

*Official Publication of the National Lum and Abner® Society*

*Happy Halloween!*



OCTOBER 1991

# THE HONORABLE LUM AND ABNER®

In the winter of 1989-90, the Lum & Abner Jot 'Em Down Store & Museum received a request from the Fuji Bank of Tokyo, Japan, for a photograph and some information about the old stores. The bank planned to sponsor a series of magazine advertisements about unusual American tourist attractions for possible travel plans by Japanese readers. A limited number would be selected and a different destination would be in each magazine, beginning in the near future. The required materials were sent, and nothing else was heard from the bank until July 1991.

A large envelope with a Tokyo return address arrived in Pine Ridge. The envelope contained a very attractive magazine, much like our *Reader's Digest* in size, except that it looked "backwards," since it opened from what for us is the back. If you read Japanese, you read from right to left, and you turn pages from left to right.

Judging from the photographs and illustrations, articles range from fashions and sewing, how-to hair tips, and cooking and gardening guides, to short stories, children's stories, health and fitness information, an Agatha Christie story, and movie reviews. There are also articles that seem to be about career choices, industries, leaders, foreign travel, politics, school, poetry, home and office furniture, and business and consumer reports. The beautiful color photographs of the rock gardens and the flowers are the most impressive, but the food runs a close second.

Eventually, if you started at what is the front of the magazine, instead of the back as we did, you find a color photograph of the Lum & Abner Jot 'Em Down Store and Museum inside the back cover, with a full-page article which we presume gives the historical information that we provided. We can read the address (which is given in English), and the various numbers included in the statistics, but would be interested if someone could translate the entire text.

Many of you know that Lum and Abner made the first transoceanic radio broadcast between two members of a comedy team when Chet Lauck was in Europe and Tuffy Goff talked to him from their USA studios (1938). The *Lum and Abner* series was heard on Armed Forces Radio during World War II. Now Pine Ridge has gone international again! People from across the United States come to spend a few minutes or a few hours in the Lum & Abner Museum, but foreign travelers have usually been from Europe, with a few from Africa, the Near East, Australia, and New Zealand. Now the Far East may learn about this corner of Americana.

A little closer to home, the Lum & Abner Museum has several new exhibits received from California, Indiana, and Oklahoma.

Visiting from California, John Wilhite, the grandson of A.A. McKinzie (who operated the general store that now serves as the L&A Museum), donated several family artifacts, including a pillow his mother, Mae McKinzie Wilhite, had made using lace sold from A.A.'s peddlers' wagon. This peddlers' wagon was used before McKinzie's general store was built in 1904. He also donated some carvings he had made over the years.

After traveling from Indiana to attend the 1991 NLAS Convention, Mr. & Mrs. Bob Carroll donated a "Let's Lect Lum" campaign button from 1936, when Lum Edwards ran for

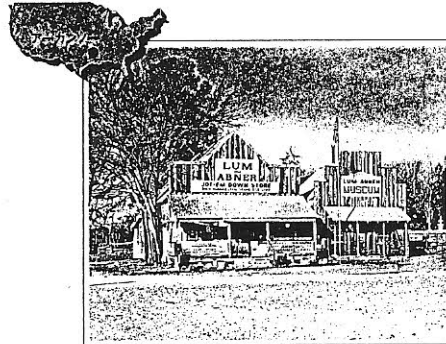
President of the United States as a Demopublican (see the October 1988 *Jot 'Em Down Journal* for that story).

From Yukon, Oklahoma. NLAS member John Knuppel sent his last year's car tags. His license number is LUM-ABR. Keeping a personalized tag year after year as John does costs a good deal more than a regular tag, but a real Lum & Abner fan doesn't care! Our thanks go out to all of the above people, especially the Fuji Bank of Tokyo, Japan. Anyone who may be able to furnish a translation of the magazine article (reproduced here) should contact the Lum & Abner Museum at P.O. Box 38, Pine Ridge, AR 71966.

- Kathy Stucker  
Pine Ridge Historian

## 富士銀行

### 富士の博物館めぐり



ラム&アブナー博物館と  
ジョットムダウン・ストア  
(アメリカ)

●開館年 1971 ●所在地 "LUM & ABNER HWY 88", Pine Ridge, Arkansas 71966 U.S.A. ●電話 501-326-4442 ●開館時間 3月1日から11月15日まで 火-土 9:00~17:00, 日 12:00~17:00/ 冬季は予約のみ開館 ●休館日 月曜、イースター、感謝祭、クリスマス、元旦 ●入館料 大人50セント、子供25セント、予約団体無料 ●撮影 自由

写真：ジョットムダウン・ストアと博物館

## 1930年代、 全米で最も愛された雑貨店。

かつて「君の名は」がラジオプログラムで絶大な人気を誇っていた頃、「放送の始まる午後8時になると女湯がカラになる」という噂がまことしやかに流されたものです。さて1930年代のアメリカでは、「ジョットムダウン・ストア」というプログラムが大人気。アーカンソー州のバインリッジにある実在の商店街を舞台にしたこのコメディは、当時の他のどんなラジオ番組より多くのファンレターを集め、その数は週になんと150万通。その人気ぶりは、当時「ウォーターズ」と呼ばれていた街の名前を、ラジオの中の架空の街「バインリッジ」に正式に変えてしまったほど。この博物館は、「ジョットムダウン・ストア」を企画・制作し、声優も努めていたラムとアブナーの名コンビを記念してつくられたものです。街の雑貨店だったジョットムダウン・ストアは固定の史跡になっており、今世紀初頭のアメリカの小さな街がどんなものだったか、番組を知らない私たちに懐かしさ語りかけてくれます。

●このシリーズは、世界中の各種博物館のご好意により富士銀行へ送られてきた写真・データをもとに、ご紹介するものです。

好評お取り扱い中  
定期おまとめ・高金利選択機能つき  
富士の新型スーパーMMC



# FUJI BANK

The Jot 'Em Down Journal, Volume 8, Number 2 (Whole Number 44), October 1991. Published bi-monthly by The National Lum and Abner Society, a non-profit organization. Membership, including a subscription to the *Journal*, is \$8.00 per year. Send editorial and subscription correspondence to the Executive Secretary, Tim Hollis, Route 3, Box 110, Dora, AL 35062.

# THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

## October 1991

### *In This Issue:*

\*\*\*\*\*

**THE NATIONAL  
LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY**

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Donnie Pitchford

**VICE-PRESIDENT**  
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**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
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**Halloween With Lum & Abner.....2**  
A classic script from 1944

**Lum & Abner & Their Sponsors.....5**  
This series concludes with a look at the degrading events of the 1950's.

**Lum & Abner In The Twilight Zone.....6**  
A photo feature of some of the more bizarre L&A stuff that has been going on.

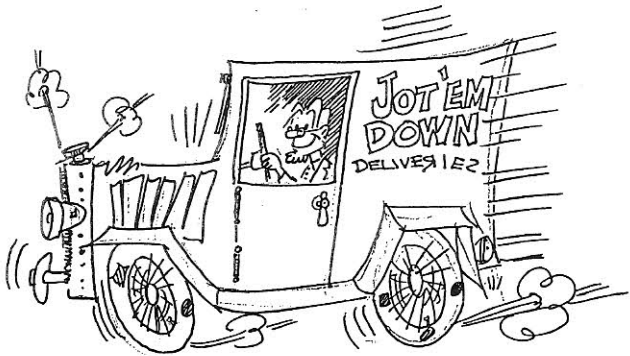
**The KTHS Story.....8**  
Historical data on the station where L&A made their debut 60 years ago.

**Meet The Members.....9**  
The spotlight turns on one of our resident artistics.

**New Tape Library Releases.....10**  
The moment you've all been waiting for!!

**COVER:** Lum & Abner help mad scientist Dr. Van Dyke (Luis Alberni) mix his "Jekyll & Hyde" formula in the feature film *Two Weeks To Live* (RKO, 1943).

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



# HALLOWEEN

## LUM and ABNER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAROLD PETERSEN

(The following *Lum and Abner* episode was broadcast on October 31, 1944. It may be heard on Tape #156 in the NLAS Tape Library.)

**ANNOUNCER:** And now, let's see what's going on down in Pine Ridge. Well, this is Halloween and the old fellows have dropped everything else to join in the activities of the holiday. As we look in on the little community today, it's evening, and we find Lum attired in a ghost costume, knocking on Abner's door. Listen...

**(SOUND: Knocking on door)**

**(SOUND: Hound dog barking)**

**LUM:** Hello?! Git away from here, Blue!! Git away!! Abner, come out here an' git this dawg 'fore I bust sumpin' over hiz head!

**(SOUND: Barking & knocking continue)**

**LUM:** Abner!!! Git away from here, Blue!! Dad blame it, ain't ye got no sense atall?!

**(SOUND: Door opens)**

**ABNER:** Here, here, Blue! Git back under th' house thar 'fore I beat th' daylights outa ye! Ain't ye ashamed o' yoreself, runnin' out here an' barkin' at folks thataway... who iz it? Whattaye want??

**LUM:** Hit's me, that's who it tiz.

**ABNER:** Well, fer the land sakes, I never knowed it twuz you, Lum, with all that riggin' on! Come on in an' lemme see how ye look!

**LUM:** Well, git that dawg back, thar.

**ABNER:** Aw come on, he ain't gonna bother you.

**LUM:** Naw, he wouldn't botherye... wouldn't do no more than take a leg offin' a feller.

**ABNER:** Why, he couldn't bite ye if he wanted to... he ain't got a tooth in hiz head, Lum.

**LUM:** Grannies, he don't need no teeth. Agin he bristles up an' comes at a feller thataway, he scares th' daylights outa ye.

**ABNER:** Ha ha, oh he puts up a good bluff! Banters everthing that comes on th' place.

**LUM:** Well, he ort ta have sense enuf ta know who I am. I've knowed him ever since he wuz a pup.

**ABNER:** Well, nobody wouldn't know ye in that outfit ye got on, Lum! If you ain't a sight! Ye look like a haint!

**LUM:** I'm a ghost.

**ABNER:** Well, ye orta ta have some horns an' whiskers...

**LUM:** GHOST, Abner!! G-O-S-T, not "goat."

**ABNER:** Oh well, come on in an' let me look at ye!

**LUM:** Ain't ye goin' ta th' party?

**ABNER:** No, I bettur not go, I reckon... the womarn an' Papa, they went over thar, but I decided I couldn't make it.

**LUM:** Well, lemme git this pillercase off my head; I cain't see nothin'.

**ABNER:** Ye don't look much like a piller.

**LUM:** I cut some holes in here ta see through, but th' thing's slipped aroun' ta where they're clean in th' back. Hadta feel my way over here.

**ABNER:** That's a purty good gitup ye got on thar, Lum... I never woulda knowed ye. Never woulda knowed ye, I don't b'leave.

**LUM:** I thought ye said this afternoon you wuz goin' ta th' party.

**ABNER:** Well, I wuz sorta aimin' on goin', but then I got ta studyin' 'bout it an' jest allowed I'd bettur git out here an' try ta keep some o' these boys outa divilment tonite if I could. I don't aim ta put up with none o' their carryin' on tonite. They jest might nigh turned this town upside downwards last year, an' I don't aim ta stand fer it agin.

**LUM:** Oh well, they're jest havin' some fun.

**ABNER:** Aw, priddle praddle.

**LUM:** Halloween don't come but oncet a year.

**ABNER:** That's jest oncet too often, too. If I ketch ary one o' them younguns doin' a thing tonite that he orten't to, I'm goin' ta throw 'em right smack in jail!

**LUM:** Aw, they don't mean no harm, Abner. Let 'em go! Let 'em have some fun!

**ABNER:** No sir, I'm the deputy town marshal here, an' hit's my job ta perTECT folkses' property! This thing o' jest lettin' the younguns in this communiti run wild jest 'cause hit's Halloween has got ta stop! Hit's a reflect on mah office, that's whut it tiz.

**LUM:** Reflect on yore office?

**ABNER:** Why shore it tiz! Folks'll be jumpin' me all day tomorrow 'cause somebody's took their front gate off, or wantin' me ta locate a wagon they've pulled off, er sumpin'.





**LUM:** Oh, they don't blame you with it... not on Halloween night.

**ABNER:** They do too! They'll go off ta this party an' then 'speck me ta look after all their houses fer 'em, an' see that th' younguns don't bother nothin' while they're gone!

**LUM:** Well, they orta ta take it in th' Halloween spirit. No useta git mad about it.

**ABNER:** Well they do, though.

**LUM:** 'Course, th' younguns orten't ta do no damage ta nobody's property... ain't nothin' funny 'bout that. But "tick-tackin'," an' carryin' jack-o-lanterns, an' one thing or another, is all right.

**ABNER:** I don't see no sense in any of it. Jes' looks like th' younguns here o' late haz jes' gone plumb hawg wild.

**LUM:** I don't know ez they're enny worse now than they ever wuz, Abner...

**ABNER:** Ain't no worse?!?

**LUM:** When most o' us wuz growin' up, we wuz might nigh as bad.

**ABNER:** Oh no we weren't, Lum! No we weren't!!

**LUM:** I don't suppose you recollect who them three boys wuz that went over ta Grandpappy Spears' house when he wuz havin' that Halloween party years ago, an' climbed up on top o' th' house an' laid boards on top o' th' chimbley an' smoked everbody outa th' house, do ye?

**ABNER:** Ha ha ha ha!! Law me, I might nigh fergot 'bout that!!

**LUM:** Yeah, I thought ye had.

**ABNER:** I never seed folks pile outa a house so fast in my life ez that bunch! Let's see now, who wuz that? That wuz you, an' Caleb Weehunt, an'... uh... um..... me.

**LUM:** That's jes' who it twuz.

**ABNER:** Hmm. Don'tcha know, Lum, 'fore we done that we onhitched th' teams that wuz tied out in front o' th' house, an' turned th' horses an' mules loose right down th' big road! Everbody had ta walk home!

**LUM:** Heh heh, I'd fergot about that.

**ABNER:** Oh, it twuz freezin' cold... snowin'... wuz they mad! That wuz my idee, I b'leave. I thought that stunt up, I think.

**LUM:** Yeah, you useta be a sight on Halloween. Weren't nothin' too ornery fer you ta do.

**ABNER:** You recollect th' time, Lum, we went over ta Ole Vesses' an' threwed all his stove wood down th' well?! Ever stick o' it!!

**LUM:** Pore Ole Vess had ta git up th' next mornin' an' borrow wood from hiz neighbors 'fore he could start a fire.

**ABNER:** Funny thing about it tiz, Ole Vess had ta go ta th' expense o' havin' hiz well cleaned. Jes' ruirned hiz drinkin' water, might nigh.

**LUM:** Oh yeah, he wuz mad enuf ta bite.

**ABNER:** Hiz womarn carried water from th' creek fer months.

**LUM:** Tried hiz best ta find out who done that... said if he ever found out who done it, he'd law 'em ta th' high court.

**ABNER:** Yeah, he'd a-done it, too. That's jes' how ornery an' cranky that varmint wuz!

**LUM:** But th' funniest thing we ever done ta my notions wuz th' time we hitched ol' Doc Murphy's horse backerds in the shaves ta th' buggy.

**ABNER:** Doc Murphy? I don't b'leave I recollect that...

**LUM:** Well, you wuz thar! You helped do it!

**ABNER:** Well!

**LUM:** Don'tcha know, we passed by somebody's place an' ol' Doc wuz makin' a call thar, an' we hadn't no more'n got hiz horse turned aroun' backerds in th' shaves till he come out.

**ABNER:** Oh, I recollect now! Ha ha, he never took no notice, it twuz so dark there. He crawled up thar an' give th' horse a lick with th' buggy whip, an' run that buggy backerds right into a rail fence!! Dumped ol' Doc right out!!

**LUM:** Turned that buggy over an' liked ta have broke ol' Doc Murphy's neck. Now that wuz ornery... that twuz mean. Doc ort to have took that horse whip an' give us a good lickin'.

**ABNER:** Well, thar's another thing too, Lum... I'll tell you, a lickin' in them days wuz sumpin' ye never fergot right away! When they gived ye a whoopin', ye stayed whooped fer some time.

**LUM:** I jes' called ta mind, Abner... do ye recollect th' time when me an' you slipped over ta Dad Fosses' place?

**ABNER:** Dad Fosses' place! Yeah, they wuz all settin' thar at th' table eatin' supper, an' we taken a big handful o' shelled corn an' throwed it up agin th' dinin' room winder! Liked ta have scared 'em ta death!!

**LUM:** Yeah, that's whut I wuz thinkin' about... never will fergit it!

**ABNER:** Ye know, littul Zular wuz jes' fixin' ta take a drink o' milk, an' hit scared her so bad she throwed that glass clean in her grandpaw's face!

**LUM:** Well you know, Dad Foss had a big mouthful o' grub at th' time, an' hit scared him so bad he liked to choked ta death. Las' time I seed him they wuz all in thar beatin' him on th' back... had him down in th' kitchen floor.

**ABNER:** Yeah, jes' a-trompin' him. Law me! Doggies, talkin' over ole times thissaway jes' might nigh makes me wanna git out an' do sumpin' tonite!

**LUM:** Yeah, go aroun' pushin' over littul houses an' stuff like that.

**ABNER:** Halloween... I did love it, did love it. I'm jes' a good mind ta hunt me up a bunch o' boys an' jine in with 'em tonite, Lum.

**LUM:** Now wouldn't you look good out playin' Halloween pranks at yore age??

**ABNER:** Well, nobody wouldn't know who it twuz! Whaddaye say, Lum? Let me git a sheet an' dress up like a ghost, an' we'll both go!

**LUM:** No sir, no sir! Not me! I tried that a few years back.

**ABNER:** Ye did, huh?

**LUM:** Yeah, I wuz comin' home from a Halloween party one nite, an' met a big bunch o' boys pullin' somebody's wagon down th' road. Said they wuz gonna put it up on top o' th' schoolhouse, so I tole 'em I'd jes' go along an' help 'em.

**ABNER:** Why, shore!

**LUM:** Sorta brought back ole times ta me, ye know?

**ABNER:** Yeah, I ain't tried that in ages.

**LUM:** So we taken th' wagon all apart an' got up on top o' th' schoolhouse an' pulled it up with a rope... piece at a time... set it back together up thar on top.

**ABNER:** I helped do that oncet... that iz a job!

**LUM:** Oh, hit tooken us might nigh till daylight th' next mornin'.

**ABNER:** Oh, shore.

**LUM:** An' the funny part o' th' whole thing wuz, I got up th' next mornin' ta hitch up my team an' my wagon wuz gone!! I started lookin' fer it... an' blamed if I hadn't worked all night helpin' put my own wagon up on top o' th' schoolhouse!!!

**ABNER:** Well I do know!! Ha ha, that wuz a goodern on you!!

**LUM:** Now you take it all th' way aroun', Abner, I don't b'leave th' younguns this day an' time iz enny worsen than they wuz when we wuz kids growin' up.

**ABNER:** Well, no... maybe not, maybe not. Mighty easy ta fergit when ye start gittin' older... sorta fergit some o' th' stunts ye pulled yerself.

**LUM:** Facks iz, I don't think they're ez bad now. They wouldn't do some o' th' ornery things we done. Gittin' more civilized, I reckon.

**ABNER:** Oh yeah. They don't tear up property th' way we used to, I'll ad-mit that. They've learned, I reckon, that they kin have jes' ez much fun, maybe more, by jes' playin' pranks that don't hurt nobody.

**LUM:** That's whut I say. An' here you wuz a while ago, had yer mind all made up ta go out an' arrest 'em an' throwever last one o' 'em in jail.

**ABNER:** Oh, doggies. Well, I'm glad we got ta talkin' it over... I'm jes' might nigh ashamed o' myself. I b'leave I will dress up an' go over thar ta th' party with ye, Lum... jes' let th' younguns have all th' fun they want to tonite! Let 'em go, I don't care!! Let 'em tear it up!!

**LUM:** Be a downright shame ta bother 'em on Halloween nite when they're jes' playin' littul pranks that don't hurt nothin'.

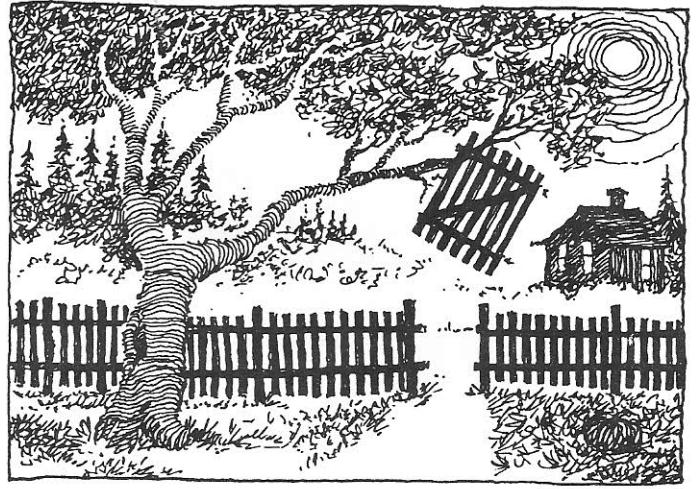
**ABNER:** Why, shore. I ort ta be ashamed o' myself fer even thinkin' 'bout it. Well, I'll go along with ye, Lum, if ye don't mind.

**LUM:** 'Course not! Come ahead! Be proud ta have ye!!

**ABNER:** Well, jes' make yerself at home then... I'll go back here an' see if I kin find a bedsheet ta dress myself up in. Doggies, I'd bettur look aroun' an' find a piller case that's already got some holes in it, though... Lizabeth'd might nigh give me a good whoopin' if she ketches me cuttin' holes in one o' her good piller slips! I'll find some back here sommers, though...

**LUM:** Well, ye bettur wait an' put it on after ye git outa th' yard... that dawg o' yorn'll 'bout take in after both o' us...

**(SOUND: Phone ringing)**



**ABNER:** Uh oh, thar goes my ring. More'n likely some smart aleck makin' a complaint already 'bout these Halloween younguns.

**LUM:** Well, jes' tell 'em ye ain't gonna bother th' younguns tonite.

**ABNER:** I'll tell 'em. HELLO? YEAH, THIS IZ HIM, BUT I... WHO? OH YEAH, HE'S SETTIN' RIGHT HERE. JES' A MINNIT. Here, Lum, somebody wants you:

**LUM:** Wants me?

**ABNER:** That's whut they said.

**LUM:** HELLO? YEAH, THIS IZ LUM. OH, HELLO, CHARLIE, HAPPY HALLOWEEN! HUH? THEY AIR?! WELL, DAD BLAME THEIR ORNERY HIDES!! CHARLIE, RUN OVER THAR AN' SEE IF YE KIN FIND OUT WHO ENNY OF 'EM IZ!! I'LL HAVE ABNER COME OVER THAR AN' THROW TH' WHOLE BUNCH OF 'EM IN JAIL!

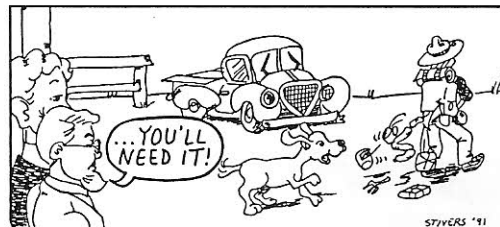
**ABNER:** Whut's that, Lum?!

**LUM:** Abner, git yer coat an' hat on! Thar's a bunch o' ornery boys over thar at my place, takin' my front gate down an' hangin' it up in a tree!!!!

**(MUSIC: Playoff)**

## The Golden Era

by Gary Stivers



# LUM AND ABNER

## and their Sponsors

### PART 9 OF A SERIES



The years immediately following the close of the weekly half-hour *Lum and Abner Show* were not easy ones for Lauck and Goff... or for radio either, for that matter. By 1950, television was rapidly making inroads into territory where radio was once the undisputed king. Because of Tuffy Goff's still-fragile health, a *Lum and Abner* TV series was pretty much out of the picture (although the idea would still be considered from time to time in the future).

Between 1950 and 1953, Tuffy Goff enjoyed himself in semi-retirement. He emerged to play Abner in an episode of *The Phil Harris-Alice Faye Show* on November 4, 1951, but such appearances were necessarily few. On the other hand, Chet Lauck continued to travel and perform as an after-dinner speaker. Wherever he appeared, the question seemed to be, "When are Lum and Abner going to return to radio?" When indeed?

In early 1953, the ABC Network decided to take a chance that there might still be some fragments of a radio audience left, and on February 16, the latest incarnation of *Lum and Abner* made its debut. It was again sustaining (i.e., no sponsor was involved), as much of the final half-hour season had been. The show was heard five days a week, in its traditional 15-minute format.

The scripts were once again penned by longtime L&A scribe Roz Rogers, although most of the episodes were "remakes" of stories that had been done in the past...however, some drastic changes were made in them to shorten the yarns. A story that had taken one month to tell in 1941, for example, might occupy only a week's worth of 1953 shows. Another difference was that the show was not performed live, but several episodes were recorded at one time. This made it possible to edit mistakes, and Chet & Tuffy's famous ad-lib binges were less noticeable.

This series was scheduled to run on the network for 13 weeks. On May 15, 1953, it drew to a close, and Lum and Abner came on at the end of the show to deliver the following plea:

**ABNER:** Well, Lum, I reckon we'd bettur start packin'.

**LUM:** Yeah, bettur do it, I guess... sure iz hard ta say goodbye ta all our friends... everbody that's lissened to us, wrote to us, an' all.

**ABNER:** Yeah, jes' seems like they're all part o' our own families.

**LUM:** Well, they air, you might say.

**ABNER:** Yeah. They all wrote an' tole us they wished we could git a sponsor so we could stay on th' air.

**LUM:** Even promised ta buy whutever we wuz sellin'.

**ABNER:** Well... maybe not enuf o' em wrote. See, lot'sa folks sorta leave it up ta th' other feller, ye know?

**LUM:** Yeah. Folks, we know yer lissenin', but evidently these sponsors don't. So if ever one o' ye would write th' American Broadcastin' Company in care o' th' station yore lissenin' to,

I b'leave you'd prove to 'em that we've got enuf friends to where we could keep visitin' with ye ever day.

**ABNER:** Yeah, tell yore friends ta write, too... git 'em ALL ta write!

By that fall, ABC had come up with a new idea to sustain the two old fellows. Beginning on September 14, the network offered the series to affiliates on a different type of basis: the local stations would sell advertising time, and the commercials would be inserted into the broadcasts in each city. Chet and Tuffy even recorded special openings for each of these sponsors; in Indianapolis, Indiana, for instance, sponsorship was by Able's Auto Company, while NLAS member Loren Cox recalls that in his home area the sponsor was the Kentucky Tobacco Board.

Within the episodes themselves one can find references to companies that may have been sponsoring the programs in various parts of the country. In one show, Lum takes time out to brag about the refreshing merits of Pepsi-Cola, while in another series L&A operate another of their famous "Name The \_\_\_\_\_" contests (this time to name Lum's mule). The prize for this contest was a Kelvinator refrigerator. Listeners were instructed to send their entries to "Lum and Abner, Pine Ridge, Arkansas;" today, Kathy Stucker of the L&A Museum in Pine Ridge reports that she can always tell when the current syndication package reaches those shows, because people still occasionally send in suggested names... not realizing that they are hearing recordings that are nearly 40 years old! A possible reference intended for Able's Auto Company comes when Squire Skimp accuses Mose Moots of being an automatic accessory to a crime: "That would make him an auto accessory... hm, that's pretty good," Squire chuckles to himself.

This series was the final fling for *Lum and Abner* on radio. By the summer of 1954, the series was quietly phased out, with little or no attention being paid to the event. The aforementioned Loren Cox remembers that on the final episode L&A locked up the store and announced that they were going to Hollywood to go into television. This, of course, never came to pass. It was shortly after this, however, that Lauck and Goff made their ill-fated journey to Yugoslavia to film one last motion picture, the unreleased *Lum and Abner Abroad*. This project was such a disaster that it brought an end to the history of Lum & Abner as a team... a real pity, because a team of such caliber seems to have deserved a more fitting end. Well, as Cedric always said, "Wonderful world."

- Tim Hollis



PHOTO FEATURE:

# LUM AND ABNER<sup>®</sup> IN <sup>THE</sup> TWILIGHT ZONE

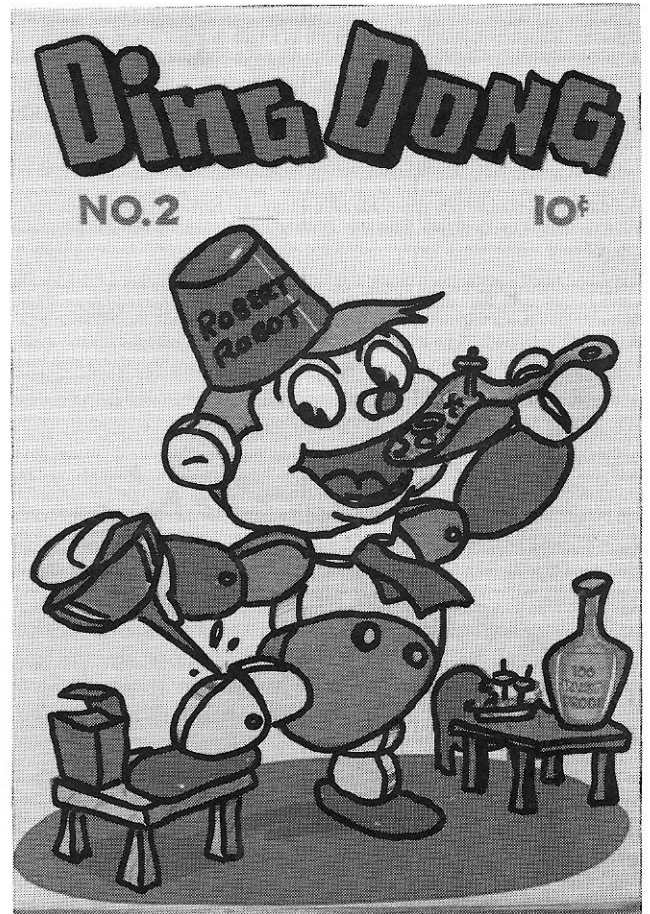
As one travels about the country, one often encounters places and artifacts that really have nothing to do with Lum and Abner directly, but that seem to show the old fellows' influence in weird ways. Some of these fall into the category of coincidence... others were done deliberately... but all contribute to the feeling that SOMETHING L&A-related is going on!



No, this isn't in Arkansas... in fact, the mountains are about as far away as possible! This was photographed in Panama City Beach, Florida, about 1958.



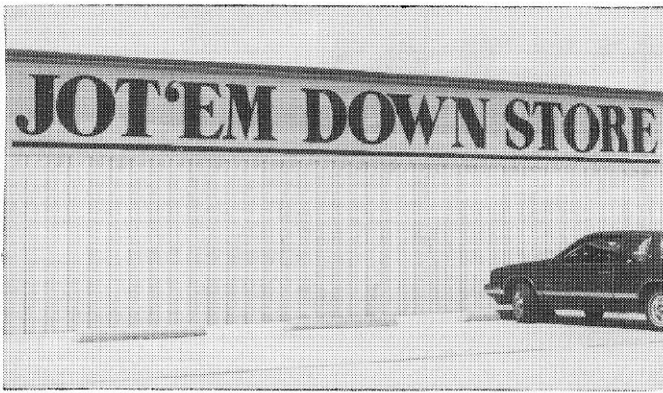
NLAS Member John Knuppel found this business in Poteau, Oklahoma, in 1989. Did Lum get this idea from the time L&A were sponsored by Able's Auto Company?



For all of those who have wondered what became of L&A's mechanical man, Robert the Robot, here is the answer! 'Robert Robot' turned up on the cover of DING DONG COMICS #2, published by Compix of New York, in 1946 (the year after L&A's storyline).

By strange coincidence, this comic book also features a story entitled 'Travelin' Toughy,' which has nothing to do with Tuffy Goff.





*Lum & Abner collectors usually feel right at home in antique shops, but this is one store that seems to go out of its way to make them feel welcome! It's located on Highway 80, just east of Dallas, Texas.*



*Uncle Donnie & Aunt Laura Pitchford were visiting Galveston, Texas, when they happened upon this restaurant.*

*Our Australian member, Geoff Oates, found this street sign in his home country in 1985. He says he couldn't find an 'Abner Road.'*



*Given a choice, where would you say would be the most unlikely spot on the face of the earth to encounter a reference to Lum & Abner? If you answered 'British Columbia, Canada,' you would be partially right. If you said 'The Alaskan Highway in British Columbia,' you would be closer. If you said, 'Mile Marker 233 of the Alaskan Highway in British Columbia,' you would have pinpointed the remote location of these tourist cabins... which are still in business today!*

# THE KTHS STORY



*The New Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs, the original location of radio station KTHS.*

By now it should be obvious that *Lum and Abner* might never have come into being at all had it not been for the existence of radio station KTHS in Hot Springs, Arkansas. In July 1988, *Popular Communications* magazine published an excellent overview of KTHS's history, and we are pleased to have been given permission to present a condensed version of that article here.

KTHS was first owned and operated by Hot Springs National Park's New Arlington Hotel. When programming began on December 20, 1924, the station was under the direction of Cam Arnoux and E.L. Olds, both former employees of WBAP in Fort Worth, Texas. The KTHS studio was located in one of the hotel's twin towers, while the transmitter was located on the 12th floor of the hotel.

The call letters KTHS actually stood for "Kum To Hot Springs," and the station did indeed seem to be a success in that regard. According to the *Popular Communications* article, after only two months on the air KTHS had attracted 25,000 inquiries asking for tourist information on the National Park. At the beginning, KTHS was picked up at 800 on the dial (it seems natural to say "AM dial," but at that time AM was the only dial in use!). During the next few years, the station's power increased and it was moved to 780, then in 1928 it moved back to 600, where it shared time with Fort Worth's WBAP. (Oddly enough, not only was WBAP the station from whence KTHS's main man, Cam Arnoux, had come, but during *Lum and Abner's* first year or so on the air, they broadcast their show from WBAP.)

In May of 1928, the New Arlington Hotel gave KTHS to the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, who proceeded to move the station out of the hotel and into the CC Building located at 135 Benton Street. (We have had little success in determining whether this building is still standing.) Later that year, the frequency was moved back to 800 again, and reception reports were received from 42 different states as well as Canada, South America, and ships at sea. (It is truly remarkable today to hear about the coverage that radio stations enjoyed in those times before the airwaves were so cluttered.)

KTHS joined the NBC Network in 1929 and moved to 1040

on the dial. This is where it stood on April 26, 1931, when Chet Lauck and Tuffy Goff, accompanied by their wives, drove over from their homes in Mena and ad-libbed a routine about two old mountain codgers they named "Lum" and "Abner." Cam Arnoux, still in control, was the party responsible for putting them on, and their act became a regular weekly feature on the station for the next two or three months.

After serving as the launching pad for *Lum and Abner*, KTHS's future went steadily downhill. By 1934, the station was in such dire financial straits that they were reduced to using unpaid high-school students as announcers. Col. T.H. Barton, who owned Arkansas stations KELD and KARK, wanted to buy KTHS and move its location to Little Rock, but the incensed Hot Springs populace soon torpedoed his plan. In the late 1930's, the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce finally agreed to sell KTHS to Col. Barton, and he became the owner in early 1941. The rest of the station's history is a muddle of frequency and location changes; it remains on the air today, heard at 1480 (on the AM dial!), broadcasting from the northern Arkansas town of Berryville.

Our thanks to *Popular Communications* magazine for allowing us to fill in this background on the station which, for all practical purposes, enabled *Lum and Abner* to mosey their way onto the air for all time.

- Tim Hollis



PLASTER / COOGAN

# Meet the Members

Send Your Article & Photo  
To: MEET THE MEMBERS,  
P.O. Box 869, Carthage,  
TX 75633

## HAROLD (PETE) & LUCRETIA (LU) PETERSEN of Salt Lake City, Utah

Back in the 1930's and 1940's, Lucretia Cushman was growing up in Preston, Kansas, a little farming community where her father was superintendent of schools. At the same time, Harold, the oldest child in a family of eight, was growing up in Logan, Utah, a middle-sized college town. In addition to their love of art and music, they had at least two other assets in common: they both loved going to the movies and listening to radio programs, of which *Lum and Abner* was a big favorite!

Pete walked home from school each day and caught the show while eating his lunch, over KVNU, a Mutual affiliate. Lu even sent in for Alka-Seltzer's "signed" photograph of the lovable comedians, which eventually found a permanent location in the Petersen home.

Following their marriage in 1954, they often reminisced over the old radio show and the only L&A movie of which they were aware, *The Bashful Bachelor*, and wished they could experience them again. In the mid-1960's, they discovered that a small radio station in Salt Lake City (where they had settled) was featuring old-time radio. *Lum and Abner* was being aired on Sundays. Pete would slip out of their Mormon

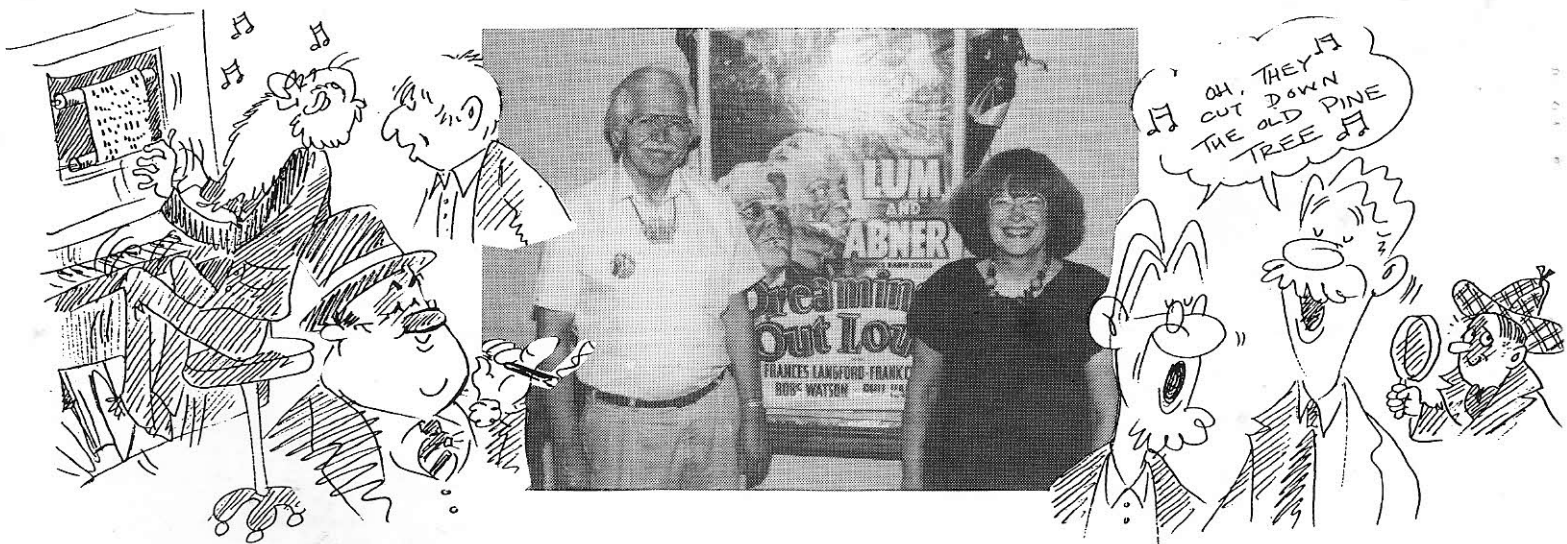
church service to turn on the tape recorder at the precise time, and thereby obtained about twelve hours of programming.

For the next 25 years, they were always on the lookout for additional recordings and information about Chet Lauck and Tuffy Goff, but except for an occasional paragraph in a magazine article and a few tapes from a company selling programs from the "Golden Age of Radio," nothing was discovered. Then, one day in the spring of 1990, Pete suggested that there just might be a real Pine Ridge, Arkansas, and a directory assistance call led to a connection with Kathy Stucker at the store and museum.

WONDERFUL WORLD! "To make this long story a little shorter, we enjoyed the 1990 NLAS Convention so much that we can't wait to do it again! We immediately purchased all seven movies, and in lots of five are working toward collecting all of the audio tapes."

(By the way, Pete is a well-known Utah watercolorist and art teacher. Lu is a highly respected piano teacher. They are the parents of four grown children, one of which, of Korean descent, was adopted by the Petersens at age two.)

(Pete was also responsible for illustrating our "Halloween With Lum & Abner" feature in this issue!)



Above: Harold & Lucretia Petersen, surrounded by a few of Pete's delightful Lum & Abner character sketches.

# NEW TAPE LIBRARY RELEASES!

It is indeed cause for rejoicing when previously-unknown *Lum and Abner* recordings surface. And such is the case now!

Recently, through the efforts of NLAS member Clyde Benge and SPERDVAC (The Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety, and Comedy), over 60 transcription discs of *Lum and Abner* have been discovered. These recordings are now part of the NLAS Tape Library.

The episodes begin on April 4, 1947. The first series comprises the original version of the story of L&A's radio station, VPR. (Faithful collectors will recall that this story has previously been available only in its 1953 "remake" version, which differs in many ways from this first rendition.) In the middle of this storyline comes a broadcast that is truly unique: on April 24, 1947, Chet and Tuffy were busy performing their script when they were suddenly interrupted in the middle by a host of radio and motion picture celebrities, who barge into the studio to congratulate L&A on their 16th anniversary in radio! It is really incredible to hear the confusion that ensues, as Lauck and Goff debate whether to continue with their script or just chuck the whole thing... all on the air!

There is a two-month gap in continuity, and the storyline picks back up in July 1947, when L&A are trying to locate the mysterious "Hempstead heirs." This story had originally been performed in 1936 (according to the 1937 *Lum & Abner Almanac*), and it too would be repeated in 1954. This,

however, is the most complete recorded version we have had so far.

Apparently, sometime in the late 1940's these transcription discs were edited for some sort of syndication, because as soon as the Hempstead story has run its course, the story jumps backward to 1941, for more episodes in the West Coast "test series" done for Alka-Seltzer! (This "test series" was the origin of the famous series in which L&A run a bank; these episodes obviously pre-date the bank series.) The storyline in these 1941 shows is totally unfamiliar, although some elements from it were incorporated into the 1942 film *The Bashful Bachelor*. What is really amazing is that between the 1947 and 1941 continuities there is a single recording made by Tuffy Goff alone, doing new material to bridge the gap between the two stories! Apparently this early syndication company was intent on keeping its programs consistent, even if it meant paying Abner himself to make up for holes in the storyline!

Apart from these recently-discovered episodes, we are also releasing some other single programs that have surfaced, including three more of the half-hour *Lum and Abner Shows*.

If you already have an NLAS Tape Catalog, simply send a self-addressed stamped envelope, and request catalog pages S-5 through S-7. If you do not have a catalog, the price is still \$5.00... send orders to the Executive Secretary at Route 3, Box 110, Dora, AL 35062.



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