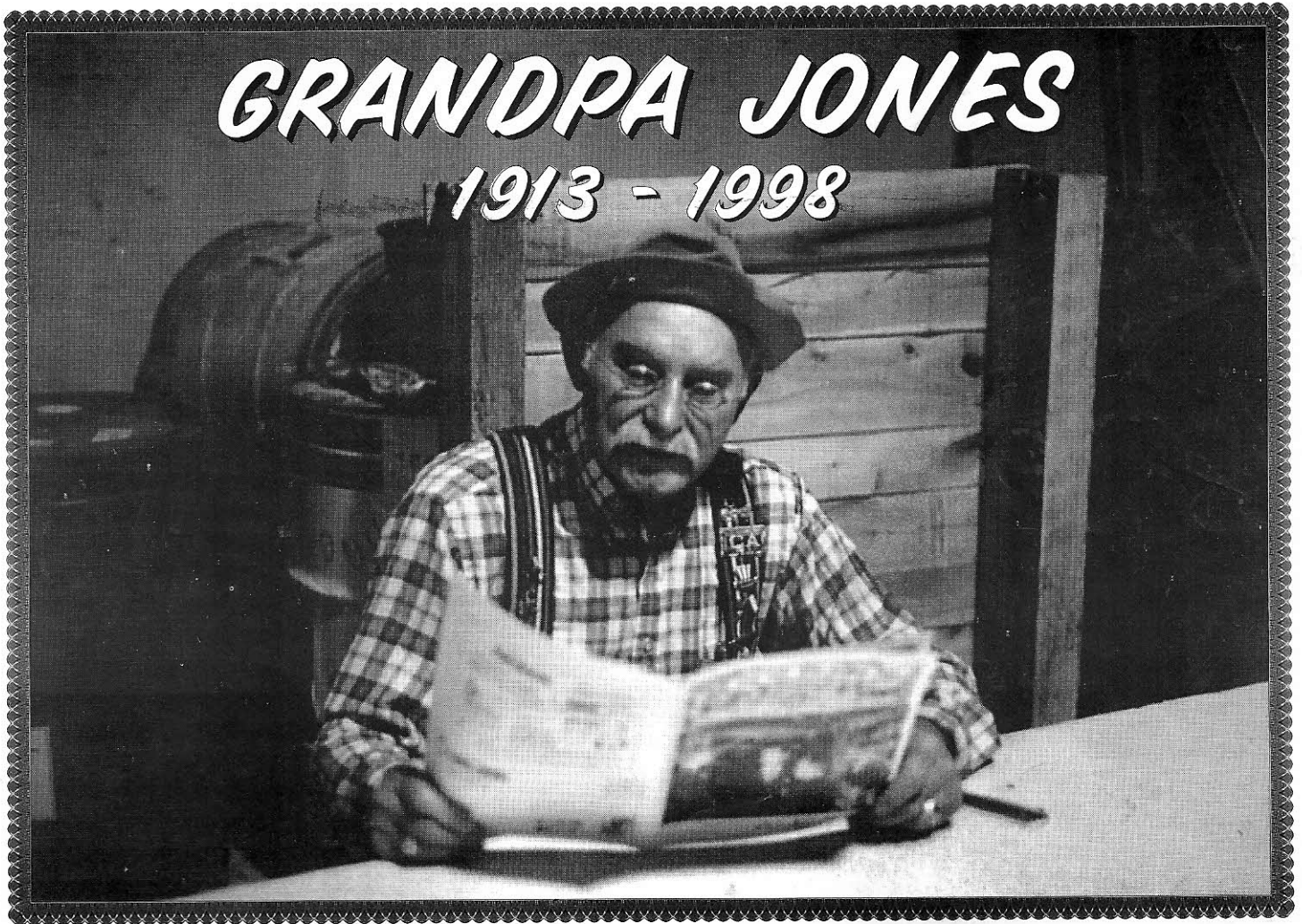


GRANDPA JONES

1913 - 1998



June 1998



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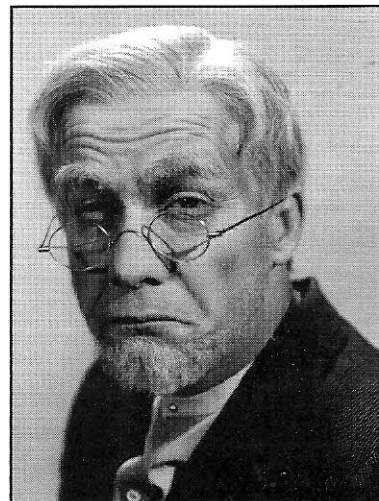
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"Dear Tuffy..."

(20 years ago this month, on June 7, 1978, Norris [Abner] Goff passed away. His longtime partner Chet Lauck wrote the following moving tribute to his friend, which was subsequently picked up and published in several Arkansas newspapers. It is reprinted here as a memorial.)



Dear Tuffy:

Tuffy, you left in such a hurry we didn't have a chance to tell you good-bye... and you took a lot of your friends with you: Abner Peabody, Squire Skimp, Dick Huddleston, Mousey Gray, Ulysses S. Quincy, and a lot of our hearts.

I opened the Jot 'Em Down Store this morning, as usual, but I don't know, somehow it just wasn't the same without you there. Lum and Abner just seem to go together like ham and eggs, and salt and pepper... one just doesn't sound right without the other. The store seemed so terribly empty... I finally just locked her up and threw the key away. The Jot 'Em Down Store ain't no more, no more telephone ringin'.

I don't know why we feel so badly about your leaving... We know you've gone to a better world, and even heaven will be a much better place with you there. I'm sure you'll find the hunting and fishing up there like nothing on this earth, and the golf courses... out of this world. I bet you've been busy visiting with your old friends... and believe me, anyone who knew you was your friend... old Andy Devine, Clark Gable, and Walter Lang. I'm sure you four had a lot of catching up to do. With your wonderful sense of humor and warm personality, I know you'll hit it right off with men like Mark Twain, Will Rogers, George Ade, Abe Lincoln, and old Ben Franklin. I'd like to sit in on one of those story-swappin' sessions.

Just think, Tuff, I have known you for 67 years. You were five and I was nine when we first met. Then, beginning in 1931, we worked side by side for 25 wonderful years in show business, and I must say I have never known a finer, sweeter, more thoughtful person in my life, with a wit and humor that has never been equaled and never will.

Tuff, you might look around and find a good location up there. If I ever have the privilege of joinin' you, we might even consider openin' up the old Jot 'Em Down Store again. I saved the old checkerboard and I believe it's my next move.

Goodbye, Tuff... Goodbye old friend... We all love you.

Chet

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THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

JUNE 1998

**THE NATIONAL
LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY**

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PRESIDENT
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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Tim Hollis

Cover: Grandpa Jones studies *The Jot 'Em Down Journal* backstage at the Grand Ole Opry, October 1987. See page 4 for a discussion of how Lum & Abner influenced his long career in country music.

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Be there or be square! (HUH?)



NLAS member Donald Potter recently came across an article in the March 15, 1998, edition of *THE MIAMI HERALD*,

dealing with the value of old unredeemed stock certificates. The article features the following very interesting information:

Say you uncover a dusty stock certificate for one share of Lum's Inc. dated 1962. It's worth about \$1800, even though the chain of restaurants that offered the beer-steamed hot dogs is history.

Originally chartered as Lum's Bar Inc. on June 4, 1958, it became known as Lum's Inc. on September 11, 1961. On December 17, 1971, Lum's Inc. changed its name to Caesars World Inc. In December 1994, that company was acquired by ITT Corporation and each Caesars World share was redeemed for \$67.50 in a cash buyout. Each share of Lum's Inc. purchased between 1961 and 1967 is exchangeable for 27 shares of Caesars World Inc. So, each original share of Lum's Inc. is worth \$1,822.50.

Better head down to the bank and check your safety deposit box!!



IN MEMORY OF GRANDPA JONES 1913-1998

The NLAS lost another of its longtime Honorary Members when radio and television personality Grandpa Jones (of *Grand Ole Opry* and *Hee Haw* fame) passed away on February 19 at the age of 84. The world of country music rightfully mourned Jones as one of its pioneers, but less was said about the role our old friends Lum and Abner played in his career.

In Jones' autobiography *EVERYBODY'S GRANDPA*, published by the University of Tennessee Press in 1984, he related how, during his senior year in high school, he had teamed up with a comical harmonica player, Joe Troyan (another NLAS Honorary Member), and the two of them began appearing on some local Ohio radio stations. This musical duo soon hooked up with country music veterans Warren ("Cap") Caplinger and Andy Patterson; here is what happened next, as Grandpa told it in his book:

One day in the late fall of 1932, Cap came to us and said that the team of Lum and Abner needed a string band for the new radio show they were starting over WTAM in Cleveland. This was real news... Their show had become a nationwide success, and on Thanksgiving night they were going to move to Cleveland (from Chicago, where they started) and begin a new season. Along with their regular show, they were going to have a "Friday Night Social" program which would be broadcast from an imaginary country schoolhouse. They needed the old-time string band for this part of the show. The sponsor would be the Ford dealers... Though the sponsors really aimed the show at residents of Ohio and Pennsylvania, it would be heard on some 44 different stations. That's why we were excited about the news. It would really be the big time.

We had already been playing in a little string band, so we just formed it up and went down to audition. Andy and a guy named Davy West played fiddle, Cap and I played guitars, Joe did the harmonica, a man named George Coleman played the banjo, and some older man whose name I don't recall played the bass fiddle with a bow. Cap and Andy were both good enough that they had made quite a few records, so we weren't exactly an



The Pine Ridge String Band, 1933. L to R: Chet "Lum" Lauck, George Coleman, Joe Troyan, Davy West, Andy Patterson, Marshall Jones, and Norris "Abner" Goff. The young ladies are the Josephine Dye Trio, also known as the Milk Maids.

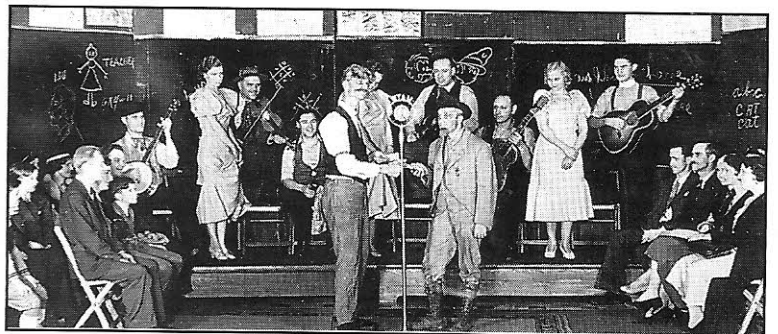
amateur group. After the audition, Lum and Abner wanted to know how much we would charge. Cap told Lum he didn't know what to charge, so Lum said they could give us \$10 a man and pay our expenses. Cap said later he nearly fell over; he had been set to ask for \$25 for all six of us!

Joe Troyan was keeping a diary at the time, and to be perfectly fair, some of his notations do not exactly follow Jones' rendition. Whereas Grandpa wrote that he and Troyan teamed up in 1931, Troyan wrote in a letter

to the NLAS on January 20, 1986:

I met Lum and Abner at WTAM in Cleveland on February 18, 1933. I auditioned for them and was accepted, playing the harmonica and doing all sorts of animal imitations. A few days later I met Grandpa (Marshall) Jones and the Pine Ridge String Band from Akron. They won their audition. Grandpa was my age and we hit it off very well. We did our first radio show with Lum and Abner on WTAM on Saturday, March 4, 1933, from 7 to 8 p.m. On Saturday, March 18, 1933, Ford Motor Co. bought the Lum and Abner show and 27 radio stations were added, all east of the Mississippi River.

To further complicate history, *THE MENA STAR* reported on all



A Friday Night Sociable broadcast from WTAM, 1933. The future Grandpa Jones is holding a guitar at far right.

these events as they happened, and there are even discrepancies there. The *STAR* agrees that L&A first appeared on WTAM on Thanksgiving night 1932, and that by March 1933 they were attracting crowds to their "Saturday Night Sociable" (coinciding with Troyan's Saturday dates in his diary). However, the *STAR* reports deviate from both Jones' and Troyan's accounts in an article announcing that Ford was picking up sponsorship of the show on May 22, 1933. (According to the *STAR*, it was not until July 4 that their WTAM show was carried by the NBC network.)

So, whatever the correct story may be, in his book Grandpa Jones continued:

It was really fun working with Lum and Abner. We became the Pine Ridge String Band: I played guitar and sang solos; Joe, besides playing harmonica in the band, did all the imitations of farm animals needed for the radio show's sound effects. We did a lot of live theatre dates with Lum and Abner as well. The first was in Warren, Ohio. We played in between their acts. They came out and did a sketch and then introduced our band; we did a little show, and then all the lights in the place would go off. Lum and Abner would go out in front and discuss why the lights went out... they'd argue about who ran out of coal oil and all such as that... and all the while they were changing into the most beautiful white suits that could be bought. When the lights came back on, there they were in the latest of clothes, in direct contrast to the old clothes they started the show with.

(Discrepancy time again: Joe Troyan's diary shows that the band's first stage appearance with L&A was in Jefferson, Ohio... instead of Warren... on April 2, 1933.)

Continuing his discussion of L&A's stage shows, Grandpa Jones went on:

Because Lum and Abner were so popular on radio, we always drew good crowds in the theatres. About the only place I remember that we didn't have a good crowd was a little theatre somewhere in Ohio; for some reason there were sparse pickings, and Lum and Abner decided to joke around. When they came out, Lum had on Abner's false goatee and Abner had on Lum's mustache. I remember thinking that Abner looked like General Grant... and he may have felt like him that night. But most of the time we did good shows, the people really liked them, and we were all sorry when Lum and Abner moved their show back to Chicago in 1934.

Although that was the end of Jones' direct association with the L&A program, they did influence him in one other very important way. In 1935, Jones and Troyan joined another early country music star, Bradley Kincaid, for stage and radio appearances. Looking for some distinguishing feature with which he could be identified, Marshall Jones remembered the old-age makeup he had observed L&A using in their personal appearances, so at the age of 22 he first donned an elderly getup of his own and became known as "Grandpa" Jones forever after!

The rest of the story has been told elsewhere. After many escapades during the formative years of country music, Jones joined *The Grand Ole Opry* in 1946, and was on hand for the premiere and subsequent long run of *Hee Haw* in 1969. (Ironically, *Hee Haw* was originally scheduled to feature skits involving...

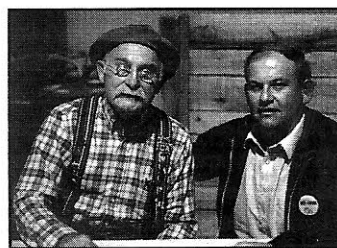


Bradley Kincaid, Joe Troyan, and the newly-named Grandpa Jones in 1935.

believe it or not... the characters of Lum and Abner! Comedian Archie Campbell was to be cast as Abner. The concept eventually bloomed into a planned TV pilot to be filmed in Nashville and written by longtime L&A writer Roz Rogers, but it never materialized.)

Grandpa Jones became an Honorary Member of the NLAS in 1985. Around that same time, he made quite a few guest appearances on various interview programs, performing a comical song that he always credited as learning during his days with L&A. We like to think it was the NLAS that jogged his memory about this! For the annual NLAS convention in 1987, he recorded a special audio taped greeting to the members. Although brief, it did contain one bit of information updating what was written in his book. He said, "The last time I saw Lum and Abner was in California at CBS studios. They had a 15-minute show, and wanted me to stay and be introduced on the program, but I had to leave before they went on. I wish I could have stayed; we would have had a lot of fun."

In the fall of 1987, Jones sent a special invitation for NLAS Vice-Prez Sam Brown and Executive Secretary Tim Hollis to visit him backstage during one of his upcoming *Grand Ole Opry* appearances. This evening turned into another fine mess that would have befitted L&A themselves. Jones was waiting, and Brown & Hollis kept sending notes that they were there, but the staff backstage at the Opry apparently found it difficult to believe their story. Word finally got to Jones about 15 minutes before his appearance on the show, and he apologized profusely, but maintained that no one had ever delivered any messages to him! The visit was therefore necessarily brief, but memorable.



Grandpa Jones & Sam Brown discuss L&A history, October 1987.

The world of comedy and the world of country music will miss Grandpa Jones and his sense of humor, but we in the NLAS can rest assured that had it not been for those two lovable old characters from Pine Ridge, it is possible that neither world would ever have enjoyed his talents.

- Tim Hollis

MR. EDDARDS TAKES A TRIP

Due to the (comparatively speaking) wealth of collectible items produced during the *Lum and Abner* Horlick's Malted Milk Period, the sponsorship by Postum seems to be overlooked. Since we are in the midst of a few significant L&A 60th anniversaries, it is worth noting that the first Postum broadcast occurred Monday, February 28, 1938. Other firsts: Lou Crosby began his memorable tenure as announcer, eventually staying with L&A longer than any other in his position. Bidding NBC farewell, the *Lum and Abner* program was introduced to the Columbia Broadcasting System, where it would remain until 1940, and would return for another three-year stint in 1947-50.

These 1938 broadcasts were believed lost for the better part of the 60 years between their live performance and now, and it is with great pride we note that the NLAS was responsible for discovering them and making them available to our eager members. We are deeply grateful to the unknown program directors and engineers who recorded them on those heavy, metal-core, acetate discs ("electrical transcriptions"). These were one-of-a-kind recordings, made for "delayed broadcast" by KMBC in Kansas City, Missouri (February 28 - April 22) and WHEC in Rochester, New York (June 6 - 27).

The NLAS would like to thank Warren Doremus, a 45-year veteran of WHEC (radio and television), who assisted recently in the research process of this article. ("HEC," Mr. Doremus informed us, were the initials of the "Hickson Electrical Corporation," the original owners of the station. While the call letters are absent from the radio waves, WHEC lives on as Channel 10, Rochester television, but is no longer affiliated with CBS.) Since these 1938 *Lum and Abner* discs were recorded "off the line" many miles from their point of origin (CBS in

Hollywood), they contain a variety of noise associated with

telephone line transmission. Some of the

WHEC labels contain hand-printed

notations:

"watch for line hits" - "hits on

network, hi freq tone on net" -

"hits + bad hiss on net." By further

label-reading, we learn that these

programs were generally broadcast two days

after their live performance

(the Friday, June 17 show was "used Sat. 6/18/38"). For you engineers, an "RCA Shadowgraph" or "1/2-tone" needle was prescribed.

Perhaps the most exciting NLAS discovery was that of the legendary "Transatlantic Broadcast" of July 21, 1938. For years the "ossifers" and members had only read of this milestone in the histories of both

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Lum and Abner specifically and radio in general. As this series celebrates its 60th anniversary, we are able to enjoy listening to the actual programs, rather than relying on interviews and printed material.

To recap the Postum series prior to the "Transatlantic Broadcast," as the February 28 episode begins, L&A are in the throes of forming "The Pine Ridge Moving Picture Company." No, this is not a reworking of the 1935 (later 1943) "Pitcher Show" plot, but rather an attempt to actually produce films in Pine Ridge! As is to be expected (which makes it fun), Squire Skimp becomes involved as a theatrical agent, and quickly puts practically everyone in town under exclusive contract.

The *Lum and Abner* quarter-hour program was being broadcast three nights per week, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, which seems to have made a difference in their pacing of plots. Instead of spending several weeks on the "Moving Picture" storyline, they quickly weave into a parallel situation in which Squire Skimp claims to have discovered oil in Pine Ridge (March 7). By Monday, March 14, the Pine Ridge Moving Picture Company is defunct. Even the oil scheme is short-lived (Squire bails out on March 16), and is followed by Cedric's discovery of dinosaur bones on March 18, which causes some excitement for a few days. A University of Arkansas professor investigates the bones on March 25 (after Abner and Grandpap's attempts to "reassemble" them), but the "dinosaur" turns out to be nothing but an ordinary mule!

Following an April Fool's Day episode, Lum and Abner settle down to "reopen" their matrimonial bureau to raise well-needed funds for the Jot 'Em Down Store. (L&A operated this

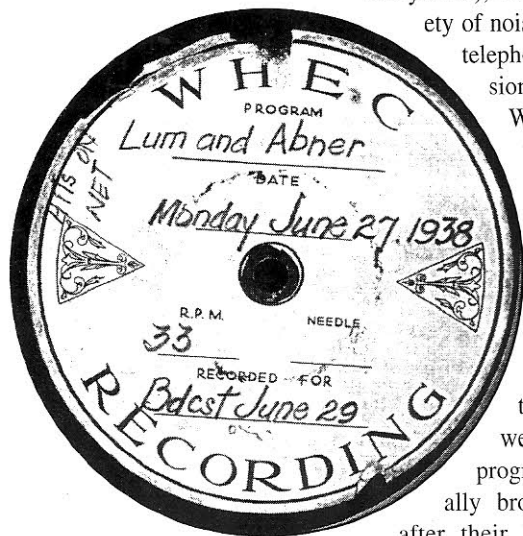
sideline back in January 1935. Refer to the NLAS Tape Library #H-5

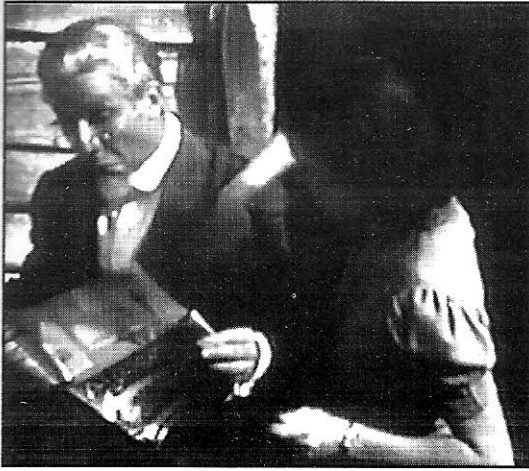
through #H-7.) Lum the bachelor becomes interested in marriage once again (his sweetheart Evalena Schultz had wed Spud Gandel less than a year before), but business partner Abner nearly wrecks the unions of Dick Huddleston, Mose Moots and Ezra Seestrunk by distributing their photos to lovesick lady applicants! (Interestingly enough, character actor Jerry Hausner, who played the part of Spud Gandel, turns up in at least one of the Postum commercials of this period!)

Just as things begin to get really interesting (an enthusiastic lady from Kansas falls in love with Lum's photo), an aggravating gap occurs in the transcription discs. (It is at this point that the KMBC discs end, to be picked up six weeks later by WHEC.) It is our hope to bridge this gap in the future in printed form with the publishing of our series *The Lum and Abner Scripts*. Until then, we must assume the Lonesome



L&A plot out Lum's journey to Europe, 1938.





Chet & Tuffy's secretary Velma McCall brushes up Goff's Abner coat in preparation for another publicity photo.

H e a r t Matrimonial Bureau fiasco was resolved to everyone's satisfaction (as well as any other plots and sub-plots introduced in the programs of April 25 - June 3).

As we delve into the extant programs currently celebrating

their 60th anniversary, we discover an interesting modification. At some time during the six weeks of missing programs, a brief reprise of theme song *Eleanor* has been moved from the end of the first Postum spot to after Lou Crosby's "And now, let's see what's going on down in Pine Ridge." Following the organ break, Mr. Crosby leads us into the body of the program. (This procedure would continue through 1939, and is evident in the two surviving recordings of that year, but would be dropped by January 1, 1940.) Those familiar with Lou Crosby's mellow, almost whispered "And now..." of the early 1940s may be surprised at his booming, energetic 1938 delivery.

Sometime prior to the Monday, June 6 program, the stage was set for both Lum and Chet Lauck to enjoy a European vacation. Likewise during that period, a new character of very short duration was introduced: Jake (last name, assumably, Grump), Abner's lazy, whining brother-in-law, portrayed by Chet Lauck. Fans of *Lum and Abner* have long admired the masterful portrayals by Goff and Lauck of major characters Lum, Abner, Cedric, Squire, Grandpap, and Mousey. On the other hand, it becomes obvious after listening to Jake and other incidentals that the "two boys from Mena" occasionally "went out on a limb" vocally. (Huh? Was that a "ol' Eddards sayin'?") All we are told about Jake is that (sometime during the missing programs) L&A have signed a contract with him, since he had the exclusive business from a bridge construction company, a situation that apparently went sour. Jake is never heard again in the existing recordings of 1939 and onward.

If you can get past the imagery of enjoying tall, frosted glasses of (ugh) iced Postum, as suggested by Lou Crosby's commercial, you will learn that "last Friday (June 3, 1938) Lum received a letter from a firm of attorneys stating that it was believed he was one of the heirs to a large fortune in England. He was asked to trace his ancestry back as far as possible and mail it to them at once, so it could be determined whether or not he's a descendant of one Samuel Edwards, who came to this country in 1778. Well, naturally, the old fellow is very excited over the news, and believes he might at last have come into a large fortune." The family also includes such names as Martha Chumwood (wife of Samuel Edwards) and her stepfather William Jensen (later referred to as Jennings!), whose estate is valued at 30 million pounds "sterling" in British terms. Abner is certain Lum is inheriting 30 million pounds of sterling silver spoons! There is some stock involved as well, which our friends interpret as being farm animals. Lum, meanwhile, learns "ster-

ling" is money, and weighs silver dollars to calculate their value in pounds, figuring 30 million would equal 480 million dollars!

Lum decides on June 8 to sell his home and move to England, reasoning that he must be "relates" of the family in question, going so far as to suggest "Lum" is a derivative of "Chumwood!" His biggest fear is learning the language - will he be able to learn English? Abner assures him Little Pearl can help, since she studies English in school! Meanwhile, Lum receives a "air mail spatial de-liver letter" from a law firm, requesting a whopping third of his inheritance plus a \$500 retainer fee to represent him in the upcoming probate case. His house unsold, he makes the unfortunate decision (June 10) to sell his half of the store for \$1,000 to none other than Squire Skimp!

By the following Monday, old Dollars-and-Cents Skimp is whipping inventory, store policy and new partner Abner into shape. Abner finds that getting organized has taken all the fun out of it! He and Lum are both shocked by a new sign erected above the porch: "Skimp's Cash Store!" (Abner sneaks up early Wednesday morning and lightly pencils "and Peabody's" under Squire's name.)

While studying a globe for the best route to the "British Umpire," L&A devise a "shortcut" through "Canady, Alaska," Siberia (not much water: "ya might could ford it in a car"), followed by a "downhill drive" through "Rushee," Poland, Germany and France! Abner becomes so excited, he plans to sell his half of the store and join his former partner!

Lou Crosby's closing commercial for June 15 is interesting: "Every time we leave Lum and Abner in the Jot 'Em Down Store, I can't help but think of an old general store, pretty much like theirs, where Mother used to deal when I was a youngster - the big cracker barrel, that old stove and the old tabby cat that was always near it. And I remember the great big display of Postum on the counter, too, for then, as now, Postum was a favorite mealtime drink with children all over the United States..."

Two days later, we learn that Mose Moots has reasoned with Lum regarding his "overland route," informing him of the lack of "fillin' stations" along the way. Abner isn't discouraged, and insists they can install a service station, and cultivate new business. The program flows into a logjam of typical Peabody confusion, especially when Lum suggests Abner combat Squire's overbearing attitude by "fightin' fire with fire." Listeners who have heard a number of these programs will be able to draw their own conclusions!

Following the weekend, we return to Pine Ridge, where Lum has made arrangements to depart for Europe on Sunday, July 3. He will travel to New York by train, and proceed on the *Queen Mary* July 6.

Cedric brings another "spatial de-liver letter," containing circulars and tickets for Lum's 1000-mile "Youth of America Tour" of England, Scotland, Holland, Belgium,



Chet Lauck can't get wife Harriet to face the camera as they sail on the QUEENMARY, July 6, 1938.



Harriet Lauck in Italy, July 1938.

France, Italy and England to begin July 11. It all sounds spectacular, with one exception: it is a bicycle tour!! (Is Lum out of shape from his days as a b i c y c l e m a r a t h o n rider a couple

and Lon Stucker, the NLAS has a file copy. After the NLAS discovered the only known disc in 1992, a fascinating comparison may be made between the recorded program (available on NLAS Tape #P-10) and the printed script.

The stateside broadcast originated in Chicago on Thursday, July 21, 1938. Following an unfamiliar organ rendition of *Eleanor*, the announcer begins: "Columbia's Department of Special Events presents at this time a special Transatlantic broadcast linking London and Chicago, bringing you a two-way conversation between that famous radio pair, Lum and Abner. For the first time in their eight years on the air [Author's note: It was seven years!], Lum and Abner are separated. Chester Lauck, who plays the role of Lum Edwards, is on a vacation tour of Europe with Mrs. Lauck and a group of friends. In London, he's pausing long enough to call up his old friend Abner in Chicago, played by Norris Goff, who interrupted a fishing trip in Wisconsin to return to the air for this Transatlantic Broadcast." The announcer goes on to recap the events of the June broadcasts before introducing L&A.

An unknown actress in Chicago becomes part of radio history, portraying the "central girl" who links the two by telephone. In all probability, Chet Lauck was speaking from the London studio in which CBS broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow informed the United States of the events of the coming World War. It isn't far-fetched to assume Chet used the very same microphone! Lauck's voice, arriving via short-wave, takes on the same eerie quality as the tonality shifts frequently.

The broadcast follows the script for all of page one, as the listener might expect. Imagine performing such a broadcast without a concrete script! Even though Goff and Lauck were masters of ad-lib, the physical absence of each actor's partner would pose problems in the ability to "read" the other's facial expressions and body language. No doubt due to the technology involved, CBS must have required a "solid" script!

Still, the "two boys from Mena" couldn't resist a few personal remarks. Even without the benefit of the script, a careful listener can detect moments in which ad-libbed lines overlap, causing the actors to be unable to hear each other. On page three of the script, Lum's answer to Abner's "How do you like England?" veers from the script following his "Fine, fine," reply, as Chet adds: "How's Lizabeth and Gretchen.. Little Pearl..." (referring to Tuffy's wife Elizabeth and daughter Gretchen, as well as the fictional Peabody family). Abner continues this train of thought:

ABNER: Oh, jist fine, jist fine...

LUM: You been ketchin' eny fish?

ABNER: Well, no, I ain't ta speak of, I been out lots, but I ain't done no good, it jist seems like the elemints is all agin it (**Note:** At this point, Chet's next line overlaps Tuffy's.) We've had too much rain in through here; the water's awful high.

LUM: Yeah, didja git Charlie Lyons ta go with ya? (**Note:** Chet is, of course, referring to announcer Charles Lyon, whose own history with *Lum and Abner* is quite significant. Chet, realizing Tuffy didn't hear this question, continues, and picks up where he left off in the script, but just for one line.) Yeah. Well, I been seein' some wonderful sights.

ABNER: Well, bless yer heart! (Laugh)

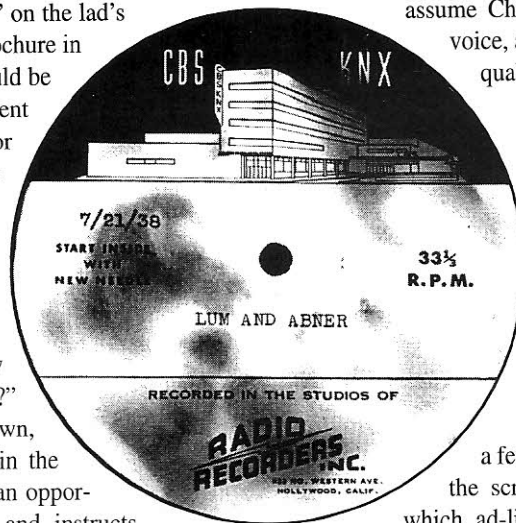
of years earlier?)

Midweek, we learn Jake is something of an inventor, and wishes to utilize L&A's old silent "movin' pitcher machine" (camera) as part of a new sleep-aid device. He wants to photograph sheep on film, to allow insomniacs with no imagination something visual to count! (Lou Crosby later suggests Jake should "switch to Postum!") Meanwhile, Lum strikes a deal with Abner for a daily dime's worth of candy to be given to young Tommy Seestrunk as "rent" on the lad's bicycle! (This is a bit odd, since the travel brochure in the previous show claimed Lum's bicycle would be waiting for him across the ocean.) Lum has spent all of the \$1,000, and begs Squire (Friday) for credit. After all, he needs groceries! Stern Skimp turns him down, and even the Huddleston Store refuses him credit, since owner Dick is out-of-town, and has left orders with Grandpappy Spears to deal on a "cash base." "Grandpap's hands is tied," Lum unwisely explains to Abner. Guess how Abner responds to that "ol' Eddards sayin'?" Lum is soon seen stumbling weakly around town, and, according to Cedric, there is no food in the Edwards pantry. Good-hearted Abner finds an opportunity with Squire absent from the store, and instructs Cedric to secretly deliver a full supply of grocery items to his old friend.

Monday, June 27 begins the final week of this *Lum and Abner* season, and with that episode, Lum offers Abner a job as his personal "treasury," to assist him in handling his soon-to-be fortune. Abner again considers selling the store, and phones "Lizabeth" (a short and two longs) for permission. It's fine and dandy with her... that is, as long as she and Little Pearl accompany the men! (She fears the boys will see a bit "too much" of Paris, as did some of the soldiers of the World War!)

Unfortunately, the final programs of this series (Wednesday, June 29 and Friday, July 1.) are unavailable. More than likely they would have been recorded on two sides of a transcription disc, one that is apparently lost. It is obvious that the series ended with Lum's departure for Europe, since the next broadcast featuring Lum and Abner would be the "Transatlantic Program!"

For years, only a script was thought to exist of this historic broadcast. Chet Lauck had donated a copy to the Lum and Abner Museum in Pine Ridge, Arkansas, and through the courtesy of curators Kathy



LUM: You know, that actor feller I got acquainted with on the boat...

ABNER: Yeah, you writ me about him, that Meechie? (**Note:** Don Ameche, who had become ill during the trip.)

LUM: Yeah, he taken down sick, y'know.

ABNER: Well, I do know! (**Note:** Another overlapped line here - Lum's first sentence.) Well, how's he seem ta be gittin' along?

LUM: They had ta oppy-rate on him. Oh, jist fine.

ABNER: He is, huh?



Don Ameche & wife sail with the Laucks on the
QUEENMARY, July 6, 1938.

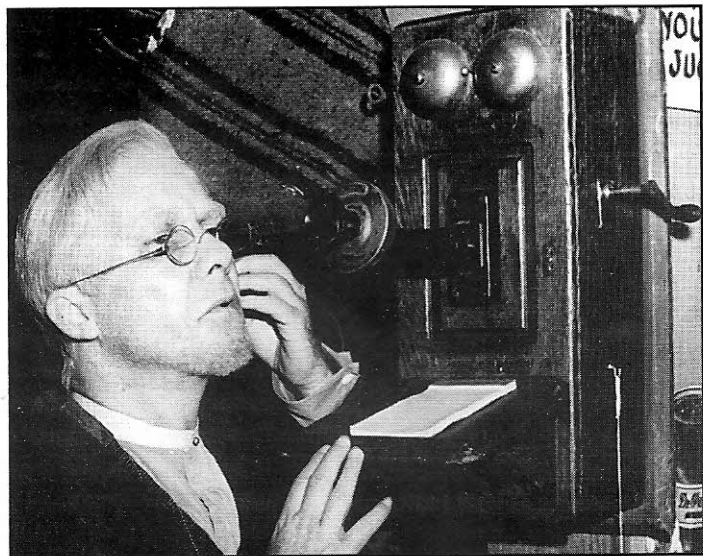
L U M :
(**Note:** Lauck gets back to the script!) Ever'body's bein' awful nice...

**D o n
A m e c h e**
would later appear on *Lum and Abner* on Friday, April 10, 1942, as part of the gala Pine Ridge debut

of *The Bashful Bachelor*, but no mention would be made of his "meeting Lum" on their joint trip to Europe! In fact, no post-1938 programs exist at this point that refer to it as being an event in Lum's life.

Abner adds the line "Cedric's got a new boat, too," during the discussion of the size of the *Queen Mary*. After Lum's scripted line, "They had a entertainment on the boat," he adds, "We wonned the ship's pool comin' over... Yeah, nearly nine hunnerd dollars!" The script is adhered to until halfway down page three, just after Lum mentions his itinerary through Holland, Belgium and Paris, when Tuffy strays:

ABNER: Well, who... how... that womern that ya writ me about, that girl ye met on the boat, that Harriet Wood, I b'lieve ya said her name wuz? (**Note:** Harriet Wood Lauck, Chet's wife!)



LUM: Yeah, well, she's here with me!

ABNER: She is? (Laugh)

LUM: Yeah, right now!

ABNER: Well, air you a-sparkin' her?

LUM: Uh... (chuckles) a little on th' side! Don't you tell that on me around Pine Ridge, now!

ABNER: I won't breathe it to a soul, not a soul! Now, you be careful, an' don't hop the broomstick while yer over there!

LUM: Oh, I ain't, I ain't.

The ad-libs continue, as Lum asks how the Pine Ridge folks are, and then, to satisfy proud papa Chet's curiosity, asks, "How's little Nancy and Shirley Mae?" (his daughters), to which Abner replies, "Oh, jist fine."

Finally, we're back to the script, with which Chet and Tuffy remain until the half-full page four is complete. The announcer (Paul Dowdy) reiterates the conditions under which the broadcast was accomplished, and invites the listeners to tune in again "when the serial resumes on September 5." (How we wish we had recordings of those programs!) Dowdy's final remarks identify the Wrigley Building as the Chicago base for the program, as *Eleanor* (clearly performed by a different organist) fades away.

It is odd that a program of this unique nature seems to have been completely ignored in virtually every history of radio to be published. As reported last issue, even *The Mena Star* neglected to mention it! Perhaps, with its live shortwave reports from various nations, the "news roundup" format, pioneered by CBS in March of 1938, overshadowed the comparatively meager *Lum and Abner* event. Nonetheless, in the history of entertainment radio, Lauck and Goff scored a unique victory.

The 1938 *Lum and Abner* programs discussed above, recorded from the original transcription discs, are available on NLAS Tape Library Cassettes #P-1 through #P-4 and #P-8 through #P-10. There are no volumes #P-5 through #P-7 available at this time, those numbers being reserved for the hopeful day we uncover discs of the missing episodes. (A reminder that the discs were originally recorded from CBS telephone transmissions, several miles from their point of origin, and contain "line noise," but are the only versions available.)

- Uncle Donnie Pitchford

Lum's Letters From Europe

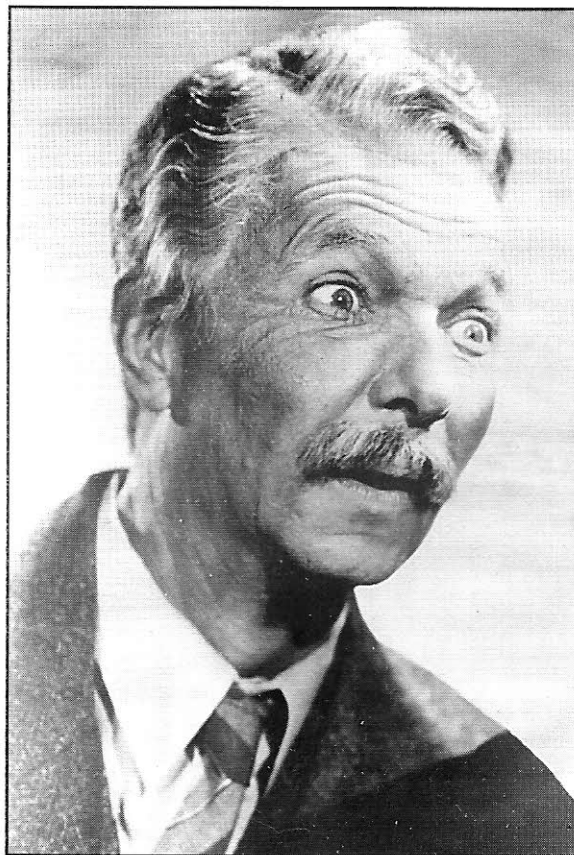
(Part Two)

(In the April issue of the JOURNAL, we printed the first four in a series of mock "letters" supposedly written to Abner during Lum's tour of Europe. These pieces were meant to be printed as a weekly feature in various newspapers and radio publications. Here, we present the conclusion of the series.)

altdorf switcherland
dear abner:

well her i am at last in switcherland. It reminds me a right smart of pine ridge with all these mountains around here only the people is a whole lot different. When i first got here day before yesterday i thought they had the biggest children here that i had ever saw in my life, but i found out they're all growed fokes. The men here wear little knee britches like the children does back home. Ever place i've tried to act like the fokes that lives there does but this is one place i draw the line, i grannies i'd feel imbarished to death if i had to go around with them little short pants on and my bare legs showin thataway. This country is knowed fer several different things, cheese, yodelin, and purty scenery. Now the cheese i aint tried yet ... and the yodelin, they's plenty of that fer i taken a walk up in the mountains yesterday and i never heard sich hollerin and carryin on in my life. You think you've heard yodelin on the radio back home but you aint heard nuthin, at least a feller can go over to the radio ther and turn it off but here they aint nuthin abody can do about it .. I'm shore proud i never had your worman lizabeth with me fer i know now that she's learnin to play the gittar that she wants to learn how to yodel too and i know my nerves never would stand to hear her yellin all the time like these people over here does. The good old united states has shore got one thing to be thankful fer and that is that it aint knowed fer its yodelin. And i think the government ort to make it agin the law fer em to do it on the radio fer it might be catchin and it might be well fer em to put their foot down before a epidemic of it gets started. Now as fer the scenery, i cant say much about that fer jist to be honest i aint seen none yit. These mountains is so dad blamed high they hide everthing, you cant see nuthin fer em. Mayby if i get to a place thats flat enough fer abody to

July 23



see over a quarter of a mile i can tell you more about this scenery they keep braggin about ... yesterday they jist insisted i climb one of the big mountains with a bunch of em so as to see the view, well i finally went and after climbin fer half a day to get to the top of the mountain, when i got ther i seen the beautiful view they was all talkin about was all back down there where we had come from and like i told the feller that showed us the way, i couldn't see no sense to go to all the trouble to climb a big mountain jist sos you could look back down at the place you was at before you started climbin. I reckon thats the reason they tied us

all together with ropes—they knowed we would catch on and try to back out, but the rest of em seemed to have the time of their life. I reckon they jist hadnt stopped to figger out how silly it was. This town where i am at now is very famous fer this is the place where that feller william tell takened a bow and arrow and shot a apple off of his little boys head. They seem to think he done a wonderful thing when he done it but personal i cant see where he done so much, in the first place thats plum dangerous to be shootin that close to a little feller thataway fer he might of put a eye out fer him and in the second place i never seen no sense in shootin the apple off of his head when all he had to do was walk over and lift it off. The only excuse i can see is that mayby the youngin was runnin and the old man couldnt catch him and the only way to get the apple was to shoot it off. I aint denighin he made a purty good shot but i dont think no great big growed man ort to be called a hero fer takin a apple away from a little boy. These fokes over here is funny thataway.

I went to a show in paris where a feller stood his wife up on the stage and throwed knives at her fer ten minits and i grannies he missed her ever time, finally i got disgusted and got up and left fer i've saw better knife throwin than that right ther in pine ridge. Well i've got to quit and get my valises packed fer the next place we're goin, where ever thats at, but i'll write you agin in a few days and let you know where i wind up at. tell everbody hello fer me and that i am bringin back a bunch of post cards so they can see all the sights that i've saw ever place i've been.

o-lee-ay—ee—hoo
(thats supposed to be a yodel)
lum

July 26

venice, italy
dear abner:

i'm sorry i ain't wrote sooner but i have been doin so much travelin around and seein so many things fer the last few days i aint had time to set down and consenstrate long enough to tend to it. As i reckon you seen by the envelope i am now in italy and when i was complainin in my other letter about the way frenchmens talked i hadnt heered nuthin ... these fellers cant even make motions to where i can tell what they're talkin about. How fokes can take our language and get so mixed up i cant see ... day before yesterday i was in rome, thats a city here in this country. I had heered of it before but i never expected to see it fer i thought i recollected readin some place a year or two ago about some feller settin around playin a fiddle while the place burned out, but i reckon it must of been another town of the same name or else they've done some awful fast buildin here one, fer they aint no sign of a fire of no kind now, sept they is a lot of broken statues that was either caused by that or they have got some awful youngens here one. I got in a parade here the other day. Me and a feller named williams from the u.s.a. that i met over here was standin on the corner talkin and i was tellin him about you and your family and about the time the black shirts—thats who was doin the paradin—come by i held my arm out in front of me to show him how tall your daughter pearl was and one of the fellers come over and kissed me on both cheeks and insisted that i was a brother and wanted me to get in the parade. He used to live in our country, too, said he use to have a fruit stand in new york before he moved back over here, but i told him he wernt no brother of mine fer i knowed i never had none. I reckon you seen by the top of the letter that i am in venice now, jist got here this mornin ... from what i see of it it is a awful pretty town but would be jist my luck to get here durin a flood, you thought the river got up last year when it washed out the swingin bridge down ther at kates creek crossin, you aint seen nuthin yet, this whole town is under water, everybody is ridin around in boats, facts is thats the only thing you could ride in less you was a duck, but it dont seem to make no difference to nobody, they all seem to be jist as happy as larks ... these fellers is all standin up in the back of their boats paddlin them around singin at the top of their voice. I've been sorter nervous all day wonderin if the water was gettin any higher and thinkin maybe i had ort to get out of here while i could but i cant find anybody that can understand what i'm talkin about when i ask em, so i'm stayin here and takin my chances that the worst part of it is over and that the water will soon start goin down. It aint rainin now and dont look like its goin to so maybe i'm safe ... i've got the water wings that i brung along on the boat tied around me in case it does get worse. If you dont get another letter from me soon write the government and tell em where i was when you last heered from me, so they can get the officials over here to lookin fer me if this thing gets any worse i might be hangin in a tree top sommers to keep from drownin.

your victim of the flood friend
lum

p.s.—i hope the trains can still get through to get this letter to you or fokes might never know what has become of me.

August 6

back in france agin.
dear abner:

flash ... good news ... i grannies i'm startin home tomorrow .. yessir the

boat is here now and i was down this mornin and takened a look at it ... it looks a whole lot like the one i come over here on sept it aint quite as big. I never was as home sick in my life but i shore do dread that trip on the boat, facts is i even got sorter sick this mornin jist lookin at the thing ... i'll tell you one thing when i get back home and you want to do any fishin my part will shore be done from the bank fer i know i never will want to get in another boat as long as i live. They have some awful purty sights and i'm glad i made the trip fer i know i'll have somepin to talk about the rest of my life but i know i aint seen no place over here that looked as good to me as pine ridge will when i get back ... we've got a wonderful country, abner, a wonderful country ... in times past i reckon i've made some slightin remarks about our government but you will never here me say nuthin else as long as i live ... trouble with us fokes we've been livin in our own country so long that we fergit how to appreciate it and the first thing you know somepin dont go to suit us and we start criticizin the government, well thank goodness, abner, we live in a country where a feller can do a little criticizin of his own without gettin throwed in jail fer it. And we dont go to bed of a night with the fear that a bomb will be drapped on top of the house before we wake in the mornin or that we will be under some other government before night falls ... times might seem hard with some of us ever now and then, but we have our own homes and vittals in the house to eat and while i have tended lots of funerals in my time i aint never went to one yet where the feller that had passed on starved to death. And we know that our next door neighbor is our friend and that real deep down in his heart he knows we got the greatest country in the world ... i've heerd lots of songs since i come over here that i had never heerd before but the purtiest piece of music i've heerd yet is ... The Star Spangled Banner—-and from now on when a parade goes by and some feller is marchin along carrin our flag, the good old red, white and blue, nobody aint goin to have to nudge lum edwards and remind him to stand up and take his hat off. I've tried all my life, abner, to do some great thing to where fokes would honor me and i never knowed till i got away from home that i had had the greatest honor bestowed on me that i could have, and that is the privilege of sayin .. i'm a citizen of the united states ... the land of the brave and the free

your home sick friend,
lum



Hit's Practical Here!

THE 14TH ANNUAL NLAS CONVENTION JUNE 26 & 27, 1998

Best Western Lime Tree Inn
MENA, ARKANSAS

Special Guest



Kay Linaker

This is the last issue of the *Journal* that will reach you before this year's Convention, so if you haven't made your plans yet, this is the time to do so!

As you see here, we have TWO special guests for this year's event. The first, in terms of working with L&A, is actress **KAY LINAKER**, who appeared with our old Pine Ridge friends in their 1943 movie *Two Weeks To Live* (as well as many other classic films of the period). A native of

Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Ms. Linaker's family was well acquainted with the Laucks and the Goffs long before the days of radio, so she will have much fascinating history to relate!

Our other guest for this year is famed radio historian **FRANK BRESEE**. His name will not be unfamiliar to anyone who has studied radio history, as his countless interviews with radio celebrities have been invaluable to the documentation of that era. Bresee actually started in radio himself as a child actor, broadcasting from the studio NEXT to the one in which Lum & Abner were doing their nightly show! During the NLAS Convention,

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Bresee will be sharing with us many of the stories he has collected from L&A's friends and coworkers over the years... we are definitely looking forward to it!

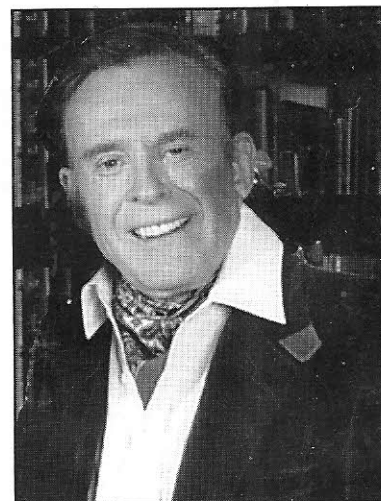
As we announced last time, our Friday evening program will be taking place at Mena's historic Lyric Theatre, where we will attempt to recreate Lum & Abner's stage act of the 1930s. Frank Bresee will lend his expertise as a master of ceremonies for this event.

A schedule of activities will be available at the front desk of the Best Western Lime Tree Inn, but basically there will be a Friday evening program, a Saturday morning program, and a Saturday evening program. Specific times will be announced in advance of each.

As usual, there is no registration fee or any other charge for Convention activities, but you definitely should make your room reservation NOW. Call the Best Western Lime Tree Inn at (501) 394-6350.

We'll be a-seein' you ther!

Special Guest



Frank Bresee