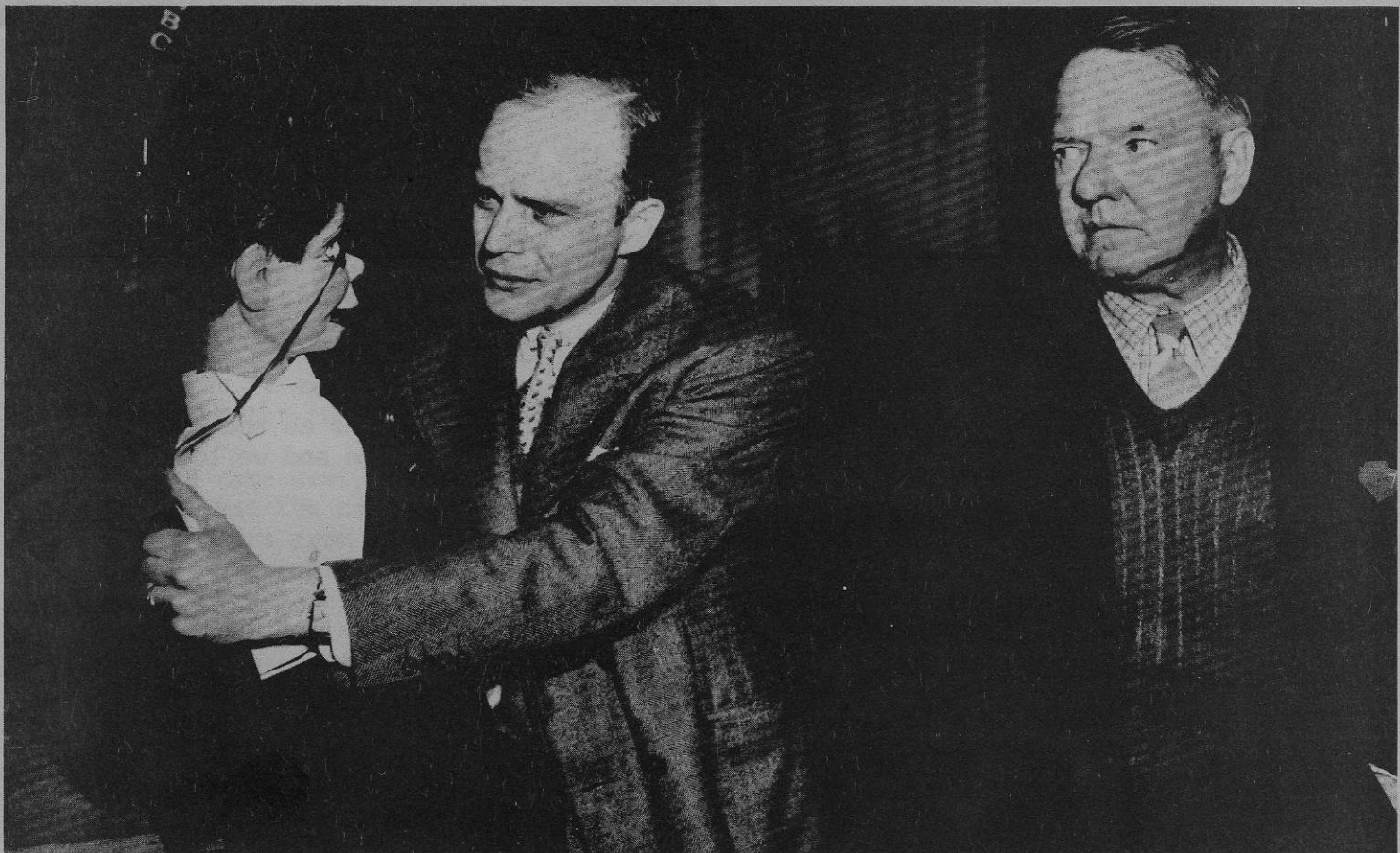


ON THE AIR

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE VINTAGE BROADCAST SOCIETY

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 4

JULY - AUGUST 1984



In a battle of quips, comedian W.C. Fields, right, and Charlie McCarthy, left, the dummy of ventriloquist Edgar Bergen, trade wooden glances.

Report From the President



Dear Fellow Members,

Welcome to Issue No. 4 of "On-the-Air". This issue is not dedicated to a particular theme but just a montage of interesting items.

As you can see from the minutes of the 6/9/84 meeting (contained on the following page) the turnout for our first general membership meeting was poor, to say the least.

Between that and the response to our questionnaire, which was sent to every member, it appears that the members are happy with the current state of affairs of the club.

With the exception of the 12 members who took the time and trouble to answer the questionnaire, everyone else evidently, had no suggestions or comments. It appears that the majority of members do not want meetings, a lending library, periodic dinners or can offer suggestions or help in preparing "On-the-Air". Fellow members, if you want a successful club and an interesting club publication we must have your input. I implore you to write any one of the Directors and state your mind about what you want the club direction to be.

In closing I wish to welcome Stu Weiss to the Board of Directors as the Club Librarian. The Board is pleased that Stu accepted the position and we look forward to his active participation.

See you next issue.

Steve

BEHIND THE SCENES

RECENT MEETINGS **** RECENT MEETINGS **** RECENT MEETINGS

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - JUNE 9th, 1984

The meeting was held at Gimbels East and started at 7:10 p.m. with Lew Krieger introducing each director, and their specific duties.

Kevin Eastwood spoke first, wanting to know if the members were satisfied with the first three issues of "ON-THE-AIR". He said he had received only two letters and he needed the membership's comments and opinions on how to make the newsletter better than any other in the hobby. He asked for old, previously printed stories of radio performers, articles, artwork and any ideas that would improve "ON-THE-AIR".

Jack Shugg addressed the membership next, emphasizing the direction the club was headed. He said the club should be better than any other, that it avoid the mistake of some of the other clubs, that it be a club where each member participates in the activities, knowledge and acquisitions of the club. He also repeated that there is an opening for a Librarian on the board, and asked for a volunteer. A member, Stu Weiss, said he would be interested and needed more information. That information will be sent to him.

Jack concluded by reporting that a donation of old time radio material to the club is expected if negotiations proceed satisfactorily. He promised to let the members know more about it in the near future.

Rod Baron came next, and talked about the finances of the club. He reported that the treasury was rich by \$600.00, that they had gained a "few dollars from advertising, but that membership had slowed down," (current membership total is 83) and that the lending library should bring in more money. It was also mentioned that the club was in the process of being incorporated, getting a non-profit status, so that donors to the library can deduct their donations from their taxes.

Robert Brunet was introduced next. He mentioned that currently he was wearing two hats; that of Secretary, taking the minutes of all meetings, and, secondly, of the Librarian. He urged all members to complete the questionnaire, so that the Directors can realize what the members want and move ahead with the business of making the club better than their counterparts on the West Coast. He concluded by letting any volunteer know that the requirements and duties of the Librarian were available for review.

Max Schmid was introduced last. He said for good or for bad he was documenting the program and history of the club.

Before the question and answer period, Lew Kreiger explained the reason for the existence of the club, which can be found on Page 6 of Issue No. 3 of "On-The-Air", item 4.

The following are the significant points brought out during the "Q" and "A" period:

1. VBS does not intend to be like some of its predecessors, where its members are required to sign affidavits of secrecy.
2. Arch Oboler's legal action against certain people who own some of his programs in their collection.
3. The unethical use of New York radio material on California radio stations.
4. The duty of VBS to make sure that all of its members will share in the material donated to the club.
5. VBS cannot sanction or condemn deals made between dealers and members, that the club must remain an impartial observer in such transactions.
6. The first-year anniversary edition of "On-The-Air" may be on audio copy or cassette.
7. The hobby of collecting old-time radio shows is being killed by the video hobby, and clubs and networks closing their doors to collectors.

Lew Krieger concluded the meeting at 8:00 p.m., mentioning that in the future the membership meeting will be open to non-members as well as members, and that guest speakers will be invited to talk about radio and its golden past.

The third issue of "On-The-Air" was distributed to the attending members, as well as a questionnaire. The members were again urged to fill out the questionnaire and mail it to the Secretary.

Soda, cake and brownies were served before and after the meeting. The background music and sound were those of the themes of old-time radio.

Those in attendance were:

Gary Dudash Bernice Duskin Ann Green Frances Levine
Robert Mattehews Arlene Sabba Stuart Jay Weiss & The Board of Directors

The meeting broke up at 8:30 p.m. Needless to say, the Directors appreciated meeting with the members who did attend. Their feedback was invaluable.

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OF JULY 12TH, 1984

The following items was resolved at the meeting:

1. Stuart Jay Weiss was unanimously voted into the Board as Librarian.
2. The results of the questionnaire, distributed at the General Membership Meeting and sent to those members who did not attend, was reviewed. See bottom of page for results.
3. Mr. John M. Eccles Jr's trivia questions were accepted for the July-August issue along with a radio log of the 1940's from Robert Brunet.
4. Mr. John Eccles was accepted as substitute stand-by Director.

Those in attendance at WBAI-FM were:

R. Baron R. Brunet L. Krieger J. Shugg

The meeting concluded at 7:20 p.m.

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE

81 Sent By June 16th.
12 Returned -- 15%

		<u>Person</u>
1. Number of Meetings/Year:	2/Year	2
	6/Year	5
	12/Year	1
	9/Year	1
	10/Year	1
2. Where to Meet:	Manhattan	8
	New Jersey	2
	Long Island	2

Continuation of Questionnaire

3. Where can the club meet:

- A. Bogie's
- B. Broadcast Hall of Fame
- C. Edison Museum
- D. Museum of Broadcasting
- E. Schools
- F. Gimbel's
- G. Large Livingroom
- H. Church Auditorium

4&5. What day and time:

- Sunday afternoon 2
- Friday 5
- Saturday 2
- Monday-Thursday 2

6. Prefer to meet at Restaurants:

- Yes 7
- No 3

7. Type of Meal:

- Sit-down Meal 2
- Hot or Cold Buffet 3
- Wine and Cheese 1
- Coffee and Cake 1

8. Price Range of Meal:

- \$10-15 4
- \$5-15 1
- \$10-12 1
- \$10- 1

9. Activities at the Meeting:

- Guest speakers
- Put on own radio play
- Old movies
- Video tapes of old radio
- General discussions
- Tape trading
- Information sessions on specific series
- Chance to meet dealers
- Trivia contests with prizes

10. Features in the "On-The-Air"
Newsletter:

- Articles on the history of radio,
specific and in detail
- Current issues -- Re: Radio
- Trivia contest offering a prize
- Interviews similar to Issue No. 3
- Interview
- Letters to Editor
- Radio scripts
- Tributes to radio performers (Life story)
- List of members and their specific
interests in radio shows
- Quiz Kid articles written by Joan
Bishop

Continuation of Questionnaire

11. Donate Time/Article: Interview and research, radio production, C. Dalfres
Articles from Kevin Butler
12. What should the club be doing for you?
Lending library
Get free tickets for TV Shows
Keep the "On-The-Air" newsletter coming
Meet dealers and traders at meeting
Seminar on the art of dubbing
Name of places where members can buy radio shows
Discounts at Sam Goody's
Dramatize radio plays
13. Substitute B of D stand-by: Yes? --- Arlene Sabba
Yes --- John Eccles Jr.
14. Librarian Yes? --- Arlene Sabba
Yes? --- Stu Weiss

Listed below are the names of the Club's Board of Directors. If you have any suggestions or information which might be useful to the club, please call or write any of the individuals listed.

Lewis Krieger
President
Membership Chairman
3000 Bronx Park East
Bronx, NY 10467

Robert Brunet
Secretary
21 W. 74th Street
New York, NY 10023

Jack Shugg
Vice President
P.O. Box 81
Bronx, NY 10468

Kevin Eastwood
Editor "On-the-Air"
145A Linden Road
Mineola, NY 11501

Ron Baron
Treasurer
2475 West 16th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Max Schmid
Historian
c/o WBAI
505 8th Avenue
New York, NY

Stuart J. Weiss
Librarian
33 Von Braun Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10312

Feedback

ON-THE-AIR TRIVIA

Hello, my name is John Eccles, Jr. and I will be contributing a series of 10 trivia questions to the On-The-Air Newsletter. I hope that the following questions on Old Time Radio will bring back fond memories and be an interesting memory teaser as well. Answers for the following 10 questions appear on Page 10. Please send any comments or suggestions to John Eccles, Jr., 443 N. Annapolis Avenue, Atlantic City, NJ 08401.

1. On "Pat Novak, For Hire" what was the name of Jack Webb's boozy assistant?
2. What radio personality, in his early days, toured with a partner and was billed as, "Two Boys and A Piano?"
3. What was Blondie's maiden name?
4. What was the name of the first film to be dramatized on "The Lux Radio Theater" and who starred in it?
5. What was the name of Bobby Benson's genuine palomino pony?
6. What radio show had a run of over twenty years and had as its two main themes "My Darling Nellie Gray" and Polly Wolly Doodle?"
7. On which radio show could such underworld characters as Dippy Danny, the Pickpocket, Charlie, the Creep, and Big Ears Benny be found?
8. Name 4 characters that Mel Blanc played on "The Jack Benny Show."
9. Who was known as the "Alfred Hitchcock of the Air?"
10. What were the names of Sergeant Preston's dog and horse?

Personal Business

FEBRUARY 6, 1984

COLLECTING A PIECE OF RADIO'S GOLDEN AGE

EDITED BY DONALD H. DUNN

The Supreme Court decision that you can freely record television programs at home was a special relief to growing numbers of people who regularly copy and swap their old radio programs. Despite congressional action in 1971 allowing radio broadcasts to be taped for home use, "there have been some questions and lawsuits over who actually owns the old shows," declares John Adams, whose collection of old programs fills 2,000 reels in his Denver home. "Now, I think the court decision means the end of that." So, with a clear conscience, you can relax, close your eyes, and let a 1930s *Lux Radio Theater* episode carry you back to the times when home entertainment was more likely to stimulate your imagination than numb your brain.

More than 30 radio stations across the country regularly broadcast vintage programs, and many fans tune in with their tape recorders ready. Others scour storerooms, yard sales, and flea markets for discarded transcription discs (16-in. records) that were used, before the advent of tape recording in 1952, to air such shows as *The Lone Ranger*, *Gang Busters*, and *The Jack Benny Program*. Join them, and you might be able to turn the hobby into an investment of sorts—a few collector-dealers charge \$10 and up for tapes of rare programs from their libraries, and one collector recently asked \$10,000 for a little-known 1940 episode of *I Love a Mystery*. But, more likely, you will have only pleasure to show for your own expenditure of time and money.

"Let me warn you, collecting becomes addictive," says Barbara J. Watkins, a Los Angeles attorney with tapes of 10,000 different programs. She says she "grew up with radio in Ohio, partly because my father didn't want TV in the house." Saddened after the last surviving network dramas (*Suspense* and *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*) faded in 1962, she started taping reruns when several California stations played them during the "nostalgia" trend of the 1970s. After learning of clubs with lending libraries and collectors willing to swap tapes, she began spending "as much as six hours a day" on her collection.

To start your own, *Tune in Yesterday* by John Dunning (Prentice-Hall, \$17.95) lists most of the regular network series on the air from 1926 to 1962. And, for \$6, take a year's subscription to *Hello Again*, a mimeographed bimonthly collectors' newsletter published by Jay Hickerson, Box C, Orange, Conn. 06477. It has data on which stations rebroadcast old shows, dealers with programs for sale, and clubs that issue occasional bulletins.

Don't think that you had to be around when *The Green Hornet* or *The Fred Allen Show* were originally broadcast in order to participate. The 10-year-old Society for the Preservation & Encouragement of Radio Drama, Variety & Comedy has nearly 1,000 members—"teenagers and senior citizens, students and retirees, along with business people," says Dan Haefele, an English teacher who edits the club's monthly newsletter (\$15, tax-deductible, from SPERDVAC, Box 1587, Hollywood, Calif. 90078). The brand-new Vintage Broadcast Society of New York (3000 Bronx Park East, Bronx, N. Y. 10467) numbers 20 females among its 70-odd members. Membership Chairman Lewis C. Krieger, a youthful systems analyst, whose 300-program collection includes some prized episodes of *The Shadow*, says it plans a lending library like those of SPERDVAC and other groups—including the Old Time Radio Club of Buffalo (100 Harvey Dr., Lancaster, N. Y. 14086) and the Radio Historical Association of Colorado (7213 Roxbury Place, Littleton, Colo. 80123). Members can borrow cassettes or a reel of tape with two or three hours of programs for less than \$2, "about enough to cover the mailing costs," says Adams, a retired sales executive.

If you are unfamiliar with the chuckles stored in such old series as *The*

LENDING LIBRARIES
SPREAD THE CLASSICS

Personal Business

A ROUND-ROBIN SWAP PAYS TRIPLE RETURNS FOR EACH COLLECTOR

Goldbergs, *The Aldrich Family*, or *Abbott & Costello*—or doubt that the sound effects on *Lights Out* or *Inner Sanctum Mysteries* can still evoke a pleasurable chill—your local library probably has some shows on discs and cassettes. Scholars can listen to the extensive collection of broadcasts at the Library of Congress, and any visitor can tune in at the Museum of Broadcasting in New York. There are usually stiff restrictions on making copies, though.

The “nostalgia” sections of many record shops offer old broadcasts: a half-hour cassette of the final *Charlie McCarthy Show* in 1956 for \$2.95, for example, or a long-playing record with Orson Welles’ classic 1938 *War of the Worlds* broadcast for \$4.95. But serious collectors shun commercially produced recordings. “It’s a gray legal area, selling someone else’s work,” notes Jack Shugg, who plays shows from his 45,000-program collection on a weekly broadcast on WBAI-FM in New York. “And,” asks Haefele, “why pay for shows that often aren’t complete—the commercials frequently are cut out—when you can rent a club’s tapes for a fraction of the cost or exchange with other collectors for free?”

Having two recorders is helpful—a cassette unit and an “open reel” model with a slow speed to store six or more hours of programs on one 7-in. reel. Owning a costly stereo rig gives no bonus: All old shows are mono, of course.

One enjoyable way to build a library quickly is to participate in a round-robin swap: Four collectors mail a 2-hour tape with four half-hour programs among themselves in a continuous sequence; you record a new show from your library over your previous contribution, and copy off three new programs each time the mailman calls. Or you may want to give your collection a focus by concentrating on one type of program or even on a single series. One group of fans, for example, is devoted to *Lum and Abner*; another to *One Man’s Family*. And collector Adams is “in contact with people all over the world” in his role as head of the Spike Jones fan club. “It’s really exciting to discover a new broadcast of a particular show,” says Watkins, who trekked to Newark, N. J., last November for an old-time-radio convention that collector Hickerson organizes annually. “I was hoping to find some episodes of *I Was a Communist for the FBI*,” she says. “I have 49, but 72 were broadcast in the 1950s.”

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Jocko Madigan
2. Bing Crosby
3. Boopadoo
4. *The Legionnaire* and *the Lady* with Clark Gable and Marlene Dietrich.
5. Amigo
6. Just Plain Bill
7. *The Adventures of The Thin Man*
8. Professor Le Blanc, Carmichael the Bear, the infamous Maxwell, Polly the Parrot.
9. William Spier
10. Yukon King and Rex

This file including all text and images are from scans of a private personal collection and have been scanned for archival and research purposes. This file may be freely distributed, but not sold on ebay or on any commercial sites, catalogs, booths or kiosks, either as reprints or by electronic methods. This file may be downloaded without charge from the Radio Researchers Group website at <http://www.otrr.org/>

Please help in the preservation of old time radio by supporting legitimate organizations who strive to preserve and restore the programs and related information.