

RECEPTION STAFF



VOL. II

No. 2

FEBRUARY, 1936.

NBC Dramatic School Inaugurated

■ The plans to offer radio dramatic training to talented guides and pages have materialized. Mr. Edwin R. Wolfe, production man, has mapped out a thorough course covering all phases of radio dramatic work. The course will be given over a period of six months, and includes lectures on "The Fundamental Principles of Acting," the theater, motion pictures, and radio; practical class work with and without scripts in hand, ad libbing and script writing; lectures and practical class work on stage direction and management; and finally the presentation of a radio play to be written, directed, announced, and acted by the members of the class.

The first meeting was held in Studio 3E, on Monday, February 3. Until further notice, the class will meet every Monday morning at eleven. Mr. Wolfe is one of the leading authorities on the production of radio programs, and at one time was associated with the American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

Don Meissner Wins Recognition on Major Bowes Amateur Hour



Photo by Ray Lee Jackson, NBC Studio

Guide Donald Meissner is shown with Major Bowes after the performance in which Don sang himself into prominence by winning third prize on the Major's Amateur Hour.

(Story on Page 4)

Pat Kelly Keeps Promise

■ With sincere enthusiasm we write of recent developments in Pat Kelly's Announcing Division. He has fulfilled—to the unqualified delight of all impatiently ambitious guides and pages—his promises of a year ago. He has executed his policy of giving everyone a chance to prove his worth; none of us ask more than that.

Last year announcing classes in elocution, foreign languages, and mike technique were inaugurated under Commander Cusachs. Ten guides were admitted to the first group of lectures. This year, Mr. Kelly revised the procedure and thought that it might be wise to select a few of the more talented aspirants to act as announcers' assistants during this period of training. Four men were selected from the ranks—Leak, Cook, Roberts, and Mc-

Carthy. They practiced pushing buttons, working "standbys," and occasionally announced sustainings.

Consequently, when an opening occurred last month, the Reception Staff representatives were given auditions and were able to perform more like professionals than amateurs; they knew what it was all about.

The first audition resulted in the selection of Page Alvin Robinson from far-away Oklahoma. At the age of twelve he captured his first oratorical wreath; later, he showed talent as a singer. The "Mikado" of Gilbert and Sullivan, and the "Red Mill" by Victor Herbert are listed among his high school dramatic ventures. Perhaps most valuable of all, however, was the experience he derived from a year and a half on the announcing staff at Tulsa's KVOO.

On Lincoln's Birthday a second audition was held. This time Jack McCarthy ran off with top honors. Jack has been an NBC page since August 2, 1933. He was valedictorian of his class at Commerce High School and has served his turn in local minstrel shows, chorals, church affairs, and miscellaneous parties, giving him much valuable training in delivery, diction, and cultivating a good clear voice. He admits that his elocutionary powers were developed and enriched during his page days when arguing himself out of penalties with the officers afforded him the best opportunity for developing strong lungs, good articulation and to think standing up.

Who's the Guide Staff's Best News Hawk?

■ If Gordon H. Mills' plans materialize, we'll soon have an active contest under way to discover the guide with the best news sense. Each recording turned in will be classified according to its news value and contents. The winning record will be forwarded to the Press Department, which will rewrite the story and release it to newspapers from coast-to-coast. Credit will be given to the guide responsible for collecting the information as well as an additional prize as yet undetermined.

Due to the added interest in radio, NBC, and the tour, the new recording apparatus in the ABC exhibit affords us an excellent opportunity to study the reactions of our visitors while adding greater appeal to the tour as a whole. Further developments will be printed in another issue of the REVIEW.

Davis Wins News Prize

This month's winner of the RECEPTION STAFF REVIEW's first prize for the best news reporting is Guide D. Caldwell Davis, whose alertness, efficiency, writing ability, and willingness to cooperate have won him the right to the REVIEW's highest award.



Guess Who?

RECEPTION STAFF REVIEW

Official organ of the Reception Staff of the National Broadcasting Company, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City. Published monthly throughout the year.

VOL. II

FEBRUARY, 1936

NO. 2

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We Are Deeply Grateful

■ Even our constant association with NBC operations in this busy whirl of broadcasting fails to acquaint us with the intricate workings of our vast organization. But the informal chats we've had on the functions and operations of our various departments did much to give us a closer insight into their set-up and part they play in the NBC picture.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude and warmest regards to Messrs. Daniel S. Tuthill, Business Manager of Artists Service; Wayne L. Randall, Manager of NBC's Press Dept.; and O. B. Hanson, Chief of our Engineering Division. Our appreciation never ends for the interest shown by those executives who have found time to talk to us informally on their respective duties. It has been through these lectures that we have increased our knowledge of NBC.

Opportunity Knocking

■ The new recording device on the studio tour offers tremendous possibilities for every wide-awake guide to exercise his creative ability and originality, display personality, show initiative, and develop voice culture. Here's the chance to gather valuable and vital information for Guest Tours as well as increase your opportunities for recognition.

Contest Winners for February

■ A new month . . . two new contest winners in the REVIEW's contests for the best news story and for the most humorous incident of the month. Dom Davis and Dick Diamant receive the four passes to the Radio City Music Hall, where they will see "Follow the Fleet," the new musical show with Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, and Harriet Hilliard, which starts Thursday, February 20th.

? ? ? ?

Listen! all you good people of NBC. There's something you must know. We're going to ----- but wait a minute!! Don't miss the March issue of the RECEPTION STAFF REVIEW for this announcement of vital importance to everyone affiliated with the NBC. Will you be on the lookout for it?

Bitterly Contested Locker Room Chess Championship Reaches Finals



Photo by William Haussler, NBC Studio

Guide Jack McGhie, chess finalist, is shown capturing one of Page Ralph Brown's men in the elimination playoffs while Guide Alwin Foster (in mufti) is offering "Mac" some confidential advice on strategy while the interested onlookers, reading from left to right, are Guides Stanley Heeb (seated), and Bill Hoffman, Page Roger Von Roth, Guide Ed Lolley, Pages James McCullough, Gordon Logue and Philip Crosbie. This scene is an every-day occurrence in the Locker Room, what with the chess fever hitting a new high for the month.

Chatter

☞ GO AHEAD AND SUE ME BUT . . . Paul Rittenhouse has once again donned the winter flannels . . . and incidentally they look like last year's repeats to us . . . Why does Leon Leak insist on wearing a size sixteen collar when he can only boast of a size twelve neck . . . and that's nothing to boast about.

☞ Bob Eldred wants it known that on the day that all the lights went out, NBC presented its regular weekly drama entitled "Lights Out" . . . Bill Collins almost passed out recently when a woman, inquiring about the tours said, "Is it necessary that we watch a broadcast? I'd rather not" . . . Bruce Magill has deserted his usual Broadway interests and has decided to try his hand at writing poetry, which explains why he's letting his hair grow . . . Dom Davis is now out of circulation. He was married last month to Miss Rosemary Brush and the best man, literally speaking, was Reid Jorgensen, former guide . . . And just a tip, drop in to Room 297 and see the most curious donation we have ever received—*The horse with his tail where his head ought to be* . . . Who is the culprit who insists on mixing up Miss Beck's three phones so that she can never pick up the right one when it rings? . . . There's no sense to this one but "Speed" McCullough

remarked one day last week that he wished NBC pages had uniforms like the fellows in the Music Hall, because he looks so swell in a beret . . . and so, with this friendly thought, I'll sign off . . . Keep your head up . . . your chest out . . . and your stomach in or first thing you know, they'll be putting you in one of those gym classes.

We Wonder

■ When the Page and Guide Library, introduced and made possible by the splendid gesture of Henry Weston in donating fifty books for this purpose, will be available for use?

■ How many people know that the chap who's been acting as interpreter for our various departments is none other than Dom Davis, one of the Guide Staff's Spanish-speaking guides?

■ Why the members of other departments who like to blossom forth as "amateur guides" in taking their friends through the building can't realize that a really good job can usually be done best by one who is used to taking tours and knows how not to inconvenience the guide group coming up behind?

■ If any of the readers of last month's item on contributions to the NBC General Library have just put off bringing in their unwanted books and then forgot about it? The library still can use them to good advantage.

Believe It or Not

(With Apologies to Mr. Ripley)

By RICHARD S. DIAMENT

First Prize Winner for
Best Anecdote of the Month.

■ While working at the Third Floor Desk on the evening of January 9th, I received an important phone call for Mr. Warburton of our Production Dept. I located him in one of the studios, working with Tom Powers, monologist, on the S. C. Johnson show. As I leaned over to speak to Mr. Warburton, I was startled to hear, "No, you must not interrupt. You cannot speak to Mr. Warburton . . . Can't you see, he is *in conference*." Mr. Warburton also was surprised at this outburst and excused himself.

It seems that by the most freakish of coincidences the quoted passage was part of the script which Mr. Powers was rehearsing at the very moment I entered the studio to call Mr. Warburton to the phone. A further coincidence revealed that the Mr. Warburton in the *script* was *not* our production director, but one of the characters Mr. Powers was impersonating. After the rehearsal amiable Mr. Powers presented me with a copy of the script, pointing out the trick passage.



Lewis Julian

■ Back in November, Russ Morgan heard Page Lewis Julian sing. He liked the voice and surprised Julian by promising him a job to sing with his orchestra as soon as they found a steady employer. At that time Morgan had a sustaining program on the NBC Blue network.

Russ Morgan did not forget his promise. On February 1st he called Julian at NBC and offered him the job as soloist with his orchestra which had just signed a contract to play at the Biltmore Hotel. A week of intensive rehearsing followed; and on Thursday, February 6th, Russ Morgan and his "Music in the Morgan Manner" made his debut in the Supper Room of the Hotel Biltmore, with Julian as male soloist.

Thus did the proverbial "break" land Lew into the vocation which had been his secret ambition. He now sings nightly to a smart, discriminating audience which often includes such celebrities as Rudy Vallee and Paul Whiteman.

Lewis D. Julian was employed by the National Broadcasting Co. on April 22, 1935. He had just received his A.B. degree from the University of Wichita, Kansas. The first two years of his college education were spent at Washington State University. While a college student he was on debating teams, played basketball and tennis (his only regret concerning tennis is that he has never succeeded in beating Rittenhouse), sang in glee clubs, and took part in dramatics. During the nine months he has been employed by NBC he has had two promotions—to the position of guide in September, 1935, and as assistant to our friend, Bill Marshall, in the Music Library late in December. We always knew Lew to be a hard worker, a swell companion, and a true friend to all who have had the pleasure of knowing him well.

Listen to Russ Morgan presenting, "Music in the Morgan Manner" and to Lewis Julian singing your favorite songs on

Mondays at 10:30 P.M. over the NBC-WJZ network and on Thursdays at 12:30 A.M. on the same network.

Next, We Present . . .

■ WINDY CITY TOPICS or *The Country Cousin Talks Back*, a line of Chatter devoted exclusively to the extracurricular activities of our fellow Chicago Receptionists, written and directed by our able Chicago correspondent, "The Loophound." The March issue of the REVIEW will have complete information on Page 2. Look for it there!

Reception Music Guild

■ Preparations are now in full swing to present on the air the first of a series of fifteen minute programs by the Reception Staff Music Guild. In answer to a call for scripts, our budding script writers have showered Mr. Phillips Carlin with enough librettos to keep the Guild busy for weeks, that is, provided all the manuscripts are accepted.

Thus far it has been revealed that the first program will include songs by Dick Diamant, Ray Sullivan, the Reception Staff Glee Club, and a still-to-be-discovered trio of blue uniforms. The Glee Club is being thoroughly reorganized and trained by Bill Marshall of our Music Library.

The Reception Music Guild has an audition board, headed by Mr. Carlin, and it has been stated that only good talent will be accepted. Several auditions already have been held. If this venture proves successful, Mr. Carlin promises to have a show on every other week.

Al Walker's Gym Classes

■ The coming of Misses Lee, Sniffen and Crawford enlarges Al Walker's NBC Girls' Gym Class to almost a score. Present members are Misses Irvine and Kohl of the Treasurer's office; Sheridan and Hassman of Guest Tours; Slater of Press; Trueblood of Reception; Nelson of First Aid; Weightman of Audience Mail; Britten of Artist's Service; Barbour of Sales; Hensman of Office Management; Howard of Stenographic; and Parker of Music Library.

MIKE'S ONE AMBITION IS TO
GO TO EUROPE!



■ MICHAEL J. GORMLEY, newly appointed First Lieutenant of Guides; because his rapid rise to his present position of responsibility indicates the esteem in which he is held by his associates.

[ED. NOTE: The author of this series, Major Donald Davis Millikin, Manager of the Telegraph and Code Office of the Radio Corporation of America; has had a long and distinguished career in the field of codes and ciphers. He was graduated from the Code and Cipher School of the Riverbank Laboratories, Geneva, Illinois, in 1918. During the World War, Major Millikin served in the Radio Intelligence Section, G-2 A-6 of the General Staff at G. H. Q., A. E. F., Chaumont, France. After the Armistice he was detailed as interpreter and translator in French and German at Advance G. H. Q., Trier, Germany. For the past four years he has been conducting classes in Military Cryptography for the Military Intelligence Reserve under the auspices of G-2 Headquarters, Governors Island, and is regarded in military and civil circles as being one of the foremost code and cipher experts in the United States.]

Cryptography is the art of secret writing and a cryptogram is a message having a secret meaning. Codes and ciphers are the two principal systems employed.

Ciphers are divided into two main classes, transposition and substitution. In a transposition cipher the letters or words of the plain text retain their usual meanings, but their relative positions in the message are changed around in the cipher text.

The order of frequency in which letters appear in the English language, for literary text, is:

E T O A N I R S H D L U C M P F Y W G B V K J X Z Q.

The vowels constitute about 40%, consonants L N R S T 30%, J K Q X Z 2%, and the remaining letters 28% of the total. If the count of letters in any cryptogram gives approximately these percentages, it may be assumed that a *transposition* cipher has been used.

MILLIKINK No. 1.

A sentence from the July, 1935, issue of the RECEPTION STAFF REVIEW:

T O D T O A N I C E C I C E D D S T O
H O W E F P Y P T H O H H I I N O S M
E G I S A M I T U T M W I R N I F U E
R L L S N O S A R F P Y S R T M I C R
E A L A Y C T H E O A N C A H E T S S

Meissner Wins Place on Major Bowes' Hour

■ The spotlight shines brightly on Guide Don Meissner for polling enough votes to win third place on Major Bowes Amateur Hour, Sunday, January 26, 1936. The Goddesses of Fate were kind to Don when they led Major Bowes into a small studio where Don happened to be singing by himself. The "king of the gong" heard him and immediately offered him a spot on the Chase & Sanborn Hour.

Meissner is twenty-one. He lives in Jamaica, Long Island, where he sang with the high school glee club for three years. After spending a year at Catholic University in Washington, D. C., he gave in to an old urge to go to sea. A year at sea as an able-bodied seaman took him to all the corners of the world. After his sea-going venture, he went back to college at New York University, and took lessons in singing. Another year later found him looking for a job. After several months of what seemed a hopeless search, he landed his present position as guide at NBC.

Don is athletic; he enjoys boating and swimming, in which sport he won several championships in school and college. He doesn't smoke nor drink, but he has a tremendous appetite for raisins, dates, and figs. He still has a craving for the sea, but now he intends to resume his vocal lessons, and hopes, some day, to make singing his vocation if opportunity will leave the door open to him.

Static

The best in a long time comes from Don Mercer:

Man: Can you tell me what type of elevators you use in the building?

Mercer: Mr. Otis regrets but they're Westinghouse.

We'll wager our next pay check he had that prepared for a long time.

» » « «

Our candid camera missed a good shot of Bob Eldred's face on the second floor when a lady asked him if she had to go down to reach the ground floor !!!

» » « «

"Papa" Kinbacher avers that the guides' rotating day-off schedule is like the music—it goes round and round—only, he doesn't know where it comes out.

» » « «

Why, oh why, did they write that song?

» » « «

Ask Hancock sometime what a "sailor's bible" is. The new carpet sweeper reminds him of old times.

» » « «

Anent the Locker Room—

We can remember when "Pretty Boy" Gayeck was just a page and not an illustration !!!

» » « «

If you've read this far, thank you.