

MEMORIES

Old Time Radio Club Of Buffalo

SPECIAL EDITION:

THE SHADOW



FRANKLYN E. HAMILTON

Vol. 1 No. 3

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The editors wish to dedicate this issue of MEMORIES to Millie Dunworth, without whose generous support this magazine, as well as much of our other material, would not be possible. Thanks again, Mill.

))

The Old Time Radio Club of Buffalo meets the second Monday of Every month at St. Matthew's Church, 1182 Seneca Street, Buffalo, New York 14210. Anyone interested in the old time radio shows of the past is welcome to attend a meeting and observe or participate. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM.

The purpose of the OTRCOB and MEMORIES is the regeneration of interest in old time radio. If the contents of this magazine stimulates your interest, then we are justified. WE need YOUR support. Write to us, write for us, just plain write! Our new address is:

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THE SHADOW

CREDITS

Lamont Cranston, The Shadow.....Robert Hardy Andrews
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Bill Johnstone
Bret Morrison (1944-56)

Margo Lane.....Agnes Moorehead
Marjorie Anderson
Gertrude Warner
Grace Matthews
Leslie Woods

Commissioner Ralph Weston.....Dwight Weist
Arthur Vinton
Kenny Delmar
Santos Ortega
Jimmy LaCurto
Ted deCorsia

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Alan Reed (Teddy
Bergman)

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Carl Caruso
Sandy Becker
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Blue Coal's Heating Expert.....John Barclay

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Bill Sweets
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Stedman Coles
Joe Bates Smith
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Jerry McGill
Bill Sweets
Alfred Bester

Theme....."Omphale's Spinning
Wheel" by Saint-Saens

Organists.....Rosa Rio
Elsie Thompson
Charles Paul

THE SHADOW

RADIO vs PULP vs MOVIES vs COMICS

by Charles Seeley

It is possible that The Shadow has four different sets of fans, who may or may not know much about each other. For example, devotees of The Shadow on radio may not be aware of the Shadow comic. Similarly, followers of the Shadow comic may not know the movie Shadow, and so on. This article will attempt to "round up" the four areas of Shadow fandom.

The origins of The Shadow on radio and in the pulp magazines are closely interrelated, and have been extensively explored in various publications such as MEDIASCENE and Jim Harmon's The Great Radio Heroes. There fore, the subject will be given only a short recap here. In the late twenties, Street and Smith Publications, Inc. sponsored a radio show which adapted mystery stories from its mystery pulp "Detective Story Weekly." Predictably, the show was entitled STREET AND SMITH'S DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE HOUR. At first, the announcer was a mysterious voice known only as The Shadow. Soon, The Shadow was narrating the entire story. In order to keep clear copyright to the name "The Shadow" Street and Smith decided to publish a one-shot magazine with the lead story featuring The Shadow. "The Shadow, A Detective Magazine" hit the newsstands in April, 1931, and the character most responsible for the pop culture revival of the sixties was born. The magazine was an instant success and would run 325 issues until its demise in 1949.

By 1936, The Shadow had become the principle character of the radio show, which was re-titled in his honor. It is interesting that, although interrelated in their beginnings, the radio show and the pulp each had a different version of The Shadow. On radio, Lamont Cranston was real; The Shadow was his alter-ego. Cranston really was a wealthy, young man about town. His ability to cloud men's minds was a result of a trip to the Orient.

Bret Morrison and Leslie Wood in a studio publicity photo.



Margo Lane is Cranston's "companion" and is the only person privy to his secret identity. (Jim Harmon makes a good point in his book when he suggests that Margo Lane and Lois Lane are sisters who share an extraordinary penchant for getting into tight spots.) Margo was first seen (heard?) on the radio show. She didn't appear in the pulp until June of 1941. There exists a controversy between radio and pulp fans about Margo. Pulp devotees argue that she was only introduced into the magazine because of pressure from the radio audience. The radio fans insist that Margo was always a part of The Shadow's life. When she first appeared in the pulp, she wasn't even one of The Shadow's agents, and usually managed only to make The Shadow work harder. She eventually straightened up when she became an active agent.

Harry E. Charlot was the original scripter of the radio show and, after his death, the scripts were mostly the work of free-lancers, including Alfred Bester, who has since put in a pretty valid claim as the author of the best science fiction novel ever with The Stars My Destination. Oddly, Walter Gibson contributed few, if any, radio scripts. Of course, he was busy churning out 10 to 15,000 words per day, on three typewriters, for the pulp which, at one point, was issued bi-weekly.

Both radio and pulp Shadows were designed to make the listener/reader believe that the character was real. The radio version succeeded the best. During World War Two, listeners wrote to the networks demanding to know why The Shadow wasn't out fighting the Nazis and Japanese.

The early radio Shadow exhibited some powers the later Shadow didn't use. At times, the former would use ventriloquism or telepathy or even "will" people to do his bidding. These qualities disappear by the forties, and The Shadow becomes just another detective with a gimmick. Even so, the audience was still there, and the show lasted longer than the pulp, ending its original run in 1954. However, thanks to Charles Michaelson, the show was revived in the sixties, achieving some success on radio stations across the country. Probably, more than anything else, the re-emergence of The Shadow on radio sparked the nostalgia interest still raging in America.

The Shadow character of the pulps is completely different from the radio incarnation. The pulp Shadow is the real person, while Lamont Cranston is another person, the identity of whom The Shadow sometimes assumes. The Shadow is, at first, a complete man of mystery, of whom we know little except of his hatred of evil. He is a master of disguise, he melts unseen through the shadows of night, appearing and disappearing unexplainedly. His weapons against evil are twin .45 automatics, with which he never misses, and a network of fiercely loyal agents. Seen infrequently, he is tall, lean, dressed in black with jet slouch hat and cape, a scarlet muffler masking his face, save for prominent nose and glaring eyes. He wears a glowing Girasol ring as an aid in hypnotizing people. He appears from nowhere, just when the situation is most hopeless. Criminals cringe at the sound of his name or his chilling laugh. Obviously, this is not the radio Shadow.

Besides Margo Lane, both radio and pulp versions share supporting characters. There is Moe Shrevnitz (Shrevvy) who, in the pulp, is a tough and cool agent of The Shadow, using his cab to further his master's plans. Shrevvy on radio is merely comic relief, a dummy. Police

Commissioner Ralph Weston is the most faithfully transcribed from one medium to the other. In both, he is hard-headed and demanding, the archetypal thirties cop. He wants to catch The Shadow, but grudgingly accepts his aid.

In the sixties, Belmont Books issued a series of new Shadow novels in paperback, supposedly written by Walter Gibson. In 1975, Pyramid Books began re-issuing the original Shadow pulps. So far, The Shadow in recent printed form has not taken off, as did "Doc Savage" and "The Avenger" re-issues, but it still might. The reader is urged to pick up one or two Shadow paperbacks, if you've never read one, just to see what it's like.

The Shadow was also the subject of one movie serial and four feature films. Rod LaRocque was The Shadow in "The Shadow Strikes" released in 1937. Kane Richmond starred in three Shadow pictures for Monogram entitled "Behind the Mask," "The Shadow Returns," and "The Missing Lady." The serial was called simply "The Shadow" and was released by Columbia in 1940. In it, Victor Jory is Lamont Cranston/The Shadow. He looks and fits the part well, but in action, well, there is room for improvement. First of all, this Shadow seems to be a cross between the radio and pulp versions. Somehow, he is patterned after both. In the film, Cranston is real and The Shadow is a mask, as in the radio show. However, he cannot "cloud men's minds." Jory's Shadow is an attempt at a pulp Shadow, at least, he dresses like the pulp Shadow. He uses .38 revolvers instead of .45 automatics and misses everytime he uses them. His Shadow is a washout at fisticuffs. If you remember, serials are long on action, and there is a fair amount in "The Shadow" but Cranston seems to fight better as Cranston than as The Shadow! As the Shadow, Jory is always being knocked out by the bad guys and left to have buildings explode around him. This inept Shadow doesn't even fairly defeat his adversary, the Black Tiger. In the final chapter, the Black Tiger proves himself as inagile as our hero when he stumbles into an electronic device and electrocutes himself. The only memorable scene in the serial is in one of the early chapters, when we see The Shadow peering through a skylight, laughing eerily. A few characters also appear in the serial that are present in the radio and pulp versions, but not as we know them. Harry Vincent is The Shadow's most trusted agent in the pulp, but in the film, he is little more than a chauffeur. At one point, he impersonates The Shadow, an action impossible on radio or in the pulp. Margo is present in the film merely to be put into danger. Not having seen the other Shadow films, and having very little information on them, I can not comment on them.

THE Shadow

DETECTIVE
MONTHLY



Everyone, at one time or another, has read a comic book, of one type or another. It was inevitable that The Shadow would appear in panelogical form. Street and Smith put out the first Shadow comic book in March, 1940. It ran 122 issues reprinting, at first, the newspaper strip by Vern Greene, then going to original stories by Bob Powell. It ended with the November, 1950, issue and in 1964, Archie/Radio Comics brought The Shadow back, hoping to ride on the wave of nostalgia then gathering force. It was a pitiful attempt. The Shadow was portrayed as another "super hero," an unintellegent move since The Shadow already possessed a firmly established character. The book folded a year later after only eight issues. The latest attempt to present a comic book Shadow began in 1973, produced by National Periodicals Publications, better known as DC, publishers of "Superman." The comic was recently cancelled, after twelve issues, about two years. DC has done the best with the character by choosing to adapt the pulp stories. After all, an invisible hero may be easy to draw but it won't hold a reader's interest. Comics are an essentially visual medium and the pulp stories lend themselves excellently to it. DC's Shadow is the pulp Shadow, complete with slouch hat, cape, and girasol ring. The stories are set in the thirties, and well capture the mood of the character. A black and white reproduction of the cover of the first DC issue of the Shadow appears elsewhere in this issue.

Most interesting was an issue of "Batman," himself an avenger of the night, wherein The Shadow appeared and was revealed to have been Batman's inspiration to become a crime-fighter. In fact, recent issues of "Batman" have shown a trend back to the original mysterious Batman, replacing the "Holy ski shoes" variety of a few years ago. DC also published "The Avenger" comic, derived from the pulp of the same name. In one issue, The Shadow and his band mistakenly battle the Avenger and his band, and the point is made that the Avenger cooperates with and observes the law while The Shadow, a vigilante, pperates outside of it.

The Shadow is an important figure in popular culture, equally as important as Tarzan or Superman. Perhaps he is as popular as he is because he is the archetypal vigilante, and the vigilante has been a popular character through the ages (witness Robin Hood and Zorro). Why? Maybe everyone, somewhere inside, has a secret desire to cut through red tape and get things done now, or mete out justice instead of law. The vigilante is just as popular now as ever in films and literature. "Death Wish," a film of a few years ago, has spawned several like films and a sequel is in the works. Paperback series dealing with vigilante characters such as the Executioner and the Destroyer are similar in spirit to The Shadow, if nothing else.

And, finally, there is The Shadow's deathless contribution to American humor. You've all heard it. Frank Sinatra is fond of quoting it.

"Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?"

"The Shadow do!"

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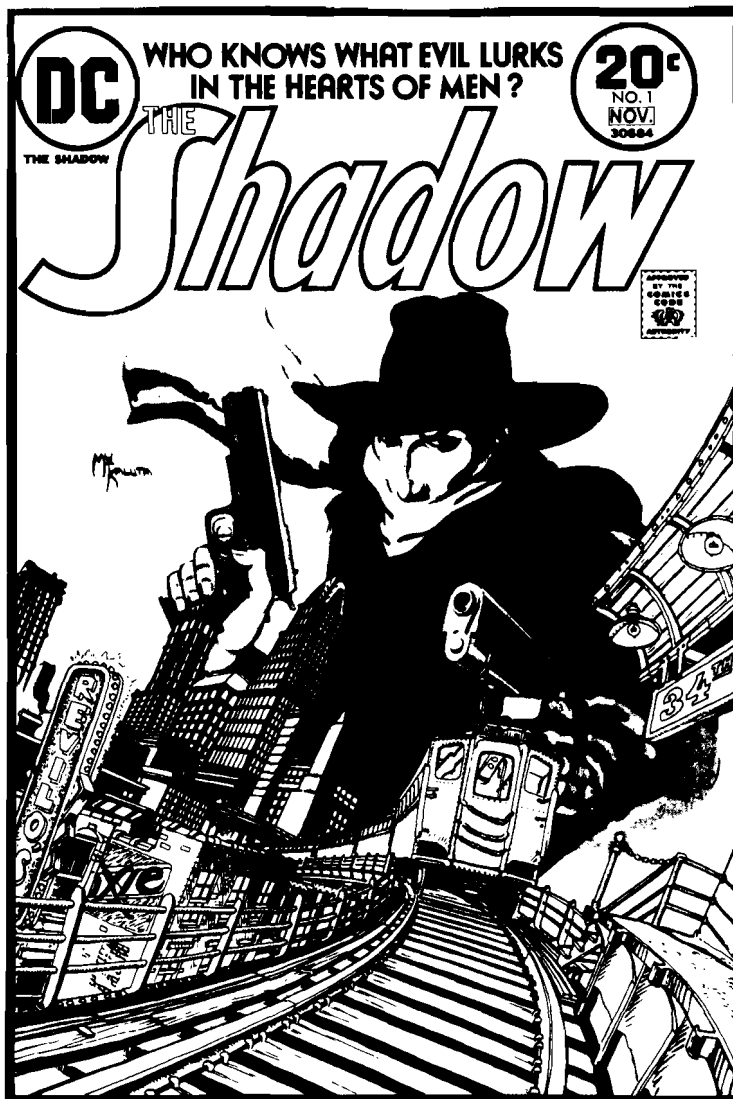


BRET MORRISON

JOHN A. BARCLAY



GRACE MATTHEWS



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DIGGING FOR GOLD IN...

PENNSYLVANIA!?

by Hy Daley, Media Instructor, Corry High School, Corry, Pa.

Back in the fifties a radio station in our area decided to get rid of its old radio discs. They placed them in a shed in an old farmhouse near their transmitter. Over the years, the roof fell in on the records; moisture seeped into the building and the ground enveloped the piles and piles of sixteen inch discs.

In November of 1975, I and Georgie Bishop, another OTR freak, got permission to salvage anything we could find in and around the building. The structure itself was empty, but we noticed a few records in the debris in the shed adjoining the old farm house.

Like excavators of an ancient tomb, we slowly sifted through the ruins and found hundreds of discs. We couldn't hope to know what was on them until we had cleaned them and played them on our makeshift sixteen inch turntables.

The batch I took home turned out to be a serial called "Destiny Trails," which portrayed James Fenimore Cooper's The Deerslayer. Most of the 39 chapter show was intact. Although slightly scratchy, they sounded very good through our system. I did recognize Frank Lovejoy as one of the main characters.

Another group of records were "Movietown Radio Theatre" starring such greats as George Raft, Barbara Luddy, Sabu, Adolph Menjou, Bobby Driscoll, and many others. Each show is a full 30 minutes of drama with Les Mitchell (from THE GUIDING LIGHT/HELEN TRENT) as host. He talks about each star and talks briefly with the guest star about the show.

Another pile contained "Five Minute Mysteries." Each disc has six different shows and a murder is solved in five minutes.

Meanwhile, Georgie was cleaning his pile of plastic. What he came up with were three separate series of "Dorothy and Dick." This show stars Dorothy Kilgallon and Dick Kollmar (of BOSTON BLACKIE); starting originally with WOR, it was later syndicated. I'm not sure if these shows are from the late forties or early fifties. Anyway, it is basically a talk show with newsy bits of gossip.

At this point, we have not cleaned all of the records, but I'll give you another report on our gold mining excavation here in north-western Pennsylvania. And, oh yes, we did find in the transmitter shack, 91 Eddie Cantor shows and 20 more "Dorothy and Dick" shows all in mint condition. As a matter of fact, 50 or so were in an unopened box!!

Thanks,
"Sourdough" Daley &
"Gold Finger" Georgie

China Story, The = 1/18/55
 Chinese Legs = see "Ned's Chinese Legs"
 Choking Horror, The = 2/14/56
 Christmas Card (or...Carol), A = 12/24/59
 Crown Prince Arnold (or...Charlie) = see "Sleeping Prince"
 Curse of Frankenstein, The = see "My Heart's..."
 Destroyer, The
 Destruction of England, The = 10/9/53
 Dishonoured = 12/14/54
 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Crun = 1/15/54
 Dread(ed) Batter Pudding Hurler, The = 10/12/54
 Dreaded Piano Clubber, The = 10/2/53
 Drums Along the Mersey = 10/11/56
 Embassy in China is Burning, The = could be "Firechief Seagoon"
 Emperor of the Universe = see "Bulldog...."
 End, The (Confessions of a Secret Sennapods Drinker) = 3/22/55
 Everest Project, The = 10/16/53
 Fear of Wages = 3/6/56
 Fifty Pound Cure, The = 2/23/59
 Fireball of Milton Street, The = 2/22/55
 Firechief Seagoon = 10/14/57
 First Albert Memorial to the Moon, The = 11/13/53
 Flea(s), The = 12/20/56
 Foiled by President Fred = 11/1/55
 Forog = 12/21/54
 Frog = see "Forog"
 Giant Bombardon, The = 12/25/53
 Gibraltar Story, The = 10/30/53
 Gold Plate Robbery, The = 2/16/59
 Goon Law
 Goon War, The
 Great Art Mystery = see "Case of the Fake..."
 Great Bank Robbery = may not be one below; could be "Terrible..."
 Great Bank of England Robbery, The = 4/12/54
 Great British Revolution, The = 12/16/57
 Great Ink Drought of 1902, The = 2/22/54
 Great International Christmas Pudding = see "International"
 Great Mustard and Cress Shortage, The = 3/8/54
 Great Nadger (or Naja) Plague = see "Nadger Plague"
 Great Regent's Park Swim, The = 10/21/57
 Great Spoon Plague = see "Spon..."
 Great Statue Debate, The = 3/24/58
 (Great) String Robberies, The = 1/13/58
 Greatest Mountain in the World = see "Everest Project"
 Greenslade Story, The = 12/20/55
 Guided Naafi, The = 1/24/56
 Harry Not A Dog = 12/11/53
 Hastings Flyer, The = 11/22/55
 Histories of Pliny the Elder, The = 3/27/57
 History for Schools = see "Histories of Pliny..."
 History of Communications, A = 1/29/54
 House of Teeth, The = 1/31/56
 I'll Meet (or Ill Met) by Goonlight = 3/13/57
 Insurance: the White Man's Burden = 2/28/57
 Internal Mountain = see "Saga..."
 International Christmas Pudding, The = 11/15/55

Invisible Acrobat, The = 4/5/54
 I Was Monty's Treble = 11/10/58
 Jet Propelled Guided Naafi, The = see "Guided...."
 Junk Affair, The = 10/7/57
 King Arthur's Sword = 12/8/58
 King Solomon's Mines = 12/2/57
 Kippered Herring Gang, The = 2/5/54
 Labour Exchange 1917 = could be " _____ " or "Fear of Wages"
 Lamppost, The = 3/17/58
 Lantern Slides
 Last Goon Show, The = November, 1972
 Last (of the) Smoking Seagoon(s) = 1/28/60
 Last Tram, The (from Clapham) = 11/23/54
 Leather Omnibus, The = 2/7/57
 Lost Colony, The = see "Sale of..."
 Lost Gold Mine (of Charlotte), The = 10/5/54
 Lost Horizon(s) (or Horizontally) = 11/8/55
 Lost Music of Purdom, The = 2/8/55
 Lost Scroll = see "Missing..."
 Lost Year, The = 12/13/55
 Lurgi Strikes Britain (or...Again)=
 11/9/54
 McReekie Rising of '74, The = 10/25/56
 Man Who Never Was, The = 3/20/56
 Man Who Won the War, The = 9/20/55
 Marie Celeste = see "Mystery..."
 Mighty Wurlitzer, The = 1/3/56
 Million Pound Penny = 11/17/58
 Missing Battleship = see "Stolen..."
 Missing Boa Constrictor
 Missing Bureaucrat, The = 11/20/53
 Missing Hair Case, The = see "Rightful..."
 Missing on the Mountain = see "Thing..."
 Missing Scroll, The = 2/1/55
 Moon Show, The = 1/31/57
 Moriarty Murder Mystery, The = 1/20/58
 Mountain Eaters, The = 12/1/58
 Mummified Priest, The = 1/22/54
 My Heart's in the Highlands = 1/27/58
 Mysterious Punch-up-the-Conker = see
 "Leather Omnibus"
 Mystery of the Marie Celeste, The =
 11/16/54
 Nadger Plague, The = 10/18/56
 Napoleon's Piano = 10/11/55
 Ned's Atomic Dustbin = 1/5/59
 Ned's Chinese Legs = 1/7/60
 Nicotine Ned = see "Last of the Smoking Seagoons"
 1985 = 1/4/55
 Nude Welshman, The = 11/3/58
 Open Casebook = see "Great Bank of England Robbery"
 Pam's Papers Insurance Policy (or...Conspiracy) = 11/24/58
 Personal Narrative = see "Seagoon Writes His Memoirs"
 Pevensky Bay Disaster = see "Hastings Flyer"
 Phantom Headshaver of Brighton, The = 10/19/54
 Piano-Firing Cannon, The = 10/23/53
 Plasticine (or Pleistocene) Man, The = 12/23/57



Policy, The = 11/25/57
 Quartermass OBE = see "Scarlet Capsule"
 Queen Anne's Reign (or Rain) = 12/22/58
 Reason Why, The = 8/27/57
 Rebellion at Red Fort, The = 11/11/57
 Red Bladder, The = 1/10/56
 Rent Collectors, The = 1/17/57
 Rightful Heir, The = 1/11/55
 Robin's Post, A Story of Lord Seagoon = 1/14/60
 Round the World in 80 Days = 2/21/57
 Saga of the Internal Mountain, The = 3/29/54
 Sale of Manhattan, The = 11/29/55
 Scarlet Capsule, The = 2/2/59
 Scragge = 11/27/53
 Seagoon MCC = see "Seagoon Writes..."
 Seagoon (Writes His War) Memoirs = 12/15/58
 Search for Rommel's Treasure, The = 10/25/55
 Secret Escritoire, The = 9/27/55
 Shangri-La Again = see "Lost Horizon"
 Shifting Sands (of Waziristan) = 1/24/57
 Siege of Fort Knight, The = 4/19/54
 Silent Bugler, The = 3/15/54
 Silver Dubloons, The = see "Spanish..."
 Sinking of Westminister Pier, The = 2/15/55
 Six Charlies in Search of an Author = 12/27/56
 Six Ingots of Leadenhall Street = see "Sinking..."
 Sky is Leaking, The = see "Queen Anne's Rain"
 Sleeping Prince, The = 11/8/56 and 2/14/57
 Sound Barrier Airing Cupboard, The = 11/6/53
 Space Age, The = 11/4/57
 Spanish Armada, The = 12/18/53
 Spanish Dubloons, The = 1/21/60
 Spanish Suitcase, The = 12/7/54
 Special St. David's Day Program = 3/1/56
 Spectre of Tinagel, The = 11/1/56
 Spon Plague, The = 9/30/57
 Spy, The = 1/12/59
 Starlings, The = 8/31/54
 Stolen Battleship, The = 11/18/57
 Stolen Postman, The = 12/9/57
 String Robberies = see "Great String...."
 Tales of Men's Shirts = 12/31/59
 Tales of Montmartre = 1/17/56
 Tales of old Dartmoor = 2/7/56
 Tay Bridge Disaster = 2/9/59
 Telephone, The = 12/13/56
 Ten Downing Street Stolen = 1/8/54
 Ten Snowballs That Shook the World, The = 2/10/58
 10,000 Fathoms Down in a Wardrobe = 1/1/54
 Terrible Blasting of Moreton's Bank, The = 3/1/55
 Terrible Revenge of Fred Fu Manchu, The = 12/6/55
 Terror of Beckshill = see "Dread Batter...."
 Thing on the Mountain, The = 1/6/58
 Tiddley Winks Theft, The = 3/10/58
 Toothpaste Mines, The = 2/12/54
 Transafrica Aeroplane Canal, The = 3/6/57
 Treasure of the Tower, The = 10/28/57

Treasure of Loch Lomond, The = 2/28/56
 Tuscan Salami, The = 2/21/56
 Under Two Floorboards, A Tale of the Legion = 1/25/55
 Underwater Mountain, The = 3/1/54
 Vacancy Filled, A = see "Gold Plate Robbery"
 Vanishing Room = see "Case of the Vanishing Room"
 Western Story = 3/22/54
 What's My Line? = 12/6/56
 Whistling Spy Enigma, The = 9/28/54
 White Box of Great Bardsfield, The = 3/15/55
 White Neddie Trade, The = 2/3/58
 Wings Over Dagenham = 1/10/57
 Ye Bandit(s) of Sherwood Forest = 12/28/54
 Yehti = 3/8/55
 Yorkshire Yehti = see "Yehti"

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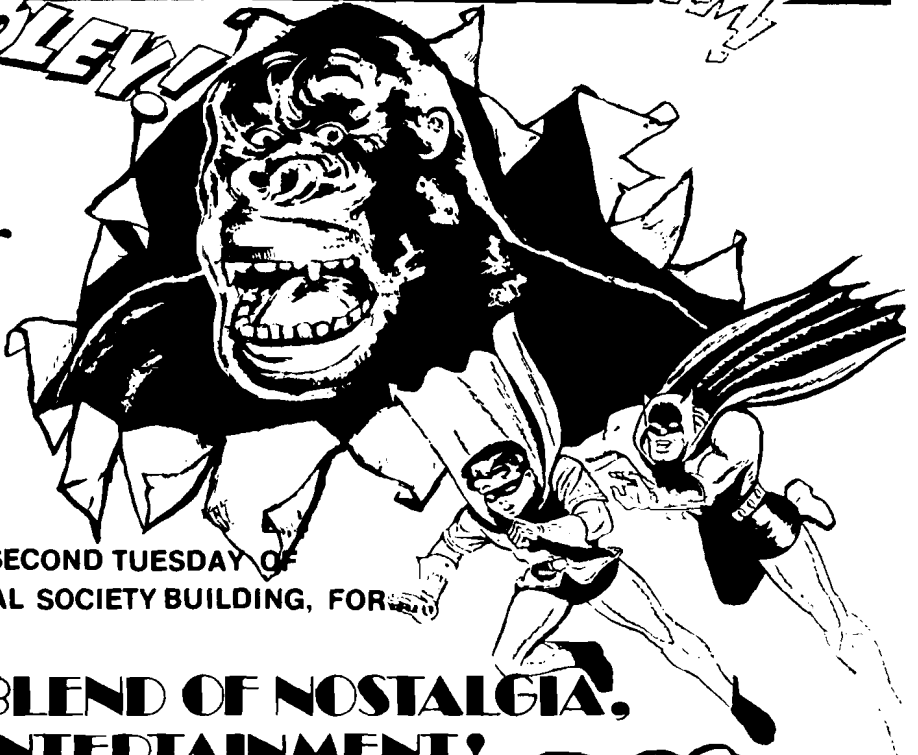
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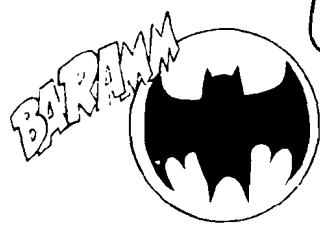


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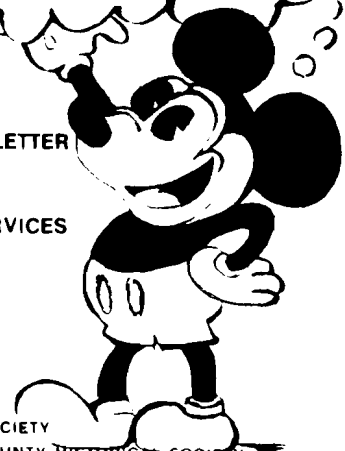
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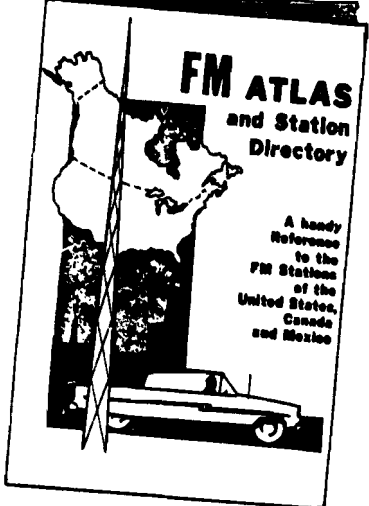
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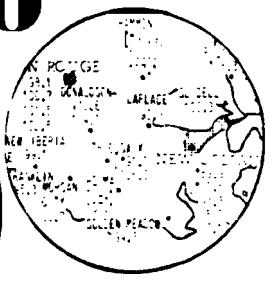
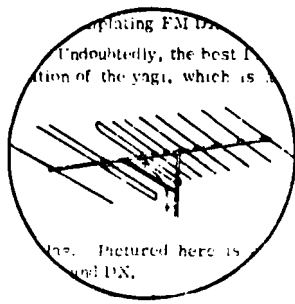
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