

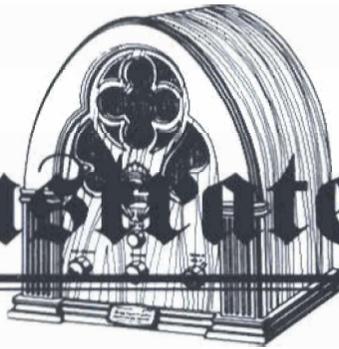
The Old Time Radio Club

Established 1975

The Illustrated Press

Number 357

February 2008



SOUVENIR
PROGRAM



WLS

NATIONAL BARN DANCE

8th St. Theatre, Chicago

The Illustrated Press

Membership Information

Club Membership: \$18.00 per year from January 1 to December 31. Members receive a tape library listing, reference library listing and the monthly newsletter. Memberships are as follows: If you join January-March, \$18.00; April-June, \$14; July-September, \$10; October-December, \$7. All renewals should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing newsletter issues. Please be sure to notify us if you have a change of address. The **Old Time Radio Club** meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 PM during the months of September through June at St. Aloysius School Hall, Cleveland Drive and Century Road, Cheektowaga, NY. There is no meeting during the month of July, and an informal meeting is held in the month of August.

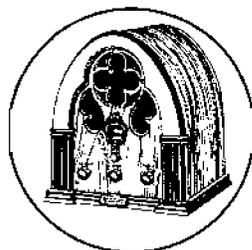
Anyone interested in the Golden Age of Radio is welcome. The **Old Time Radio Club** is affiliated with the Old Time Radio Network.

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**Send all articles, letters, exchange newsletters,
etc. to: The Illustrated Press**

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Library Rates:

Audio cassettes and CDs are \$1.95 each and are recorded on a **club supplied cassette or CD** which is **retained** by the member. Rates include postage and handling and are payable in U.S. funds.



Kate Smith & "God Bless America"

by
TOM CHERRE

Like many of us, I watched the recent Ice Bowl game and was very pleased with the way Ronan Tynan sang "God Bless America." He is a fine singer and did the song proud, but I'm sure none of you will disagree that Kate Smith and only Kate can captivate an audience with that strong sense of emotion and patriotism. Back in the 1970s her popularity soared to new heights with another generation when she performed at The Spectrum for the Philadelphia Flyers in the Stanley Cup finals. She was like a good luck charm, the Flyers having won a lot more games when she sang in person or when her recording was played. As Kate would say "It ain't begun till the fat lady sings."

My earliest recollection of Kate Smith goes back to the early 1950s when she had her afternoon TV show. I would usually catch her closing theme song "When The Moon Comes Over The Mountain." I would kid my mom using the high falsetto and make wise cracks about Kate's huge size. I realize I was wrong and never appreciated her for what she was, but then again I was a little squirt. Now I believe she was a truly remarkable person.

She was born Kathryn Elizabeth Smith in Washington DC in 1907. As a young girl she sang in church choirs and for community events. When she was only eight years old she was presented with a medal by General Pershing for entertaining the troops stationed in the Capital area. By the time she was fifteen Kate won just about every amateur singing contest there was in the city. Her only dream was to be a Broadway singer. Her parents were against her in her bid to be a singer and after high school she enrolled into Nursing College. However, she was offered a week's engagement on the same billing with Eddie Dowling so she quit school and never looked back again. This led to the part of "Tiny Little" in Atlantic City and then on to the Broadway

musical "Honeymoon Lane." While on Broadway Kate found her new role to be more of a buffoon than a singer. Although she performed in many good musicals she was unhappy with the direction in which her career was heading. Many performers, including Bert Lahr, would chide her about her weight and appearance. She was more or less being cast for her size rather than her voice. Things changed for the better when Columbia Records VP Ted Collins, longtime partner and manager, put her on the radio in 1931. She had one of the most popular shows on the air and began recording hit after hit.

In 1938 Irving Berlin was asked to write a patriotic song. After not coming up with anything he recalled an old song he wrote back in 1918 while stationed on Long Island. That song was rejected and he threw it in his trunk. He later dug it out and gave it to Kate Smith to sing. Shortly after the war started in Europe she premiered "God Bless America" on her radio show and the phones never stopped ringing. During World War II Kate Smith was credited with selling over 600 million dollars worth of war bonds. She also recorded over 2000 songs, 19 of them being million sellers. At that time Crosby was the number one male vocalist. Kate won the choice for best female vocalist.

Officials at the Spectrum noted that when the National Anthem was played there was movement, noise and a lot of disrespect. When Kate sang "God Bless America" everyone was quiet and respectful. To make a case in point I did DJ music for a number of years back then. At many weddings, dances and parties I often closed with "God Bless America" and many, many times people would form a circle hold hands and join in the singing. And this was way before 9-11. I still get a chill every time I hear a recording of Kate Smith singing that song. Irving Berlin said that this was his favorite song and it would give Kate Smith immortality. He was so right.

They still play it at the 7th inning stretch at Yankee Stadium. That's something good to be said for Mr. Steinebrenner. We were truly blessed to have her bestow her immense talents on us. Kate Smith who never married, died of diabetes in 1986 at the age of 79 in Raleigh, North Carolina. God Bless America and God Bless Kate Smith.



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The Year 1948 in Review

By JERRY COLLINS

The Top events of 1948 included:

1. Baseball's greatest hero Babe Ruth died from cancer.
2. The Berlin Blockade led to the Berlin Airlift.
3. The Marshall Plan begins its aid program to Western Europe.
4. In one of the greatest upsets in American political history Harry Truman defeated Thomas Dewey.
5. CBS introduced the 33-1/3 long playing vinyl record.
6. Mohandas Gandhi was fatally shot by a Hindu fanatic.
7. Congress created the House Committee on Un-American Activities as another "Red Scare" begins. Soon they began their infamous investigation of the "Hollywood Ten."
8. Margaret Sanger, a leader in the US birth control movement, helps in the establishment of the International Planned Parenthood Committee.
9. Orville Wright and DW Griffith, two great innovators and pioneers, both die in 1948.
10. Edwin H. Land introduced an instant camera, the Polaroid Land Camera.
11. The Civil Air Patrol was established.
12. The Supreme Court ruled that religious education could not be taught in public schools.
13. Alfred Kinsey, a biology professor at the University of Indiana, published a book on human male sexual behavior.
14. Toast of the Town hosted by Ed Sullivan premieres on CBS television.
15. Candid Camera Premiered on television.
16. The movie "Hells Angels." led to the increased popularity of the Harley-Davidson Motorcycle.
17. Nestles Quick, Scrabble, Dial antibacterial soap and V8 vegetable juice all hit the market.
18. Professional wrestling debuts on prime-time network television (Dumont).
19. Former Japanese Prime Minister, Tojo and six other Japanese wartime officials are executed for war crimes.
20. The 1940 and 1944 Olympics were cancelled. The Olympics were resumed in 1948 in London.

The Cost of Living for 1948:

1. Average income - \$2,933
2. First Class Stamp - \$.03
3. Admiral TV/phonograph/radio - \$549.50
4. Buick Roadmaster - \$2,900

The following radio shows premiered in 1948:

1. The Phil Harris Alice Faye Show for Rexall
2. Life with Luigi
3. Our Miss. Brooks
4. Straight Arrow
5. Jeff Regan
6. The Hallmark Hall of Fame

The following teams and individuals won championships in 1948:

1. The Cleveland Indians defeated the Boston Braves in six games to win The World Series.
2. Steve Van Buren scored the only touchdown as the Philadelphia Eagles defeated the Chicago Cardinals 7-0 in a blinding snowstorm for The NFL title.
3. St. Louis University won the NIT title with a 66-52 victory over NYU before 18,491 fans at the Garden. Ed Macauley led the winners with 23 points.
4. Kentucky defeated Baylor 58-42 to win the NCAA title. The game was played before 16,174 fans, the second smallest crowd of the season at Madison Square Garden. The Wildcats were led by Alex Graza with 14 points and Ralph Beard with 12 points.
5. It was a hitter's year in baseball. Although Joe DiMaggio hit 39 homeruns along with 155 RBI's and Ted Williams batted .369 with a slugging percentage of .615, it was Lou Boudreau with a .355 batting average that was named the American League MVP. Stan Musial is the National League MVP with a batting average of .376, a slugging percentage of .702, 39 homeruns, 18 triples, 46 doubles and 131 RBI's.
6. Eddie Arcaro rode "Citation" to racing's Triple Crown.
7. Ben Hogan won the U.S. Open as his way to being golf's top money winner at over \$32,000.
8. The Toronto Maple Leafs dominated the 1947-48 hockey season with a 32-15-13 regular season record. They concluded the season with a four-game sweep of Detroit for the Stanley Cup.
9. Joe Louis continued as heavyweight champion, although Jersey Joe Walcott gave him a tough fight in August. Other top fighters were Gus Lesnevich (LHW), Tony Zale (MW), Rocky Graziano (MW), Marcel Cerdan (MW), Ray Robinson (WW), Ike Williams (LW) Sandy Saddler (FW) and Willie Pep (FW)

Top movies of the year:

1. The Treasure of Sierra Madre
2. Key Largo
3. Easter Parade
4. Hamlet
5. Johnny Belinda
6. A Foreign Affair

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1. The Naked City
2. A Gentleman's Agreement
3. The Farmer's Daughter
4. A Double Life
5. Miracle on 34th Street
6. I Remember Mama

The Favorite songs of 1948:

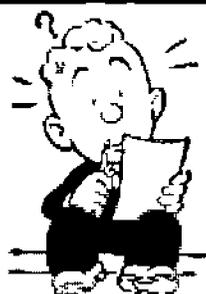
1. Button and Bows
2. On a Slow Boat to China
3. My Darling, My Darling

Popular television shows of 1948

1. Texaco Star Theater (Milton Berle)
2. Toast of the Town (Ed Sullivan)
3. Candid Camera (Allen Funt)
4. Camel Newsreel Theater (John Cameron Swayze)
5. Studio One
6. Philco TV Playhouse
7. Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts
8. Chesterfield Supper Club (Perry Como)

The most popular books of 1948 included:

1. The Big Fisherman
2. The Naked and the Dead
3. Crusade in Europe
4. The Gathering Storm
5. Roosevelt and Hopkins



Librarian's Notes

By FRANK BORK

About 3 months ago in early November I moved to my new home in Lancaster, NY. A couple of weeks later I was ready to move the Club's Library, well just some of it. 50 large boxes of reel-to-reel tapes. Bob McDivitt, Dick Olday, yes that's The Sinister Dick Olday of the old days. Wow has he ever changed. Bob, Dick and myself acted as Supervisors, while Dick's son did 98% of the work. Well after all we just couldn't let him do everything now could we?

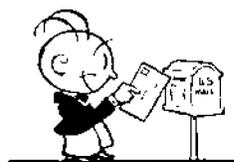
The Radio Club's thanks and mine go to Bob and Dick. Plus a very special thanks to Dick's son.

On November 15th, Don Boyack, Ben Bookhagen and Ben's father helped me move 54 boxes containing well over 6000 Radio Cassettes. That's not all, there were

over 75 books in the Club's Library that also had to be moved. Also 4 file size boxes of reference material, 3 boxes of blank cassettes and cassette cases, all jamed into my minivan and brought to my new home. That's not all, now came the job of carrying them one by one into the basement. Then stacking them in numerical order to be placed on the racks when the paint dried.

My thanks and the Club's thanks go to Don, Ben and Ben's dad.

P.S I forgot Ben's dad's first name. Well what can I say? When you get to be my age, sometimes you forget things. By the way what did you say your name was?



Comments from Our Mailbag

Hello Ken,

As usual, loved the December IP, especially the article on Red Barber. When I was a kid growing up in the Bronx the radio was our entry to the world. As I walked along the street all windows were open due to the summer heat. We heard the voices of Red Barber and Mel Allen coming from the apartments. They told us what was happening on the field. Then after Red retired he was still heard every Friday on Public Radio for 5 minutes with Bob Edwards. How wonderful it was.

Take care,
Alan Glaser

Dear Editor:

I found Tom Cherre's article on Barton Yarborough very enjoyable, although I was puzzled by his opening paragraph. How could Yarborough be considered a "poor choice" for the role of Sgt. Ben Romero? The role was created for him!

As I wrote in my book, Jack Webb wanted Yarborough to portray his "Dragnet" partner. He'd worked with him on "Escape" and "Jeff Regan" and believed they would work well together; as Peggy Webber told me, Yarborough brought "a good contrast with Jack." Yarborough was clearly a Texan, so how does a Texan become a Los Angeles cop? Well, he must live in L.A. - so the question is, why? Perhaps he has or had family living in the area, and decided he wanted to settle there. How is it that there would be family in both places - what's the link? Mexico, of course. Ergo, Sgt. Romero is a Texan of Mexican descent, which was mentioned in at least one of Ben and Joe's sidebar conversations.

Also, Mr. Cherre's statement that Joe Friday's future partners "never equaled the rank of Sgt. Ben Romero" is untrue. The partner immediately following Romero was Sgt. Ed Jacobs, portrayed by Barney Phillips. The rank of future partners changed simply because the LAPD ceased pairing Detective-Sergeants.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Hayde

author, *MY NAME'S FRIDAY: The Unauthorized but True Story of DRAGNET and the Films of Jack Webb* (also a member of the Metropolitan Washington Old-Time Radio Club)

BEING THERE: Collecting Radio Broadcast Admission Tickets

By RICK PAYNE (All Rights Reserved 2008)

During the golden age of radio, networks and sponsors invited the general public to attend live performances of many popular programs. For the performers, the presence of the studio audience provided encouragement, laughter and appreciation. For the audience, the experience was an unforgettable opportunity to see their favorite entertainers at work. Tickets from some broadcasts survive today . . . waiting for collectors like me.

Radio provided the primary source of family entertainment, and it was inevitable that programming would reflect the rural base of America. Then, as now, people embraced country and western-themed shows. They reflect core American values . . . a spirit of being good neighbors with humble upbringing, and exemplifying that an average guy with desire and talent can rise to dizzying heights of fame. That's the American dream.

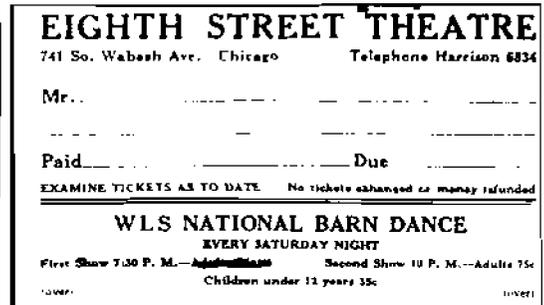
These programs are among the most enduring form of entertainment in American history. This month, it's our turn to reconnect with our heritage by focusing on tickets from the golden age of the country-western shows.



The Grand Ole Opry has been broadcast every Saturday night over Nashville-based station WSM since November 28, 1925, making it the nation's oldest continuous radio program. When WSM joined the fledgling National Broadcasting Company in 1926, the WSM Barn Dance reached a regional listening audience. On December 8, 1928, the program followed an NBC program of grand opera from New York. Host George Hay announced to listeners that they were now to hear "grand ole opry" . . . and the rest is history.

As the Opry grew, WSM had an unanticipated problem accommodating the desires of listeners to attend the weekly broadcasts. Tickets were distributed by insurance salesmen working for the station's parent company. A specially-constructed radio studio was quickly outgrown, and the program moved to several venues during the 1930s. From June 1936 until July 1939, the show was broadcast from the 3500-seat Dixie Tabernacle on Fatherland Street in east Nashville. It was during this period that Roy Acuff joined the Opry cast, and during this period that the music shifted to featuring vocals over instrumentals. The ticket style pictured above was used during that run.

Eventually, the residents of the area protested so loudly about the disruption caused by the broadcasts that the show was forced to move to the smaller 2000-seat War Memorial Auditorium. It was there that the program went national for Prince Albert Tobacco in October 1939. In 1943, *The Grand Ole Opry* moved to the legendary Ryman Auditorium, where it continued until 1974. Today, the program originates from Opryland USA.



The Opry wasn't the first country music program, however. The biggest predecessor was Chicago's *National Barn Dance*, which took to the air in 1924. In fact, the program was founded by George Hay before he moved on to Nashville. The powerful WLS broadcast signal reached a wide audience in the Midwest, and the *National Barn Dance* didn't join the NBC line-up until 1932. The last public performance of the show was in 1957, although it continued as a television program until 1968.

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At it's heyday in the 1930s and early 1940s, the show was brilliantly marketed to create a personal bond between audience and performers. WLS and principal sponsor Alka-Seltzer offered a tremendous number of photographs, yearbooks, autograph albums and song-books as premiums. Listeners took a personal interest in the romance and eventual marriage of performers Lulu Belle and Skyland Scotty. *National Barn Dance* was a springboard for the careers of Gene Autry, Pat Buttram, the Hoosier Hot Shots, Rex Allen, George Gobel and countless others. A broadcast originating from the 1933 Chicago World's Fair drew a crowd of over 35,000 people!

National Barn Dance originated from Chicago's 1200-seat Eighth Street Theatre on Saturday nights from 1931 to 1957. Over three million people paid to attend the broadcasts after long waits for tickets. They received beautiful souvenir program booklets. Despite that, I've never found a full ticket from a broadcast. The best I can offer is the 1937 stub and original envelope pictured above. I'm at a loss as to why the 10 PM show cost 20 cents more than the 7:30 show.

THE COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM WGAR STUDIOS CLEVELAND, OHIO		NO 077
APRIL 12 SUNDAY	DOUBLEMINT GUM PRESENTS GENE AUTRY IN MELODY RANCH 6:30-7:15 p.m. Doors close 6:20 p.m.	GOOD ONLY SUNDAY 12 APRIL 1942

After his early 1930s appearances on *National Barn Dance*, Gene Autry headed west and became the most popular singing movie cowboy of the decade. He held that ranking until he enlisted in the Army Air Corps during the war, when Roy Rogers assumed the mantle of "King of the Cowboys." Gene returned after the war and built a powerful financial and broadcasting empire. He remains the only entertainer with five stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame . . . representing his success in radio, films, television, records and live theatrical performances.

The Gene Autry radio program, officially known as *Melody Ranch*, debuted on CBS in January 1940. Gene was joined by fellow *National Barn Dance* veteran Pat Buttram, his co-star for many films. The Chicago-based William Wrigley Company sponsored the program for the complete run through 1956.

Melody Ranch usually originated from Columbia Square in Hollywood, but occasionally aired from other locations due to Gene's many personal appearance tours.

The November 16, 1941 show aired from his Flying A Ranch in Berwyn, Oklahoma . . . where city officials officially changed the name of the town to Gene Autry, Oklahoma. This 1942 ticket is for a broadcast from Cleveland, which elected not to change its name.

COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM COLUMBIA SQUARE PLAYHOUSE 6121 SUNSET BLVD. — HOLLYWOOD		Friday SEPT. 22 1939 4-4:30 p.m. Doors Close at 3:55 p.m.	No 1148
	"UNDER WESTERN SKIES" Johnny Mack Brown The Texas Rangers and Ruth Holloway		
CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED			

Gene Autry wasn't the first movie cowboy to host his own radio series. Buck Jones hosted a 1937 series called *Hoofbeats* for Grape-Nuts Flakes. Tom Mix, of course, never personally performed on radio's *Tom Mix Ralston Straight Shooters* program. And Ken Maynard starred in a syndicated series called *Tales of the Diamond K* in the 1930s.

But in 1939, Johnny Mack Brown headlined the short-lived musical variety series *Under Western Skies* on CBS. As halfback, he had led the 1926 Alabama football team to a national championship and memorable Rose Bowl victory. From 1927 to 1966, he appeared in nearly 150 western films. At the time of the radio series, he was starring in B-westerns for Universal.

There's very little information on the series, which lasted only 15 weeks. The final broadcast was on October 6, 1939. I have no reason to believe that Johnny Mack sang on the show, but we'll have to await the discovery of a surviving transcription to be sure. His singing voice was reportedly dubbed in his only screen attempt ("Drifting Along" in 1946). He usually relied on others to carry the tunes in his oaters.

	CBS RADIO NETWORK COLUMBIA SQUARE 6121 SUNSET BLVD. - Studio C	SATURDAY OCTOBER 22 1955 7:30-8 p.m. Doors Close at 7:10 p.m.	No 577
BRISTOL MYERS Presents JIMMY WAKELY with THE THREE RAYS			
Children between 8 & 12 will be admitted with adults			

One of those singers that Johnny Mack Brown relied on in the movies was a youngster discovered by Gene Autry. Young Jimmy Wakely was performing in Oklahoma City when Autry heard his country music trio and invited

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them to join his new *Melody Ranch* series in 1940. He stayed with the show until 1942, but was quickly signed to appear in movies and to record western and popular music. He proved to be one of the best . . . and one of the last . . . of the singing cowboys.

CBS carried *The Jimmy Wakely Show* from 1953 to 1956. By this time, he was known as the Bing Crosby of country music for his laid-back style. The age of the singing cowboy was over, but Jimmy Wakely's success eventually earned him admission to the Western Music Hall of Fame.

COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM COLUMBIA SQUARE PLAYHOUSE 6121 SUNSET BOULEVARD — HOLLYWOOD		THURSDAY JULY 27 1950 10-10:30 p.m. Doors Close at 9:45 p.m.	No 512
STUDIO C CBS	PHILLIPS 66 DEALERS PRESENT THE REX ALLEN SHOW WITH THE SONS OF THE PIONEERS		
CHILDREN UNDER TWELVE WILL NOT BE ADMITTED			

Rex Allen had the distinction of making the last of the singing western movies in 1954. Like Gene Autry, he had first made his mark in Chicago on the *National Barn Dance* program. He made his first film in 1950. Rex Allen was gifted with a wonderful voice, and later in life he provided narration for many episodes of the Walt Disney television programs.

He returned to radio in 1950 for *The Rex Allen Show*. The program aired regionally from Columbia Square in Hollywood until 1952. As if he didn't have a pleasant enough sound on his own . . . he was joined by the greatest western vocal group of all time!

TUES. JULY 22 STUDIO C 12:30 to 1:00 P.M.	American Broadcasting Co., Inc. A.B.C. STUDIOS 1539 NORTH VINE - HOLLYWOOD LUCKY-U RANCH STARRING The Sons of the Pioneers WITH GEORGE PUTNAM — BETTY TAYLOR Doors Open 12 Noon — Doors Close 12:15 P.M.	466
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The Sons of the Pioneers are a legend in their own right . . . a musical group that redefined western harmony while performing continuously for 74 years. They debuted in 1934 on Los Angeles station KFVB (operated by Warner Brothers Studios). Len Slye, an Ohio-bred singer with a unique yodeling style, sought other performers to create a new brand of music. It required long hours of careful harmonizing to attain the right sound, but proved to be unforgettable. Pioneers Bob Nolan and

Tim Spencer wrote the songs (notably "Cool Water" and "Tumbling Tumbleweeds"), and brothers Karl and Hugh Farr rounded out the original lineup.

The Sons of the Pioneers were regular performers on radio. At least 200 performances of *The Lucky-U Ranch* aired on ABC and, later, the Mutual-Don Lee network in the early 1950s. The ticket pictured above dates to 1952; George Putnam was the announcer, while Betty Taylor was an early performer in Disneyland's Golden Horseshoe Revue.

Len Slye, of course, left the group in 1937 to make western films for Republic Studios as Roy Rogers. Never abandoning his musical roots, Roy frequently performed with the Sons of the Pioneers on film and recordings in later days. Although *The Roy Rogers Show* aired from 1944 to 1955, I have never seen a ticket. If you have, please email me!

MUTUAL-DON LEE BROADCASTING SYSTEM DON LEE PLAYHOUSE 5515 Melrose Ave. Hollywood, Calif.		SATURDAY JUNE 19 1948 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME 7:30 to 8:00 P.M. DOORS CLOSE 7:15 P.M.	No 128
STUDIO 2 KHJ	BAKERS OF WEBER'S BREAD Present "ALL STAR WESTERN THEATRE" Starring Foy Willing and the Riders of the Purple Sage.		
ADMIT ONE CHILDREN UNDER 12 WILL NOT BE ADMITTED			

Jack Dalton created a western group called The Riders of the Purple Sage in 1932, and they enjoyed a brief run of success on LA station KFI until 1934. In 1942, baritone and songwriter Foy Willing created a new version of the group for the LA-based radio series *Hollywood Barn Dance*. Like the Sons of the Pioneers, descendants continue to perform to this day although Foy Willing's group only lasted ten years. They joined Roy Rogers for a series of films when Republic balked at the Pioneers' asking price, and also performed in films for Jimmy Wakely, Monte Hale, Tom Tyler and Charles Starrett.

On radio, they starred in the *All-Star Western Theatre*, a series of western melodramas broadcast on the Mutual network from 1946 to 1948. They were part of the regular cast of *The Roy Rogers Show* during the late 1940s as well.

The 1948 episode seen in person by this ticket's original owner involves the tantalizing tale of how Foy and the band almost froze to death when it was 128 degrees in the shade, according to David Goldin's website. I can never adequately thank historians like David for preserving information!

MUTUAL-DON LEE BROADCASTING SYSTEM DON LEE PLAYHOUSE 1313 North Vine St. Hollywood, Calif.		SATURDAY JUNE 24 1950	601 NO
STUDIO 1 KHJ	MUTUAL-DON LEE BROADCASTING SYSTEM Presents "HOOSIER HOT SHOTS" A New Comedy Variety Show with Anita Gordon	CALIFORNIA DAYLIGHT TIME 9:15 to 9:45 P. M. DOORS CLOSE 9:00 P.M.	
Admit One—Children Under 12 Will Not Be Admitted—(See Reverse Side)			

There's a great line contained in a website dedicated to the history of the Hoosier Hot Shots. To quote Wayne Daniel: "If Spike Jones is the man who murdered music, the Hoosier Hot Shots first beat the victim to a pulp, making it easier for Jones to deliver the lethal blow."

The Hot Shots rose to fame on WLS, hosting several programs of their own as well as being regular headliners on *National Barn Dance*. They had free rein to define their act; one member explained "What we have to sell is an act called stupid." In any event, they were wildly popular and toured throughout the Midwest for years. This ticket is from their 1950-51 series on the Mutual network.

when some of the greatest entertainers in the world were just coming into their own. You can email requests and comments to me at oldtix@aol.com!



TOMMY RIGGS IS BACK

He's on the air with brainchild Betty Lou after two years in the Navy

She's only an imaginary little tyke, but a set of trick vocal cords and a sharp sense of humor have made Betty Lou almost as flesh-and-blood as the little girl next door. Her creator, Tommy Riggs, discovered his voice "trick" of talking like a little girl at Brown University.

He was quarterback on the school's varsity football team. One day while in the locker room, he suddenly pitched his voice to that of a little girl.

"You should have seen those brawny football players jump back into their shower stalls," Tommy laughed. "They all thought a girl was coming through the door. It took quite a while to convince them it was only a voice trick."

That practical joke proved to be Tommy's start in show business. He appeared on midwestern stations after graduation from Brown and in 1936 was "discovered" by Rudy Vallee. Later he headlined his own show until called into the service. After receiving his Navy discharge, he got his comeback chance as a summer replacement for the *Ginny Simms Show*.

(Article originally published September 1946)

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10		ADMIT ONE
Studio "C"	NBC Production Originating at W S M	
Doors Close 10:25	JAMUP & HONEY — MINNIE PEARL — KAY CARLISLE JOE MAC PHEARSON — THE OLD TIMERS QUARTETTE	

Let's close with this heavily-worn souvenir of *Riverboat Revels*, another of the many programs presented by Nashville's WSM. Station program director Jack Stapp was the driving force behind this cousin of the Grand Ole Opry, and obviously used the opportunity to engage Opry talent in many shows.

Riverboat Revels was produced in 1941, and the ticket reveals that it would have been attempting to fill a program gap after the Opry program. Jamup & Honey was a blackface comedy act performed by Bunny Biggs and Honey Wilde, and Minnie Pearl was . . . well, Minnie Pearl. We can't pin it down to a specific date, but it remains a rare relic of a lost show.

There were so many other country-western themed programs, it seems a shame to leave them behind. But Spade Cooley, Merle Travis, Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, Hank Penny, Dale Evans, Patsy Montana and others will have to wait for a future edition as we bring this session to a close.

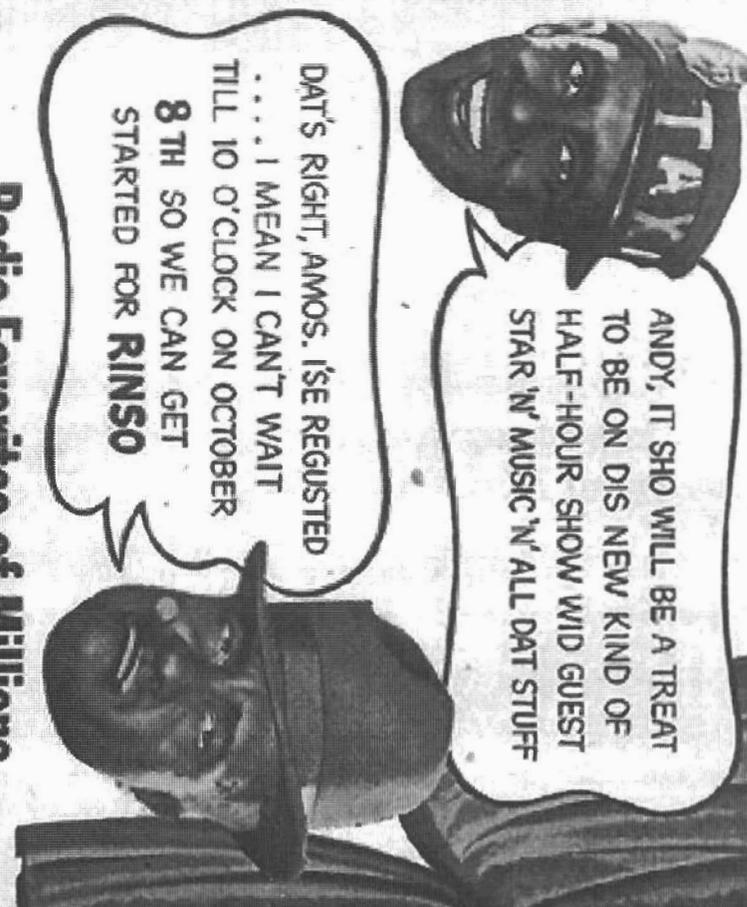
In our next article, we're going to focus on tickets from the 1930s . . . the early days of network programming

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