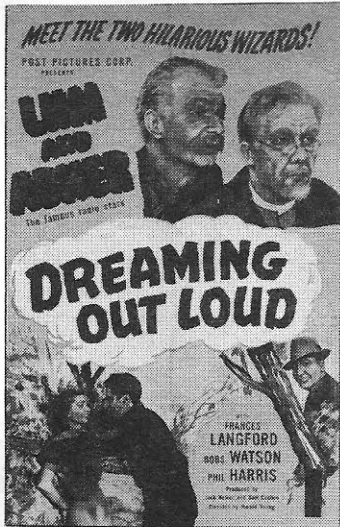


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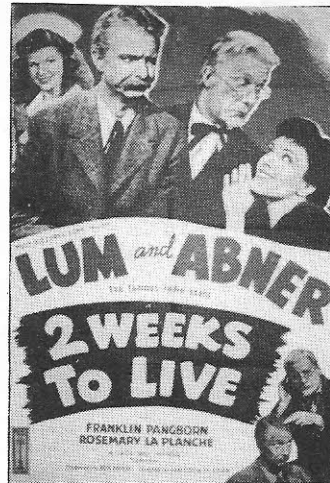
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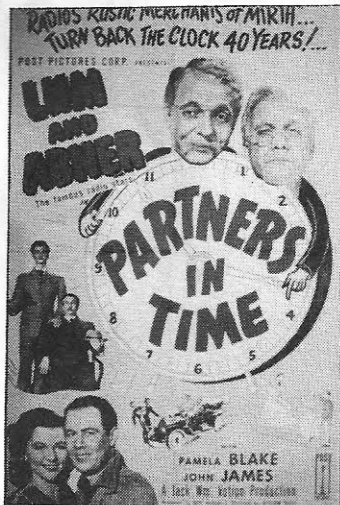
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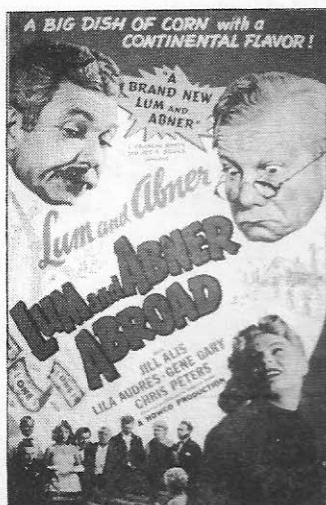
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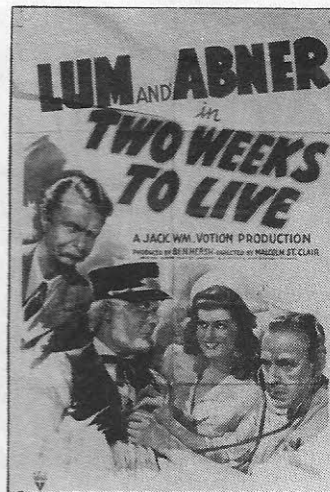
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# THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

FEBRUARY 1987

## In This Issue

\*\*\*\*\*

### THE NATIONAL LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY

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"Today, we need Lum and Abner  
 more than ever."

- AETN, 1986

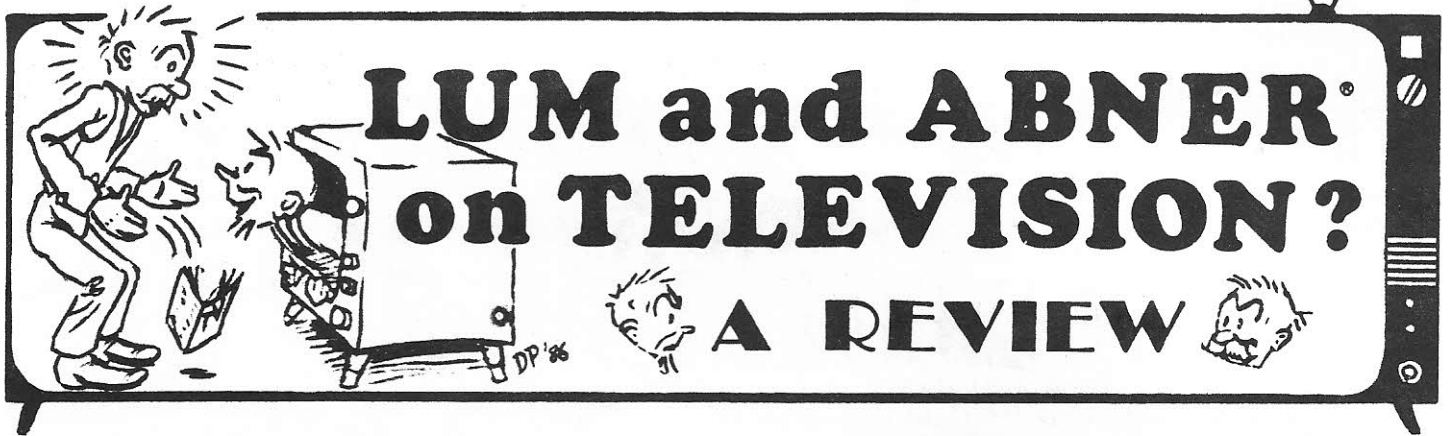
COVER: Just in time for  
 Valentine's Day! A romantic  
 scene from PARTNERS IN TIME  
 (RKO, 1946), with Norris Goff  
 (Abner), Pamela Blake (Eliza-  
 beth), and Chet Lauck (Lum)

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 Chester Lauck, Jr.

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ABOVE: Chester Lauck and Norris Goff en-  
 joy a guffaw or two in this candid photo-  
 graph taken by Jerry Hausner. (Courtesy  
 of Mr. Hausner)



# LUM and ABNER<sup>®</sup> on TELEVISION?

## A REVIEW

It has always been somewhat difficult to produce a television documentary about a radio program; usually one suffers at the expense of the other. Because of this, programs of that type are hard to find: a few years ago, we had a documentary entitled "Amos 'n' Andy: Anatomy of a Controversy," but it centered mainly on the TV series. There have also been retrospectives on Bob Hope, Jack Benny, and Abbott & Costello, but these too were primarily concerned with television and movie appearances.

As for our friends Lum and Abner, nothing of note had been produced since 1973, when the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AEIN) gave us "Two Boys From Mena," a 90-minute tribute to the pair at a time when both of them were still living. Since then, television has largely ignored the two rural characters...until now, thanks once again to AEIN.

On December 30, 1986, AEIN unveiled "Lum and Abner: Laughter Never Dies," a brand-new, hour-long documentary. Although the National Lum and Abner Society was not directly involved with the production of the special, our influence upon it was still visible.

The show contained many clips from classic L&A radio programs, courtesy of the NLAS Tape Library. Rare and unusual photographs were also included, many of which were totally unfamiliar to us (maybe we'll come across them someday). But perhaps the most novel and intriguing parts of the special were the interviews conducted with many of the NLAS Honorary Members: Ethel Huddleston Ball, Harriet Lauck, Roz Rogers, Phil Harris, Bobs Watson, Betty Boyle, Louise Currie, and Barbara Hale all shared their memories of L&A, as did Mr. John Faulkner (who knew Norris Goff during their boyhood days in Mena), Arkansas Senator "Bud" Canada, and Mrs. Oscar Planter (widow of the Mena photographer who was responsible for much of the early L&A/Dick Huddleston/Pine Ridge publicity).

The rest of the show (which, by the way, was narrated by comedian Jerry Van Dyke) was mainly taken up by well-selected clips from the Lum & Abner movies, "Lum and Abner Abroad" being the only one of "Lum & Abner Abroad" being the only one not given generous footage...understandably. These were used superbly to lead into the interviews with the actors seen in the excerpts: Watson, Currie, Harris, & Hale.

Unfortunately, there are a few things about this program that are not so commendable. The most glaring was the total omission of Clarence "Ben Withers" Hartzell, the only surviving regular cast member of the show. We were not happy when we found out he had not even been contacted for the show, albeit he WAS the one who provided us with a tape of it for this review.

Also, AEIN was slightly careless in the spelling of some of their guests' names: for instance, L&A's writer turned out to be Roswell "Rodgers," and Dick Huddleston's daughter was "Ethyl" Ball (the kind of gasoline Zed Whitzit doesn't sell). Strangely, while narrator Van Dyke lamented the horrible production values of the L&A TV pilots, footage was shown of the 1948 "Canasta" pilot, which was infinitely superior to the 1949 "Abner Plays Sick" show. The latter of the two would have illustrated Van Dyke's derogatory comments much better.

The following statement may sound a bit egotistical, but the last of our objections is the fact that the National Lum and Abner Society was almost totally ignored throughout the entire show, mention being limited to two tiny references, both incorrectly naming us the "Lum and Abner Fan Club." The NLAS is probably the single most powerful reminder of L&A's continuing popularity, and to be excluded from their official history is irritating, to say the least. Hopefully, someday the time will come that we can present OUR side of the story.

All in all, however, there is much more to praise than to criticize in AEIN's latest effort; let us all hope that a similar documentary will someday be produced for viewing by the entire country, rather than only Arkansas residents.

(Because of the timeliness of this review, we have chosen to substitute it for this month's scheduled installment of "LUM AND ABNER ON TELEVISION?" This series will resume in our next issue with a look at Chet Lauck's 1950s TV commercials for Conoco.)

- D. Pitchford and  
T. Hollis



"ADVICE ON SALESMEN"

This is the story of mean Squire Skimp 'n'  
 The Pine Ridge gossip, Sister Simpson.  
 Wicked old Squire, now he owned a mine  
 And he told his friends it worked right fine;  
 And he said, "Now folks, if you buy my stock,  
 You'll have a lot of money for your old black  
 sock."  
 Now Squire worked fast...there was no one he missed,  
 And soon Sister Simpson was next on his list.  
 So he dropped around just as bold as bold,  
 And started right in on his story of "GOLD."  
 But the Pine Ridge gossip was ready for Skimp...  
 She talked & she talked till the Squire was limp.  
 How the cow had calves and the hens won't lay,  
 And the weather's been bad & the lodger won't stay;  
 About the Pine Ridge Mayor & Robert in New York,  
 The AAA and the high cost of pork.  
 She gabbed on & on till the Squire grabbed his hat,  
 And left Sister Simpson in the middle of their  
 chat.

THE MORAL:

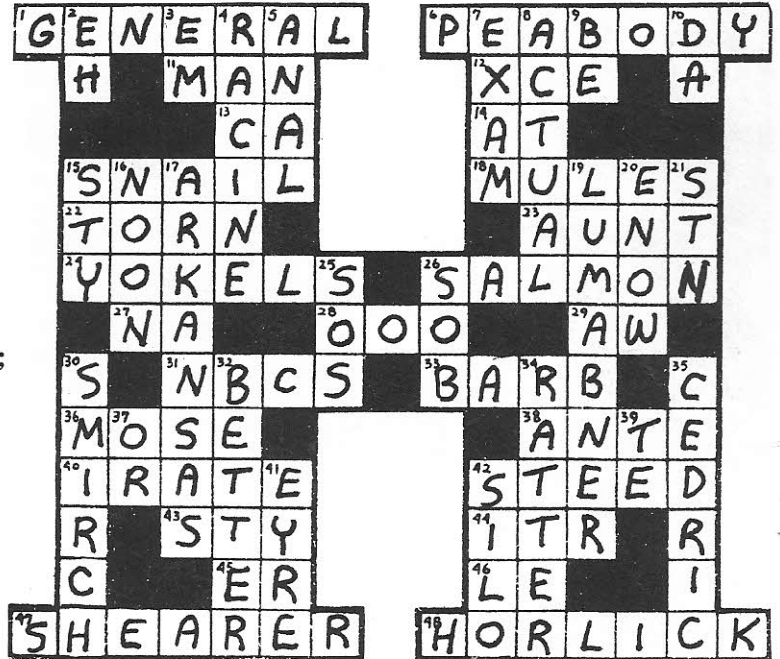
When the salesman calls and opens up his kit,  
 You do the talking and you won't git bit.

- From The Pine Ridge News  
 Spring 1936



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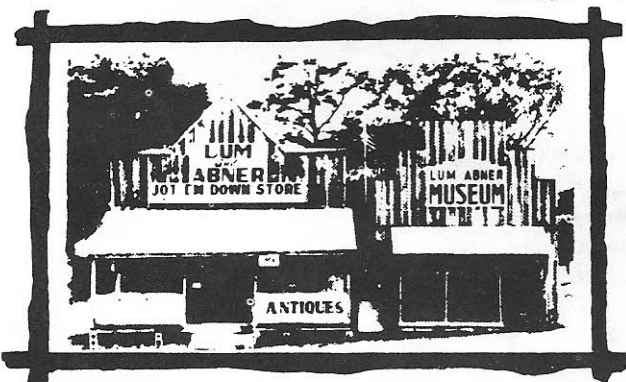
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# LUM and ABNER In the News

## REPRINTS OF PAST LUM & ABNER ARTICLES

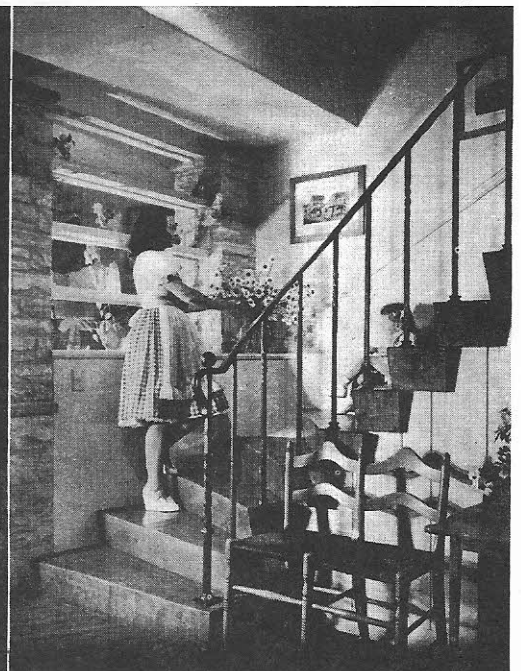
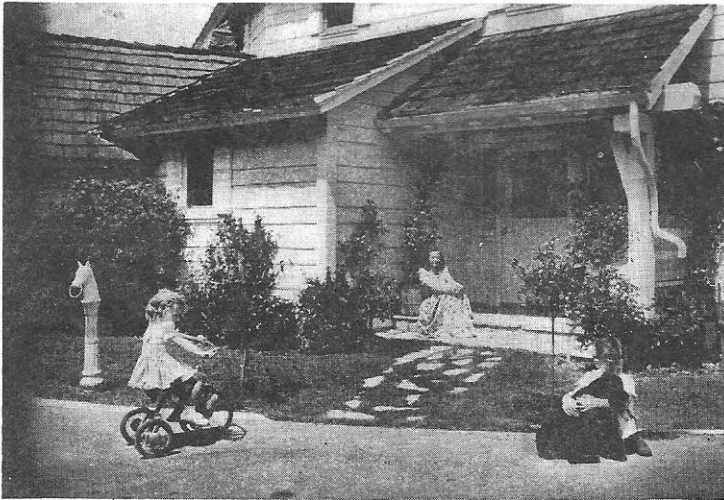
By Helen Weigel Brown

**I**T'S exciting fun to share house "discoveries" with you: Our newest is this Encino, California, home of Norris and Elizabeth Goff and the two small Goffs, Gretchen and Gary. Norris Goff, you know, is "Abner" of NBC's famous Lum and Abner radio team. It's a pretty wonderful house, we think—not because of size or magnificence of furnishings—but wonderful because it's such a perfect sort of home for family living. Figuring you'd enjoy them most, we've aimed our camera on those parts of rooms that offer something unusual in architecture or furnishing—ideas you may wish to snap up for your own remodeled or new dream house. L. G. Scherer was the Goffs' architect.

**1** Welcome to the Goffs' home! It's a two-story house, with roof of natural oiled shakes and redwood siding painted white. From atop its high hill it looks out over a wide green valley to purple hills beyond

**2** What gay welcome for guests at the Goffs! The bed headboard is padded and upholstered in emerald green textured cotton, in tune with the green quilted chintz valances. The candlewick spread is white, and so are the column lamps on their maple stands, topped off with white parchment shades dotted with great shiny red buttons

**3** A friendly hearth, informal pine furniture, and a burst of color give the Goffs' dining-room loads of warm hospitality. Their huge window, inviting the morning sun, wears double-tiered curtains of tucked organdy. Chintz draperies are deliciously Early American with their blue apples and bunches of little green grapes on luscious tomato red. Button tufts on the light blue chair pillows and the edging for the white chintz chair ruffles are the same tomato red. Even the rug's in character—cotton rag in light blue, white, and dull reds



(We do not know the date or place of publication for this unusual article. It was sent to us by actor Jerry Hausner, who found it in the files of his late wife, Velma McCall, who was Lum & Abner's secretary for many years. An educated guess as to the date of the article would be 1941.)

4 A stairway with a vista! Wouldn't you love it in *your* dream home? It overlooks the dining-room and garden beyond. Wood shelves, bits of bright glass, and tiny potted plants lend their charm. Those distinguished stairs are solid oak blocks, left natural except for varnish on the treads

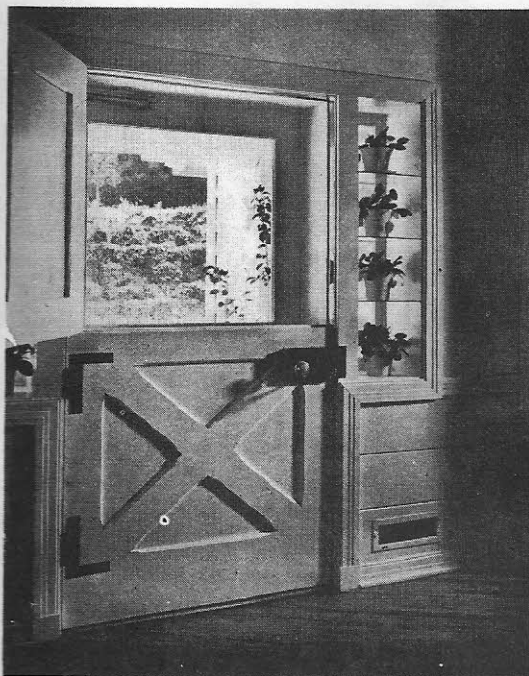
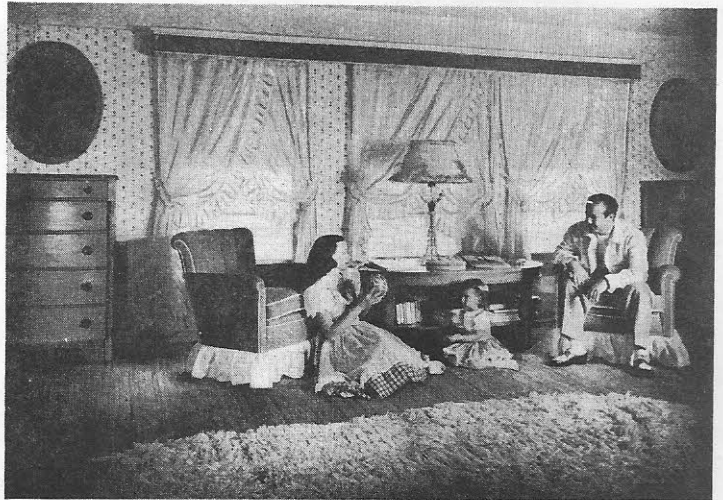
5 There's drama-in-a-doorway at the Goffs' inviting front entrance. The little glass-shelved windows welcome the sunbeams, flatter the charming Dutch door, add a sprightly touch from the porch side. The black iron L hinges and lock are part of the authentic "Dutchness"

6 "Make every corner count," the Goffs instructed their architect. And didn't he do a grand job of it? Here's a delightful living-room angle, the built-in sofa upholstered in light blue rough-textured cotton, gaily informal with plump ruffled pillows sheathed in flowered white chintz. Don't miss the clever brass-trimmed plant trough backing up the sofa. Furniture's of natural pine waxed to a glow. The shaggy rug's in natural color. Walls and heavy ceiling beams are red-wood paneled, painted off-white

7 These windows in the Goffs' own bedroom get tied up as triplets with the help of a simple cornice. Curtains are white organdy, the cornice covered with quilted burgundy chintz. But it's the grouping in front that invites you—twin shell-back chairs upholstered in light blue textured cotton piped and ruffled in white quilted cotton, and a pine table with oodles of space for magazines and books. The wall-to-wall rug is light blue, topped with a pale yellow cotton string rug. Above the white dado, Mrs. Goff had her walls hung with white quilted chintz with blue and burgundy flowers—novel and lovely!

8 Here's one of the merriest decorating schemes you could dream up if it's gay informality you're wanting. There are geranium red and bright emerald green blooms on the white-grounded wallpaper—geranium red lacquer on the twin side chairs with their pads of white quilted chintz—white crash trimmed with emerald quilted chintz for the dressing-table skirt, and the same green chintz to frame the mirror. The cotton rag rug is natural. As frilly as little Gretchen Goff herself is the clever lamp shade made of lots of rows of white rickrack stitched together in flounces

Photographs by Maynard Parker



5

6

8



# LUM AND ABNER'S LOST CHAPTER

As most people know who have followed the I&A shows either on tape or over their local radio station, the I&A series is pretty much complete from September 1941 until late in 1946, with only a few isolated episodes missing here and there. However, there is one glaring exception, which has annoyed I&A collectors for years.

For some inexplicable reason, there is a two-month-long gap in continuity in the spring of 1944. To our knowledge, the shows from this period have been lost for some time, as the syndicated series always omits them every time it rolls around to that point. Just before the break, Lum and Abner have broken up their partnership again over a misunderstanding, and Lum has gotten himself in trouble with Grandpap for accidentally shaving off Mr. Spears' beard, and when the series resumes, Lum, Abner, and Cedric are preparing to embark on a treasure-hunting expedition to Tennessee.

What came between these two points, you ask? Until recently, no one could say. But because Roz Rogers has saved his I&A scripts all these years, for the first time we are able to tell you the answer. Lum patched up his argument with Grandpap, and from there the series continues in Mr. Rogers' own synopsis:

"Lum tells Abner that he is going to leave town and look for greener pastures. Actually what he wants is for Abner to take him back into the store as a partner. But Abner says the kind of partner he needs is one with money ... and Lum hardly fits that bill.

"Lum asks Abner to write him a letter of recommendation, but it is such a short, unflattering letter that Lum writes it himself. When Abner reads it, it is so glowing that he forgets it is about Lum and decides he would take that man as a partner even without money! So, Lum is back in.

"Now that Lum is a partner again, he hints that Abner should put on a big banquet welcoming the new partner. Abner never catches on, so Lum has to come right out and tell him to do it. It turns out that Lum has already made all the arrangements for the banquet, decorations, newspaper publicity, etc...and making Abner think he is the one who has made all these arrangements. Abner decides he had better go

home and rest up as long as he has been so busy doing all those things.

"At the banquet, everyone is so busy eating that they hardly listen to Abner's introduction of the guest on honor ... Lum. And as they all have excuses to leave, Lum winds up delivering his speech in the kitchen to Gomer Bates, who was hired to wash the dishes.

"Lum, after listening to DUNNINGER on the radio, decides to take up mind reading. He tries it on Abner but fails, figuring Abner's mind is too weak to be read. Either that or Lum's mind is too strong to ever make it a blank. Abner says that if it takes a blank mind, Cedric ought to make a first-rate mind reader.

"Lum scoffs at this, but later Cedric is able to read a whole grocery list someone has dropped on the floor ... without ever looking at the list! Lum becomes convinced that they have a mind-reading genius on their hands, and he immediately becomes Cedric's manager.



"Lum arranges for Cedric to put on a demonstration at the lodge hall. Cedric thinks they want him to do his usual specialty ... bird calls ... not mind reading. Lum and Abner talk about getting Cedric's mind insured. Abner asks what it is that they are insuring his mind against. Lum decides it must be



against his learning anything. His one great asset is his blank mind. Lum gives Cedric a lecture about not spoiling his chances for success by sneaking off to school and getting educated. Squire Skimp becomes convinced that Cedric is indeed a mind reader and tricks him into signing a management contract.

"Lum is mad at Abner for letting Mind Reader Cedric slip out of their hands and sign a contract with Squire. Then they realize that because Cedric's birthday comes on February 29, he only has a birthday every four years and thus is only six years old. (EDITOR'S NOTE: This bit of information is the only concrete evidence we have as to exactly how old Lauck, Goff, and Roz Rogers considered Cedric to be.) That makes him a minor and any contract he signs is no good. Squire agrees that is true, so he gets Cedric's papa to sign the contract.



"Lum receives many replies from radio station managers to his invitation to hear Cedric read minds, but he can no longer deliver Cedric the Great. Lum tries to buy Cedric's contract from Squire but no luck. Later, Squire offers to sell half of Cedric for \$500, but that's too high for Lum. Abner suspects that Cedric can't read minds anymore. Squire disproves that by calling in Cedric and they put on a mind reading act. And Squire no longer wants to sell.

"Lum finally signs a \$500 note and buys back Cedric's contract. Then they find out that Cedric can't read minds at all. What to do about all those radio commitments? They finally decide (because Cedric is only six) to bill him as the biggest, most overgrown QUIZ KID!!

"L&A desperately try to teach Cedric a lot of facts out of the Almanac for his first performance as a Quiz Kid that evening, but he is hopeless. Lum tries to talk Abner into shaving his beard and putting on a little Fauntleroy suit, but Abner wisely refuses. Lum finally calls Ezra Seestrunk at the lodge hall and cancels the whole thing.

"Lum tries to figure out what his assets are: one barber chair...worthless; one \$500 contract covering Cedric's talents ... equally worthless. He tries to sell the contract to Abner for a few dollars, but Abner isn't buying.

"Squire comes in and Lum is going to tell him off, but Squire takes the wind out of his sails by handing him the \$500 note, now torn in half. He says he sees the error of his ways and intends to turn over a new leaf. Lum and Abner suspect this is some new scheme and they wind up taping the note back together and stuffing it into Squire's pocket.

"Now L&A find out Squire gave \$150 to the Red Cross. This increases their suspicions regarding Squire. Later they find out that Squire told one of his renters, the Widder Jessup, to forget last month's rent ... which she couldn't pay. Now they are sure Squire is up to some terrible thing.

"As more reports come in of Squire's good deeds, L&A become more and more suspicious. They hire Mousey as a detective to shadow Squire and find out what he is up to, but they learn nothing from Mousey's report. Lum does his own detective work, dressed like a tramp. A dog bites the seat out of his pants and he is trapped in a phone booth. He calls Abner to rescue him, but Abner and Grandpap are more interested in their checker game. Sister Simpson breaks into the phone booth and knocks Lum out with her umbrella.

"Everyone is talking about Squire's good deeds, and as a result no one trusts him at all. Lum talks to Doc Miller, and Doc thinks Squire may be mentally ill. He brings a friend, an amateur psychiatrist from Fort Smith, to examine Squire.

"When Professor Bisbee, the psychiatrist, arrives he thinks Cedric is the intended patient. By the time Lum straightens him out on that, the Prof begins to wonder about Lum. By the time Lum & Cedric try to explain about Cedric's bird calls, the Prof decides he'd better get out of there right away. Lum and Cedric decide he must be crazy.



"Squire asks Lum to come to his office in the evening to discuss something. Squire is baffled. He really has been trying to turn over a new leaf and be honest and good, etc., but this only makes people distrust him more than ever. Lum explains that his conduct is so unnatural that it makes people uneasy and suspicious. If Squire wants to regain his good name and standing he will have to start gypping people a little bit again, then they will believe him. Lum suggests Squire try a possible buried treasure scheme.

"Squire thinks this is preposterous, but he does remember that he has an old fake treasure map. Lum asks if he ever tried digging there. Squire says no, it's a fake. Next, Lum asks Abner to lend him some money ... he might know a good deal concerning some buried treasure!!

"It is easy to see that Lum is actually interested in the treasure even though he knows the map is a fake. Grandpap comes in with some SECRET news about a buried treasure expedition Squire is getting up. Abner tells Grandpap not to put any money into it because it's a fake. Grandpap hasn't, but only because there is such a big line-up outside Squire's office. When Squire tells everyone it's a bad risk, this only makes them more eager to get in on it.

"L&A try to figure a way to get Squire to let them invest in the Buried Treasure Expedition. They try to use psychology on Squire and make him think they are not interested. Squire says they are right; he'll abandon the idea...even though he was considering taking L&A in as partners on the expedition. Now L&A quickly switch and join with Squire.

"Lum reports to Abner on a lunch he and Squire had to launch the Buried Treasure Expedition. Abner wants to know when the election of officers will be held. It was already held. Abner hits the ceiling. Lum finally calms him down by telling him he was elected to an office ... something called "Officer In Charge Of." Furthermore, he was the only one elected unanimously! Squire was elected to some sort of office like Secretary/Treasurer and Field Director. Abner feels sorry Lum got left out. But it finally comes out that Lum got some little old no-count job like ... uh ... President of the Co. Abner hits the ceiling again.

"L&A are gearing up for the big crowd of those clamoring to invest in the Buried Treasure Expedition. They see their first customer approaching: Cedric. Lum reminds Abner that to keep from getting sued they must not talk anyone into investing ... it must be their own free will. All Cedric wants is a jar of peanut butter. Now L&A have the problem of trying to talk Cedric into investing without actually doing it. Cedric finally agrees to invest but only because that's the only way he can get his peanut butter. They reason that he wanted the peanut butter of his own free will, so that gets them off the hook.

"L&A get the treasure map from Squire to help promote investments. Grandpap calls to say that he and Charlie Redfield are coming to the store to see the map. (The treasure is supposed to be near the town of Covington, Tennessee. It was buried there by La Salle to keep the Indians from stealing it.)



"It sounds as though Grandpap and Charlie are going to invest at least a thousand dollars apiece, but it turns out they just want to settle a \$2.00 bet over whether Covington is in Tennessee or Arkansas."

At this point, the recorded series resumes, and the story continues to its end.

The NLAS is pleased to have been able to present this synopsis of the missing episodes for the first time; anyone who happens to run across any of the shows from this period, please contact us immediately!



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# The Secretary's Desk

The new year has brought a flood of mail to the Zekatif Seketerry's office, but a sincere effort has been made to tend to all of it. Should you write for some reason and do not get an immediate response, just be patient...an answer will come eventually.

Another batch of programs has been released from the Tape Library; these are contained on pages 33 - 38 of the catalog. As we promised in the last issue, these include the sporadic episodes from the two-year period between the story of the Lumburgers and the start of the half-hour series. We have been unable to locate the entire series, but until such a time as that happens, these 20 or so episodes will have to do. To obtain the new pages, just send a SASE as usual. However, because the Tape Library Catalog is now nearing completion, we are temporarily discontinuing the sale of the whole catalog to date. By summer, we should have it finished and at that time we will reissue it in a handsome new format. So just hang in there; if you don't have a catalog yet, you will be able to get one soon.

At this time, I'd like to take a moment to thank a few people who have helped make 1986 a great year for the NLAS. First of all, a special "thankee" to Santa Monica radio personality Bobb Lynes, who has untiringly promoted the NLAS ever since its inception. (He also designed our official NLAS logo.) Also, thanks to Barbara Watkins of SPERDVAC and to the Friends of Old Time Radio, both of whom have brought us new members. The NLAS has also received publicity in various nostalgia magazines, most notably Movie

Collector's World, which gave us a record number of responses.

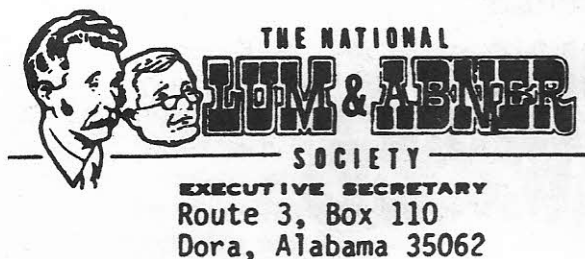
Our undying gratitude goes to L&A's half-hour series announcer Wendell Niles, who was generous enough to donate to us one of his original "Lum and Abner Show" scripts from 1949. Also, character actor Jerry Hausner has been keeping us well supplied with original photographs and memorabilia, as has Pat McCarver of Collector's Originals, who has located much rare L&A movie material. Of course, it's always a pleasure to hear from Ethel Huddleston Ball and the Stuckers at the L&A Museum...both of them have helped the NLAS above and beyond the call of duty.

And while we're at it, let's all give three cheers to the staff of Action Printing Company, who somehow manage to take our most difficult requests and make them turn out looking great. Folks, you're the best thing we've had since Uncle Donnie himself stopped printing the Jot'Em Down Journal.

In addition, there are many, many others who have brightened the past year, and if we missed mentioning you by name, we still appreciate you. 1987 looks like a banner year for the NLAS, with many surprises in the works!

One sad note: the NLAS deeply regrets the passing of Mr. Donald D. Pitchford, Sr., father of our president, Uncle Donnie Pitchford. Our sympathy is with the family.

- Tim Hollis, Zekatif Seketerry  
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