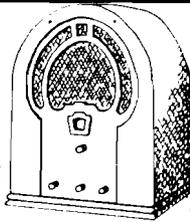


THE OLD TIME



RADIO CLUB

EST. 1975

ILLUSTRATED PRESS

#88
JANUARY, 1984



FIBBER'S CLOSET



THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Club dues are \$17.50 per yr. from Jan.1 through Dec. 31. Members receive a tape listing, library lists, a monthly newsletter (The Illustrated Press), an annual magazine (Memories), and various special items. Additional family members living in the same household as a regular member may join the club for \$5.00 per year. These members have all the privileges of regular members but do not receive the publications. A junior membership is available to persons 15 years of age or younger who do not live in the household of a regular member. This membership is \$10.00 per year and includes all the benefits of a regular membership. Regular membership dues are as follows: if you join in Jan. dues are \$17.50 for the year; Feb.\$17.50; March \$15.00; April \$14.00; May \$13.00; June \$12.00; July \$10.00; Aug. \$9.00; Sept. \$8.00; Oct. \$7.00; Nov. \$6.00; and Dec. \$5.00. The numbers after your name on the address label are the month and year your renewal is due. Reminder notes will be sent. Your renewal should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be certain to notify us if you change your address.

OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW AVAILABLE. Annual dues are \$29.50. Publications will be air mailed.

THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS is the monthly newsletter of The Old Time Radio Club headquartered in Buffalo, N.Y. Contents except where noted, are copyright © 1984 by OTRC. All rights are hereby assigned to the contributors. Editor: Richard A. Olday; Assistant Editor: Jerry Collins; Production Assistance: Arlene Olday; Printer: Ken Krug
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CLUB ADDRESSES: Please use the correct address for the business you have in mind. Return library materials to the library addresses.

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REFERENCE LIBRARY:

Pete Bellanca
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Grand Island, N.Y. 14072
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TAPE LIBRARY

Frank Bork
7 Heritage Drive
Lancaster, N.Y. 14086
(716) 683-3555

BACK ISSUES: All MEMORIES and IPs are \$1.00 each, postpaid. Out of print issue may be borrowed from the reference library.

Chuck Seeley
294 Victoria Blvd.
Kenmore, N.Y. 14217

T The Old Time Radio Club meets the second Monday of the month (September through June) at 393 George Urban Boulevard, Cheektowaga, New York. Anyone interested in the "Golden Age of Radio" is welcome to attend and observe or participate. Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.

DEADLINE FOR IP #90 - February 13
#91 - March 12
#92 - April 9

ADVERTISING RATES FOR MEMORIES

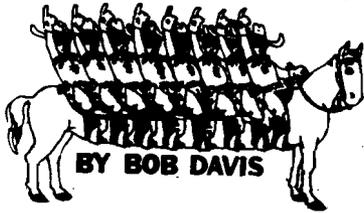
\$30.00 for a full page
\$20.00 for a half page
\$12.00 for a quarter page

SPECIAL: OTR Club members may take 50% off these rates.

Advertising Deadline - September 15th.
For further information write to:
100 Harvey Drive
Lancaster, N.Y. 14086

SAY!

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?



There is a definite time-lag between the time I actually sit down to write these positively pulsating and predominately precipitous pearls of profound but possibly prosaic pronouncements (whew!) and the time you hold them in your hot little hands to read them. During this lag a lot of things can happen. One being that someone writes a column similar to the one you've written. This has happened to me twice and this is my way of saying to both Jim Snyder and Kean Crowe that I really didn't mean it guys...Honest!

A few months ago I did a column on old radio premiums such as rings, arrowheads, etc. and shortly after received a letter in the mail bearing a copy of Jim's e-x-t-r-e-m-e-l-y similar column. OOPS! No excuse. Your column must have been in the back of my mind hidden among the cobwebs when I sat down to write that one.

At the last OTR Club meeting I turned in December's column and later found out that Kean Crowe had done a similar column featuring "THE AVENGERS" radio show. His was a deftly drawn delineation of data that detailed with definite decorum the delectable and delightful dramas that he holds so dearly. Sorry Kean, my dalliance with your discourse wasn't deliberate..(double-whew!). Hey, can you tell I just got a new Thesaurus?

Gee, now I'm afraid to write about anything. Who knows what kind of column these guys will do next? I could do a trivia column but I'm starting to get threatening letters every time I do one. I'd better hold off on that for a while. Maybe I could resurrect THE ANSWER MAN from our (in)famous Memories issues? Naw, I had to swear to the rest of the club that I would never do that

again. They threatened to bulk erase my head if he ever came back. No Virginia, not my tape recorder head... my real head!

This column will be turned in at the December meeting of the OTR Club which is our last meeting of the year. This last year has been good to us. The Club has grown and hopefully become an even bigger bargain for your dollar. The tape library is expanding and so is the reference library.

Even though the economy lately has been just terrible our members have remained with us for the most part and we are looking forward to bigger and better things in the future. Stick with us, the best is yet to come. If nothing else...we're different! Renew-renew-renew!

I wish that there were some way that all of you could attend a meeting. I'm sure you'd have a ball. Maybe sometime in the future, (if I remember) I'll do a column on just what a typical meeting is like. Local members shouldn't worry. I'll change the names to protect the innocent!

By the time you read this Christmas 1983 is a thing of the past. We at the OTR Club hope that you and yours had a fantastic holiday and want to be the very first to wish you a Merry Christmas 1984.

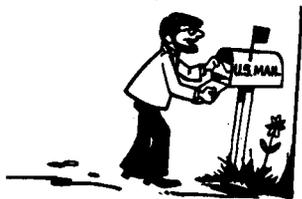
See ya next time....

* * * * *



Frank Sinatra

Letters



"I wrote this article for my school paper. I would like you to print it in the first available issue. I don't know if it will produce, if it will not. You may retype it. I really like if you could. I've been a member of the Club for 3 years. It's a great club. I would like to write other articles." (((Jeff, you send them and I'll print them-Ed.)))

Jeff Muller
439 Faitoute Avenue
Roselle Park, N.J. 07204

TUNE IN:
OLDTIME RADIO

By: Jeff Muller

Many people in this school have never heard of any of the oldtime radio stars. And many will be surprised to know some of the stars' names and shows that they were on in the 1930's, 1940's and 50's.

We begin the list with Tony Randall, who appeared on a well-known and popular mystery show, "I Love A Mystery." The character he portrayed was Reggi Yorke. The show ran from 1943-1952. You know him as Felix Unger.

Another radio alumnus is George Burns. George had a comedy show with his nutty wife Gracie Allen. The two originally were a vaudeville act who jumped on the radio bandwagon in 1932 to star in their own half-hour radio comedy. This format was very successful; it ran until 1950 when they went successfully into television.

Another pair of stars that came from radio were Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin. This team was just starting their rise to super-stardom in films. The show was part of a search by CBS to find new talent. This show was not as popular as it could have been because of the competition it was against "Amos and Andy."

Another star with a career in radio was Bob Hope. His show was also an outgrowth of vaudeville. The show was started in 1935 and was very successful right until it went off the air in 1958.

Try to imagine a TV show running 23 years. Many radio shows ran longer,

Some of the finest TV shows were originally on radio in the '30's, '40's and '50's. "I Love Lucy" had the same cast of crazy people at its successor on TV. The radio version lasted only one season, 1952, before its leap into television.

A hit on Broadway was once a popular children's daily serial and comic strip, but the name was "Adventures of Little Orphan Annie." The Broadway hit renamed it simply "Annie."

For the soap opera fans, one show which started in 1937 on radio is still on television today: "The Guiding Light." It ran on radio until 1952 when it became a television show, spanning forty-five years combined.

Another surprise in shows being in radio is "Father Knows Best," which ran one year on radio in 1949 before it came to television.

One closing note, the famous Dickens Christmas Tale, "A Christmas Carol", played every year from 1938 to 1952. It was part of the Campbell Playhouse. This version starred Lionel Barrymore. Today Drew Barrymore of "E.T." is a part of the famous Barrymore family...Tune in next time for another exciting episode of Tune In Goodnight all....

OBLIVION WAITS AT
THE CROSSROADS!..

The Clubs most recent decision to raise dues could signal our demise. Assuming that our existance depends on members dues this increase can only mean a loss in membership. Why is that? Well, none of the other clubs in the hobby have raised their dues. Personally I don't mind paying the additional dues, but, I know for a fact that many others will object. Sound like self destruction.

Speaking of clubs, did you know that the new club in New York City calls itself the Old Time Radio Club? This is bound to cause confusion. By the way, their dues are \$10.00. Sperdvak seems to have so much money that the members can send several on the Board of Directors to the OTR Convention all expenses paid. Their dues are \$15.00. WOW! You Sperdvak members are really generous; too bad you don't have a decent news letter to show for it. NARA (whose dues are also \$15.) couldn't raise enough interest among its members to celebrate its tenth anniversary in LA seems to have solved its' financial problem

with a quarterly news letter. Nuff said.

The OTRC (of Buffalo that is) was well represented at the 1983 OTR Convention but not much interest in returning next year because of other er...commitments(?) Have we lost our enthusiasm just when things are looking up? Tune in again next year, same time, and hopefully, same station. By the way, if any of you are interested, I have a dozen Lone Ranger 50th year buttons that I had especially made for the convention, which I will send you free of charge. The first twelve requests I receive will get one. How can you pass up such a good deal as that? You don't even need a box top for this offer.

Rumor has it (from reliable sources) that a bonanza of new good quality programs will be available this coming year (1984). From what I can determine, this new material will make your mouth water. So stick with it gang; the best is yet to come.

Gene Bradford
19706 Elizabeth
St. Clair Shores, Mich. 48080

((Our Club was faced with rising printing and mailing costs so we opted to raise dues. We did consider making the I.P. bimonthly and/or cutting its size, eliminating Memories and even one suggestion to disband. However, we have been very proud of our record of sending out publications to our members and we felt that most members would rather spend a little more and have our publications continue on schedule. To ease the pain, we are offering the free tape of the Lone Ranger pilot program until 2/1/84. Special incentives tied in with our 10th anniversary in 1985 are already in the works, so while we are not the cheapest, the OTRC offers the most and the best. Other members are invited to send their comments. Ed.)))

* * * * *

Fibber McGee, Molly Join 'Walk of Fame'

HOLLYWOOD (UPI) — The comedians who starred in the "Fibber McGee and Molly Show," which became a classic during nearly two decades on NBC radio, now have a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame.

Jim Jordan accepted the award this week in

presentation at Sunset Boulevard and Vine Street, once the site of studios where the show originated.

The program, which ran from 1935 to 1952, was a top show during the "Golden Days" of broadcast and a forerunner of TV sitcoms, according to a Hollywood Chamber of Commerce spokeswoman. The Jordans made four feature films: "This Way Please," "Look Who's Laughing," "Here We Go Again" and "Heavenly Days."

REFERENCE LIBRARY: A reference library exists for members. Members should have received a library list of materials with their membership. Only two items can be borrowed at one time, for a one month period. Please use the proper designations for materials to be borrowed. When ordering books include \$2.00 to cover rental, postage, and packaging. Please include \$1.00 for other items. If you wish to contribute to the library the OTRC will copy materials and return the originals to you. See address on page 2.

OTRC special offer

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP
BY FEBRUARY 1, 1984 & RECEIVE A
FREE QUALITY CASSETTE OF THE PILOT
PROGRAM FOR THE LONE RANGER RADIO
SERIES (NOT THE ORIGIN) ORIGINALLY
WRITTEN OVER 50 YEARS AGO. THIS
PROGRAM WAS RE-ENACTED & BROADCAST
LIVE OVER RADIO STATION WEBR IN
BUFFALO FROM THE LONE RANGER CON-
VENTION IN ARCADE, NEW YORK ON
JUNE 25, 1983.

DUES \$17.50/ YEAR
*OVERSEAS \$29.50/YEAR

*EVERYTHING SENT BY AIR MAIL

* * * * *

TAPE LIBRARY RATES: 2400' reel-\$1.50 per month; 1800' reel-\$1.25 per month; 1200' reel-\$1.00 per month; cassette and records-\$.50 per month. Postage must be included with all orders and here are the rates: For the USA and APO-60¢ for one reel, 35¢ for each additional reel; 35¢ for each cassette and record. For Canada: \$1.35 for one reel, 85¢ for each additional reel; 85¢ for each cassette and record. All tapes to Canada are mailed

Radio Isn't What It Used to Be

By NICKIE McWHIRTER

Kansas City, Mo., Service

LISTENING to radio was once the most exciting domestic diversion next to sex in any American household. Radio was fresh, reflecting the imaginations and insights of persons as talented and diverse as Fred Allen, Edward R. Murrow and Orson Welles.

That was when radio was primarily an entertainment medium. Today it is 99 and 44/100 percent pure advertising medium, and it is looking for an excuse to exist. It depends for guidance in this serious enterprise not upon imagination or talent, but upon a ding-dong wizard called research.

In those never-to-be-forgotten days of yesteryear, each radio show had its own sponsor or sponsors. Two was tops. One was the standard. That meant the

sponsor didn't have to compete with two dozen others in any time period. Because of this, commercial announcements were less frequent and much less frenetic. They actually contained useful information.

Today, especially on AM radio, there are five spot commercials every five minutes. That's on a slow day. These commercials tout unrelated products and services. They pile on top of each other, each screaming for attention in a different voice and style. Radio broadcasting has become an unending string of disjointed shouts, interrupted briefly by the content of the show, which, because of the time available, isn't much.

Those who heard the old radio show "Orphan Annie," however, still remember its sponsor, Ovaltine. Would sweet Annie drink

anything else?

Wheaties sponsored "Jack Armstrong, the all-American boy!" Wheaties gave boys their strong arms, of course.

J-E-L-L-O in six delicious flavors — strawberry, raspberry, cherry, orange, lemon and lime — sponsored Jack Benny.

There was sense to commercials on old radio shows. They were unobtrusive and integrated with the content and mood of the show.

Enter research, the vile imposter who would not have us believe he knows ways to make people THINK radio is still worth listening to, even if it isn't.

Research says people have short attention spans. Nobody listens longer than 20 minutes at a stretch. (Why should we?) Because of this, program segments must be short. A couple of

minutes is plenty.

Research says people are fascinated by news, sports and weather. So give them news, sports and weather at least once an hour, even if there's nothing new. (No wonder we tune out every 20 minutes.)

Research says people want to hear what's familiar. Play the same music they're buying in record stores. Play it over and over. Interview the same celebrities being interviewed on TV and written about in People magazine. Get the coach to discuss every game, before and after every game.

So much for research, except for this: I heard a radio-station manager recently explaining to a television interviewer why his station plays Beatles tunes exclusively. The interviewer thought that odd. The manager said,



Fred Allen would have had some caustic comments.

quite solemnly, "At some time during the day we all need the security of a Beatles song. We have verified this through research."

Fred Allen would have made hash of that guy. Some network is liable to make him a vice president.

Fibber McGee Tells His Life Story

With corrections, additions and deflections by his wife and partner, MOLLY

When Look asked me to write an article about us, I hesitated quite some time before shyly consenting. Modesty, I thought to myself, is a great little virtue. But it's the guy who honks his horn who gets the curb service.

I was born on the top of Kickapoo Hill in Peoria, Illinois, in a little white house, in the year 18 ought 96. An ordinary lad, to all appearances, but one destined to bring the precious boon of laughter to millions.

I shall pass lightly over my school years, and tell you about the girl who was

SAYS MOLLY

Spoken like a true Anglo-Klaxon, dearie.

You don't have to honk it so often, or so loud, McGee.

to become my wife and partner (Molly Driscoll was born in the year 1901) also in Peoria. We often speak of this fact in hushed tones, because if she had been born in Australia or Spitzbergen (we might never have met.) She was one of four pretty girls and a dozen big brothers.

In Peoria, Molly was considered a child prodigy on the piano. When she grew older and they made her get off the piano, she learned to play it. With her piano and my beautiful baritone voice, we became widely known as Molly and what's-his-name.

SAYS MOLLY

Please excuse the blot.

Oh, I'd have caught up with you sooner or later!

SAYS MOLLY

So you see, we haven't been on the radio all our lives, in spite of those certain letters to our sponsors. In fact, we spent years playing all the biggest theaters in the smallest towns with our own concert company before public clamor brought us to radio and a wider audience.

Almost immediately - after eight years, that is.

(Almost immediately, our program for the Johnson's Wax people leaped into the high ratings.) That was in 1935. The radio surveys indicate that we have approximately 30,000,000 listeners—an estimate which I consider very low. If you take the number of people listening to the radio at 9:30 EST, over NBC, on Tuesday nights, and multiply them by the number of radio sets in the United States, (you get an entirely different picture.)

And you know where you can hang it.

Fibber Makes a Decision

But to get back to our humble beginnings. I decided to get enough money to marry Molly. Being (more artistic and sensitive rather than the money-grabbing type, I decided I'd have to go to work.

Red-blooded American Boy!

I was too well-known in Peoria to be offered anything over \$12 a week. So I went to Chicago, famous for its encouragement of young talent in the arts. My success was immediate. Within several months, I was singing baritone with a vaudeville quartet in an act known as ("A Night with the Poets.")

And what a night!

The day I paid the final installment on my Tuxedo, I went back to Peoria, where I was met at the station by a brass band. Things happened swiftly after that. War was declared. Molly and I were married. And five days later, I was on my way to La Belle France, as I call it, via Camp Forrest, Ga.

See what those nights with the poets did to him?

My services to the United States are veiled in secrecy. Only the highest echelons in Washington, and possibly 10 Downing Street, have full knowledge of my activities in the mad years of the First World War—the Big War. In a simple but touching ceremony, I was presented with the Victory Medal by a grateful government.

Molly Gave Music Lessons

During my absence, Molly had helped pass the time by teaching piano to some 55 eager little monsters. Many of them were gifted with true pitch when playing softball, but thought that a minor chord was something used to hang an underaged horse thief.

You mean mustered on top and you in the middle.

After the Armistice, Molly waited for my return. (But I was mustered into an entertainment unit,) and sang for a while with an AEF quartet. Being indispensable was nice, but getting home was nicer.

You were lower than Dr. Beebe's last dive.

So it was a happy day when I jumped off the transport at Newport News and returned to Peoria and Molly. The fact that I had no money—and no prospects—failed to dampen my gaiety for several hours.)

There were no big radio contracts waiting for us to sign. In fact, there wasn't any such thing as radio. The Harding-Cox election returns hadn't been broadcast. Jack Benny and Fred Allen were in vaudeville, under assumed names. Edgar Bergen was whittling on a piece of wood, which was later to become one of the greatest unpaid comedians on the air. And Bob Hope was

RETURN WITH US TO...

Bill Owen
by
127
1/12/37

BARNACLE BILL, THE SAILOR

BARNACLE BILL WAS ONE OF THE MOST EAGERLY-AWAITED AFTERNOON RADIO SHOWS FOR SMALL CHILDREN IN THE 1940S, PARTICULARLY IN THE MIDWEST. BUT NEARLY EVERY TRACE OF THE SAILOR HAS DISAPPEARED FROM RADIO'S ARCHIVES. LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT THE PROGRAM EXCEPT THAT IT ORIGINATED IN CHICAGO WITH ACTOR CLIFF SOUBIER* IN THE TITLE ROLE. OTHER THAN THAT, BARNACLE BILL IS ONLY A MEMORY FOR TODAY'S FIFTY-ISH MEN AND WOMEN WHO USED TO LISTEN TO HIS WEEKDAY ADVENTURES.



WHAT DID BARNACLE BILL LOOK LIKE? THAT WAS PURELY UP TO THE LISTENER'S IMAGINATION...



*SOUBIER'S OTHER CREDITS INCLUDE DAN HARDING'S WIFE, LONE JOURNEY, ARNOLD GRIMM'S DAUGHTER, LONELY WOMEN, MEET THE MEEKS, FIRST NIGHTER, GASOLINE ALLEY, THE SINCLAIR MINSTREL SHOW, VIC AND SAGE, THURSTON THE MAGICIAN, UNCLE EZRA'S RADIO STATION AND SKY KING.



Groucho Marx:

(A lot of good static was going to waste, and it's hard to understand what people did with their time when they got tired of playing mah jongg.)

Well sir, I'm not the type guy to wait for a Marconi to get the wires in the right place. So I took work elsewhere. I had no trouble finding a job. I found 11 of them in three months. But they paid off with buttons, and I was getting badly in debt to employment agencies.

I sold insurance and demonstrated washing machines. That is, I tried to. But the only policy that seemed to be popular was honesty, and Spike Jones had not yet cornered the washboard market. I worked as a mail carrier too. To this day, Christmas cards fail to bring a warm glow to anything but my feet. When my arches ache now, it doesn't mean rain. It means I just saw a mailman. (If the pain rises, and settles. I just saw a postmaster.)

At last, I went back to vaudeville. It was a difficult decision to make, (because I had to leave so many home ties in saying good-bye to dear old Peoria.)

Fibber, Molly Form Team

By this time, my entrance into show business wasn't solo. Molly went with me, and *Side By Side* became our personal theme song. We were permanent professional partners from then until now - first with our concert company, and then in radio. Now, before every broadcast, we have our own little moment of reminiscence when I introduce "my partner this season - Molly McGee, nee Driscoll."

We didn't know it at the time, but vaudeville was in the first stages of rigor mortis. One night, when an audience of musical illiterates failed to appreciate our act, Molly suggested that maybe we should talk as well as sing. She felt we needed a little snappy patter, witty sayings and all stuff like that there.

Well, all a man needs sometimes, when he feels low, is to have his little woman suggest something. So I said, "No. It won't work," and unscrewed the light bulb and went to sleep. And just to show you how right I was, we went broke at the next stop, Lincoln, Ill., even though we'd never tried Molly's suggestion!

Have you ever been broke in Lincoln? It shouldn't happen to a dog - and you know what I think of dogs after carrying mail in

SAYS MOLLY

What's good about static? Does DuPont speak well of silk?

McGee!

A likely story. He packed all his own and most of my nine brothers'.

I like the way you squeeze my hand when you do it too.

I didn't sleep.



This charming screen and radio actress is:

Penny Singleton

RETURN WITH US TO...

Mr. DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WEDNESDAY NIGHT WAS A BAD ONE FOR CRIMINALS ON NBC RADIO FOR MANY YEARS. MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY WAS NO OFFICE-BOUND BOOK-WORM BUT A VIBRANT PROSECUTOR WHO TOOK TO THE STREETS AND ALLEYS HIMSELF TO CRACK A CASE.

JAY JUSTIN AS MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY SPELLED OUT HIS DUTIES OVER A FILTERED MICROPHONE AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH BROADCAST...

AND IT SHALL BE MY DUTY AS DISTRICT ATTORNEY NOT ONLY TO PROSECUTE TO THE LIMIT OF THE LAW ALL PERSONS ACCUSED OF CRIMES PERPETRATED WITHIN THIS COUNTRY BUT TO DEFEND WITH EQUAL VIGOR THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF ALL ITS CITIZENS.

YOU'RE SAFE NOW MISS MILLER!



MISS MILLER, PLAYED BY VICKI VOLA, WAS THE CHIEF'S ALERT YOUNG SECRETARY.

HARRINGTON, THE D.A.'S ASSISTANT, WAS PLAYED BY LEN DOYLE.

MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY WAS INSPIRED BY RACKET-BUSTER THOMAS E. DEWEY, THEN NEW YORK D.A. PHILLIPS H. LORD, WHO DIED OCT. 19, 1975, WAS THE PRODUCER OF THIS THRILLING PROGRAM.



A bandleader of screen and radio, he's:

Vaughn Monroe



Illustration by Bill Owen. Vaughn Monroe, Penny Singleton, and Jay Justin as Mr. District Attorney. Fibber and Molly appeared in...

THE LAUGH SMASH OF THE YEAR!



Hope's a would-be King



Trumped by a pair of Queens



Who are after more than
his Jack

How you'll Howl with

BOB HOPE
SIGNE HASSO
WILLIAM BENDIX

in
"WHERE THERE'S

SAYS MOLLY

Peoria. But always the philosopher, I got to thinking. After all, what's money? Just a lot of cold metal and dirty paper. It gives you a false set of values. And could I have used a false set of values in 1926! I couldn't chew anything with the set I had.

Remember how authors of thrillers do when they can't write their characters out of a jam? They start the next chapter with: "Once out of the blazing acid vat, our hero mounted his horse and rode away." Well, back in Peoria, I mounted my pride and canvassed the town selling pants. I tried to dream up a new act while persuading skeptical customers that striped trousers were perfectly *de rigueur* with a checked coat. Little did I dream that the turning point of our lives was just around the corner.

It's a long turning that has no road, isn't it?

They Take a Dare

One evening, while visiting at my brother's house in Chicago, we were dared to go on the air as a harmony team. So we drove to Station WIBO and asked the program director to put us on the radio, for free. That last word was pure magic in those days. We broadcast songs and off-the-cuff patter, while our friends listened at home with considerable awe.

Well, that's one word for it, I guess.

We left the station with a contract, and soon we were appearing regularly as "The O'Henry Twins." If anybody reading this heard that first broadcast, (what will you take to keep quiet?)

Remember, money talks - even hush money.

This went on for some time, and we were making ten or fifteen dollars, hand over fist. In October of 1927, we got a job three days a week at WENR, Chicago. We still worked our stage act the other four days (just because we loved it.) Besides, we thought it good business to straddle the entertainment racket long enough to see if radio was a flower due to bloom on vaudeville's grave.

Eating, that is.

Insuring the bet, as it were.

The McGees Were Versatile

There were some pretty good shows on the air in those days. *The Smith Family* was great. *Kaltenmyer's Kindergarten* was colossal. *The Air Scouts* was terrific. They might even have been good if we hadn't been in all of 'em. But our favorite program was one we did a little later, five days a week, over WMAQ.

It was called *Smackout*, because the proprietor of the rural store was always just "smack out" of anything he was asked for. I played Luke Gray, the elderly storekeeper, and (with amazing versatility, about six other voices.) Molly did a little girl named Teeny, which she still does on our Tuesday night programs, and several other characters. She also played the piano, and we sang from one to four numbers in each broadcast, including, naturally, *Side By Side*.

Versatility, eh? What other voices do you do now?

For several months before this, we had been supplied with gags by a commercial artist and cartoonist named Don Quinn. Don knew he could write jokes, because the humor magazines bought his wheezes and returned his drawings.

We asked him one day if he'd like to work for us writing the *Smackout* scripts for five bucks a throw—and his silence. (In those days, it was a confession of weakness to have a writer from whom you supposed to be

I've heard it said that we will sound like that

HAPPY BAKERS

There's something catching about the idiotic rhythm of the opening song of this program and before you know it, with your head wagging crazily back and forth, you are completely in the mood which seems to last until the equally crazy final signatures. Vivien Ruth, as the girl who makes the Happy Bakers, Phil Duey, Frank Luther and Jack Parker happy, is an intriguing singer.



Vivien Ruth



Fibber and Molly rehearse weekly network show with Don Quinn, who has been their script writer since 1931. The three have a business partnership.

cepted eagerly, because he liked radio and us. Besides, the commercial art business had just laid an egg that would have brought tears of pride to a dinosaur's eyes. That was about 1931, and Don has been writing our material ever since as a one-third partner.

All the time that *Smackout* had been on the air, it had never been sponsored, although we had prepared auditions for any number of people who had relatives in town and wanted a free show. So we weren't particularly excited when Jack Louis, a smart showman who happened to be in the advertising business, asked us to write a new show for Johnson's Wax.

We told Don, who groaned. He'd seen too many brain-children die in infancy and considered this proposed show to be just another benefit performance for a few account executives.

In this spirit, Don went home to his hot little typewriter, and dashed off an opus which he called *Fibber McGee and Molly*. It was based on my tall stories. The title distinguished us from all the *Petty and Bobs, Sam and Henrys, Jake and Lenas and this-and-thats.* Quinn says now if he'd known what we were getting into, he'd have thought up a less corny title.

Jordans Are Unknown

Well, the rest is radio history. We were signed up, and today Johnson's Wax is a success. A lot of "Tain't funny, McGees" have hurtled over the kilocycles since then. And while Fibber McGee and Molly are pretty famous, Marian and Jim Jordan can walk into any good restaurant and get the old brusheroo.

In all our years of living out of suitcases and trunks on the vaudeville circuit, I think what we dreamed of more than anything else was a permanent home address. Well, we got it—79 Wistful Vista. And if you don't think 13 years on the air for one sponsor is pretty permanent, you just don't know the mortality rate in radio.

Maybe I didn't mention it, but Marian (Molly to you) and I have two children of our own. Jim, Jr., is in moving-picture production, and Kathryn is married to Dr. Adrian Goodman. She has a tiny daughter named Diane, which makes me a grandfather.

I don't mind that much, but I still feel awfully strange being married to a man

SAYS MOLLY

You mean for people who had any number of relatives.

How wrong can you be?

Don't forget "Lum 'n' Abner," bless their hearts.

Since 1886, in fact. We're retroactive as well as radioactive.

Did I hear the telephone?

Okay, December. This is May, signing off!

ON WHAT radio program did Digger O'Dell, the friendly undertaker, appear? W. W., Mrs. A. S., Cheek-towaga. Life of Riley.



Jane Ace, queen of the malaprops, and patient Mr. Ace, unravel their fantastic home life on Tuesday evenings at 10:30. Mr. A. is the writer, producer and director of *Mr. Ace & Jane*.



Singers Kay Armen and Dick Brown stand by as emcee Bert Parks

Program Notes

The WCFL Radio Theater is a nightly program of old time radio programs. The program is usually three hours in length. There is a variety of comedy, mystery, drama and adventure. Radio serials, such as Jack Armstrong, can also be heard. Chuck Schaden is the host. Broadcast time is 8 p.m. - 11 p.m. C.S.T. but are sometimes shorter because of sports events. It can be heard on WCFL Chicago 1000 Khz AM. That's 15 Hours a week. But that is not all. Chuck Schaden also offers THOSE WERE THE DAYS on WNIB-WNIZ FM 97 serving the Chicago and Zion, Ill. 1-5 p.m. on Saturdays.

A NOSTALGIA DIGEST is offered for \$7.00 a year. If interested the address is Box 421, Morton Grove, Ill. 60053.

It's fairly certain that Old Time Radio will continue through June 1984 on WEBR 970 Khz Buffalo, N.Y. Complete program schedule is not available as this is written.

As I look over the Old Time Radio programs to which I've been listing, I can't help but believe that in any given evening there may be at least as many hours on the air as there were during the Golden Age of Radio.

If members are aware of old time radio programming which other members may be interested in, drop me a line.

Frank Boncore informs us that the new WEBR Old Time Radio program schedule is effective January 2, 1984. Programs are heard Monday through Friday at 8 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 6p.m. WEBR 970 Khz. Buffalo New York.

MONDAY-The Green Hornet; The Cavalcade of America.

TUESDAY-The Aldrich Family; Screen Directors' Playhouse

WEDNESDAY-The Lives of Harry Lime (The Third Man); NBC Short Story

THURSDAY-Abbott and Costello; Sgt. Preston of the Yukon

FRIDAY-Gunsmoke; Suspense

SATURDAY-NBC Short Story; Green Hornet

SUNDAY-The Lives of Harry Lime (The Third Man); Sgt. Preston of the Yukon.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Joe O'Donnell

206 Lydia Lane

Cheektowaga, N.Y. 14225

* * * * *

TAPESPONDENTS-Send in your wants and we'll run them here for at least two months.

I am looking for recordings of some early programs to copy, including: Uncle Ezra, Hobby Lobby, Guy Hedlund Theatre, Ben Bernie, Renfro Valley Barn Dance, Bobby Benson, Buck Rogers, Bradley Kincaid, National Barndance.

Ed F. Lawlor

5 Pauline Street

Carteret, New Jersey 07008

Silverstone cabinet radio, 8 tube superheterodyne with push button tuning. From Sears Roebuck 1941. Tubes light, but speaker needs to be connected. Have parts list and instructions booklet containing wiring diagram. Also supply of station call letters to be installed on the automatic push buttons.

Harold J. Ahlstrom

158 Stockbridge Avenue

Buffalo, N.Y. 14215

(716) 834-0393

I will trade for any sports material I don't have on an equal basis. Thousands to choose from. Free Catalog supplied.

John S. Furman

Box 132

Ballston Lake, N.Y. 12019

Tapespondents is a free service to all members. Please send your ads to the Illustrated Press.

* * * * *



Peep in at Amos 'n' Andy writing their radio skit. Freeman Gosden (Amos) seeks inspiration while Charles Correll (Andy) does the typing

NICK CARTER

in

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gold & guns

Oct. 1933

CHAPTER XV A FORTUNE HUNTER

Absolute silence reigned there in the stone corridor inside the cellar wall of Thomas Gravesend's home. Nick Carter lay on the floor, making no motion at all, as still as though he were dead.

Over him in the darkness stood Henry Winslow. Now that he had pulled the trigger on the gun, now that he had sent a lug of lead tearing out into the darkness, his hand began to shake.

Heavily, soggily, he crossed Nick Carter's motionless body, went down the corridor to where his flashlight lay, its beams dispersing themselves in the direction away from the prone body of the detective. As he moved, Winslow's back was toward Nick.

He did not see the detective's hand dip under his coat, did not see Nick Carter extract a gun from his shoulder holster. Winslow picked up the flashlight, flashed it on Nick Carter.

The detective still lay quietly not even his chest moving as he breathed. Slowly, heavily, Winslow came back.

He flashed the light directly down on Nick Carter's face. In the palid light from the flashlight, Nick's face was ghastly, like a mask of death.

Winslow stood there for a moment. Then again he started to walk way out of the corridor.

But he had not gone ten feet when indecision preyed upon him. He could not leave the body there. He turned, came back, looked down at Nick again.

Then he dropped to his knees, put his hands on Nick Carter's heart.

The heart moved. Nick Carter was alive.

Winslow gave a great sigh of relief. He tried to pull the detective to his feet. Nick did not resist. He simply lay limp.

Winslow could see no wound on the detective's body. He tried to turn Nick over. But the detective was too heavy for him.

Winslow laid the gun down on the stone flagging. He got both hands under Nick's body, turned him over. As he did so, Nick Carter snatched up the gun that Winslow had laid down.

Winslow rolled Nick over on the other side. Still he could see no wound. Suddenly it occurred to the servant that the detective was fooling him.

Quickly he grabbed up the gun that was lying on the corridor floor. He stood over Nick Carter, gestured with the pistol.

"Get up, Mr. Carter!" he said. The servant's voice was nearly pleading. "Get up, sir, please!"

Nick Carter opened his eyes. Behind him an unostentatious gray splash on the wall showed where Winslow's bullet had missed its mark, had hit harmlessly into the wall.

Now the detective moved. Slowly Nick Carter drew one knee up, pressed it down to the flagging. Then, just as slowly, his body swayed forward, until he was kneeling there on the stone flagging.

Winslow gestured with the gun again. "Get up!" he snapped. "I know you're faking."

Nick Carter moved his head from side to side, put up his hands as though to examine his head, as though he thought a bullet had penetrated his brain. Then the detective put his hand in front of his eyes, looked at it in the light of the flashlight that Winslow held.

Evidently, surprised that there was no blood on his hand, Nick Carter stood all the way up. He moved toward Winslow.

But the servant stepped back. "Keep your distance, Mr. Carter!" Then Winslow laughed, added: "Did you think you were shot?"

Nick Carter looked at the servant stupidly. Then he turned and started to walk away out of the corridor, back to the secret entrance through which he and Winslow had come from Gravesend's bedroom.

Winslow clicked the safety catch of his gun on and off ominously. "Stand still!" he ordered.

Nick Carter turned.

"Oh, I forgot," the detective said clearly. "I wanted to examine the rest of this corridor."

He moved ahead. He brushed past the servant in the corridor, got to the place where the passageway narrowed to a little tunnel to pass over the safe.

"You go in first," Nick Carter said to Winslow.

The Servant shook his head. Again he clicked the safety catch of his revolver on and off, as though to threaten Nick Carter.

"Stand back, Mr. Carter." Winslow said. Believing that the detective had been frightened by the sound of the gun, Winslow was now reeking with self-confidence. He felt that he had the detective in his grasp.

"You can go out of this corridor," Winslow said, "you promise me that you will drop this case and go away and not bother Mr. Gravesend anymore."

"I'm not bothering Mr. Gravesend," Nick said patiently. "I'm trying to help him. Can't you see that?"

The detective put up his hands, caught hold of the bottom of the little tunnel over the safe, started to hoist himself up.

Winslow raised his gun. "Stop or I'll fire, Carter!" he snapped.

Nick Carter grinned, dropped back to the floor. His hand was like light, going inside his coat. It came out with a gun.

Nick saw Winslow's fingers tighten on the trigger of the gun he held. The servant pushed his revolver forward, closer to Nick.

"Put that gun up, Mr. Carter!" he said. "I'll have to kill you!"

Again Nick grinned. He held his own pistol idly in his hand. He turned again, started for the little tunnel over the safe.

Winslow's finger tightened still further, the knuckles on the trigger growing white from pressure. The trigger clicked.

But no bullet came rushing forth.

Nick Carter turned. Winslow's face was puzzled.

Frantically the servant pumped chamber after chamber of the gun. Each time the trigger clicked--each time no bullet came forth.

When Winslow had pulled the trigger six times, Nick stepped up.

Lightly he pulled the revolver out of Winslow's hand. Then he dipped into the side pocket of his coat, took out another revolver, held it up for the servant to see in the light of his own flashlight.

"I switched guns," he said slowly, "when you bent over me while I was lying on the corridor floor."

Winslow's mouth fell open, his eyes nearly popped out of his head.

"That's a gun I shot empty at the crooks before," Nick Carter said. "Now, Winslow!" he said crisply, incisively. "You crawl into that tunnel, Go first. No tricks, now!"

The detective also took the flashlight from the servant. Gesturing with the flashlight, he made Henry Winslow crawl through the tunnel ahead of him.

Nick came after, his light flashing into every cranny of the tunnel. They crossed the little tunnel. It was about ten feet through, long enough to go over the safe.

Then they were out in another corridor on the other side, exactly like the one in which Winslow had threatened Nick Carter. Nick prowled this, too, but found nothing, found no loose stones.

They turned a corner. Now they were on the fourth wall of the cellar.

Here Nick Carter found what had been an archway at one time. But it was filled with big round stones, heavily cemented together.

Nick Carter examined the cement. It was moldy with age, covered with moss and lichens. There was no doubt that this archway had not been used.

Nevertheless, Nick Carter tapped each stone in it with the butt of his revolver. He found nothing to make him suspicious.

Ahead to them, five feet farther on, they came to a dirt wall. Perhaps this had been the way out of the house when this passageway had been a means of escaping from Indians and besieging warriors. Perhaps the archway had been the way out. Nick Carter could not tell. But he could see that no one had escaped from this tunnel recently.

Nick went back, back to the place where the little tunnel over the safe began. He examined this with the greatest diligence, forced Winslow to help him. Still Nick Carter could find nothing.

Again he gestured to Winslow to

climb into the little tunnel. Nick crawled after him, and they got back into the corridor.

They went up through this, up the stairs. Their progress was slow, for Nick Carter insisted on tapping the walls at all points. But finally they emerged in Gravesend's bedroom.

Nick sat down wearily on the spring of the mattressless bed. His adventure had taught him nothing. He had passed through a secret corridor that went all around the safe in which the gold had been, but he was no nearer to locating the gold than he had been in the first place.

Winslow stood, half at attention, in front of Nick Carter. The detective looked up.

"We might as well move this bed back, Henry," Nick Carter said, not unkindly.

Winslow swallowed twice, dumbly. Then he grabbed hold of one edge of the big bedstead. Nick Carter holding the other, they got the big four-poster back into place.

Again Henry Winslow took up his peculiar pose, like a man trying to stand at attention, and not knowing whether it was the thing to do or not.

"What's the idea, Henry?" Nick said. "Why don't you go down and go to bed? You must be pretty tired."

"Then I'm not---under arrest, Mr. Carter?" Henry Winslow asked, unbelief in his voice.

Nick shook his head. "Whatever you did, Winslow," he said softly, "you did in the interests of your master. Go down and go to bed now."

Quavering his thanks to Nick Carter, Winslow rushed out into the hall. Nick heard him clattering away down the stairs.

The detective scratched his head, lit one of his famous Turkish cigarettes, and strolled out into the hall. He believed Henry Winslow's story, believed that the man had been acting blindly, thinking that by killing or threatening Nick Carter, he could protect the master whom he adored.

Nick wandered downstairs, picked up a telephone. He called police headquarters in New York City.

"Get me anything you can," he told the bureau of identification there, "about the Mulligan gang of New Jersey. I've killed one Mulligan

today, and turned another one in--that's Salami Mulligan. Get me anything about the members of the gang still at large--about Jack Mulligan, who's in a Federal prison some place."

"I'll do that," the sergeant at the other end of the wire said. "Where do you want the dope sent, Mr. Carter?"

Nick told the policeman to send it to Gravesend's house. Then he hung up the phone. He turned around.

Geoff Pritchard was standing in the room, his eyes wide. Nick Carter had not heard the young man come in.

Pritchard looked Nick over from head to feet. Nick wondered what the young man found so peculiar in this appearance. Then he looked down at himself. He was dirt all over.

Evidently he had picked up a good deal of dust and sail in crawling through the little tunnel, in examining the dirt wall at the end of the secret passageway.

"Have you been digging, Mr. Carter?" the young man asked.

Again Nick noticed the eagerness, the anxiety, in the young man's voice. Again the thought occurred to him that Geoff Pritchard was only marrying Iris for her money--that he would jilt the girl if the gold were not recovered.

Secretly Nick Carter made a mental note of the fact that Iris Gravesend would be better off if her father did not get his money back. Nick was developing quite a dislike for this young man whom he had liked so well on first acquaintance.

"Yes," the detective said shortly, "I've been digging. I didn't find the gold, if that's what you want to know."

Pritchard's anxiety did not lessen, but his curiosity seemed to die away. "Where were you digging?" He asked.

"Oh, here and there."

Nick Carter turned on his heel, went through the door and back up the stairs to his own room. As he reached the top of the stairs, he happened to look down. Geoff Pritchard had come out of the living room, was standing in the corridor. In the light that streamed down from the stairwell, Nick saw the young man's face. Pritchard looked like a man about to make a desperate decision, like a man about to do some unpleasant task.

Again the detective shrugged. Love was not his province. He was a

detective, not a matchmaker. And yet, Nick felt a little sorry for Geoff Pritchard, too, for the job the young man would have to do in breaking off his engagement.

As he turned into his room, Nick suddenly connected Pritchard's actions with the case. The detective was not yet convinced that the gold was not hidden in the secret corridor, or in some secret corridor. And yet Winslow had told him it was a two-man job to get into the corridor.

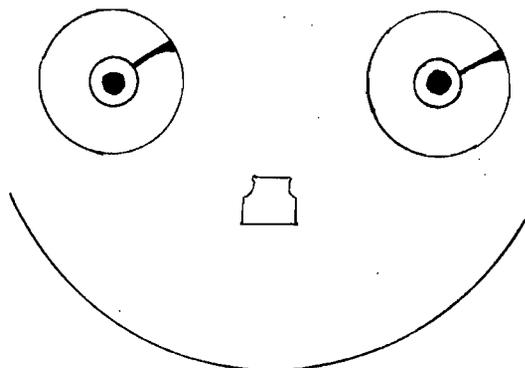
Winslow had evidently not helped Thomas Gravesend to move the gold. Who could have, then, except Geoff Pritchard? And if Geoff had, why did he believe that Gravesend was now impoverished, that Gravesend's daughter was no longer a good match?

This confirmed Nick Carter's substantial belief that Gravesend had not removed his own gold, had not stolen money from himself so that he could steal money from the government.

When he came back from the bedroom, Nick happened to step to the hall window. Down on the lawn, underneath him, in the light that flowed out from the house, he saw Geoff Pritchard walking back and forth. There was no doubt about the seriousness of the young man's dilemma.

And this confirmed again Nick's belief that Gravesend had not moved the gold.

* * CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE * *



REEL-LY SPEAKING

Our tape library has grown larger this past year. 170 reel to reel tapes and 135 cassettes make up our listening library. We now have a vast array of shows and stories to choose from. Hopefully we will have some of the Big Band music to lend to our members Also sportcasts of the old fights, baseball games and football games. (Condensed of course). The tape library can

only continue to grow if our fellow members donate reel to reel tapes and cassettes to the club. A reel to reel tape donated allows any member to borrow one reel for each reel donated, free of charge except for one way postage. (The cost of returning the tapes). Donate a cassette and choose a cassette to borrow free. There is no limit to how many reels and cassettes you may donate to borrow reels and cassettes free. Let's start the new year right and donate that reel and/or cassette to the club library. Everyone has three or four doubles in his or her collection, so why not share them with your fellow members and get that tape you've wanted to borrow from the tape library free. If you don't have a box for your donation, the Club librarian will box it and list it in the I.P. for the members to borrow. When donating a reel and cassette, please list the length of the reel 1800' etc. All the shows contained there in and donated by your name and the date. A note to those club members who borrow reels and cassettes. The club librarian will not send members tapes or cassettes who have not returned tapes or cassettes previously borrowed. Remember, reel and cassettes are loaned on a one month period. This past year your CLUB librarian had to send shorted requests to members because other members neglected to return their borrowed reels and cassettes on time. Some reels were held for two and three months. PLEASE RETURN those reels and cassettes on time. When requesting either reels or cassettes, please send an alternate list. That way when a member requests four reels or cassettes his order can be filled.

Listed below are five new reels donated by club members. Thanks gang.
R-157 1800' ADVENTURES BY MORSE
The Living Dead Episodes 9 & 10.
9-Trail of the Phantom Church Bell
10-Where the Pearls are Hidden
Coffin for the Lady
The Girl of Mystery
Conversation in the Casket
Deepest Grave in the World
Land of the Living Dead 1-10
Dude Martin Sunrise Roundup
Dude Martin 1948 Disc Jockey
Big John & Sparkie
Sleeping

** CONTINUED NEXT MONTH **

Editor's DESK



We welcome 1984 with a change in size in our I.P. Millie has decided to discontinue printing until further notice due to personal problems. It was due to our low printing costs that we were able to put out as much material as we did...Thanks, Millie. Last issue was printed by Mr. Copy due to a multitude of problems too long to go into here. The cost was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times what we had been paying and the quality was not better. That brings us to this issue, member Ken Krug has assumed the duties of printing our newsletter. Ken, however, does not have facilities to reduce the size of the I.P., hence the new $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 size. The new size has

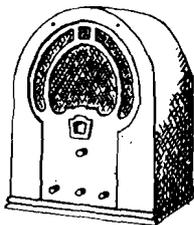
advantages and disadvantages. Among the advantages are larger print and better reproductions, while disadvantages include high postage (37¢ instead of 20¢) and slightly less material. Members are encouraged to send comments and suggestions to the Illustrated Press, 100 Harvey Drive, Lancaster, N.Y. 14086



Eddie Cantor:

THE OLD TIME

100 HARVEY DRIVE



RADIO CLUB

LANCASTER, N.Y. 14086

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