

April 1997

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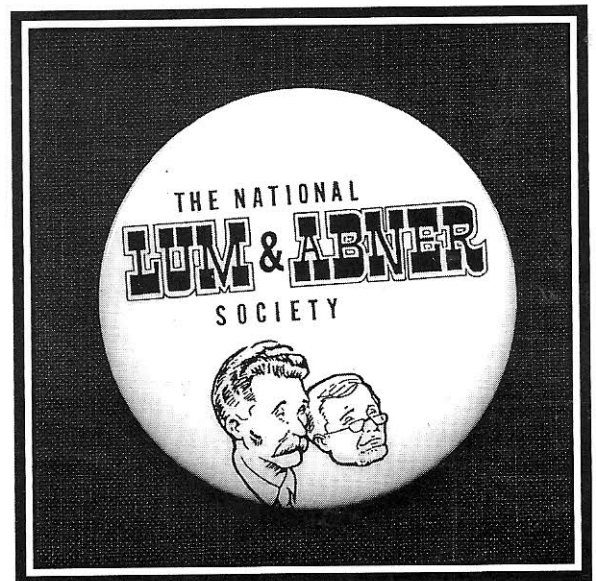
***Hot Springs, AR 71901***

# PINS YOU CAN HEAR

## DROP!

## (Huh?)

One of the most popular items at our annual conventions since they began in 1985 have been the NLAS pinback buttons. When these were first produced, we offered them through the *Journal* as well, but in recent years their dwindling supply forced us to limit their sale to the conventions themselves. Good news: we now have a brand-new stock of these pins, and you can once again order them by mail! The design of the pins has remained the same, only the logo has been cleaned up a bit. The price for each pin is \$1.50, but if ordering by mail, you should add another 75¢ per pin to help out with the postage. There is no limit on how many you may order. Of course, these new pins will also be on sale at this year's convention. Send mail orders to the Executive Secretary at 81 Sharon Blvd., Dora, AL 35062.



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# THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

APRIL 1997

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**THE NATIONAL  
LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY**

*Zekatif Ossifers*

**PRESIDENT**

Donnie Pitchford

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Sam Brown

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Tim Hollis

\*\*\*\*\*

**Cover:** Lum & Abner appear to be in a pensive mood as they participate in a little whittlin' during the spring of 1938. (Courtesy of Mandy Lauck)

All illustrations are from the NLAS Archives, except as follows. Page 4, Page 5 top L: UALR; Page 5 bottom R: Miles Laboratories; Page 6 & Page 7: UALR; Page 9: Michael Cate.

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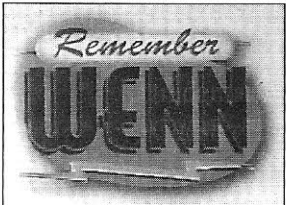
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## WENN? LATER!

In our last issue, we encouraged everyone to try their level best to watch the great American Movie Classics network series about old-time radio, *Remember WENN*, airing on Saturday nights. Just about the time that issue came out, the show ended its season and went into reruns! However, we have information from AMC that new episodes will resume in June; until then, if you missed the earlier shows, you can enjoy catching up on them during the show's regular time slot. Check your local listings for time and channel info.



# Lum and Abner<sup>®</sup> and the SUSPRIZE PARTY!

As we all know, Chet Lauck & Tuffy Goff were famous for playing tricks on their friends and business associates; for example, consult the article about announcer Gene Baker that appeared in the last issue of the *Journal*. Very rarely did anyone manage to get one up on them... but it did happen, and in at least once instance that took place 50 years ago this month, it happened while their broadcast was actually on the air.

If you have heard Tape #301 of the NLAS Tape Library, you will know immediately which broadcast we are speaking of here. The date was Thursday, April 24, 1947; the following Saturday marked 16 years since the first *Lum and Abner* broadcast on KTHS in Hot Springs. A lot had happened to those "two boys from Mena" during those 16 years. By now they were broadcasting on a Monday through Thursday basis over the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), with Miles

Laboratories as their sponsor. They were friends with some of the biggest names in radio and movies of the era, and on this particular day, a large group of these acquaintances decided to throw Lauck & Goff a "surprise party" in honor of their broadcasting anniversary.

When the day's broadcast began, there was no indication that there was going to be anything out of the ordinary about it. Lum and Abner's storyline concerned their trying to get shortwave radio station VPR (the Voice of Pine Ridge) off the ground by selling time slots to various advertisers in town. This plot allowed Chet & Tuffy to indulge in some hilarious satire on current radio programming, and at the very beginning of this show they made some remarks that today might not be immediately meaningful. Here's the scoop:

On the previous Sunday, April 20, comedian Fred Allen had



**L&A'S FRIENDS GATHER TO CELEBRATE THEIR 16TH ANNIVERSARY IN RADIO, APRIL 24, 1947. L TO R: JON HALL, CHARLES LYON, FRANCES LANGFORD (BACK TO CAMERA), ANDY DEVINE, CHET LAUCK, GAIL PATRICK, DON WILSON, TUFFY GOFF, JACK BAILEY, UNKNOWN, ELSIE MAE & RALPH EMERSON, & CLARENCE HARTZELL. NOTICE THE TWIN CAKES WITH LUM & ABNER'S HEADS MOUNTED ON THEM!**



**CHET LAUCK, FRANCES LANGFORD,  
ANDY DEVINE, TUFFY GOFF**

planned to broadcast on his own show (which originated from New York) a routine that poked fun at the vice-presidents of his network, NBC. NBC was not too crazy about being made a laughing stock, and they warned Allen not to include the material in his show. Defiant, Allen went ahead with his routine, with the result that NBC cut him off the air during the time it took him to tell the jokes. This unwarranted censorship sent shock waves throughout the radio industry, and comedians on other networks immediately sprang to Allen's defense. That was the background for the following exchange between L&A (Tuffy's lines were most likely ad-libbed on the spur of the moment):

**LUM:** (on phone) ALL RIGHT THEN, MOSE, THAT'S A DEAL... MONDAY NIGHT, THAT'S WHEN YER FIRST PROGRAM'LL HIT TH' AIR... YEAH... UH HUH...

**(SOUND: DOOR OPENS)**

**ABNER:** Hey, Lum, I jes' sold... oh, 'scuse me...

**LUM:** Hesh up, Abner, so's I kin hear what Mose is sayin'. Grannies. HELLO, MOSE, MY VICE-PRESIDENT JES' CAME IN AN' INNERUPTED ME THER... 'SCUSE ME... WELL, WE KIN GIVE YE JES' ABOUT ANY KIND OF A PROGRAM YOU WANT...

**ABNER:** (mumbling) Jes' wait'll he gits ta broadcastin', I'll cut him offa th' air fer talkin' ta vice-presidents like that.

**LUM:** UH HUH... ALL RIGHT, WE ORTA BE ABLE TA FIX UP SOMPIN' LIKE THAT FER YE...

**ABNER:** I'll put him on th' Fred Allen show if he wants ta talk that way...

References to Allen's fiasco would pop up again later in this program.

Normally, Lauck & Goff were the only human beings allowed in the studio during an actual broadcast; whether the announcer was present or in another studio seems to have differed depending upon the particular sponsor and network. This day's episode featured Clarence Hartzell as Ben Withers, so he was also there, awaiting his entrance cue. Now, Chet & Tuffy had a unique way of acknowledging the presence of anyone out of the ordinary who happened to be in the studio, or anyone who came in dur-

ing the broadcast. We have been told that, in listening to an L&A show, if they suddenly and for no reason drop a name into their conversation, that was their way of telling that person, "We see you, and we're glad you're with us today." When the surprise party guests begin trickling into the studio one at a time, at first Lauck & Goff simply assume that they have company, and go into their usual custom.

The first time this occurs, Lum is trying to explain to Abner what a radio "floormat" is. "Hit's a radio term," he says. "I been readin' up on this stuff... been talkin' to Nat Wolff, he helped me on it some." Nat Wolff was a well-known radio director of the time, and apparently he was the first person of the coming group to enter the studio on this day. A few minutes later, Mose Moots calls on the phone to discuss his upcoming VPR show, and when Lum answers the call, he remarks, "Well, shake up yer phone, Mose, ye sound like Jack Bailey!" ("They'll kick ya off the air fer stuff like that, Lum," ad-libs Goff.) This clues us in that the jolly host of *Queen For A Day* (another Miles Laboratories radio series) has now made his entrance.

About the time Lum has decided that Mose's show should be about a "millionaire polo player and part-time barber," the situation in the studio begins to deteriorate. No longer even attempting to remain quiet, the noise of a large crowd begins seeping in behind L&A's dialogue. "Wait a minit, we don't need all these sound ee-fects," Chet says, obviously aware by now that something strange is going on. The sound of a live, squealing pig is heard (it was being presented to the boys as a gag gift), and Lum covers that with, "Abner, git that pet pig o' yores outa here!" "Cedric left him over here, I never had nothin' ta do with it!" yells Tuffy. The background noise continues while Ben Withers makes his entrance and the phone rings again. "If that Cedric ever brings another pig in here," grumbles Abner. After Lum's latest phone conversation with Mose, he reports that Mose has decided to advertise his barber shop with a musical program starring children. "He wants ta call 'em the Little Shavers," says Lum, setting off a huge laugh from the assembled crowd. (This also proves that L&A's humor was definitely appreciated by their peers in radio.)

Up to now, L&A have tried their best to keep their plot going



**CALIFORNIA MILES LABORATORIES EXECUTIVE  
FRANK CLANCY, TUFFY GOFF, LOU COSTELLO**

in spite of the distractions, but once Mose calls again and Lum gets into another conversation, an unidentified voice quite literally elbows his way to the microphone to say, "Pardon me, will you, fellows? Excuse me?" "Jes' a minit, who's this runnin' in here?" Tuffy asks, obviously somewhat puzzled by all this. "You guys are doing a lot of talkng about radio," explains this voice, "and this is your seventh anniversary (*sic*), and a bunch of us have come over here to say hi to you, is that okay?" L&A have no choice but to go along with it, and the first person introduced to them is... Jack Bailey! "Which one are you, Lum or Abner?" he asks Tuffy.

Next to arrive is Tom Breneman, who is his usual jovial self. "Good to see you again," he chuckles, referring to the time he guested on *Lum and Abner* approximately a year earlier. Bart Marshall, "Mr. X," makes a brief appearance, followed by Tuffy's good friend Andy Devine. "I doggies, the whole place is full o' people!" says Goff, rather overwhelmed. (During the course of all of this, Chet & Tuffy never drop the L&A voices.) Don Wilson enters to give his congratulations; Lum says, "Yer kinda new in this bizness too, ain't ye?" Clarence Hartzell, having gotten out of character, shouts, "Frances Langford is over here, Lum!" As the attractive singer and actress greets her old *Dreaming Out Loud* co-stars, Lum remarks, "Ther's my neighbor; she lives over at Cherry Hill, right close to me." (We can't say for sure, but Langford may have been living next door to the Lauck family at the time.)

The next arrival is "Professor" Kay Kyser, another former L&A guest. He is followed closely by Jim & Marian Jordan, better known as Fibber McGee and Molly, who were friends of the Laucks and Goffs going back to their Chicago days. (It is truly amazing how many stars from other radio networks were allowed on this single broadcast!) "This isn't Sunday, but here's Phil Harris!" someone announces, and another of Tuffy's closest friends enters! Actress Gail Patrick is next on the agenda; she had been one of their friends at least since the early 1940s.

Now it is again Tuffy's turn to get a laugh: "Well, this is really a surprise; a feller jes' cain't git his work did no more!" Peter Lind Hayes enters; Lum tells him, "Saw ye th' other night,



**DON WILSON, ANDY DEVINE, GAIL PATRICK,  
FRANCES LANGFORD, JON HALL**

Pete." Next comes Charles Lyon, accompanied by the aforementioned director Nat Wolff. Chet breaks in to give credit where it is due: "I might say that Charlie Lyon's th' one that did our announcin' 16 years ago!" "First show," agrees Goff. They greet actor Jon Hall, whom we understand was at that time married to Frances Langford, and then are introduced to the great British actress Edna Best (who would later essay a continuing role as Lady Brilton on the 30-minute version of *Lum and Abner* almost two years down the road).

"I hope we didn't butt in, now go ahead with your script!" one fellow yells, setting off another tremendous laugh. Chet has an answer for that one, too: "Well, we're a script ahead... we'll jes' do this one Monday night!" There are still more arrivals, however: Gene Carroll, once half of the comedy team of Gene & Glenn, for whom *Lum and Abner* was a summer replacement during its first days on the NBC network. Now known for doing both male and female voices as "Jake and Lena," Carroll demonstrates his incredible Lena characterization here. Jack Bailey gets into the act again: "We don't want to steal any of Allen's stuff, but there's a vice-president in the house!" The resulting laughter obscures the ABC exec's name, but Lum gets off a good one: "We got nice vice-presidents over here!!"

After all of this, L&A don't know what to do. "Well, do we go into a commercial, or go back into the script?" fumbles Tuffy. Someone takes this opportunity to correct the first intruder's mistake that it is L&A's 7th year on the air; now we find out they are actually beginning their 17th year of broadcasting. It is also pointed out that just as many of Lauck & Goff's friends are waving from inside the control booth. "This is 'bout the biggest get-together I've saw fer a long time," Lum remarks. "Hit's th' biggest audience we've ever had in 17 years!" counters Abner. "Hit's th' first time we'll get a rating!" "I wisht they'd take our Hooper here in the studio," says Lum, referring to the pre-Nielsen method of gauging a show's popularity.

There is one last surprise left for the boys: Elizabeth Goff, Tuffy's wife, makes her only known appearance on a L&A broadcast! "There's Lizzabeth over there!" someone shouts, and Lum seems delighted too: "Ther's yer worman, Abner!" Liz's first on-the-air remark is, "What am I supposed to say?" "Well, you jes' git back to yer plowin'," Tuffy responds in character.



**CHET LAUCK, GAIL PATRICK,  
JOAN DAVIS, TUFFY GOFF**

"Thank you, and congratulations to both of you!" is Liz's parting shot. (Either Harriet Lauck was not present, or she never made it to the microphone.) As organist Ralph Emerson strikes up "Auld Lang Syne," announcer Gene Baker comes in: "Friends, today's *Lum and Abner* program was a special surprise party for the old gentlemen on the occasion of their 17th anniversary on the air!" (It was actually their 16th; they were beginning their 17th year!)

ABC made sure a studio photographer was on hand to thoroughly document this historic gathering of L&A's friends and business associates, and these photos (from the collections of Miles Laboratories and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock) can be seen here. One final note: Chet's remark that they could simply save their script until Monday was not a facetious one. On Monday, April 27, Gene Baker opened the show this way: "Well, on our last broadcast, as you have probably heard, we had a surprise party for Lum and



**LAUCK & GOFF FEED THE PIG WHOSE SQUEALS COULD BE HEARD DURING THEIR ATTEMPT TO KEEP BROADCASTING!**

Abner. Hundreds of their friends from the entertainment world came in during the broadcast, and you heard many of them on the air when they interrupted the old fellows and congratulated them on their 16 years of broadcasting. After the program, their friends had a big anniversary party for them, and they're still a bit tired as a result. But they have problems to meet in Pine Ridge with their new radio station, VPR. So today, Lum and Abner are right back where they started at the beginning of their last program!"

And that's exactly what they did. The VPR story unfolded, and nothing else was said about the "surprise party." But we can assume that the memory of such a gesture of affection by their radio peers lingered long "after the party was over"!

- Tim Hollis

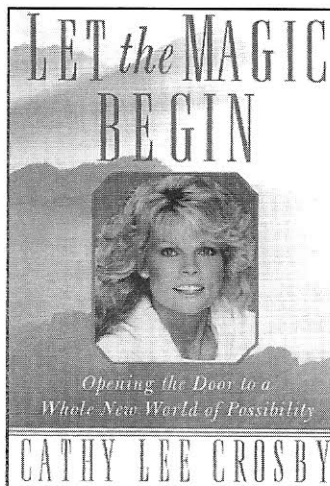
# PINE RIDGE LIBRARY BOOKSHELF

by Lum Eddards, Head Librarian

(SOUND: FIRE ALARM RING ON PARTY LINE)

Howdy, everbody, they ain't no fire... this here's jes' Lum Eddards, head librarian, tellin' ye 'bout a new book we jes' got in down here at the Jot 'Em Down Store an' Liberry. Ye reecollect that ther right smart of a looker Cathy Lee Crosby, ol' Lou's youngun, that come down fer the big NLAS Convention doin's last summer? Well, that ther little whippersnapper has done gone and writ hersef a book, of which it's titled *LET THE MAGIC BEGIN*.

Now, don't let that ther title fool ye. This ain't no book on conjurin' tricks, like the ones ol' Houdonit an' Cussin Cliff does on TV. This here's the story 'bout how li'l Cathy Lee learnt hersef ta deal with worry an' trubble. Ye know, jes' 'cause she's a celeebriety an' has made a oncommon suckcess of hersef don't mean she ain't got problums th' same as th' rest o' us. But stid o' lettin stuff like that git her down, she's found a way ta fight back...



an' ol' Squire Skimp found out if ther's one thang that gurl can do, it's fight.

Now, we reckon not all of ye kin git down here ta our liberry ta check out this here new book, an' even if ye did we'd only have one copy ta go 'round mongst the 600-odd of ye. So th' bes'

thang ta do iffen you wanna see how this smart youngun deals with life iz ta mosey on down to yer local book store an' ask 'em fer it. Hit's published by one o' them fancy pants New York outfits called Simon & Schuster... jes' a minit... what's that, Abner? No, I ain't got time ta play Simon Sez... I didn't say no sich a thing, I said li'l Cathy Lee's book wuz published by Simon & Schuster. Now, let me git back to these fokes 'fore they hang up their receivers...

Well fokes, I guess that's 'bout it, but iffen ye take th' time ta look up *LET THE MAGIC BEGIN*, we know you'll en-joy it sompin wunnderful. So long fer now!



In past installments of this series, we have seen the many ways that roadside businesses have attempted to capitalize upon L&A's popularity. But did you know that on April 18, 1944, Lauck & Goff themselves devoted an episode of their show to commenting on the American highway landscape? The storyline involved Lum, Abner, & Cedric striking out for Tennessee, under some misguided notion of finding buried treasure there. After many harrowing adventures, they slowly and painfully work their way back to Arkansas, having to pawn Cedric's beloved pinball machine (which he brought along with him on the trip), and that is where we pick them up in this broadcast, which may be heard on Tape #137 in the NLAS Tape Library:

**ANNCR:** And now, let's see what's going on down in Pine Ridge. Well, after being stranded in Little Rock, Arkansas, the unhappy and unsuccessful treasure hunters finally managed to scrape up enough money for the last leg of their homeward journey. As we look in on the bedraggled remnants of the once-hopeful Lost Treasure Expedition, we find Lum, Abner, and Cedric driving along the highway, heading for Pine Ridge. Listen...

**(SOUND: CAR MOTOR)**

**ABNER:** Hey, Cedric, watch wher yer drivin', ther! Doggies, might nigh run us inta th' ditch!

**CEDRIC:** 'Scuse me...

**ABNER:** Scare us half ta death! Now you keep yer mind on yer drivin'!

**CEDRIC:** I'm tryin' to, Mr. Abner, but all I kin think about is that pore ol' pinball machine o' mine.

**ABNER:** Cedric Weehunt, we tole you not ta bring that up no more now.

**CEDRIC:** Well, I cain't hep thinkin' about that pore ol' pinball machine settin' back ther in Little Rock all by itself.

**ABNER:** Oh, my... Cedric, we've tole you a thousan' er a hunderd times that you might be able ta git that back someday. We didn't actual sell it ta that feller, we jes' sorter left it ther fer a while at that pawn shop.

**LUM:** Yeah, and we give you th' pawn shop ticket, too. You still got it, ain't ye?

**CEDRIC:** Yes mom, I got it... I'm wearin' it right next ta my heart... that's right wher I'm gonna keep it th' rest o' my life.

**ABNER:** Well, if you ever git seven dollars together, why, you kin jes' send that ticket ta Little Rock an' git th' machine back agin, Cedric.

**CEDRIC:** Things'll never be the same, though, leavin' it behind in Little Rock thataway.

**ABNER:** Hmph.

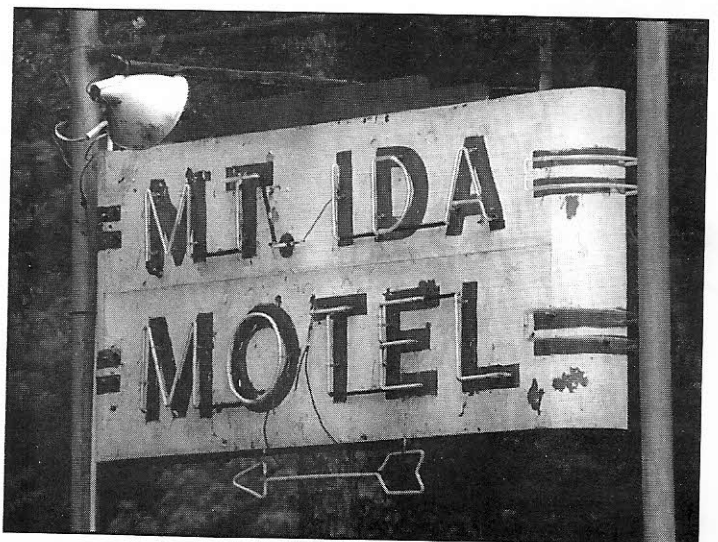
**CEDRIC:** I don't know wher I'll ever be able ta look it in th' face agin.

**ABNER:** Oh my goodness... Cedric Weehunt, sich talk.

**LUM:** Look, Cedric, leave us face th' facts... we had ta raise the money somehow ta git home, an' that marble machine o' yores is th' only thing that pawn breaker feller'd loan us enny money on.

**ABNER:** An' we had ta git home, Cedric... we couldn't jist set ther in Little Rock an' starvation ourseves ta death.

**CEDRIC:** No mom, but if you'd jes' tole me what you wuz aimin' ta do... if you'da jes' let me went with ya ta th' pawn shop...



**THIS MOTEL ON U.S. 270 DOES NOT ADVERTISE THAT BEN WITHERS OR CHARLEY WEAVER SLEPT THERE!**



**ABNER:** Well, we knowed you'd never in th' world part with that machine, so we jes' had ta do it thataway.

**CEDRIC:** Yes mom. But if I coulda jes' talked to that pawn breaker myself... tole him ta take good care of it... to be good to it...

**ABNER:** Be GOOD to it?! Law me, Cedric, you talk like that wuz a human bein' stid o' a batch o' wood an' tin' an' glass an' stuff.

**CEDRIC:** Oh, hit wuz jes' like a brother to me might nigh.

**ABNER:** Oh, my... brother... a pinball machine fer a brother... swan to goodness...

**CEDRIC:** All alone in a big city... no friends er nothin'. No tellin' who'll be puttin' nickels in it... bound ya somebody'll even put slugs in it.

**ABNER:** Doggies, Cedric, I wisht you'd stop talkin' about it. That's all we've heered ever since we left Little Rock, you talkin' about that pinball machine.

**CEDRIC:** I'll bet hit sez TILT right now.

**ABNER:** Aw, fer the land sakes...

**LUM:** Try ta git yer mind offa that an' on some other subject, Cedric.

**ABNER:** Yeah, Cedric, I tell you... read th' signs along th' road, they're awful innerestin'. I jes' love ta read 'em myself, special them kind that's sorter broke up into a whole row o' signs, you know.

*Abner is, of course, referring to the now-legendary Burma-Shave signs, which literally covered the American roadside during the 1940s. L&A here set up a funny gag with a surprise twist, but in reality the Burma-Shave rhymes were limited to six signs, with the final one being the company logo. L&A's fictitious rhyme here goes on for at least ten signs!*

**LUM:** Yeah, ther's one of 'em startin' on that row o' fence posts, ther. See 'em?

**ABNER:** Yeah, that's th' kind... DON'T HIDE INSIDE...

**LUM:** Ther's th' next one...

**ABNER:** A DARK OL' CAVE...

**LUM:** BECAUSE YER WHISKERS...

**ABNER:** WON'T BEHAVE...

**LUM:** COME ON OUTSIDE...

**ABNER:** AN' BE THE RAVE...

**LUM:** OF ALL THE GIRLS...

**ABNER:** BOTH WACS AN' WAVES...

**LUM:** JES' RUB ON YORE FACE...

**ABNER:** AJAX HIGH GRADE SADDLE SOAP.

**LUM:** Huh?

**ABNER:** Doggies, that don't rhyme very good, you know it?

**LUM:** I think that last one wuz a diffrent kinda sign, Abner... musta missed one o' them others.

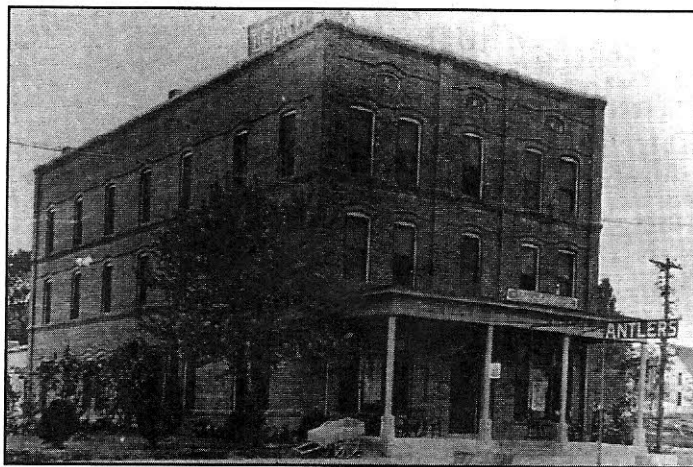
**ABNER:** Yeah, must of... ain't this fun, Cedric?

**CEDRIC:** Mom?

**ABNER:** I doggies, we're gittin' closer ta home! Ther's a sign ther 'bout the hotel in ther at th' county seat!

**LUM:** Yeah... NINE MILES TO ANTLERS HOTEL.

*The Antlers Hotel was an actual business in Lauck & Goff's home town of Mena ("the county seat"), but for a long time this*



**THE ANTLERS HOTEL, MENA, WHICH WAS DEMOLISHED IN THE 1970s.**

*sequence did not make sense to the NLAS Ossifers. Anyone who has driven from Little Rock to Pine Ridge (via Hot Springs, as Lum mentions a few lines from now) knows that the most common route is to take U.S. 270 from Hot Springs, through Mt. Ida, to Pencil Bluff, at which point state highway 88 turns off to the left to Pine Ridge. It is about 16 miles from Pencil Bluff to Pine Ridge, and then another 18 miles to Mena, so Lum's statement that the billboard reads "nine miles" to Mena didn't really add up. Then, in researching the old issues of THE MENA STAR, the probable answer presented itself. During L&A's heyday, Highway 88... although it was officially named the "Lum & Abner Highway" ... was not the road of choice for people traveling from Mena to Hot Springs, or vice versa. According to highway improvement articles in the STAR, most people coming from Hot Springs would stay on U.S. 270 until they got to U.S. 59/71, which ran a short distance south into Mena. Highway 88 was a crooked dirt road, and apparently everyone except the farmers in the small communities along its route avoided it as much as possible. Apparently, in this episode, L&A and Cedric are traveling south on U.S. 59/71, and when they reach Mena they intend to turn east on Highway 88 and finish the 18 miles to Pine Ridge. That seems like an awfully roundabout way of getting there, but since they are driving rather than riding in a wagon, it is probably the most efficient way. Now, back to L&A's discussion of the Antlers Hotel billboard:*

**ABNER:** LOW RATES... 20 ROOMS 20. Does that mean they got 40 rooms in that hotel, Lum?

**LUM:** Naw, I don't think so.

**ABNER:** Well 20 an' 20 iz 40, ain't it?

**LUM:** Yeah, but I've saw that hotel, an' I know good an' well they ain't no 40 rooms in it. That 20 ROOMS 20 is jes' a fancy way they got o' advertisin' the hotel, I think.

**ABNER:** Jes' tryin' ta make fokes think they got 40 rooms, huh?

**LUM:** Well, sorter... Jes' like that show we seen advertised back ther in Hot Springs... you know, wher they had pitchers o' all them girls out in front o' th' show house?

**ABNER:** Yeah... yeah, I recollect that.

**LUM:** They had a sign ther, said 50 GIRLS 50.

**ABNER:** Hit did? Doggies, them girls never looked that old. They shore hold their age well, don't they?

**LUM:** It wasn't talkin' 'bout their age. Ther wuz 50 girls in th' show... then they put another 50 on ther in case ye never read th' first one, I reckon.

**CEDRIC:** Pore ol' pinball machine...

**ABNER:** Now, Cedric, we tole you ta fergit that an' read th' signs!!

**CEDRIC:** All right, I'll try...

**ABNER:** Ther's one up ahead ther, see it yonder? What's that say, Cedric, hit's too fer away fer me ta read it yit.

**CEDRIC:** Er... CHERRY HILL FUNERAL PARLOR... WHEN YOU SUFFER THE LOSS OF A DEAR ONE... doggonit, that must mean me.

**ABNER:** Huh?

**CEDRIC:** I'm sufferin' th' loss of a dear ol' pinball machine.

*Now the episode really departs from real geography, as it is highly unlikely that a Cherry Hill business located on dirt road Highway 88 would have a billboard on U.S. 59/71 north of Mena. (We know from the Antlers Hotel billboard that L&A are now approximately nine miles north of town.) Obviously, for the sake of entertaining dialogue, Lauck, Goff, & head writer Roz Rogers had no qualms about shifting the locations of Pine Ridge and its environs around when necessary!*

**ABNER:** Oh, land sakes alive.

**CEDRIC:** Pore little Maiden.

**ABNER:** Little Maiden?! Is that whut you said?!

**CEDRIC:** Yes mom, that wuz its name... it wuz printed right on th' machine, ther... last name wuz Ohio.

**ABNER:** Ohio?!

**CEDRIC:** Yes mom, that's whut it said on ther... "Maiden Ohio." Pore ol' lonesome thing... don't know a soul ther in Little Rock, neither.

**ABNER:** Well, course it don't! Don't know a soul nowhers else, neither, Cedric! Pinball machines ain't humings! They don't know fokes!

**CEDRIC:** Well, thatun knowed me, I bleave.

**ABNER:** KNOWED ye? Aw, priddle praddle.

**LUM:** That's plumb silly, Cedric.

**ABNER:** (L) Why course, Cedric... hit knowed ye... (L)

**CEDRIC:** Well hit does, I think... leastways ever time I'd walk up to it, it jes' seems like it'd lean toward me, sorter... rubs up agin me sorter like a ol' cat.

**ABNER:** Well, yore always tiltin' it all the time, that's the reasons fer that.

**CEDRIC:** When I'd put a nickel in it an' start shootin' them balls around, why the whole thing jes' sorter seems ta light up.

**ABNER:** Well, natural. That's whut hit's sposed ta do, that's the way them things works.

**CEDRIC:** Pore ol' lonesome machine. Bound ya hit misses me



**THIS ABANDONED GROCERY STORE, PHOTOGRAPHED IN 1983, WAS UNDOUBTEDLY THE CHERRY HILL EQUIVALENT TO THE JOT 'EM DOWN STORE.**

sompin' wonderful.

**ABNER:** I doggies, Cedric, to hear you talk, a body'd spect that machine ta sneak outa the pawn shop an' foller us down th' road.

**CEDRIC:** Bet it would, too, if hit could. I know I'm jes' gonna pine away without it.

**ABNER:** Pine away?! Now that outcaps ennything you've said yit, Cedric.

**LUM:** Yeah, pull yerself together, Cedric! All of us feel bad

enough 'bout goin' back ta Pine Ridge empty handed, without no buried treasury. So, don't make it no worse fer us by all this moanin' an' groanin' over a marble gadget.

**CEDRIC:** Marble gadget, he sez!!

**ABNER:** Well, that's whut hit tiz. I tell you, hit ain't gonna be easy ta face the fokes at home, Cedric! Bein' the laughin' stocks o' th' whole town.

**LUM:** CEDRIC, WATCH OUT!!

**ABNER:** OH MY, OH MY...

**LUM:** Git back on th' right side o' the road ther, fer goodness sakes.

**ABNER:** Cedric, you ain't payin' no more 'tention to yer drivin' than nothin'!

**CEDRIC:** Well, how kin I think 'bout drivin' at a time like this? I'm too sad.

**ABNER:** You've jes' got ta fergit that ole thing, Cedric, an' git yer mind on sompin' else fore you git yerself a narvous break-down.

**CEDRIC:** I bleave I'm gittin' one already.

**ABNER:** No you ain't, neither! Now, think o' some other stuff fer a change... think o' sompin' happy!

**LUM:** Yeah, think about gittin' home. We ain't so very fer from Pine Ridge now. Think about seein' all the ol' famillar places agin.

**ABNER:** Yeah, all yer ol' friends: Barrel Legs Crockett, Whitey Ebert, Ginkum Riley, Gomer Bates...

**CEDRIC:** Pine Ridge'll never be th' same agin...

**ABNER:** Oh my goodness...

**CEDRIC:** I know I'll jes' set around an' pine away. I don't bleave I'll last out a week, mysef.

**ABNER:** Now, that's th' silliest thing I ever heered, Cedric. Nobody ever died from a pinball machine... I don't think.

**CEDRIC:** Well, I'm goin' to, though. Here's whut I want ya ta put on my tombstone: put on ther an' say, "Here lies Cedric Weehunt, died of a broke heart."

**ABNER:** Fer the land sakes alive...

**CEDRIC:** An' I want ya ta bury that pawn shop ticket with me.

**ABNER:** Doggies, Cedric, now if you don't stop this, you'll have us thinkin' sompin' like that actual is gonna happen to ye!

**CEDRIC:** Well, hit IZ goin' to.

**LUM:** Now listen, Cedric, I've stood all this I kin. You've been goin' on like this ever since we hit the road early this mornin', an' I'm sick an' tired of it!



**THE LONG-DESERTED MENA DRIVE-IN THEATRE  
HAS BEEN BULLDOZED TO MAKE ROOM FOR A NEW  
SHOPPING CENTER.**

*With modern-day roads and transportation, a drive from Little Rock to Pine Ridge takes approximately 2 1/2 hours. Lum's statement that they left early that morning indicates that their trip is taking considerably longer than that!*

**ABNER:** I'm sick an' tired of it, too! You ain't gonna die of no broke heart no more'n I am! So jes' git that idee right outa yer head right now!

**CEDRIC:** Hit's the truth, though... I'm startin' ta feel th' ee-fects of it already. Fer 'bout the last 20 miles now I've been feelin' a sorter hard pain around my heart... jes' like sompin' was stabbin' me.

**ABNER:** That's jes' yer imagination, Cedric.

**LUM:** Why, shore, you've got yerself ta wher you'll believe ennything you say. Now pull yerself together an' stop actin' like a half growed eediot.

**ABNER:** Why, shore.

**CEDRIC:** But I tell you, this is... OHHHHH, ther it tiz agin! The worsen I've felt yit!!

**ABNER:** Sich imagination... in all my days, Cedric...

**(SOUND: CAR MOTOR STOPS)**

**ABNER:** Now wait a minit, what're you stoppin' th' car fer?

**CEDRIC:** I jes' cain't go on no further. I'm all did fer. The end has came.

**ABNER:** Now lissen here, Cedric Weehunt, you start up this car an' git us...

**CEDRIC:** OHHHHHHH, THER IT IZ AGIN... they're gittin' worse, now... better jes' lay me down in th' back seat an' kiver me up with that lap robe... OHHHH, I cain't stand it much longer...

**ABNER:** I doggies, now lissen here, Cedric...

**LUM:** Wait a minit, Abner, he does look sorter pale. Maybe he ain't jes' imaginin' this.

**ABNER:** Huh?

**LUM:** Yeah, things like this do happen, you know. Cedric, wherbouts zactly do ye feel the pain?

**CEDRIC:** Right here, Mr. Lum, right over my heart. OHHH, ther it tiz agin, hurts jes' ta touch it.

**ABNER:** Oh my goodness... pore Cedric...

**CEDRIC:** When ya git back ta Pine Ridge, will you fellers write a letter fer me?

**ABNER:** Why shore, ennything at tall...

**CEDRIC:** Write it ta Little Rock, an' say...

**ABNER:** Now wait a minit, Cedric... we'd love ta do that the worst way, but a pinball machine cain't read no letter.

**LUM:** Abner, wait a minit, we better humor him. Shore we'll write the letter, Cedric.

**ABNER:** I reckon hit'd work out all right at that... cause even though the machine cain't read, why somebody else could read th' letter to it... er, no, they couldn't do that...

**LUM:** What do you want us to say in this letter to th' pinball machine, Cedric?

**CEDRIC:** Well, jes' write it ta that feller at th' pawn shop. Tell him ta be kind to th' machine, an' tell him I passed on to my reward with its name on my lips... Maiden Ohio.

**ABNER:** Doggies, this is sad.

**CEDRIC:** OHHHHH, hit's gittin' worse, I cain't go on.

**ABNER:** Oh, my.

**LUM:** Abner, better loosen up his shirt ther, give him some air. Be keerful with him, though.

**ABNER:** Yeah, I will... I will...

**CEDRIC:** OHHHH, watch out ther, Mr. Abner. Say, I wisht you'd give my bird whistle to Barrel Legs Crockett, an' give my jacknife ta...

**ABNER:** Well, I'll be dad blamed... Cedric, set up straight, here...

**CEDRIC:** I cain't, Mr. Abner, I'm dyin'.

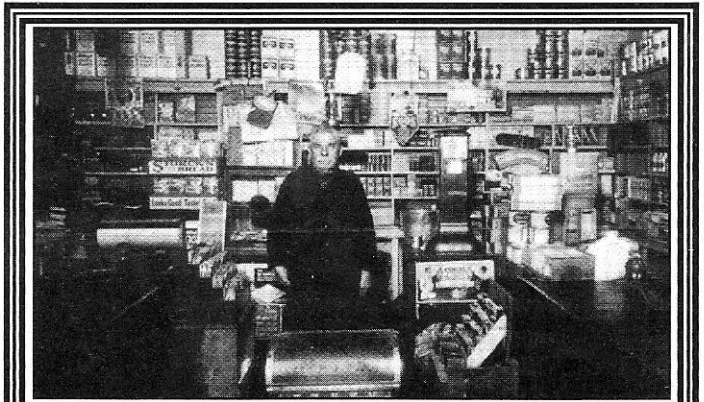
**ABNER:** No you ain't, yer jes' bein' stuck by a safety pin!

**CEDRIC:** Safety pin?!

**ABNER:** The one you used ta pin that dadgum pawn shop ticket to yer undershirt!! Now set up an' drive us home!!!

**(MUSIC: PLAYOFF)**

*If you plan to attend the NLAS Convention in Mena on June 20 & 21, and are coming through Little Rock, you will definitely be recreating the routes depicted in this episode!*



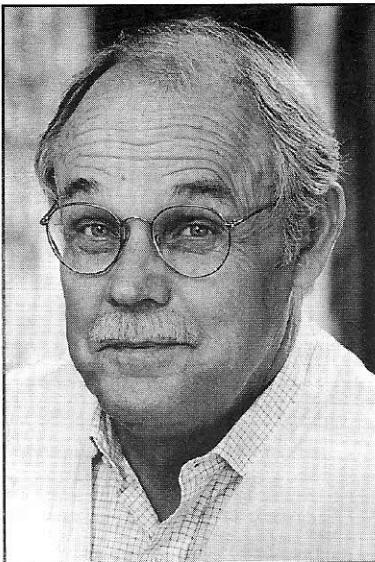
*NLAS member Kathy Grams-Gibbs of Glendora, CA, sent in a clipping from the December 1996 issue of REMINISCE EXTRA magazine. The photo above depicts yet another "Jot 'Em Down Store." According to the magazine, this one operated in Greenwood, West Virginia. It is not known whether this store was one of the many that were authorized by Lauck & Goff. Thanks, Kathy!!*

# Hit Won't Be Long Now!

## The 1997

# NATIONAL LUM & ABNER SOCIETY CONVENTION

## MENA, ARK. - JUNE 20 & 21



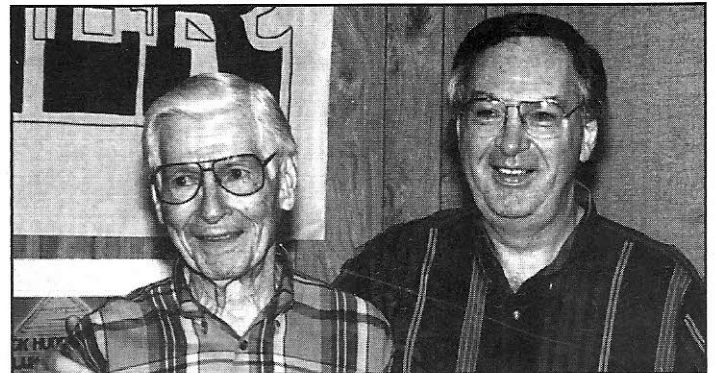
*Scheduled Guest*

*Lewis Arquette*

older neither! Seriously, the convention has grown so much from the days when it consisted of a group of fans sitting on the porch of the Dick Huddleston Store, discussing their favorite L&A episodes, that more time was needed for the setting up, rehearsals, and just plain old visiting with the members and special guests in attendance.

Speaking of special guests, as you know, we usually do not have our final lineup ready until the June issue of the *Journal* is published. However, as of this writing, we do plan to feature **Lewis Arquette**, son of the late Cliff "Charley Weaver" Arquette. Cliff was a semi-regular on *Lum and Abner* during the show's later 30-minute days, but his friendship with the Laucks and Goffs went back even further than that. Lewis, himself a renowned actor, will be bringing us more information about his dad's work and the influences that brought about his "Mt. Idy" routines.

You may have noticed that there is something different about this year's NLAS Convention, which is coming up on June 20 and 21. It will still be held at the Best Western Lime Tree Inn in Mena, Arkansas (Lauck & Goff's hometown), but for the first time ever, programs will be held on Friday night, as well as Saturday morning and Saturday night. The total effect is that the convention activities will be "stretched out" over two days, rather than our past custom of cramming them into one Saturday. What was the reason for this change? Well, the previous convention schedule turned out to be extremely draining: the NLAS Zekatif Ossifers ain't gettin' no younger, you know, and it looked like if somethin' wern't done purty quick, they wern't goin' to git no



*Scheduled Guests*

*Harlan Hobbs & Ben Combs*

In addition, L&A associates **Ben Combs** and **Harlan Hobbs** made such a hit with their all-too-brief appearances last year (another casualty of the convention's former hectic schedule) that both gentlemen are planning to return this year with still more amazing L&A history to share. (To learn how both men were connected with our old friends, consult the October 1996 issue of the *Journal*.)

More incredible discoveries that have come to light will be shared during this year's activities. For years, rumors circulated that Lauck and Goff had appeared in motion picture short subjects, in addition to their seven "official" feature films. With the help of **Chet Lauck Jr.** and his son **Scott Lauck**, we have at last tracked down these "long-lost" L&A performances! Also, some fascinating "behind-the-scenes" film snippets have emerged, and all of this previously-unknown material will be incorporated into one of the convention programs. We should note here that, because of legal reasons, the film footage from this year's convention will not be put on sale or made available through the NLAS Tape Library, so, if you want to see it, you should plan to attend! This will be its only public appearance.

A time schedule for the convention will be ready by the time the next *Journal* is published. In the meantime, you should probably be thinking about making your reservations. The number at the Best Western Lime Tree Inn is (501) 394-6350. Start planning now, and we will bring you a full update in our next issue!