

October 1987

# MEET THE OSSIFERS ...

President:

"Uncle Donnie" Pitchford

Donnie Pitchford is a resident of Carthage, Texas. He received his bachelor's degree from Stephen F. Austin State University and his master's from the University of Texas at Tyler. He is currently serving his third year as broadcast journalism instructor at Carthage High School, and teaches a night class for Panola Junior College. Donnie and his wife Laura (a teacher of early childhood education at Carthage Primary) are members of Pisgah United Methodist Church of Carthage. Donnie was introduced to Lum and Abner by his late father, Don Pitchford Sr., in the mid 1960's, when father and son had lunch at a Lum's Restaurant in Memphis. Don Sr. aroused Donnie's curiosity by reminiscing about L&A, and ten years later, Donnie bought a record of L&A in the "budget" section of a music store. He became really "hooked" in 1981, when KHYM-Radio, Gilmer, Texas, began airing the original L&A programs. He and friend David Miller began trading L&A tapes and researching the classic team. Interested in art all his life, Donnie enjoys contributing illustrations to the Journal.



Vice-President:

"Singin' Sam" Brown

Sam Brown was raised on a farm in the Mississippi River bottoms of extreme southern Illinois, and currently resides in the town of Dongola, not too far from his boyhood home. In 1985, we reported to you that Rex Riffle was the oldest NLAS ossifer, but it seems Singin' Sam holds that honor by a few months. Sam is a journeyman lineman for the Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative. He and his wife Carole are members of the First Lutheran Church of Dongola, where Sam serves as a Sunday School teacher. Sam holds a bachelor's degree from Southeast Missouri State University. He became interested in Lum and Abner by listening to the rebroadcasts on WGGH-Radio from Marion, Illinois. A newspaper article on Mr. George Lillie's efforts to revive L&A prompted Sam to contact the gentleman, who put him in touch with David Miller and Donnie Pitchford. Donnie and Sam met at the 1982 "Lum and Abner Day" in Pine Ridge. The pair gave each other nicknames based on old radio characters. By 1983, Sam was corresponding with Tim Hollis, and soon the NLAS was born!!!



Tim Hollis is a lifelong resident of Dora, Alabama. It was Tim who conceived the idea for the NLAS, and developed the organization after becoming acquainted with Singin' Sam Brown. Tim received a B. A. in Communication in 1984 from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and is currently employed as an advertising director, and does freelance work in radio and television. Tim is a member of the Dora Church of God, and utilizes his talents as a puppeteer in ministry for the children. His interest in Lum and Abner grew out of his addiction to other radio shows, introduced to him by his parents. Tim's duties as secretary are extensive, and include laying out the Journal, handling the bulk mailing of the Journal, managing the tape library, coordinating the NLAS Conventions, handling correspondence, conducting Lum and Abner research, and many other activities. Tim would never say this himself, but since "Uncle Donnie" is writing this column, it should be known that Tim is the hardest working "ossifer" of the NLAS, and deserves much credit for its success!



Executive Secretary:

"Mousey" Tim Hollis



Rex Riffle is now a "city dweller" in Buckhannon, West Virginia, but grew up in a town just like Pine Ridge, called Johnstown. After serving in the Army, Rex attended West Virginia Wesleyan College and completed his bachelor's degree. For nearly a decade, he has taught at Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School, where he teaches sixth grade social studies. Rex is the proud papa of two youngins, Molly and Paul. Rex and his wife Peggy adopted a cat last year and named her Geraldine, after L&A's own feline. The Riffles attend First Baptist Church of Buckhannon, which is where they met and were married. Rex became interested in old time radio some years ago, and collected Jack Benny programs. His mother suggested he order some Lum and Abner tapes. He became addicted! Also a stamp and postmark collector, he found there really was a Pine Ridge, and in 1984 he drove a thousand miles to attend "L&A Day", where he met Tim and Sam for the first time, and was soon appointed Publicity Director. He contributes "The Party Line" and "Back in the Feed Room" to the Journal.

Publicity Director:

"Squire" Riffle

... OF THE N. L. A. S. !

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# THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

OCTOBER 1987

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### THE NATIONAL LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY

Zekatif Ossifers

#### PRESIDENT

Donnie Pitchford

#### VICE-PRESIDENT

Sam Brown

#### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Tim Hollis

#### PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

Rex Riffle

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"Lum and Abner were big stars  
 when Gomer Pyle was still  
 wetting the bed down in Alabama."

- Pat Buttram,  
 1966

COVER: Clark Gable visits his  
 good friends Chet and Tuffy and  
 director Harold Young on the set  
 of DREAMING OUT LOUD, 1940.  
 (Photo courtesy of Harriet Lauck.)

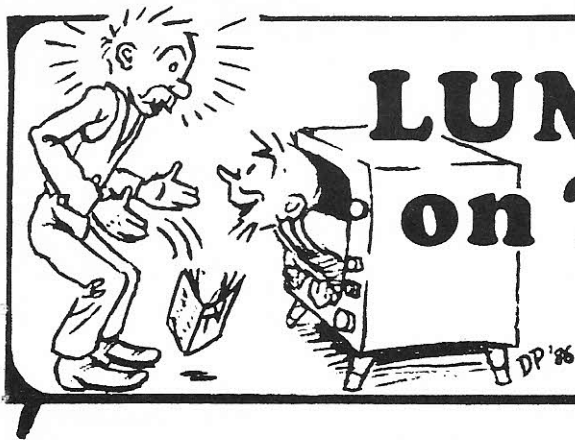
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 of Chester Lauck, Jr.

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\*\*\*WATCH OUR NEXT ISSUE FOR THE DEBUT OF  
 "THE PARTY LINE," THE NEW FEATURE THAT  
 YOU WRITE!!!\*\*\*



NORRIS GOFF AS OTIS PYLE AND FRANK SUTTON  
 AS SGT. CARTER IN A SCENE FROM "GOMER PYLE,  
 USMC," JANUARY 1, 1965



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

## Part 5 of a Series

For reasons best left to psychologists to figure out, the early-to-mid-1960's found the television schedules loaded with comedy shows with rural settings...they became known among TV historians as the "corncoms." Chief among these were such hits with the public (if not the critics) as "The Beverly Hillbillies," "Petticoat Junction," "Green Acres," "The Andy Griffith Show," etc. etc.

In the previous installment of this series, we examined Chet "Lum" Lauck's TV performance on a regional level ( in a series of political commercials for an Arkansas senator ). This time, we focus on Tuffy Goff's emergence from retirement to perform on network television. Not surprisingly, it was the "corncoms" that brought our friend back to the sound stages..appropriate, since many of the aforementioned series seem to be directly descended from Lum and Abner, not only in style and setting, but also in their striking similarities in characterizations! (For more NLAS theories and comparisons, consult the article "Lum and Abner: Their Ancestors and Descendants, Part II," which appeared way back yonder in the October 1984 issue of the Journal, and was "co-writ" by Tim Hollis, David Miller, and Yours Truly.)

One of the "corncoms" was the immensely popular spinoff of the classic "Andy Griffith Show," which starred the simple-minded simpleton who formerly ran the gas station in Mayberry, Gomer Pyle (who could have been Cedric Weehunt reincarnated). In September 1964, Gomer left his home town to join the Marines, and a new show was born: "Gomer Pyle, USMC." To say the show was a success can be proven by the fact that it seriously hurt the ratings of another show in its time slot, one hosted by none other than Jack Benny (WELL!). Into one memorable episode shuffled Gomer's grandfather, "Sgt. Otis Pyle, U.S. Cavalry..Retarded," played by that veteran of rural comedy, Tuffy Goff!

This episode went unseen for some time after its initial appearance on January 1, 1965, thanks to the unfortunate CBS policy of withholding the black & white season of programs in favor of the color shows when daily afternoon reruns were begun. Luckily, syndication packages are complete, and this program is once again being shown for us to enjoy.

The episode opens with mail call, as Gomer receives a letter from his beloved Granddaddy Pyle, who informs his grandson that he will soon be arriving in the area with his camper, and is looking forward to a visit. Meanwhile, Gomer is being subjected to embarrassing leadership training, in which the cranky Sgt. Carter orders each man to lead the platoon in drill. In typical Gomer Pyle fashion, our hero bungles his one and only chance, guiding the marching Marines into a collision course with the fuming sergeant.

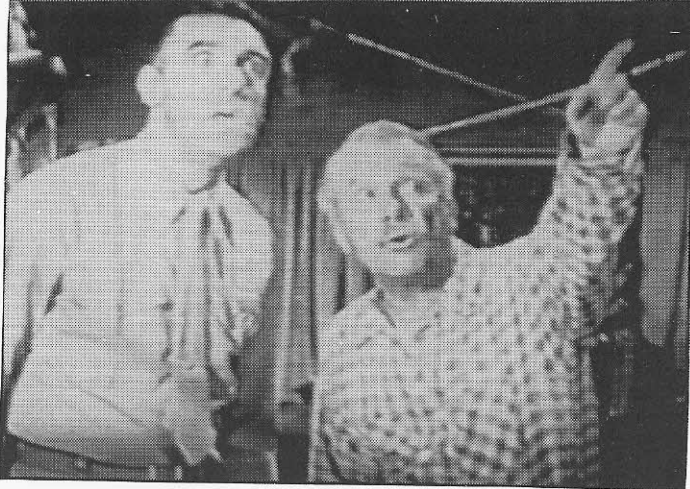
Cares are temporarily left behind as Gomer goes to visit his grandpa's camper. Tuffy Goff essentially plays Abner Peabody here, and is perfect for the role. His hair has naturally turned white, and he sports his own silver mustache rather than the phoney Abner beard of the RKO films ( in fact, he looks much like he did in the film fiasco "Lum and Abner Abroad" from 1954 ). His voice is slightly more gruff than before, but his characterization is pure Abner. Tuffy is every bit the polished performer on the 1965 TV screen. His facial expressions in the closeups are priceless.



Grandpa Pyle, a retired military man, spends his time traveling, and gives Gomer a special souvenir Grand Canyon pillow. A non-Abner running gag has Grandpa asking Gomer, "Are ya six foot?" and answering himself with, "Ya look six foot!" It isn't long before Gomer tells Grandpa about his failure on the

drill field. Grandpa is disturbed, because the Pyles have a history of military valor. Mr. Pyle works diligently to get Gomer into shape. He gives him lessons in "bellerin'" commands, and attempts to use children in the trailer park as substitute troops, an idea that fails dismally.

To give Gomer the gumption he needs to command the troops, Grandpa presents him with a good luck charm carried by several Pyles in several wars: a

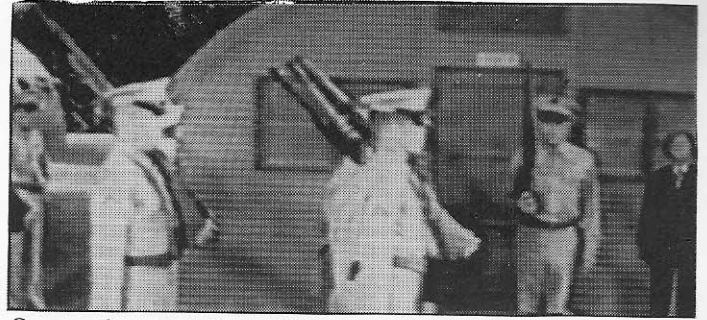


silver emblem that reads EXCELSIOR. That's all dandy, but Gomer tells Grandpa that he has already had his one chance to command, and he blew it ... the Sarge would never give him another chance at it. But old Otis Pyle has other ideas, and pays Sgt. Carter a visit alone (wearing what appears to be the same black suit and string bowtie that Abner was most often seen with). After insulting the younger sergeant's physical condition and stature ("You don't look six foot!"), Grandpa Pyle carefully tricks the



sarge into giving Gomer another chance at command. Carter, thinking the elder Pyle will be humiliated by his grandson's repeat performance, gleefully invites Grandpa to be his guest for the drill.

Comes the day of the great test, and a confident Gomer, EXCELSIOR in pocket, drills the troops surprisingly well! That is, until he discovers he has dropped the shiny good luck charm! Gomer panics and neglects his troops; a near disaster is averted when



Gomer locates the emblem on the ground, his confidence returns, and he orders the men to halt.

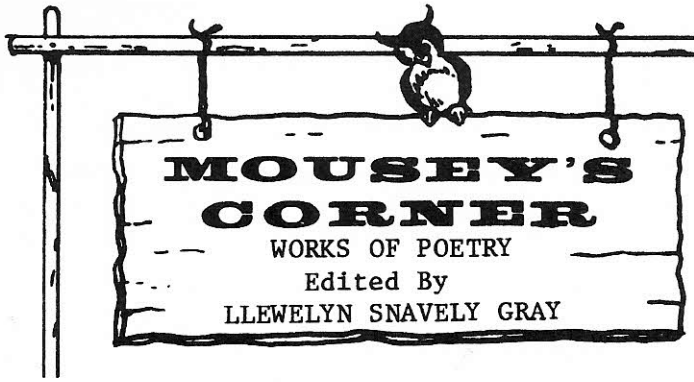
Later, Gomer and Grandpa Pyle celebrate their success back at the trailer. Grandpa reveals the secret of the EXCELSIOR emblem by returning it to its rightful place: as the trademark on his refrigerator door! "You mean it wasn't great-granddaddy's emblem that did it at all?" Gomer asks in amazement. "No, an' it wasn't some dinkus off a refrigerator door, neither," Grandpa replies. Then, pointing to Gomer's heart, "Recollect, son, it ain't what you got in yer pocket that counts; hit's what you got in there."



If the Gomer Pyle reruns are available in your area, I strongly recommend that you look for this episode. I believe you'll agree with me that Tuffy did an excellent job, and I regret that he did not reprise the role later. He did, however, step backward from spinoff to "parent" show to appear as another character on "The Andy Griffith Show" ... but that's next issue!

- Uncle Donnie Pitchford





I picked up a book of poems  
 Published by Edwards and Gray.  
 I thumbed through it for a minute  
 To see what it had to say.  
 The poems were mostly written  
 From Mousey's gifted pen.  
 Everything he wrote about  
 Was like a mother to him.



My reading was interrupted;  
 Abner asked me if I could afford  
 To invest some valuable time with him  
 Around the checker board.  
 I grannies, a man's never too busy  
 To play checkers with a friend;  
 "Set em up," I said, "I'll be the black-uns,  
 And I won't have to cheat to win!!"

Yes mom, those were the best of times,  
 The best I ever knew.  
 Though both now gone, they'll live on & on;  
 Lum and Abner, we'll never forget you.

- Kurt Jensen

**STRANGER THAN FICTION DEPARTMENT:** Just to show you how closely the minds of our members sometimes run together, we present the following evidence. The poem below was submitted some time ago by one of our members; at almost the same time, another member in a completely different part of the country was writing a similar poetic work. Here we present the first of the two submissions...in our next issue, we will present the other.

The hub of all activity  
 In the little Pine Ridge town  
 Was at the Jot'Em Down Store  
 When Saturday came around.  
 There stood mustached Lum Edwards,  
 Handsome, tall, and thin,  
 And his partner, Abner Peabody,  
 With goatee and glasses and grin.

"Howdy do you do, sir,"  
 Abner greets me with a smile.  
 Lum seemed to be a-studying  
 With serious face and squinted eyes.  
 Cedric Weehunt came in behind me;  
 He was the delivery boy.  
 He was making birdcalls on a whistle,  
 Apparently his favorite toy.

Grandpappy Spears was just leaving,  
 Taking with him the almanac.  
 "I doggies," Abner quickly scolded,  
 "Don't fergit to brang hit back."  
 These were the best of times,  
 The best I ever knew,  
 Lum and Abner on the radio  
 And later in feature films, too.

Two longs and a short the phone would ring  
 By the feed room, on the wall.  
 This time it was Squire Skimp  
 Who made the local call.  
 Squire was selling insurance,  
 But Lum and Abner paid no heed.  
 Squire was never noted  
 For nothing but dirty deeds.



Lum and Abner have had an effect on American society that continues to this day, sometimes in the oddest places. They have been mentioned on "The Cosby Show," and there was even a reference to them in a fantasy/science fiction novel, Wrack and Roll, by Bradley Denton. The game show "Jeopardy" has used them as one of its contest questions.

There was once a family in Texas that had twin bull calves on their ranch and named them...you guessed it, Lum and Abner. In the school where I teach, we had two assistant principals who constantly referred to themselves as I&A, especially when they had an unpleasant task to perform.

Probably one of the most pleasant surprises for me was to find out that the great western musical group, Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys, once recorded a special version of their hit song "San Antonio Rose" in honor of Lum and Abner. I liked that song so much that I have been collecting Bob Wills' material ever since!

- Rex Riffle

# LUM and ABNER In the News

## REPRINTS OF PAST LUM & ABNER ARTICLES

(Since Mena, Arkansas, was the home town of Chet Lauck and Tuffy Goff, it was only natural that the local newspaper, The Mena Star, would take more than a passing interest in their careers and activities. As an illustration, consider the articles below, which all appeared in the Star during July and August, 1938. Thanks to Shirley Cannon of Mena, without whose help these rare articles would never have been discovered.)

### "Grandpappy Spears" Dies at Pine Ridge

Allec Cling Wilhite, Pioneer Mountain Farmer, Was Original of Lum and Abner Character.

Funeral service for Allec Cling Wilhite, pioneer mountain farmer of Montgomery county who was made famous by Lum and Abner as "Grandpappy Spears" and who died at his home near Pine Ridge Saturday afternoon about 4 o'clock, was held Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock at Oden.

Original plans were to have the service in the Oden Baptist church but before the funeral hour the building was filled to overflowing and it was decided to move outside where the last rites were conducted under the spreading oak trees on the church lawn. It was estimated that more than 500 attended the funeral. Rev. J. B. Liles of Big Fork and Rev. J. A. Morgan of Oden officiated and burial at the Oden cemetery was directed by the Beasley-Wood Funeral Home of Mena. The pallbearers were Ottis Huddleston, Odis Campbell, Raymond E. Lee, Roy Garrett, Bun Lawrence and Dan Davis.

Mr. Wilhite was born October 18, 1856, near Oden. He followed the profession of farming all his life and seldom left his home community. It was said that "Grandpappy" had never been out of the state and one of his rare trips out of his home county was on April 26, 1936, when he went to Little Rock and was the guest of Lum and Abner when the radio team came to the capital for the ceremonies incident to the official changing of the name of Waters to Pine Ridge. He was also a familiar figure at the annual banquet-meeting of the Polk County Possum Club, at which gatherings he popularly received a large share of attention. He was a member of the Baptist church.

### Airplane Was Flying Close to Pine Ridge

Pine Ridge, capital of the land o' "Lum & Abner" had unexpected thrills Thursday when an airplane swept over the little town, and traveled so low disaster was feared. According to some observers the plane at times was within twenty feet of the ground, and in its circling about the little hamlet clipped top limbs from some of the trees.

The purpose of the low flying was not revealed, but many Pine Ridge residents believe the occupants of the plane were attempting close up photography of this famous spot.

### Ouachitas Are Unknown to Some Writers

Publicity men still mistake the Ozarks for the Ouachitas and give those hills in North Arkansas credit that's due the wonderland south of the river. The Radio News in the July number, repeats the mistake. The publication has an excellent article about "Lum & Abner" and gives a most interesting article about the Mena radio stars, but misplaces the place of origin for these creators of Pine Ridge philosophy and fun. The Radio News in a big headline proclaims them as "Rural Wits from the Ozarks."

### Dick Huddleston Gets His First Airplane Ride at Indianapolis Air Meet

About the time that "Lum" was getting used to dry land after a long ocean trip coming back to the United States, Dick Huddleston, another famous Pine Ridge citizen, was getting a big thrill in Indianapolis where he was a guest at the big air show last Sunday. A news item in an Indianapolis paper, in telling of the show, said:

"Among the celebrities who visited the show are Maj. James Doolittle of St. Louis, Mo., speed flyer; Dick Huddleston, of Lum 'n Abner fame . . . and several automobile race drivers."

Here is Dick's letter to The Star:

Indianapolis, Ind., Aug. 15, 1938.  
Dear Mr. St. John:

I can't keep from writing you and telling you what a nice time I had Sunday and what a thrill I got out of it. I was guest at the great air show here. They have one of the best ports in the country. It was said there were 150

planes here for the day and 2,500 people.

I was taken up for my first airplane ride here. When I was introduced to this big crowd of people the master of ceremonies told the people I had never been up in a plane. Then all the pilots wanted to take me up. I just went up in a 16-passenger plane and then a very famous pilot wanted to take me up in a two-seater, and I went. When we were up 3,000 feet he would have me take the stick and maneuver the plane a little, and gee, did I get a thrill to do that, and it traveling 140 miles an hour.

They did everything that can be done with a plane here at this show. One man took off and landed back on top of the same auto. Another man made a parachute jump from two miles high and many other stunts that are too numerous to mention.

I am enclosing a paper clipping telling the many things they did. And, oh boy, was that some sight for a country fellow like myself.

We are leaving here for Ohio tonight.

DICK HUDDLESTON.

## VACATION OF "LUM EDWARDS" NEARS THE END

**Mr. and Mrs. Chester Lauck  
and Children Left Friday for  
Hot Springs—Back in  
Hollywood by Sept. 2.**

With the allotted time for a vacation at home having expired, Mr. and Mrs. Chester H. Lauck and children Shirley and Nancy, left Friday for Hot Springs where they will visit for a few days and then continue on to Hollywood, where the team of Lum and Abner will be re-united after a six week's separation and will start immediate preparations for going back on the air early in September.

The visit of the radio star and his family in Mena following the return of Mr. and Mrs. Lauck from Europe, occasioned a family reunion at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lauck, parents of "Lum". From the Rio Grande valley came Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Lauck of Pharr, Tex., to see "Lum" and attend the reunion, while the rest of the family making up the reunion group were Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lauck Jr., and Mrs. Ellen Lauck Wood and children Billy and Mary Jo, all of Mena.

It was a rather intensive week with various functions being staged to honor the radio entertainer and his family. There was a stag party at the Legion Hut, a special Lions club luncheon at the Antlers, a reception dance at the Elks and other affairs, to say nothing of several golf games and fishing expeditions, trips over the Skyway Drive, through the Mena Recreational area of the Ouachita National Forest and of course to Pine Ridge, locale of the Lum and Abner programs.

While Dick Huddleston was not at Pine Ridge during "Lum's" visit there, being now in Ohio where he is traveling with the Pine Ridge Follies, a vaudeville troop, "Lum" no doubt got inspiration and material perhaps which will be worked into the broadcast programs this fall and winter.

When word came to Mena that "Lum" would spend a week here following their European tour, there was considerable speculation as to whether the radio star had gone 'high hat.' The week's stay convinced the skeptical ones that such was not the case. It was the same old "Chet" that used to be a familiar figure on Mena streets, in local business circles and social, sports and church activities.

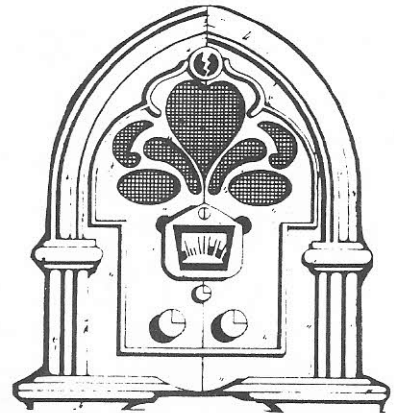
Sunday morning he taught his old class at the First Methodist church and later in the week obliged the local baseball team by attending in person and umpiring the first two innings.

Before leaving he expressed his appreciation for what the Old Home Town had done in honoring himself and family while here and said it had been a most enjoyable stay.

"We will take a train from Little Rock early next week," Chet said, and expect to arrive in Hollywood September 2, and get down to business on our first program which will be on the air Sept. 5."

He explained that the programs would go back on the air on the "three a week" schedule for the time being at least but thought possibly after the first of the year the original five programs a week might be again heard.

Miss Velma McCall, private secretary of Lum and Abner, who came to Mena last Sunday, left Friday morning on the southbound KCS passenger train and will go directly back to California. The visit to Arkansas was the first of Miss McCall who said that after having written so much about Arkansas for "the boys" she was delighted at the opportunity to "come and see it" for herself. She visited in Little Rock and Hot Springs before coming on to Mena.



## ARCHIE CAMPBELL

1915-1987

We are sorry to report the August 29 death of one of our Honorary Members, comedian Archie Campbell. Mr. Campbell was a star of the "Hee Haw" TV series, and was most noted for his comically mangled versions of famous bedtime stories, such as "Rindercellar," "The Pee Little Thrigs," and "Beeping Sleuty."

Around 1970, Campbell was slated to play the role of Abner in a never-produced Lum and Abner TV pilot written by Roz Rogers. We have been unable to find a copy of the script, but we believe it still exists. He was made an Honorary Member of the NLAS in July, 1985.

It is certain that Archie Campbell's unique brand of comedy will be missed by all.



# “AND NOW...”

Howdy, and welcome to a new feature, entitled "And Now...", which is designed to report current events in the "Wonderful World" of L&A! What more fitting title than those familiar words that opened thousands of memorable Lum and Abner programs, and prepared us for what was happening "now" in Pine Ridge. Lum and Abner - related events are happening "now", in other parts of the country besides Pine Ridge, so let's take Diogenes Smith's lantern and shine a little light into all the corners that's dark and stuff. I think.

As we look in on the little community of Pine Ridge today (1987), we find NLAS Publicity Director Rex "Squire" Riffle and his wife Peggy, admiring some recent donations to the Lum and Abner Museum. Pictured with Rex and Peggy below is Mrs. Kathy Stucker.



Spread across one of the counters in the Jot 'Em Down Store are a number of photographs donated by Mr. Joe Riddle of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Mr. Riddle, a longtime fan of Lum and Abner, was acquainted with Chet Lauck, and has collected L&A memorabilia for a number of years. He has been very helpful to the museum in the past by providing numerous materials.

Meanwhile, down in Dallas, Texas, Bill Bragg, "the man with a million friends", is doing an excellent job of promoting both the Lum and Abner program and the NLAS! Bill is Founder and Executive Curator of the National Museum of Communications, Inc., and hosts a special series of broadcasts on the Yesterday USA Superstation, which can be made available free of charge to everyone, including radio stations and cable television companies. If you own a satellite dish, you can tune in the Yesterday USA Superstation on Spacenet 1 Transponder 21 Audio Sub-Carrier 6.2! (Doggies, sech technicalology!) Yesterday USA can be heard between 6:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. Central Standard Time, seven nights a week. Says Mr. Bragg, "Our purpose is twofold. First, we want to preserve and

present radio broadcasting as it was during the 1920's, 1930's, 1940's and 1950's. And second, we want to tell the world about our great museum, and solicit tax-deductible contributions to help sustain its operation."

Mr. Bragg has been kind enough to give the NLAS numerous plugs on his broadcasts, and has recently made special arrangements to air Lum and Abner episodes! Lum and Abner have met the satellite! How interesting it is to think that these programs that were recorded on outdated 16-inch transcription disks are today being transmitted by such modern methods. The NLAS extends a hearty "thankee" to Bill Bragg!

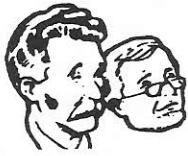
Southern Illinois seems to be a hotbed of Lum and Abner activity. As you remember from our last issue, this area is the home of Kurt Jensen and Ed Frost, two pastors who use their vocal talents to recreate the spirit of Lum and Abner (and many other classic radio characters!) for 1980's audiences. Of course, this is also the home of Singin' Sam Brown, who was asked to appear in behalf of the NLAS by radio station WGGH of Marion, Illinois, in a special event at Mack's Super Foods. WGGH carries the syndicated Lum and Abner series, and Mack's sponsors the broadcasts, and conducts promotional activities that make folks sit up and take notice (see last issue again for Kurt and Ed's participation). WGGH, to express their appreciation, presented Mack's with a framed print of Uncle Donnie Pitchford's 1982 Lum and Abner painting (which was reproduced on the cover of the June, 1986 Jot 'Em Down Journal).



Pictured above at the August 8 event are, from left-to-right, Singin' Sam Brown, Fritzi Janes and husband Mack Janes (owners of Mack's Super Foods), and Scott Watson and Marcia Raubach (from WGGH Radio). Many thanks to The Hometown Newspaper of Marion for the photo.

See you folks later!

- Uncle Donnie



## Memories of **LUM and ABNER**®

( This month's contributor, Bobs Watson, appeared as the conscience-ridden little boy, Jimmy, in Lum and Abner's feature DREAMING OUT LOUD, 1940. )

I was about nine years old when I worked with Lum and Abner in their very first motion picture, DREAMING OUT LOUD. They treated me great when we worked on that film; they were just very easy to get along with, they were fun-loving, they were two men who enjoyed what they were doing. They just seemed to love each other so much, and the whole process of making motion pictures.

Working on the picture was a real joy. I got to do some fun things in it: I remember the rain scene, where they had the water pipes up above to make it look like it was raining, and how much fun it was for me to stand off to one side and watch it. I kind of wanted to get underneath it, and be a part of all that fun that was going on, but at that particular part of the story I was supposed to be at home, dying with pneumonia, so I couldn't take part in it.

Toward the conclusion of the filming, I remember making a comment in the bedroom scene where I had pneumonia and was dying; that was one of the last scenes I did in the picture, as I recall ... Between takes, while they were setting up to do another scene, I was out of the bed and had my robe on, just waiting for the next scene to take place. It was supposed to be my room, and in the room there was this really neat sailboat, and I stood over there admiring that thing (my dad had always taught me to never touch the props). And one of them...I think it was Chet...came up to me and said, "Do you like that?" And I said, "I sure do; I've always wanted to have something like that." (This was just in passing.) And at the conclusion of the filming, Lum and Abner had purchased that boat from the studio and had autographed it for me! They said, "What do you want to call it?" At first, I said I wanted to call it Lum and Abner, but they said, "No, that's really not a name for a boat." So I said, "Well then, it's got to be called the Dreaming Out Loud." And so, Chet took an India ink pen and wrote on both sides of the front of the boat, Dreaming Out Loud. And on the side of it, they wrote "To Bobs, from Lum and Abner."



Lum and Abner were certainly well-known in radio, and moved on into motion pictures, but they were also the first two actors from a motion picture to ever be televised in Hollywood. And I'm proud to say that I was with them the night that we went over to the old Don Lee Studios to do the broadcast. They had the television cameras set up, and we were called upon to do a scene from the movie. We did the scene in which I start to run out of the Jot'Em Down Store, but they stop me and then we sit and talk about what is troubling me. It was a very interesting experience, because I wasn't quite able to grasp what was going on, but in those days of early television [ 1940 ], who was???

God bless you all!

- REV. BOBS WATSON



## News from the **TAPE LIBRARY**

Rejoice, O faithful readers, your patience has been rewarded! At long last ( too long ), the TAPE LIBRARY CATALOG is now once more available in its new, revised form!

Many members have requested information on the availability of a Lum and Abner program log. Well, the Tape Library Catalog is the closest thing to that that we are likely to see for a while. As far as we know, our catalog is unique in that it presents the CORRECT broadcast dates for the Lum and Abner shows, as confirmed by the original scripts. It contains virtually the entire syndicated series of programs, plus several others not available from any other source. It covers the shows all the way through the last known recorded episodes in 1954.

Here is the procedure to follow if you want one: should you already have an old copy of the catalog, just return it to us and a new one will be sent at no charge (since some of the tapes have been renumbered, the old one would be of no further use to you.) If you do not have an old copy, the price of the new edition is \$5.00. It includes all the information about how to go about ordering the shows you want.

Now is the opportunity; don't let it pass you by!  
Send orders ( and old catalogs ) to Route 3, Box 110, Dora, AL 35062.



L TO R: NORRIS GOFF, HAROLD YOUNG, IRVING BACON, CHET LAUCK, AND BOBS WATSON AT THE DON LEE TELEVISION STUDIO, HOLLYWOOD, 1940

-----Advertisement-----

*Visit* **The Lum and Abner Museum  
and Jot 'Em Down Store**

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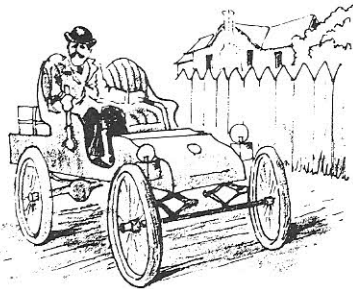
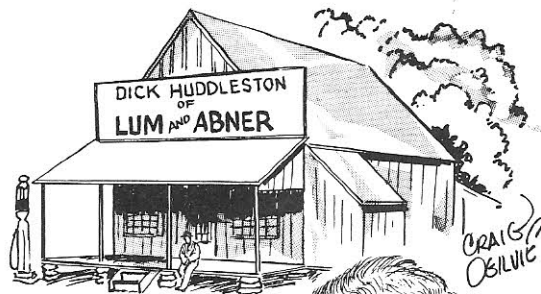
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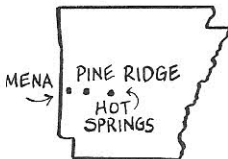
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# This is Arkansas

PINE RIDGE WAS ORIGINALLY CALLED "WATERS," BUT THE NAME WAS CHANGED WHEN THE "LUM AND ABNER" RADIO SHOW STARTED USING CHARACTERS BASED ON PEOPLE AND PLACES IN THE AREA.



IN 1903, LITTLE ROCK HAD A TOTAL OF FOUR AUTOMOBILES!



DURING THE 1930s, CHET (LUM) LAUCK AND NORRIS (ABNER) GOFF WERE RANKED AMONG THE TOP U.S. RADIO ENTERTAINERS. THE COMEDY TEAM FROM MENA, GOT THEIR START ON RADIO STATION KTHS IN HOT SPRINGS.



This feature presented as a public service by this publication.  
 Approved by the Arkansas Department of Tourism  
 One Capitol Mall, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72201

ABOVE: Newspaper feature drawn for the Arkansas Department of Tourism, 1986. Courtesy of Chester Lauck, Jr.

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