

The Old Time Radio Club

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The Halls of Ivy

Membership Information

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Club Mailing Address

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Lancaster, NY 14086



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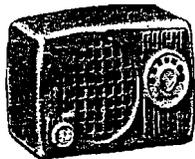
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SAME TIME, SAME STATION

by Jim Cox

JACK BERCH and HIS BOYS

A flirtatious whistle opened this merry quarter-hour followed by the baritone vocalist-host's signature theme: "I'm a-whistlin' . . . are ya listenin'?"

Jack Berch's personality simply radiated across the miles. He could put more smiles into tunes and light-hearted banter than just about anyone on the air in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. His program was "the friendliest show in radio," claimed historiographer John Dunning.

Berch had to be good at what he did for, like the show he presided over, he too was bounced around from network to network, sponsor to sponsor, and timeslot to timeslot. Starting in 1935 he appeared in 15-minute segments all over the board for all four national networks, sometimes on two webs concurrently, principally as a daytime artist but also — especially in the earliest years — at night, and anywhere from once a week to twice, three times or five times weekly.

His sponsors included Wasey Products (Knox gelatin), Fels Naphtha, Manhattan Soap Co. (Sweetheart soap), the Kellogg Co., Gulf Oil Corp. (Gulf spray insect repellent), Canada Dry Bottling Co. and — his most durable association — the Prudential Insurance Co. of America. Berch's longest, best-recalled run, with Prudential, extended from 1945-52. During those years he aired at 4 p.m. Eastern Time on ABC (1945-46), 11:30 a.m. on NBC (1946-50), 11:45 a.m. on NBC (1950-51) and 12 noon on ABC (1951-52). While the show continued into 1954, it was compacted in its latter months to five-minute segments on behalf of Canada Dry.

The series was known at varying times under several monikers. In 1935-36 for Wasey Products it was called *The Kitchen Pirate*. Under auspices of the Manhattan Soap Co. from 1939-40 it arrived as *The Sweetheart Serenader*. Throughout its long run it was most often called *Jack Berch and His Boys*, although the program was commonly identified at times as *The Jack Berch Show*.

A native of Sigel, Ill., Berch was born Aug. 26, 1907. He began working as a door-to-door coffee and tea salesman and would arrive on homemakers' doorsteps whistling and singing a bouncy tune. Little did he expect this to become his lifelong trademark. At Youngstown, Ohio he encountered the wife of WKBN's station manager who helped to arrange an audition for the young salesman. The rest is history.

Even when Berch's show met periods of cancellation, the industrious vocalist never gave up. At one point, in 1942, he produced a syndicated series of shows that was marketed and distributed to individual stations across the country. He was still a middle-aged singer at 46 when his series departed the network airwaves forever. Berch died at 85 in Jamaica, N.Y. Dec. 10, 1992.

For most of the show's run Tom Shirley was its announcer. For the syndicated series, however, John Reed King, who was destined to become a popular radio quizmaster in subsequent years, was enlisted for that assignment.

And who were the "boys"? At various times Berch's accompanists ranged all the way from the Charles Magnate Trio to the Mark Warnow Orchestra, with others in between. The sponsor's financial commitment, the network, the time and day(s) of broadcasts and the show's competition were likely factors in determining how many "boys" Berch could afford — as well as the quality of their musical caliber.

The show wasn't strictly musical, however, for the host occasionally interviewed special guests — sometimes celebrities like movie idols Van Johnson and Robert Taylor — who'd drop by the studio. A special feature, called "The Heart-to-Heart Hookup," allowed Berch to dedicate a song to a particular listener who might be one of life's unfortunates, perhaps someone whom life had passed by — most often the troubled, infirmed or advanced in years. Once Berch helped reunite a mother and son. The woman had moved from home, leaving no forwarding address. She believed that her son had died in World War II. But that report was false, and the show was instrumental in putting the two together again.

On occasions Berch read poetry to listeners. Sometimes he offered them household hints or menu ideas. No matter what — whether speaking, whistling or singing — his voice resonated with an upbeat predilection and his fans found him to be a welcome break in the midst of days of toil and struggle. Who could contradict the man who said, it was "the friendliest show in radio"?

"The Jack Armstrong Murder"

by Woody Smith
(Part Three)

For Those Who Came In Late: Kyle Foster, the narrator, has been mysteriously transported to another reality, a world where characters of old time radio really exist. Wrongly accused of the murder of Jack Armstrong, Foster is aided by The Shadow and Sam Spade. Narrowly escaping capture by Jack Packard, Doc Long, and Reggie York, the three men, with Margo Lane, set sail for Singapore on the trail of a vast criminal conspiracy, master-minded by Fu Manchu. When their ship is taken over by Manchu's Si Fan, the four escape in a lifeboat. Incredibly, the ship is then attacked and sunk by a strange submarine. Foster, Spade, and Margo are hauled aboard the sub, but the Shadow cannot be found. They learn that their captor is Ivan Shark.

PART THREE

She was super-ugly and she wanted to kiss me. She came close, so close that I felt ill. Her breath smelled of rotting fish. The worst part about it was that I was chained, hand and foot. "You are so handsome, Kyle Foster." Fury Shark told me. "Yeah, well, just lucky, I guess." She put one clawed hand behind her head. I guess she thought she was cute. "Do you find me . . . attractive, Kyle? You don't mind if I call you Kyle, do you?" I told her I didn't mind. "Well?" she said. "Uh, what . . . what did you want?" She spun around on one foot, sending a vague stench of something unpleasant floating by me. "I asked you if you thought I was attractive." "Oh yeah, yeah, that's right. Hmmph, well I've never seen anyone quite, ah like you before." She hurled herself on me, her warty arms around my neck, her smelly breath in my face. "Do you really mean that, Kyle darling? Do you?" I almost passed out. "God, yes, yes!" I choked. She squealed unappealingly and planted a slobbery kiss on my cheek (I had turned my head in time). She jumped up and down and hugged herself. "Oh I must run and tell Father. He'll be so pleased! I'll get someone to take off those nasty chains and we can be married right away!" She capered out the door and I had the dry heaves.

Shortly, two guards came and removed my fetters, then hauled me into Ivan Shark's cabin. He sat there behind an immense desk, Fury stood, beaming hideously, next to him. He fixed me with a piercing gaze. "Well young man, I understand that you want to marry my only darling daughter." His accent was getting easier to understand. "Well," I gulped, she seems to have her heart set on it." Ivan Shark joined his fingertips together. "Unfortunately," he said, "I cannot allow it." I almost let my elation show. Fury screamed, "YOU WHAT?"

Ivan took a conciliatory tone with his loving daughter. "Now, now, my dear, you know it would be quite impossible . . ." "YOU LET ME HAVE HIM! YOU PROMISED!" Ivan was forced to grab her arms to keep her from hitting him. "Please, Fury. You can have another. How about that nice Mr. Spade down in the hold?" She tore loose from him and ran sobbing from the room. Ivan looked after, then straightened his clothes. "Now, ah, Mr. Foster," he said. "As to your . . . disposition. It seems that you are eagerly sought by both the forces of the law and a . . . relative of mine." I was puzzled. "Relative?" "Yes, you know him as Dr. Fu Manchu. We had the same father, you see." "Then why . . ." "Why did I attack your steamer? because I knew that the Si Fan were aboard. I did not know why, but that they were aboard was sufficient. My half-brother and I do not get along, Mr. Foster. We never have. And now it comes to my attention that he wants you. Why is that, do you think?" I shrugged. "Beats me I never met the man." Ivan smiled thinly. "You will. Fu Manchu will pay dearly for you, Mr. Foster, more than the reward offered by Warbucks Industries for the slayer of Jack Armstrong. I intend to sell you to him. Before I do, however, I wish to know what it is that makes you so valuable." "Gee, I wouldn't know, really." Ivan looked impatient. "Come, come, Mr. Foster. you will tell me one way or another. If need be, I'll sell you by bits and pieces."

I thought it over. Torture never turned me on. I'd almost rather marry Fury. And I figured I was on my own. The Shadow never came out of the water, so he must have drowned. Spade was locked up in the hold, nursing a nasty scalp wound. Of what Ivan Shark had done with Margo Lane during the three days since our capture, I shuddered to think. I hadn't even seen her, so I didn't know if she was alive or dead. I could expect help from no one.

So Ivan Shark and Fu Manchu didn't get along, eh? There might be a way to work both ends against the middle and maybe stay alive.

"All right," I said. "I'll talk."

And I did, for nearly an hour. I spun such a tale, he had to believe me. I told Shark all about the Collier Door into other realities and about Manchu's conspiracy with criminal geniuses from other worlds, but I embroidered it a little. I told him that, while Clay Collier had invented and built a small model of the door, I was the only one with the necessary knowledge of "cryalosis mechanics" which was a vital component of the Door. Of course, I made it all up. Ivan Shark bought it. His eyes gleamed.

"So!" He said. "Without you, Fu Manchu cannot carry out his plans. Good, Good! You will construct a Door for me!" Uh. I hadn't figured on that. "But I can't" I replied. "Collier has all the formulas and blueprints. I'd need those." Ivan frowned. "Very well I'll have the plans stolen." "But there are no plans, Mr. Shark, not written ones. They're all in Collier's mind." "So?" Ivan thundered. "Then we'll steal Collier! Fang!" The creature came running. Ivan rapidly explained to him that they were going after Collier. That was just what I wanted. I didn't think that Shark could pull off his plan, but it would give me time to escape, well, try to escape with Margo and Spade.

"First, however," Ivan told Fang, "We will put in at our base. We will leave Mr. Foster there to prepare his laboratory for our return." "Yes, master," slobbered Fang, and he slinked off to give the necessary orders. Ivan turned to me. "I think perhaps I shall leave Fury with you, Mr. Foster. I think romance makes her color better." Yeah, I thought. Puss green. "I would like to have Mr. Spade and Miss Lane with me, also." "Really? Why?" "Well, Mr. Spade is rather handy in the lab - - -" "A private detective?" snorted Ivan. "Handy in the lab?" "Oh, well, we are close friends, you see, and - - -" "Oh very well. He will live as long as you do." That didn't sound heartening. "As to Miss Lane," he continued, "I shall indeed leave her at my base. I would not want to take her into serious danger." So I knew Margo was alive, at any rate. We had a chance.

Ivan Shark's base, I discovered, was in a vast underground cave, accessible only through an underwater tunnel of considerable length. I reflected that any escape was going to be extremely difficult. I was shown my laboratory which was very well equipped. Spade was there, looking somewhat worse for the wear. Two guards stood by the single door watching us.

"Foster," Spade said, would you mind telling me, slowly please, just what in blazes is going on here?" "quiet Sam," I cautioned him. "Here, help me plug in some of these gizmos onto those whatchacallits. The trick is to look busy." We worked all day, making something out of glass tubes, flasks, rubber hoses, and anything else I

could find. It looked impressive as hell. While we worked I brought Spade up to date. Margo was being kept in Ivan Shark's own suite of rooms. Shark had already left on his wild goose chase. Spade and I each had a cell to sleep in.

That night, Fury came to my cell. "Oh, Kyle" she wailed. "What are we to do? My father will never let us marry. He means to kill you when you've completed the Door." Ivan was considerate; he didn't want to make his daughter a widow. Fury suddenly looked shrewd. "If I help you escape from here, she put forth, "Will you marry me when we're safe?" I most definitely did not want to marry Fury Shark. Just as definitely, I wanted to live. Ergo, I lied. "Sure." She hugged me. God, she was strong. "Oh I'm so happy!" she squealed. "We'll have lots of kids and - - -" I disentangled myself from her. "Sure, sure, but we have to escape first." "There is another way out," she said, "Besides the underwater tunnel. There is a stairway, carved from stone, that leads to the surface above us." "What is above us?" "Calcutta," she answered. "Calcutta? India?" "Yes, of course. The stairway opens into the basement of the Hoobli Hotel. Oh, what an excellent spot for a honeymoon!" I had to keep her mind off that track. "Listen, Fury, I won't leave unless Sam Spade and Margo Lane go with us." Her baleful little eyes blazed. "That hussy! If you feel anything towards her - - -" "No, no, nothing like that. It's just that she pulled my fat out of the fire a few times and I want to return the favor. Spade, too." Fury glared at me. "You're positive?" she demanded. "Yes, of course." "Very well, Kyle, come with me."

We left my cell and made our way down a corridor, picking up Spade on the way. When we got to Ivan Shark's quarters, Fury left us outside and went in alone. She came out dragging Margo. Margo looked very pale and drawn, but I knew she would make. She's tough.

Fury led us to a small chamber at the farthest end of the huge cavern that housed Ivan Shark's base. She closed and locked the door behind us, then went to the wall opposite and inserted a peculiarly shaped key into a hole. The wall swung outward and revealed a long, stone corridor, lit eerily by flickering gas lamps.

"This way," Fury said, and I smacked her on the chin. I didn't pull my punch because I knew she was as tough as anyone. She went down like a deflated blimp. We left her in that chamber, tied up with her own clothes, and entered the stone corridor. We pushed the wall back until we heard it latch closed. We went on.

Shortly, we came to a huge stone stairway, which curved up into the gloom above us. The lights became fewer as we went up. How long we climbed I can't say:

we did have to stop several times to rest. Finally, the lights were no more, and we continued upwards in darkness, stumbling. The stairs narrowed until we could only pass in single file. I led, then Margo, with Spade at the rear. All at once, I took a step and sprawled flat on my face. "Kyle! What is it?" Margo breathed. I got up. "Watch it here," I said, "The steps have stopped."

We continued on. Soon, I walked into a wall. That was it. The tunnel had stopped. I felt around, looking for a crack, a protuberance, anything to indicate that this was an exit. Finally, I found a hole and inserted into it the strange key I had taken from Fury. This time the wall swung inwards, and we had to step back a few paces.

I saw lights through the opening, but not so bright as to blind us after the long darkness. We emerged into a large, damp, stone-walled room, which was the basement of the Hoobli Hotel. There were crates and boxes piled all over the place. And against one wall, bound, gagged, and seated on the floor, were two people. One was a man, handsome and dark haired. The other was a boy, blond and stringy looking.

I debated about untying them. I was getting very cautious of late. I pulled their gags off first. "I'm Kyle Foster," I said quietly. "And this is Margo Lane and Sam Spade. Who are you?" The man's voice was deep. He was Irish. "My name's Pat Ryan and my little friend here is Terry Lee." he looked at me queringly. "Where did you come from?" he asked. "It's a long story Pat, "Why are you tied up?" It probably means something that by now I was through being surprised. It didn't faze me in the least that I was talking to Terry Lee and Pat Ryan. Sam and I began untying them. "Blame it on the Dragon Lady," Pat said. It figures, I thought to myself. "Yeah," put in Terry. "She's mixed up in a - - -" "Terry," Pat cautioned. "A conspiracy with Fu Manchu, among others," I finished for Terry. "You know, then." "Yup," I said, and told him all about the Shadow and the Sharks. "So you're the one that was wanted for the murder of Jack Armstrong?" Pat asked. "What? Was wanted?" "Why, yes. Oh, you couldn't have known. Fu Manchu has come out into the open. He has given an ultimatum to every government of every major nation in the world. They have forty-eight hours in which to dissolve themselves or Manchu will destroy their capital cities with some sort of ray. That was yesterday. And he claims the credit for having Armstrong killed. I guess that clears you Kyle."

I was rather pleased. I was no longer a hunted murderer. I suddenly felt very light hearted.

Pat took command of our little group. First, we broke open some of the crates which, it turned out, held various weapons. I outfitted myself with a rifle and a handgun. When we were all armed, we made our way upstairs.

We emerged into the kitchen, which was empty. We cat-footed it outside into the darkness. I didn't know the time, but the eastern sky was lightening. We headed for the docks. Pat told me he had friends with a boat. We reached the docks in about a quarter of an hour. The boat that Pat's friends gave us wasn't much, but we boarded the ancient scow and began rowing out to the center of the river. The boat had a single mast that supported a tattered sail, and a cranky steam engine. Pat waited until the sun had been up for an hour before deeming it safe enough to fire up the boiler. The little engine made a hellish noise, but it worked.

"Does anybody have any idea where we're going?" This was from my erst-while bodyguard, Sam Spade. "Does anybody know where we are?" I asked. "Geography has never been one of my strong points." Terry Lee looked at me like I was dumb. Maybe I was. "Anybody would know that we're on the Ganges River, headed south," he answered. "Oh," I said. "I figure on heading for Chittagong, in the Bengal," said Pat. "Unless someone has a better idea." We didn't. "How long will it take?" I asked. "Three days, maybe four. Assuming the Dragon Lady doesn't catch up with us."

I frowned, my light-hearted mood had vanished. Fu Manchu would be destroying cities at the end of the day, if governments hadn't capitulated to him. The Shadow had told me that I might be a focal point in the whole affair of the Collier Door. While I didn't understand that, I felt I should be doing something to help. But what? The only lead I had was Singapore, hundreds of miles away. I decided to head for that city when I could. After all, the Shadow had given his life to protect me.

We traveled and talked. Pat filled us in on the news of the world from the time our ship had been sunk. Superman was missing. He had failed to answer any urgent calls. An attempt on the life of the fabled Daddy Warbucks had been foiled by the faithful Punjab and the Asp. Captain Midnight had been wounded in a battle with a mysterious rocket ship. Sightings of similar rocket ships were being reported all over the world. And the criminal Green Hornet (well, they didn't know that he was a good guy) was purported to have helped Batman and Robin escape a Si Fan death trap in Gotham City. Nayland Smith and Dr. Petrie, Manchu's well known adversaries, were last seen in Singapore,

thus confirming the Shadow's information and my own decision.

Margo was a little broken up about the Shadow. We tried to cheer her up, but now that she had time to brood about it, she became more melancholy.

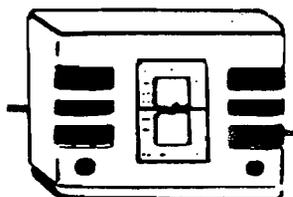
Nothing much happened for the rest of the morning. There was some food aboard, so we ate. There was no sign of pursuit. I thought a little about home. I figured that I had been gone about five days. I doubted that anyone would be concerned about me, except my boss, who had probably fired me by now. It was mid-afternoon when I began tingling. It was strange, like pins and needles. I had felt it before. "What's the matter, Mr Foster?" asked Terry. "You look funny." I agreed. I looked at my hands and watched my skin shimmer. And then the waves of cold passed through me, the waves I had felt five days ago on the back porch of my fishing cabin in Michigan. I heard a scream from far away and then it was over.

I wasn't in the scow anymore. I looked around, I was sitting on the ground in the middle of a barren valley. It was cold. I saw the rocket ship when I looked behind me. It was a stubby ship, matching the description of the ones Pat Ryan had told me about. It rested on its belly, smoke coming out from the rocket tubes in the rear.

A hatch on the side of the ship opened, and two oddly dressed men and a girl stepped out. The girl saw me first and cried out. The bigger of the two men, the blond giant, whipped out a strange looking pistol and leveled it at me. The other man, older, slightly flabby, with thin dark hair, put a hand on his arm. "Wait, Flash," he said. "He may be friendly." Man was I friendly. "Hello Flash Gordon," I said.

To be Continued

Be sure not to miss the concluding chapter of *The Jack Armstrong Murder* in the next issue of The IP! THRILL to the battle of hundreds of rocket ships over New York City! GASP at the incredible Death Trap of Fu Manchu! DISCOVER the true murderer of Jack Armstrong! WITNESS the showdown with Fu Manchu and his cohorts of evil!



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



JERRY COLLINS

Dan Marafino has so many interests and hobbies that he has twice strayed from the Old Time Radio Club. Thus for the second time I welcome Dan back to the club. Within the first hour of his first meeting, Dan volunteered for a job. He has now replaced Don Friedrich as one of our cassette librarians. He will now handle orders for cassettes numbered 1 up to 1999. When you place your order ask Dan about some of his interesting hobbies. You may contact Dan at:

19 Church Street
Lancaster, New York 14086
(715) 684-073

Dear Jerry,

Although you addressed your question about the Tom Mix war record to Jack French in the January IP, I couldn't resist responding also. Jack and I both wrote articles on this issue in our respective publications back in 1996. But probably The Tom Mix Book, a 1989 publication by M. G. Norris deals with it best. I've Xeroxed and enclosed chapter six which talks about the hundreds of false stories about Mix.

As you can see he did not participate in the military actions that you asked about. This is best illustrated by Mix's claim to have ridden next to Teddy Roosevelt in the famous charge up San Juan Hill in the Spanish American War, when in reality the battle was made on foot, not on horseback.

As you will note, from chapter six, Mix's reputation was mostly myth rather than fact. Much of that myth came from Mix himself, but that doesn't have to detract from our enjoyment of the radio program, movies or whatever. After all, most programs on radio were not realistic in what they portrayed anyway. For example, the portrayal of Jack Benny on the program of that name bore no resemblance to the real man.

I enjoy your writings, keep up the good work.

Jim Snyder

"Groucho Always Picks on Me"

by Sid Ross

People feel sorry for the man Groucho heckles most

Whenever Groucho Marx insults George Fenneman some listeners get so worked up about it they sit right down and write protesting letters.

Fenneman is the smiling young fellow who does the "announcing" for Groucho's *You Bet Your Life* show on radio and TV. Fenneman will take a deep breath and begin his announcements. Right in the middle, Groucho will say: "Smile, smile!—this is the *fun* show . . . Look idiotic, Fenneman!" And Fenneman has to smile while TV watchers in 48 states laugh at his expense and look for traces of idiocy. Fenneman likes Groucho, but he's also a little fearful of him. He never knows what predicament Groucho will put him in next.

Groucho Interrupts Everything

Yet to Fenneman, Groucho is a great guy. Fenneman, in fact went through high school doing imitations of him. "And he admires *me*, I suspect," says Fenneman, "because I can memorize lines. Groucho hates to memorize anything." The people who write those protesting letters would feel better if they knew that the barbs Groucho continuously throws at Fenneman probably do conceal a very deep respect.

The day of the show, George Fenneman comes into the studio a half hour before Groucho, so he can do the commercials in peace. "We found it doesn't pay to try to do them with Groucho," Fenneman says wryly. "It's pretty hard to be serious with this man around—nothing's sacred to him."

The shows are filmed in advance for TV. During the filming, it doesn't take much by Groucho to "break up" Fenneman's announcements. "He can do it by merely interrupting me," says Fenneman. "He'll wait until I am just about to utter a word. Then he'll start speaking and, of course, he bawls me out for interrupting him. "He'll break me up for four or five minutes and everybody laughs except the director who sees 10,000 feet of expensive film that he can't use going through the cameras." Recently Groucho gave the announcer the business by shaking his hand and saying: "Fenneman show the people your teeth." So Fenneman smiled. "No, no!" Groucho said. "Take 'em out and show them your teeth!"

The Brush-Off

Or Groucho will toss an aside: "How are you Fenneman, you drunk?" Or Fenneman will announce the Great Man, who enters to applause. Fenneman extends his hand for a handshake, but Groucho puffing at his cigar, walks right by the announcer commenting: "How do you get to Grand Central Station from here?"

Or Groucho sits by the mike and tells the audience: "This is Mr. Fenneman who will be just as dull as I was for the last three minutes." It happens off stage too. Groucho will remark to Fenneman before the show: "George, you're lucky to be working with a fellow with a face like mine. You *have* to look good! Fenneman usually drops in to Groucho's dressing room before the show. "We chat about books and authors or something in the news," he says.

Down to Work

After going over the commercials, Fenneman gets notes on the people in the studio audience—housewives, truck drivers, firemen, servicemen. Before the show, the people are interviewed quickly and have television makeup applied. While this is going on, Groucho is being made up in his dressing room (he never sees the contestants before the show begins), but he always appears on stage before the audience warm-up is over, to stroll around, blow cigar smoke in Fenneman's face, and otherwise heckle him. Maybe there'll be a pretty girl on the show says Fenneman: "He'll tell me casually, 'Get her phone number!' Or he may say something the audience can't hear." "Subconsciously, I'm on guard, but I can't ever figure out what he's going to do or say. I never even know *how* he's coming on stage: once he rode out in a wheelchair. Another time he walked right pass me and announced: *Welcome to John's Other Wife. I was out with her last night, and you're welcome to her!*"

"I may have only three lines to say to introduce the contestants but it may take me 10 minutes to get those lines out," says Fenneman. Fenneman does not have much outside contact with Groucho. For that matter, Groucho doesn't have much social contact with anybody. Once a year he gives a party. Everybody goes home by 12 o'clock and Groucho goes right to bed. One of Groucho's favorite subjects is Fenneman's education. Groucho still insists that Fenneman went to Stanford, despite the fact the announcer attended San Francisco State.

"I Pleaded with Him"

"I corrected him about this, but you just never try to correct Groucho," says Fenneman. "He still persisted in

saying that I had gone to Stanford. All my friends thought that I was 'going Hollywood,' disowning my college. So I went to Groucho and pleaded with him: Gee Groucho you're getting me into trouble with this Stanford business." "Okay, we'll correct that," Groucho promised. So that evening he says on the show: "Ladies and gentlemen, I've been saying all along that George went to Stanford. Now he tells me this isn't true." Then Groucho turned to me in front of everybody and asked, "Where did you go, George?" I enunciated very clearly, "San Francisco State College." "Then with that double look he gives people, he told the audience: 'Aw, you made that up. You went to Stanford!'" (Fenneman has quit trying.)

Other people might consider this rough treatment but Fenneman says he actually enjoys it. "Everybody seems to think Groucho is always picking on me and lots of people feel real sorry for me," he says. "But he's not nasty. I don't think he's ever said anything in malice to me. Sure, I used to worry that he didn't like me." Despite all these things, or perhaps because of them, Groucho and his announcer have a remarkable rapport during the show. "When he likes a contestant, he glances over at me and we sort of mutually agree with a little aside glance," says Fenneman.

"Once you get to know him," Fenneman says, "you find that this kind of guy you can't get mad at."

No Worries

According to Fenneman, Groucho is a chronic worrier. "I think he's perturbed very much about the condition of the world. But he never burdens anybody with his own problems. The only time I really heard him complain was when he made a movie. 'I have to memorize these asinine lines,' he said."

"The guy is simply a tremendous person," says Fenneman. "There are so many sides to Groucho that I'd like to know him better myself. There are very few guys in his league. He's not cast in any mold. One thing I do know—he can deflate anybody and sometimes it'll sound cruel."

Fenneman relates an incident that happened not long ago at a restaurant. Groucho hates to be bothered especially when he's eating. A woman rushed up to his table and started gushing all over him. Groucho ignored her as long as he could. The woman identified herself as a "typical fan" and then, getting no response from Groucho, asked half doubtingly, "Aren't you Harpo Marx?" "No," said Groucho "are you?" *Parade* 11/1/53

MEMBER'S MIKE



Ladies/Gentlemen:

Can you suggest a source for a tape of one of the 27 available episodes of "LONESOME GAL" . . . ?

A disc jockey syndication, first broadcast October 13, 1947, on WING, Dayton, Ohio, and broadcast locally for two years. Then beginning in December, 1949, syndicated nationally by transcription, through the mid-1950s?

I look forward to your help.

Very truly yours,
Edward A. Nyren
PO Box 58035
Tierra Verde, FL 33715-8035

Ken Murray Views the News

Groucho and Harpo Max getting fined \$1,000 only goes to show that being a radio comedian is now a hazardous profession like steeplejacking and pedestrianism.

The whole trouble is that there are only 36 basic jokes in the world and a radio program needs 75. That is why every good joke has been used so often, you sometimes can't recognize it through the callouses and barnacles.

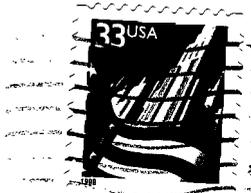
And say, if Joe Miller ever came back to earth, he could slap every radio comedian into jail and then you folks would have to listen to symphony programs.

Every comic from Sandy Hook to San Diego is looking for a new gag. And once a really good one is invented, watch the boys pounce on it and give it more twists than a gross of corkscrews.

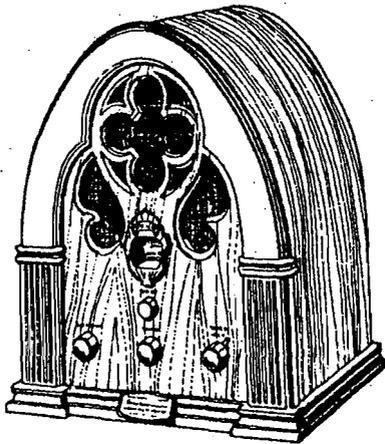
Well, that's all I got time for right now. I've got to get busy thinking up a new and snappy answer to "Who was that lady I seen you with last night?"

11/5/37

Old Time Radio Club
 Box 426
 Lancaster, NY 14086



FIRST CLASS MAIL



KEN KRUG 1/00
 49 REGAL
 DEPEW NY 14043

4/2/47

WGR
COFFEE CALL
 3:15 P. M.
 TOMORROW

WGR
DINAH SHORE SINGS
 9:30 P. M.

Dinah's voice is as soothing as ever, between the legs of PETER LIND HAYES.

WGR
SONGS BY WHO?
 9:00 P. M.

WINNY songs by SINATRA, but of course, BOB the PIED PIPERS. Those arrangements are by Axel Stordahl.

WGR
DR. CHRISTIAN
 8:30 P. M.

An original, prize-winning drama in which the good doctor "gossips" of a common malady known as "gossiping."

WGR
AUNT JENNY
 12:15 P. M.

Aunt Jenny has an Easter story from now 'til Friday. Star is 18-year-old soprano BOBBY WHITE, son of early SILVER MASKED TENOR!