

Spring 2007

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VOLUME 2***
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***LUM & ABNER: THE EARLY YEARS
VOLUME 3***
MAY 24, 1935 - JULY 18, 1935

***LUM & ABNER: THE EARLY YEARS
VOLUME 4***
JULY 19, 1935 - SEPTEMBER 12, 1935

Send orders to the NLAS executive secretary at 81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, AL 35062.

An' speakin' of modern tecknologiwockle advances ketchin' up with the fokes in Pine Ridge, notice in the ad up ther on th' right that our good buddy Chet Lauck Jr. has now made his copies of the L&A movin' pitchers available on DV an' D as well as good ol' vidiot tape! Wonderful world!

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THE SEVEN **Lum and Abner®** MOVIES

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**THE NATIONAL
LUM AND ABNER
SOCIETY**

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PRESIDENT

Donnie Pitchford
VICE-PRESIDENT
Sam Brown

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Tim Hollis

*Front Cover: Lum seems infatuat-
ed by his own reflection in the mir-
ror, but Abner appears to be a bit
more dubious, in this wonderful
"character pose" from 1938.*

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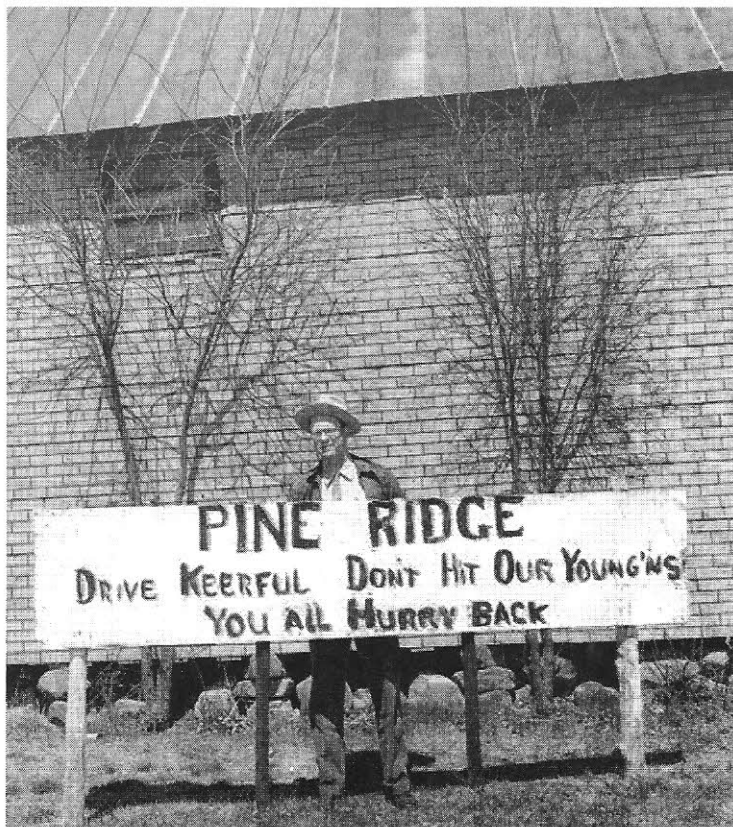
THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL Spring 2007

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We're sorrowful about this here "miniature issue," folks, but time jes' run out on us. We'll do our bestest to make up fer hit next time... maybe... we think....



LUM and ABNER's® "DEAD SEA SCROLLS"

Part Nine of a Series

Several issues ago, we explained that a previously-unknown collection of Lum and Abner scripts had turned up, and while the NLAS is unable to secure them for our own archives, one of our members was permitted access to them long enough to write a synopsis of each one. We now pick up with that member's summaries where we left off in our Winter issue. As you will recall, in January 1934, Lauck and Goff had unexpectedly received notice – apparently on the very day of the show itself – that they had been cancelled again. Over the next few weeks, they went to Racine, Wisconsin, to visit William Horlick, the aged founder of Horlick's Malted Milk, who had written them a fan letter. They asked Horlick to be their new sponsor, and he agreed. Since there was not a daily 15-minute time slot available on any of the networks, they returned to the air through the facilities of powerful WCCO in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and it is with that premiere broadcast for Horlick's that our summaries begin here:

April 2, 1934

Lum and Abner are starting a newspaper and trying to buy an old printing press from Snake Hogan. Abner has Snake willing to take fifteen dollars for it but Lum, the tough deal-maker, comes in and offers a hundred.

The scripts deal with the newspaper and Snake Hogan's attempts to butt in on the business for weeks. The script for May 18, 1934 switches direction. Someone has broken in and stolen their printing press just as they got the paper ready to print. Abner has the idea (from his book on how to become a great detective) that the press might have been stolen by counterfeiters. Abner is dressed in a disguise too. Both Abner and Dick recall a couple of strangers who had been in town recently. They had asked Dick about a printing press.

May 21, 1934

Somebody passed Dick Huddleston a counterfeit ten-dollar bill that had George Washington's picture on it.

May 24, 1934

The counterfeiters were using Cedric, giving him three dollars for every ten he could get changed. But they threatened him so he won't tell who they are.

May 28, 1934

Lum and Abner are looking for the counterfeiters at night. They come to a house that's empty and supposedly haunted. See piles of counterfeit money but are themselves nabbed by the federal agents who have been in town.

May 29, 1934

Dick got them out of jail and they have their press back to print the paper on. They're going to give away their paper since folks were so nice as to sign the bond that got them out of jail.

May 31, 1934

John Gilmore is suing them for slander because they had an article in the paper about him getting his wife from a matrimonial bureau.

June 6, 1934

They settle with Gilmore by giving him the newspaper business and one-third interest in the store.

June 17, 1934

Dick mentions that the fellows in the county seat who promoted the hotel in Pine Ridge last year are not planning to open it again this year. Dick thinks they know the hotel is a money-maker but they hope to frustrate the shareholders into selling it cheaply to them. Dick put two thousand dollars in it and he's going to call a meeting of the shareholders and have someone else manage the hotel. Abner put three hundred in it. The stockholders own 51 percent and those promoters own 49 percent. Lum and Abner agree that they will run the hotel and have Grandpappy manage the store for them.

That, friends, is where our contact's summaries end. Of course, we can tell that the storyline was going into the plot that would later be recycled in the summer of 1946, with Lum and Abner running the Mountain View Hotel and getting involved with jewel thieves. In fact, a few scripts from the 1934 version appeared in our reprint book *THE LUM AND ABNER SCRIPTS: 1934*, which is still available for \$7 per copy.

We hope you have enjoyed this long-running series of synopses of the L&A shows for which most likely no recordings exist... at least in printed form, we can better understand what was going on during the program's first two or three formative years!

(On the facing page, you can see the front of the issue of the *Pine Ridge News* that was being promoted during the May/June scripts above. Because L&A were reaching a smaller audience during these first months with Horlick's, this issue must be the more scarce of all that were issued over the years.)

PINE RIDGE NEWS



PINE RIDGE IN SMOULDERING RUINS?

PEABODY'S PINE RIDGE PICK-UPS

Or Pine Ridge Through a Knot-Hole.

By Abner Peabody

John Gilmore's new wife he ordered from the matrimonial bureau arrived in Pine Ridge last week to make her home here. We all hope she is as good a woman as they advertised her to be.

Andy Maxwell and his whole family is took down with the measles. All their friends ought to be shure and visit them while they are quarantined.

The Widow Abernathy took her children and two pigs to market at the county seat last week. The widow says pigs is bringing a good price this spring.

Amzi Gardner and his wife tried to start a fire with a gallon of gasoline last week and it exploded and blowed both of them clean up through the roof of the house and fifty foot in the air. Some say this is the first time the two of them has been out together in over two years.

Dick Huddleston, our postmaster, says if we don't get a rain soon it'll be so dry we will have to start putting postage stamps on with pins.

Doc Miller says its unhealthy to let hogs sleep under the house but Kalup Weehunt says his has allus slept under his house and his hogs seem to do alright.

A glass of Horlick's hot before going to bed soothes and relaxes.

Mose Moots, chief of the Pine Ridge Volunteer Fire Department, was serious hurt when Lum Edwards barn burnt. Mose was up in the loft of the barn and couldn't get down so somebody throwed him a rope and when he tied it around his waist they jerked him out but he hit his head against the waterin trough and sorter broke his fall.

Ezra Seestrunk butchered last Friday. The neighbors wish he would butcher more oftener.

Luther Jacobs reports that business is better and Luther ort to know on acct. of he runs 'he peddling wagon in this section.

I just learned that John Gilmore's wife he ordered from the matrimonial bureau has got five children which has came with her to live here so John got some boot in the deal.

Kalup Weehunt found the front gate to his yard yesterday which has been lost ever since Halloween. It was in the bath tub.

Uncle Henry Lunsford is having a lot of sickness at his place these days. Doc Miller was called over there twice last week. Once to see his mother in law and once to see his horse. Henry says he's afeared he's going to lose his horse.

They're buildin a brush arber in the Holly Springs Community this week getting ready for a pertracted meetin.

For your health's sake drink Horlick's every day.

Horlick's lunch tablets for the golfer. When motoring—fishing—to overcome seasickness.

Drink Horlick's for lunch instead of a heavy meal which is apt to cause drowsiness.



Lum Edwards, Editor-in-Chief, Pine Ridge News

BIOGRAPHY OF LUM AND ABNER

The Life of the Owners and Publishers of the Pine Ridge News. By Lum Edwards, editor.

Judge Edwards, who has recent retired from the Supreme bench was borned in a little village not far from London, England. He was borned to poor but honest parents who was pheasants, and at the early age of five he showed a talent for writin and law matters so he run away from home cause his papa wanted him to serve his apprenticeship as a tanner. Judge Edwards stole away in the dead of night when he was eight year old with only a six pence in his jeans. After wondering around in a fog in London, Judge Edwards ketches a big ship which was sailing for Shanghai, way off. After capturing Shanghai and all them other places in through there I sailed back across the Red Sea till he got to the Panama Canal where they was all shipwrecked and little Judge Edwards was washed up on a isle offen the coast of Africa all he found out was Australia. When Judge Edwards landed in Australia the first thing I done was to organize a expedition knowed as the Childrens Crusade and he lead them into the middle of Africa where they hunted big game and cannibals and bring them back alive. It was while he was there that he got word that they was a big gold rush on up in the Van Dyke and he takend out and went ther and found all the gold he could pack off and he got very rich and returned to his native country in France where he bought a castle for his mama and papa who was still Pheasants and made them kings. By this time Judge

Edwards had a nuff money so he hired the best professors of the time to learn him all about newspaper writin and law matters. About this time he heard the call of arms over the radio and so I sailed to my native country the dear old U. S. A. the land of the brave and the free where he fit in the Revolutionary army but had a hard time crossing Delaware to let the people know the British was comin on the ice chasing Uncle Tom and little Eva. After winning the war here he re tion and sailed to the north pole where he nearly died with the tropic fevers. While he was bedrid with the fevers he wrote his first book which was Dante's Inferno.

After this Judge Edwards blazed a trail in a kivered wagan and discovered a beautiful range of Mountains knowed as the Ouachitas where the most beautifulest flowers grows. He settled in the little city of Pine Ridge where he is giving his time and talents by serving the community as Justice of the Peace, President of the School Board, President and Left and Right Vice Pres. of the Jot 'Em Down Store and Editor of the P. R. News.

Abner Peabody is constable and helps git out the paper. He lives in Pine Ridge too.



Abner Peabody

BIG FIRE SWEEPS CITY?

Hundreds Homeless After Fiery Dragon Stalks Through City?

This is what might have happened if the Volunteer Fire Department hadn't of put out the fire that started in the barn belongin' to Lum Edwards, Justice of the Peace and President of the School Board, two weeks ago.

Owin to the quick work of the fire boys, lead by Mose Moots, barber, chief of the Volunteers, the blaze was distinguished before it had did much damage. The loss been just a few shingles burnt off the roof.

Ezra Seestrunk who generally uses his team to pull the hose cart for the fire boys, was in the field plowing with his mules at the time the fire broke out so Kalup Weehunt and Uncle Henry Lunsford got in the shaves and started to pull the hose cart and done fine till they started accross the culbert over Ward Creek and a aeroplane flew over 'em. Hit ever saw and they had a runaway with the hose cart and run off the culbert and turned it over. The boys had to beat the fire out with wet gunney sacks.

Mose Moots was serious hurt when he got up in the loft of the barn and couldn't get down on account of the fire so somebody throwed him a rope and when he tied it around his waist they jerked him out but he hit his head against the waterin trough and sorter broke his fall, which kept him from bein hurt any worse. Mose says he thinks the fire was started by a fire-bug but the editor, Lum Edwards, thinks somebody done it on purpose.

LUKE LUNSFORD RECOVERED FROM FROZEN FEET

And is Able to Be Out Again.

Friends at the Past Time Pool Parlor was greeting Luke Lunsford again last week after being laid up for two months on acct. of Froze feet. Luke says his misfortune was brung on because of being too tender hearted. He just can't stand to see his woman work. His feet froze durin the last cold snap we had. Luke woke up one mornin with the temperature down to twelve below zero and looked out the winder and seen his wife out in a blizzard chopping wood and when he pulled the covers up over his head to keep from watching her, he pulled the covers off of his feet and they froze. Luke is a rail road man by trade and is still waiting for a rail road to be built through Pine Ridge to go to work.

Horlick's Malted Milk gives quick energy.

HEAD-RISE ON BRIAR CREEK CAUSES ACCIDENT AT CROSSING

Luther Phillips and Family Has Narrow Escape.

When Luther Phillips seen the heavy rain storm that come up last Wednesday night, him and his family was at the Roy Reynolds home visitin, he says he was afeared they would have trouble crossin Briar Creek so he ketches up his mules and children and started for home as quick as he could but Briar creek was up clean out of its bank agin they got to the crossin. Just as they got in the middle of the creek the swift water float-ed the wagon bed right off of the wagon and throwed the whole fambly right out in the stream. By the time Luther got through saving the mules, part of the children had already got to shore. All but little Zular who was missing. After searching for nearly a hour they found her ketches in the water gate. Luther says he wont never take another chance driving out in that high water again. Good mules is hard to find these days.

Farewells to Some friends

The Jot 'Em Down Journal published its first obituary in our third issue (December 1984), and that one was for Ora Garrett, the Pine Ridge barber who claimed to have been the model for Mose Moots. Since then, we have had to report on far too many passings of people who were connected with Lum & Abner at one time or another, but this time we have THREE of them to cover all at once. To make matters worse, a couple of them are not even current obituaries; it is just that we only recently learned the sad news about them. We will take them in the order that the individuals were associated with L&A.

JOE TROYAN of Cleveland, Ohio, died at age 88 on June 21, 2000. Yes, we know that was seven years ago, but apparently his wife has been receiving his copies of the *Journal* all these years, and we still would not have known that Joe had left us if one of their family friends had not notified us. Known as "Bashful Harmonica Joe," Troyan was a member of the Pine Ridge String Band on L&A's Friday Night Sociables in 1933-34. He had been an honorary member of the NLAS since 1986, and in our October 1986 issue he contributed these memories of his years with the show:

I first met the boys, Lum and Abner, at WTAM, our 50,000-watt station here in Cleveland, on February 18, 1933. I auditioned for them and was accepted, playing the harmonica and doing all sorts of animal imitations. A few days later I met Marshall "Grandpa" Jones and the rest of the Pine Ridge String Band, from Akron, Ohio. Grandpa was my age and we hit it off very well.

I would visit Lum and Abner during the week and got to know them quite well. I even visited their living quarters in the Auditorium Hotel, across the street from the radio station. One day, they were writing their script for the show and the room was so cold that they typed with their gloves on. They told me that the room cost \$25 a week at that time.



"Bashful Harmonica Joe" Troyan

On Sunday, April 2, 1933, Lum and Abner played their first theater appearance; it was in Jefferson, Ohio, about 60 miles east of Cleveland. Population: 2000. Price: Adults, 35¢, children, 10¢. Lum and Abner played on a 60-40 basis. The rest of us (String Band, yours truly, the Milk Maids, etc... ten people in all) were paid \$10 each.

On the way home that night, I heard Lum and Abner laughing so loud. They said to me, "Joe, we didn't make a dime after expenses on this show," but they were so happy to see such a crowd. The theater had 300 seats, and we did three shows that day, all to standing room only.

After about 14 months, the boys left Cleveland for a new sponsor, Horlick's Malted Milk. Grandpa Jones and I became very close friends and we worked many

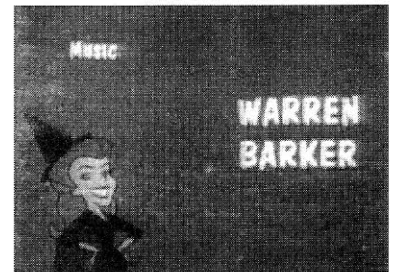


Joe Troyan (center) with Bradley Kincaid (left) and the young Marshall (Grandpa) Jones (right), shortly after leaving the Lum & Abner show.

shows together. We learned many good things from Lum and Abner (and later, Bradley Kincaid), and we are just as close today. Grandpa was in service in Germany and I was with the Army Air Force, in a Hollywood Show Unit, traveling with the Ninth Corp area in the west with Mickey Rooney, Alan Ladd, Peter Lind Hayes, Mario Lanza and William Holden –

all wonderful people. And, while I was in Hollywood, I visited with Lum and Abner in March 1943.

The second L&A associate we have lost came from a vastly different part of their history than Joe Troyan. WARREN BARKER died on August 3, 2006, at age 83. His brief brush with L&A history came in 1962, when he was hired to write the music for the ill-fated Lum and Abner TV pilot produced by Four Star Productions, starring Arthur Hunnicutt and Edgar Buchanan. We located Warren in retirement in South Carolina in 2001, shortly after we had done our best to recreate that TV pilot during our convention that summer. He was amazed to hear from the NLAS, as he had totally forgotten that the L&A pilot was one of his jobs, but he dug through his files and sent us copies of his complete musical scores for that show. It is not surprising that an unsold pilot was low on his memory list, because he spent many more successful years composing music for the Bewitched TV series, and also contributed heavily to the musical aspects of *The Flying Nun*. After our initial contact, Warren kept in touch more regularly than many other honorary members. His widow, Mary J. Barker, sent us his obituary notice, and for that we are most grateful.



Our third departed friend was probably less of a household name than either Joe Troyan or Warren

Prod. 1/30/62 Title "LUM 'N ABNER" THEME #1070 Page 1

Four Star TV { COMPILED
Arranger WARREN BARKER

THEME MELODY
WITH HARMONY
INDICATED

Barker, but he certainly did his part to keep L&A's names before a public that had increasingly forgotten who they were. GEORGE LILLIE of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, died on April 24, 2006, after a lengthy illness. (We are thankful to NLAS member Bob Morgan, a friend of George's, who belatedly learned this news.) The story of George's association with L&A is more a tale of frustrated ambitions than anything else, but he did set in motion some important events that were not actually a part of his plans!

Some time in the late 1960s, while Chet "Lum" Lauck was enjoying retirement in Hot Springs, Arkansas, George made contact with him and the two remained in touch with each other. George claimed credit for getting the syndicated L&A episodes back on the radio in cities across the country; we aren't sure just how this dovetails with the fact that Lauck was already getting ready to re-release them as early as 1965, but it is certain that Lillie's contacts with old-time radio collectors – in those bygone days before the internet – certainly helped boost the number of stations airing the shows.

George's obsession was to get Lum & Abner back on television. He was not going to do it with live actors, though, saying that Lauck & Goff would not allow that. No, he was determined to recreate the show using some sort of mechanical puppets with lips that would be synchronized to prerecorded dialogue. Probably realizing that this project had little future after so many previous attempts to bring L&A to TV had failed, Lauck and Goff gave George the total rights to do as he pleased with it, plus the ancillary rights to merchandise Lum & Abner toys, books, games – the whole deal.

Unfortunately for George, his project never got past the talking stage in 30 years. However, he was a wizard when it came to getting publicity for his dream. Over the years, countless newspapers picked up on his story and ran it, often using what sounded like exactly the same sentences to describe his project.



Seemingly every article about George Lillie over a period of some 20 years featured this same photo of him with his reel-to-reel collection of radio shows.

Occasionally, one of these features would be picked up by a wire service and carried in other papers, and it was one of those that caught the eye of future NLAS vice-president "Singin' Sam" Brown in 1982. Up until then, Sam thought he was the only L&A fan in the world, so he got George's phone number from directory assistance and gave him a call.

By sheer dumb luck, the same newspaper story had been spotted by David Miller down in Texas, and he too had contacted George, telling him of the interest in L&A he shared with his friend Donnie Pitchford. When Sam spoke with George, George gave Sam the phone numbers for David and Donnie – and that was how the nucleus

of what would become the National Lum & Abner Society was formed! So, even though George's TV efforts came to naught, he quite inadvertently was responsible for the creation of the NLAS itself.

George kept in touch over the years, always looking for an angle that would alert potential sponsors to his ideas. He eventually decided that the best use for his L&A puppets - which apparently were never even built - would be to feature them in commercials for some large company, which could then lead to a TV series. We can all guess how that never worked out, either. But one thing you had to admit about George Lillie: he was an eternal optimist. In our NLAS file on him (which is more benign than having an FBI file on someone), the final article appeared in one of the small Iowa papers in December 2001. It closes with George's admission, "It may never happen, but then, I might get a call tomorrow and we'll be in business. I'll never give up. It's going to become a reality. I honestly believe that."

All we can say in conclusion is that, wherever George is now, perhaps he is finally getting to produce his much-beloved series and just maybe one day the rest of us will get to enjoy it when we join him.

- Tim Hollis