wood.

### February 15, 1932

Lum gets a telegram that widow Juley Ann Dooley of Locust Spur, Missouri, is coming to visit and will arrive in Mena by train tomorrow.

### February 16, 1932

**GRPAP:** Ther she is settin back ther in that cane bottom cheer in the back.

**DICK:** Is that—well I do know . . . Looks like a bale of cotton back ther.

**ABNER:** I doggies she looks like she'd way as much as one of them mules of Lum's.

Also has seven children.

### February 24, 1932

**LUM:** Well hit looks like things is gittin in worse shape all the time. Here I was had my mind made up to tell the widdier Dooley to take them youngens and git plum out and off the place and here the measles busts out amongst em. Now they're cornteened.



### March 7, 1932

Company from Kansas City is interested in the rubber formula. Wants them to come to Kansas City.

### March 16, 1932

At train depot in Kansas City:

**JOHNSON:** *Mr. Weaver and I have both enjoyed being with you. It has been a pleasure.*

**ABNER:** *I doggies I never will fergit that show we seen last nite. If I'da knowed they had a show like that in town I'da went ther ever night we was here.*

**LUM:** *You better not never say nuthin bout that wher Elizabeth can hear you. You know yersef how strong she is agin gurl shows thataway.*

### March 18, 1932

**LUM:** *Yea, and when I told em if they wouldn't give us three thousand dollars fer it we'd jist carry it to some other company, they started changin their tune.*

**DICK:** *Well that was a purty slick batch of tradin Lum. When you fellers left here all I thought you'd ever git outa that rubber was a free trip to Kansas City.*

### March 24, 1932

First appearance of Squire Skimp

**LUM:** *Yonder is a customer Dick. Looks like a stranger—*

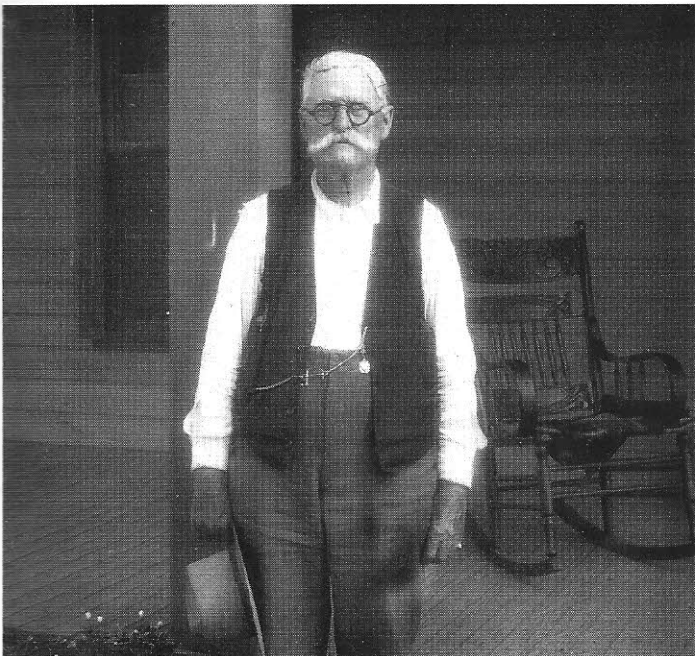
**DICK:** *Yea that new feller that bought the Williams place.*  
**GOOD MORNIN MR. SKIMP.**

**SQUIRE:** *Good morning Mr. Huddleston.*

**LUM:** *(whisper) Thats the new nabor Abner.*

**DICK:** *Come on back here I want to make you aquainted with a couple of old timers here in Pine Ridge.*

**SQUIRE:** *Yess, I want to meet all the foks I can round here. I do love my nabors.*



*Squire Skimp made his first appearance on the L&A broadcast of March 24, 1932.*

### April 13, 1932

They do a story with a speaking role for a Dr. Butler who is a traveling optician trying to sell reading glasses to Abner. The glasses don't help him read because Abner doesn't know how to read.

### April 22, 1932

Dick reading the paper:

**DICK:** *Evalener Schultz, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Schultz, to become the bride of Mr. Lum Edwards, April 27. Miss Schultz is well known throughout the county, having taught school for the past seven years following her graduation from the State Teachers Normal. At present she is principal of the Pine Ridge school.*

**ABNER:** *Well they're telling all about Evalener in ther and aint said one word about you, Lum.*

**LUM:** *Yea, they ort to told in ther bout me bein president of the school board.*

**DICK:** *The announcement of the approaching marriage came as a great surprise to her many friends. The wedding will be held in Pine Ridge next Wednesday. Invitations have been sent out by the parents of the bride and a large gathering of friends are expected to attend the ceremony. The groom is an old resident of Pine Ridge.*

### April 27, 1932

Lum gets jilted just before the wedding when Evalena sends a letter to him:

**LUM:** *Dearest Lum; I know you will think I am terrible but I cannot go through with our wedding. Perhaps you can forgive me when I tell you that my heart belongs to another. You have been so good to me I hate to do anything that will hurt you. I should have told you sooner but I did not realize it myself until a few days ago.*

### April 30, 1932

Abner decides to run for sheriff of the county.

### May 2, 1932

**ABNER:** *What was that Dick was a telling Satidy bout everybody bein afeard to run agin Snake Hogan.*

**LUM:** *Oh, they aint nuthin to that much. He's helt the office fer years you know.*

**ABNER:** *Yea, I know he has.*

**LUM:** *They was a couple of fellers come out agin him onct and fore the lection come they both showed up a missin. Aint nobody run agin him since.*

**ABNER:** *Well what become of em, Lum?*

**LUM:** *Thats the strange part about it, nobody ever knowed. They've never been seen or heard of since.*

Lum is already courting Bular Skimp, even though Evalener is sorry about treating him badly.

### May 4, 1932

Working on an election slogan for Abner:

**LUM:** *We can put right accrost the top ther. Vote fer Abner Peabody, the peoples peerless pecteter. Then down here we can say. This is a pitcher of Peabody the great detective, the man with a thousand faces.*



*In the spring of 1932, Lum found himself courting both schoolmarm Evalena Schultz (posed by Nancy Chambers, left) and Squire Skimp's comely daughter Bular (posed by Lois Hooper, right). He was old enough to be the father of either lady, and in fact was presented as having a grown daughter and grandchildren at this point in the show's history.*

**ABNER:** Yea, thats a lookin a heap better.

**LUM:** Wait a minit I fergot to put in ther about you bein a dog, I mean, a huming bloodhound.

Has to name his party and is not sure which to put:

**ABNER:** Jist put down ther Republican and Democrat.

**LUM:** Well now that might git fokes to thinkin you was jist bein both so's to git em to vote fer you. Reckon couldn't we put it all down in one word sos they'd jist see it was ther side and not notice you was on the other side too.

**ABNER:** Wait a minit Lum, I don't know as I'm follerin you on that.

**LUM:** Well if we call you a Republicat or sompin like that. They'd both think you was on their side.

**ABNER:** I doggies thats a good idy Lum.

**LUM:** Wait a minit, I tell you. We'll call you a Demopublican.

#### May 12, 1932

Knowing that the violent Snake Hogan is after Abner, Lum and Abner decide to make an iron sandwich board for Abner to wear with his campaign information on it. They had seen a sandwich

board advertisement while in Kansas City.

#### May 13, 1932

Lum and Abner go on the radio to make a speech for his campaign over WABL, the "Voice of the Ouachitas." Lum takes up all the available time in introducing Abner.

#### May 14, 1932

Lum is sparking both Bular and Evalener, bragging over the phone to them about his radio speech.

**ABNER:** I started to tell you while ago Lum. I been down to the blacksmith shop They've might nigh got that sign done.

**LUM:** Did you try it on?

**ABNER:** Yea, they had me put it on sos they could tell how long to make it. I doggies Lum that things goin to be turible heavy fer me to pack around.

**LUM:** Why shore, I told you hit'd be heavy, but you said you wanted sompin that'd stop bullets.

**ABNER:** Oh I aint a complainin. The only thing, I'm tryin to study up some way sos hit wont be so oncomfortable on my

shoulders.

**LUM:** Well you can take a old comfort and sorter pad it up ther to wher it wont rub agin yer shoulder.

**ABNER:** Yea, I'll study up some way.

**LUM:** Well now don't go to studyin bout it now. You'll go to sleep agin. Have they got it to wher I can start paintin the signs on it yit?

**ABNER:** Yea, I reckon hits done by now. He was jist smoothin off the aidges when I left. You ort to see it Lum hit looks like a big bell you know sorter narry at the top and the bottom comes out like a old time hoop skirt.

**LUM:** Well we may as well go by Dick Huddleston's store and git some paint and go on over ther and git them signs put on ther.

**ABNER:** Yea, I'd love to have it done sos I can wear it tomorrey. What did you say you was goin to call the name of it Lum. I jist caint recollect that name.

**LUM:** Why I thought we'd name it 'Old Iron Sides' on account of hit bein made outa iron and havin sides to it.

### May 16, 1932

They decide to have a contest to find a slogan better than "Able Abner, the peepul's peerless perlecter."

### May 24, 1932

Have bought a horse and will paint the slogan on the horse too. Snake Hogan sends a contest entry:

*Here lies Abner Peabody in his last restin place,*

*He made the mistake of runnin agin Snake Hogan in the sheriffs race.*

### May 26, 1932

They name the horse John Doe.

### May 27, 1932

Snake Hogan comes to the office, scares Lum away with two shots, hands Abner a pistol so it will look like self-defense, and is preparing to shoot him when Cedric saves the day by covering Snake with a shotgun loaded with buckshot.

### June 1, 1932

Lum took Evalener to meeting and Bular saw them and was glaring. Abner is wearing a bullet-proof vest that he had made at the blacksmith shop.

### June 2, 1932

They are painting the winning campaign slogan on John Doe. It is "My Election, your protection."

**LUM:** Hits from uh ...Mrs. G. N. Ball. 907, West Main Street, Waxahachia, Texas.

At the end of the normal script of June 2, there is a single-spaced additional page as follows. The ellipses are in the original:

**LUM:** Thank you Everett... Ladies and Gentlemens and Childrens... Friends... I like that better.. You know bout all a radio entertainer has got in the way of assetts is his friends. We have jist been notified that Saturday, day after tomorrey, will be our last program.. Yep, they're takin us off. We was jist gittin to wher we felt like we was gittin acquainted with you good when they told us.. I don't reckon we was sposed to say anything to you



*bout it but we jist couldn't leave thout tellin you good bye and lettin you know wher we was goin. Me and Abner is goin to New York first of next week, ondoubtedly we'll find somebody that'll let us have our little visit with you ever day. Now to tell you the truth, I bleave they'll send fer us to come back right chere, if a nuff of youns'll write in and tell em to. You know bout the only way they can tell up here wher you're likin our programs or not is by the number of letters they git about us. Now our friends has allus been good bout writin in, why the way you responded to the Slogan Contest we jist put on, made us realize jist how many friends we did have... Now I tell you what me and Abner want you to do. We want ever lastin one of youns to write in to the station you been listenin to or to the National Broadcasting Company here in Chicago and tell em if you've liked our program. Course theys some of our friends wont hear this nouncement... You'll tell em fer us.. wont you?.. Now I want Abner to say a few words to youns but fore I-set down, I want to say, if you've got half as much enjoy-ment outa visitin with us down at Pine Ridge ever day, as we got outa puttin the program on fer youns, well, we're happy thats all... I jist wonder how many friends we've got.... Alright Abner. Stand here on this box.*

**ABNER:** Fokes... whilst I aint no hand at out-loud talkin, things like this'll make a speaker out of a feller that aint turned thataway ordinary. One of the hard parts bout all this is, they've helt us up here now to wher hits too late to put in a crop this year. I doggies, I hate to take out right here in the middle of my sheriffs race, special after I've spent so much on my campaign. I dont know what I will do with John Doe and Old Iron Sides... John Doe's appeltite'll be runnin on jist the same, job or no job. Here I was bout had my mind made up to run fer president (L) and Lum was fixin to git in a turible mix up twixt Evalener and Bular... Now serious, folks, if youns want to do me and Lum a favorance, set down right now and write em a letter and tell em what you think of me and him fore you fergit about it. Now dont let on that we put you up to it.... Well our time is bout up. We'll be back tomorrey and the next day and after that, hits jist up to you. We'll be lookin fer yer letters.. Thank you.

TO BE CONTINUED.....



# The 20th Annual NLAS CONVENTION

This is getting confusing! Let's see if we can get this straight. The National Lum and Abner Society became 20 years old with the August 2004 issue of *The Jot 'Em Down Journal*, but the 20th NLAS Convention should have been in June 2004, but it wasn't. The NLAS celebrated its 20th anniversary in the December 2004 *Journal* instead of the August 2004 issue, but the 20th NLAS Convention didn't take place until June 2005. So the NLAS is now turning 21 years old, even though the 20th NLAS Convention also marks the 20th anniversary of the FIRST NLAS Convention. Okay, that's all clear, isn't it? At least as clear as the mud down by the Ouachita River, which is almost as clear as a nice, rich glass of Horlick's Malted Milk!

As Abner might say, "Rack 'em up and shoot 'em agin, Lum, I jumped th' track on ya..." Yes, the NLAS has been around officially for 21 years. Our first convention was held in June 1985, not too far from our first anniversary. We've held a convention each year with the exception of 2004, so that is why 2005 became number 20. As such, the June 25 event turned into a stroll down memory lane. ("Doggies, is that ennywher near Lover's Lane? Er Lover's Leap?")

It was decided to scale down for 2005 and locate a guest or guests who worked with Lum and Abner. We all know the sad fact that very few of those people are still with us, but one lady expressed a desire to return to Mena: Kay Linaker, a.k.a. Kate Phillips. "Miss Kate," the memorable supporting actress from the 1943 L&A film *Two Weeks to Live*, joined us in Mena's familiar Lime Tree Inn meeting room to celebrate our 20th gathering. This remarkable lady will have turned 92 years of age by the time this article is in print.

Our convention was contained in two Saturday programs, the first commencing at 10 a.m. A nice crowd arrived to see quite a display of memorabilia. The walls were covered with numerous posters from the seven L&A motion pictures, while four tables held every issue of *The Jot 'Em Down Journal*. Still other tables and walls displayed an array of photos and articles from the NLAS archives. "Uncle Donnie" Pitchford prepared a 21-minute video production containing short clips of every guest who has appeared at an NLAS Convention from 1985 to the present. Also included were L&A associates who were unable to attend for various reasons, but were important to the history of the program and had been awarded the Lum and Abner Memorial Award. The



*The NLAS's 20th anniversary convention cake, in time for the NLAS's 21st anniversary. Er... HUH?*

list of these special people, which follows, will stir special memories for those who have attended some of our conventions: Clarence Hartzell, Roz Rogers, Ethel Huddleston Ball, Chet Lauck Jr., Kathy and Lon Stucker, Dorothy McClure, Elsie Mae Emerson, Elizabeth Goff and the Goff family, Jerry Hausner, Harriet Lauck, Bobb Lynes, Elmore Vincent, Wendell Niles, Bobs Watson, Ruel Bain, Eloise Plaster, Les Tremayne, Cousin Cliff Holman, Louise Currie, Willard Waterman, "Auntie Helen" Hartzell, Shirley Lauck Babcock, Parley Baer, Ted Theodore, Pamela Blake, Ben Combs, Cathy Lee Crosby, Linda Lou Crosby, the Lauck family, Gene Hamilton, Harlan Hobbs, Forrest Owen, Lewis Arquette, Darl Miller, Mary Lee Robb, Frank Bresee, Kay Linaker, Robert Cates and the Opie Cates family, Fred Foy, Doy Grubbs, Barbara Fuller, Dick Beals, Sam Edwards, Robie Lester, Rhoda Williams, Dal McKennon, Troy Boyd, Ginny Tyler and Nancy Wible.

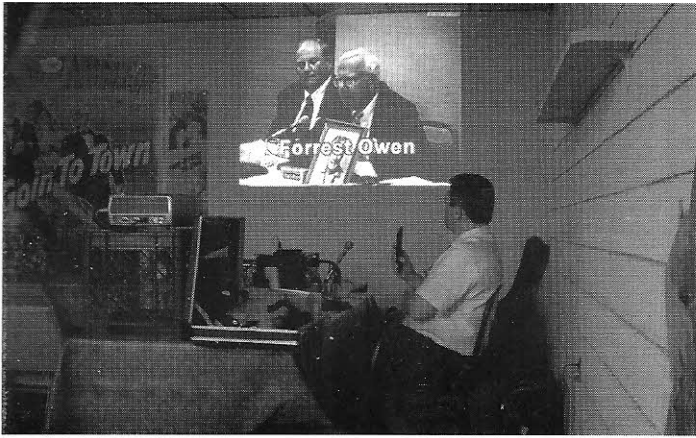
"Before and after" clips were played to compare the remarkable work done by First Generation Radio Archives. Short clips from a 1935 *Lum and Abner* recording, taken from the original transcription disc, allowed the audience to hear a 1993 disc-to-tape transfer compared to a 2005 disc-to-CD version, restored by the digital technology and expertise of FGRA's Tom Brown. In the audience was member Alan Johns, who assists in the audio restoration process by "proofing" the recordings to check their quality, and Alan was happy to discuss his work with the group. (To learn how you can hear these remarkably restored shows for yourself, see page 2 of this issue.)

Kate Phillips (Kay Linaker) entertained the crowd with more of her stories from Hollywood's Golden Age, including the account of her childhood friendship with an elderly gentleman known as "Mr. Tom." This rather hard-of-hearing fellow was kind enough to take "Miss Kate" to a band concert, and when she was allowed backstage to collect an autograph from the bandleader, she was surprised that the musician wanted "Mr. Tom's" signature as well. Autograph collectors would treasure those bits of ink today, because they belonged to none other than Thomas Alva Edison and John Philip Sousa!

At 11 a.m., modern technology (a lavalier mic stuck to the earpiece of a cell phone with a tiny donut of poster putty), allowed the NLAS to speak with 1946-48 *Lum and Abner* radio producer Forrest Owen by telephone. Forrest, a 1996 convention guest, shared his memories of Chet Lauck and Tuffy Goff and took questions



*Rare L&A movie posters and almost 21 years of JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNALS decorate the meeting room.*



*Forrest Owen, L&A radio producer and 1996 NLAS convention guest, joined the 2005 festivities by phone.*

from the audience. We'd hoped to have Forrest back with us this year, but his schedule simply did not allow it. It was great to have him with us via "the party line!"

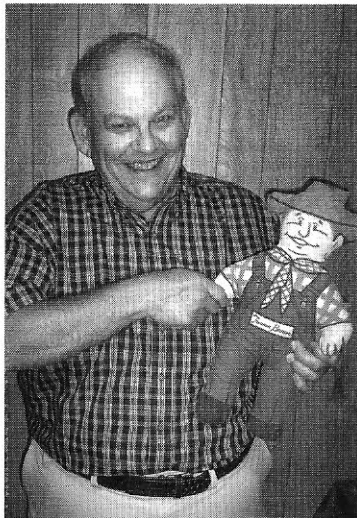
The remainder of the morning session became something of a "NLAS Greatest Hits" collection. In answer to requests, various pieces of NLAS video were projected, including the trailers for the films *Partners in Time* (narrated by Les Tremayne) and *Two Weeks to Live*, and the outlandish promo for the 2003 script, *Murder in Pine Ridge?* concocted by "Uncle Donnie," who musta got kicked by a mule or whopped on top of his head.

The "ossifiers" put it to a vote, and the audience elected to see the entire film *Two Weeks to Live* during the evening program at 5:00. "Miss Kate" spoke after the screening, expressing her delight at viewing it with an appreciative audience who "laughed in all the right places." Her performance as the evil woman who takes advantage of Lum and Abner was excellent, calling to mind the various roles she tackled in the enjoyable Charlie Chan films.

Two members donated door prizes. Bob Flood handed us a stack of nostalgic DVDs and VHS tapes, and we decided to draw numbers based on the sign-in sheet and allow the winners to choose two prizes each. The grand prize, a collection of *Lum and Abner* cassettes contained in two collector boxes, was donated by Rolland Ivy.

"Our Miss Kate" received the Lum and Abner Memorial Award in 1998, and, in 2003, a special 60th anniversary plaque honoring her L&A film role. For her 2005 NLAS Convention appearance, "Aunt Laura" Pitchford selected a lovely earring and necklace set as a gift of thanks for "Miss Kate." The gift was accompanied by a card signed by all present. Tim Hollis joked that the gift that didn't quite make the cut was a "Sam Brown doll," and he proved it by

holding up a toy that actually resembled our vice-president "Singin' Sam!" In actuality, and coincidentally, it was a premium from a defunct chain of fried chicken restaurants called



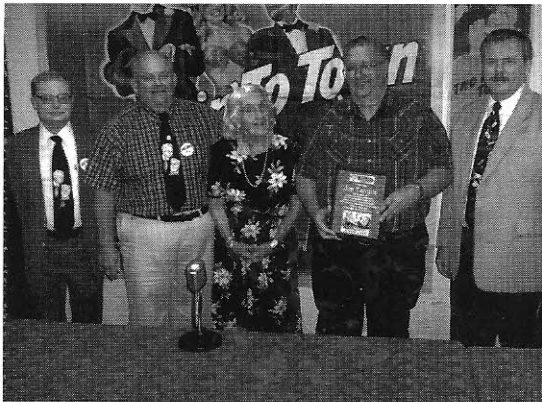
*Sam Brown and Farmer Brown... can you guess which is which?*

Farmer Brown's!

Singin' Sam (not Farmer) Brown began joking about someone in our midst called "Grandpap" who didn't have anything better to do than to have perfect convention attendance -

all 20 times! It was none other than John "Grandpap" Knuppel from Yukon, Oklahoma, our one and only perfect attendance member. His award was a "key to the Jot 'Em Down Store" - a large key mounted on a wooden plaque in the shape of the store.

On hand for the fun were Lon and Kathy Stucker of the Jot



*Jim Temple receives his award for his many years of service to the NLAS.*

Conventions through the years.

Jim Temple of Lufkin, Texas was presented a plaque of appreciation for his 15 years of convention attendance, as well as his work in creating and maintaining the NLAS website. Additionally, Jim and his daughters have assisted countless times with the setup and striking of the meeting room. And speaking of striking, Jim's daughter Kenna was in attendance this year and pitched in once again. Photographic work (video and stills) was provided by Chuck Anders again this year. Thanks to you all!

"You've got to sing loud enough to drown out this guitar," demanded "Uncle Donnie" as he strummed somewhere near the key of G-whiz on a borrowed



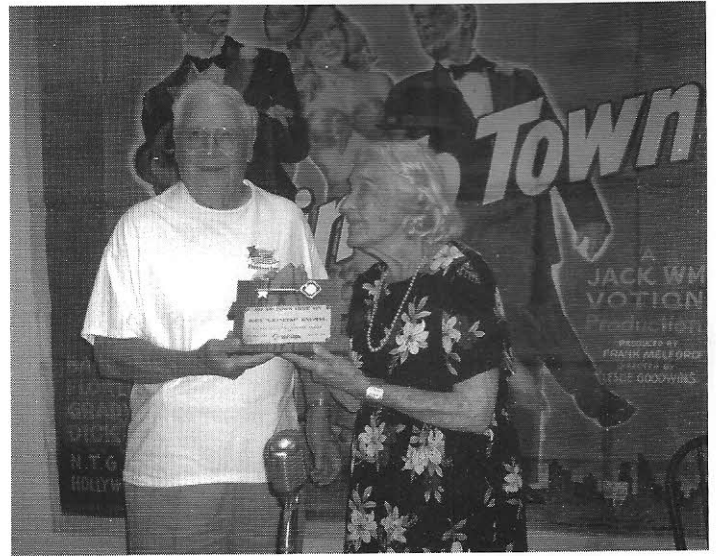
*It should be illegal to be as cute as Jim Temple's daughter Kenna, but she has been helping with our setting up and taking down ever since she was a tiny thing.*



Yamaha. That's a guitar, not a motorcycle, although the bike may have sounded better. Nonetheless, the crowd sang their way through L&A's favorite song, "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree," but the event wasn't quite over. It was time to cut and enjoy a cake to celebrate whatever "20th Anniversary" you wished it to be, and to sort that out, refer back to the beginning of this article!

In retrospect, it seems incredible that we have put together 20 NLAS Conventions, beginning in 1985 with a ZERO budget, the Pine Ridge Fire Hall, borrowed audio equipment and two L&A associates who gave their time and joined us at their own expense. Since that time, we've met an amazing array of radio, television and film veterans, many of whom knew and/or worked with Chet Lauck and Tuffy Goff. We have indeed been fortunate, and the memories are bittersweet, since so many of our guests have passed away. We are thankful for those who are still with us, of course, and, as Sam Brown has said so often of the conventions, "We do this for you, the members." Another of Sam's expressions comes to mind whenever we receive a nice note from a member: "That's our pay!" Tim, Sam and I would like to sincerely thank you, the members of the National Lum and Abner Society, for making these 20 conventions possible.

- "Uncle Donnie" Pitchford



Kay Linaker presents John "Grandpap" Knuppel with his "key to the Jot 'Em Down Store" for 20 years of perfect convention attendance.

## In Memory of ROBIE LESTER 1930? - 2005

We were saddened to learn that our good friend and 2001 NLAS Convention guest **ROBIE LESTER ECCLESTON** passed away on June 14, 2005, after a long battle with leukemia. Robie's age might have been one of the best-kept secrets in show business, but her family has said that if we designate her as 75, that will be close enough.

As we mentioned at that time, Robie had no direct connection with Lum and Abner, but she was booked for the 2001 convention because of her long association with veteran radio actor Sam Edwards, the first guest lined up for that year's event. During the 1960s, Sam and Robie were teamed on many albums for the Disney record label, and since these mini-dramas were really the last outposts for radio-style performing at that time, it seemed fitting to reunite the two of them.

Robie was born in the microscopic community of Megargel, Texas, but spent her childhood and adolescent years in Canada. After graduating from college, she went to Hollywood to try her luck as a singer. Her voice was amazingly powerful, but girl singers were a dime a dozen in Hollywood, so she developed an uncanny knack for character roles that would serve her well in animated cartoons over the next couple of decades. She was



heard in many TV commercials for Kellogg's Froot Loops, Sugar Smacks, and Raisin Bran, as well as enough radio commercials to fill a reel of their own. Besides her record work for Disney, she worked in the company's films as one of Donald Duck's nephews, and in the animated features *The Aristocats* and *The Rescuers*. Probably her most famous animated role was as Miss Jessica, the schoolteacher who becomes Mrs. Kris Kringle in the perennial Christmas special *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town*.

Retiring from performing in the early 1970s because of heart disease, Robie lived in quiet obscurity until being located and suitably recognized by her fans. At the 2001 NLAS Convention she performed her big song from the *Santa Claus* special, "My World is Beginning Today," the first time she had sung publicly in years. She made a brief return to the voice industry with a cameo appearance on the *Adventures in Odyssey* radio series, but her health remained delicate. For the past year she had been undergoing aggressive chemotherapy treatments that left her physically drained, but she continued to support her two main passions, animal rights and her family, right up to the end. We will miss her always-cheerful encouragement of our efforts.