

CHUCK SCHADEN'S
NOSTALGIA NEWSLETTER
AND
RADIO GUIDE

FROM THE HALL CLOSET • BOX 421 • MORTON GROVE, IL 60053

BOOK FIVE

CHAPTER FOUR

APRIL, 1979



BUD ABBOTT AND LOU COSTELLO made their radio debut in 1938 on the Kate Smith Hour, made frequent appearances with Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy and filled in as a summer replacement for Fred Allen. They got their own show in 1942 for Camel Cigarettes on NBC and were regulars on the air through 1949. They made an easy transition to television in the 1950s, but they are best known for their zany work on the motion picture screen.

GAGS HAVE GROWN UP

by
JACK BENNY

THANK RADIO, SAYS THIS STAR, FOR RAISING STANDARDS OF HUMOR

REPRINT from TUNE IN, April, 1945

IN THE past 20 years, American humor—accelerated by radio—has come out of the barnyard. It has been cleaned up, perfumed and sparked by those unsung heroes, the gag-writers. Today, the ether is so full of good gags that even the ghosts have hysterics.

I will go out on a limb to say that radio has done for American humor in ten years what it would have taken vaudeville 50 years to. I feel no heart-aches over vaudeville's passing, when I think of the way the old-time comic used to get his laughs. Gags were in their infancy then. They were as unsteady as a baby—and had to be changed just as often. A comedian used to throw a gag at a vaudeville audience with a swing and a prayer, never knowing whether it would roll 'em in the aisle—or roll up the joint. He might get howls with a certain gag at one show, and at the next the audience would look at him as though he had just read from page 26 of the Zanesville, Ohio classified directory.

As a result, he desperately needed some sort of "gag insurance." He had to get laughs—or else. His formula for this was pat. First, he pitched his open-

ing gags across the footlights. If nothing happened, he tossed them his very best gag, just to make sure that the audience was still there. Then—if nothing but cigar smoke came back—he played his trump card. A concealed tug at his trick belt, a deft wiggle . . . and his pants fell down.

That was always sure for a laugh—until, with dozens of comics doing the same thing all over the country, even this trick grew stale. So new tricks were added. I remember one comic who got thrown off the circuit because his underwear lit up and played "The Star Spangled Banner"!

Gags have grown up since then, and radio methods are quite different. Just contrast the old vaudeville routine for insuring gags with what we have today. Our "gag insurance" doesn't rely on slapstick but upon what we call a "topper." We then get a topper to top a topper—and perhaps one to top that, as illustrated in the following dialogue used by Mary Livingstone and Rochester on our program:

Mary: You say you just got in town, Rochester. What took you so long . . . was the train late?



JACK, MARY, PHIL HARRIS, ROCHESTER AND DON WILSON

Rochester: What train? I was out on Highway 99 free-lancing.

Mary: You mean you hitch-hiked. Why?

Rochester: Well, instead of a train ticket, Mr. Benny gave me a road map.

Mary: Oh.

Rochester: And a short talk on the generosity of the American tourist.

Mary: You mean that's all Mr. Benny gave you?

Rochester: No . . . he also gave me a white glove for night operations.

There you have three "toppers," all on the same gag. That's the kind of insurance that you, as a comedian, can feel safe with. It's like holding a ticket on every horse in the race. It's safer, more dignified—and saves a lot of wear and tear on your pants.

Some people think that comedians and gag-men are responsible for bringing

American humor out of its giggly youth to manhood. While it would be nice to take the credit, our overtaxed consciences won't stand the strain. No, it's the audience who shoved the "little men" up to voting age.

The clamor for something better and still better has made necessary the same strides in gags as in automobiles and planes. When your gags and routines start lying around on the stage like old eggs from the same tired basket, and your audience reacts to your stuff as though they had lockjaw . . . brother, you'd better start looking for better material—or a rich widow!

The public today demands more of its humor than "a laugh at any price." It resents too much insulting, too much cynicism. In short, the public likes good comedy, but it likes good taste even better. I have found that a gag line with too much sting is about as funny to people as a trial fitting for the electric chair.

You've probably noticed that nobody ever gets hurt on our program. Of

course, I am subjected to quite a little shoving around—I'm supposed to be a braggart, I'm supposed to wear a toupee, I'm supposed to be stingy—but it's all in the spirit of fun! We try to follow one simple rule: "If it hurts, it isn't funny." (Naturally, however, I reserve the right to modify this, in the case of Fred Allen.)

Basically, our show is built on a foundation of real people—not burlesque characters, but ordinary, everyday people. I'd be willing to bet that there are very few of you who don't know people exactly like Mary, Phil Harris and Rochester, as they are represented on our program. Yes, and there are lots of others who are just as dumb as Dennis Day was on our program (though I'm apparently having a tough time finding one dumb enough to work for the same money as he did).

We feel that, to a certain extent, we represent the audience. In us, they see themselves. It would be foolish for us to knock each other around, because then we would be knocking the audience around . . . and when you start doing that—well, your sponsor had better be your own brother-in-law.

However, one of America's greatest national characteristics is our ability to laugh at ourselves. When the audience sees themselves through us, they get a special kick out of the jokes that seem to fit them personally. If someone pulls a gag on me about my having false teeth, 98 percent of those in our audience who have false teeth will laugh heartily. (The other two percent would laugh, too, but their gums are still sore.)

Throughout, we try to have things happen to us which would happen to anyone—things which will be interesting and also, above all, *funny*. That's why so many of our routines and gags come from what we see around us—like all that water, when we were coming from Vancouver to Seattle by boat.

We were all on the top deck enjoying the beautiful scenery . . . all, that is, except Phil Harris. Harris was down in his stateroom asleep. He isn't very interested in water—thinks there's too much of it to give it any value. I know this because, once when I was talking to Phil about the earth and how it was three-fourths covered with water, he said "Yeah. You know, Jackson, I think the Creator slipped up a little there. He could have just as easily made it bourbon!"

Well, we were talking about all that water and started throwing a few ideas around, finally coming up with: "Harris was mad when he saw all that chaser with nothing to go with it." We weren't satisfied, but we knew we were on the track of something. We worked it over some more and then tried another version: "It made Harris mad to see all that water and nothing to break the trail." It still didn't have the snap it needed, until my writers switched and changed it to: "Harris was mad when he saw all that chaser—with nothing to break the trail."

That was it. Why, I don't know. But it was. It may sound like a simple idea and, on paper, look as though very few changes had been made, but the audience roared when we served it up on the program. If we'd tried that in vaudeville 20 years ago, without the split-second timing that we use on the air today, it would only have died a quick death on the other side of the footlights. Perhaps audiences, too—as well as gags—have grown up.

Let me bow out with this piece of advice. Since you, the listener, are responsible for the present high level of our humor . . . keep it that way. Don't let us comedians slip back into the "easy way." Keep writing those letters telling us what you like, what you don't like, and what you want. You're the boss and I'll get it for you—even if I have to keep my writers up all night to do it!

What I Think of Swing

By Glenn Miller

REPRINT from
RADIO VARIETIES,
December, 1940

"What do you think of swing?"

A personable young representative of the genus jitterbug approached me between dance numbers at a college hop recently and pinioned me with that question.

It was like asking Babe Ruth what he thinks of baseball or Roscoe Turner how he feels about flying. Paraphrasing an old ballad I gave her the obvious answer:

"It made me what I am today."

In justice to swing I couldn't honestly paraphrase more than the opening line of that venerable tearjerker — "The Curse of an Aching Heart," I think it was called—for swing hasn't "dragged ME down 'til hope within me died."

Quite the contrary. It has lifted

my orchestra into the top bracket of dance bands and brought me a modest measure of fame and fortune — which I hope will not be too fleeting.

There is more to it than that however.

If there is one thing I like, it is good music. I have never had enough of it. And swing is good music—when intelligently played.

Two of my pet "hates" are (1) bad music and (2) people who detest swing. The first is usually responsible for the second.

Perhaps I should be more tolerant of people who don't like swing, for there **have** been a lot of musical crimes perpetrated in its name.

Some misguided musicians seem to feel that to swing a number it is necessary only to "give until it hurts." Their prime objective appears to be to smash beyond hope of repair the eardrums of the defenseless customers.

You must have a good basic melody before you can successfully swing it. It can be sad or it can be gay — but it must be tuneful. And to produce real swing, the band has got to give out something more than deafening sound and fury.

Experience has convinced me that even the most rabid alligators prefer their tom-toms muffled by other sounds of the jungle. Rhythmic dissonances send shivers down the spine but when they are blatantly poured out in unrestrained volume, the resultant effect can be completely paralyzing.

Swing fundamentally is jungle music. While I don't belong to the Explorers' Club, I'm reasonably certain that our foremost jungles have more to offer in pleasing sound effects in their warbling birds' songs than in the



irascible roars of their prowling lions. And when a great ape pounds his chest and goes boom, uttering the meat cry or the mate cry, as the case may be, it's a safe bet he's so far up the jungle mountainside that the echo is just eerie background for the sighing of the night wind through the trees. Granting that swing then, is jungle music, let's keep it authentic.

They regard me as a fence straddler in the field of swing because I like to blend the sweet with the hot. I believe in dressing up my jungle savage in smoothly-tailored tails and top hat and moulding my Hawaiian hula dancer into one of those sleek, form-fitting dinner gowns from a smart Fifth Avenue shop — "encasing solid, suggestive jungle sounds in a smooth, mellifluous jacket." That's the way some lad summed it up who swings his adjectives the way I like to think I swing my tunes.

Something old-new-borrowed-blue, I've found to be a winning combination on a swing program.

Have "Sweet Leilani" blow "Smoke Rings" "Under a Blanket of Blue" by the "Waters of Minnetonka." Call the medley "Boogie" and you've got something sweet and torrid.

Take a lovely old ballad like "Sweet and Low" or "My Darling Nelly Gray," dress it up in modern style and you've got a number that lends itself to some equatorial sending.

And, if you would put your listeners distinctly in the groove, let them cut the rugs to the accompaniment of a hot arrangement of "Prelude in C Sharp Major."

I believe swing is here to stay. But the bands that are going to have the popular following will be those whose arrangements subordinate the jump stuff and exaggerated jive to sonorous tonal quality. They must give out quality rather than quantity of tone effect, resisting the temptation to blast full-lunged upon a world already shell-shocked by too much "blitzkrieg."

The Lady Under the Hat

Hedda Hopper

REPRINT from

MOVIE MAGAZINE, September, 1944

■ Hedda Hopper, Motion Picture's own gossip columnist, has been around Hollywood so long that she's as much of a fixture as Lookout Mountain or the palm trees. Though she's by no means an octogenarian, she was in the first picture that Louis B. Mayer ever produced, in the dear dead days when movie headquarters was on Long Island. She came with him to Hollywood about twenty-five years ago which rates her as a lady who practically arrived in a covered wagon.

In the beginning, of course, she was an actress. She had been on the New York stage when she was married to the late DeWolf Hopper. In pictures she played beautiful ingenues who were made love to in every setting from desert islands to drawing rooms. It was this long experience which led to her career as a columnist.

In the old days when she was with MGM, publicity men had an easy time of it. If they wanted to know what was cooking they picked up a phone and called Hedda. She knew everything, in some way, and could spout off items by the hour which they could plant.

How she got all the information was something of a secret. She went to a lot of parties, of course. She had worked with most of the big shots in town and she invariably met all the interesting newcomers. Somehow, what these people told her about themselves and their business stuck in her head. The result was that publicity men used to drain her dry, spend half an hour calling the press and loll in their chairs the rest of the day.

It was Andy Hervey, still a publicist with MGM, who finally got Hedda into print. A representative from a syndicate had come to Hollywood looking for a person who knew movies intimately to write a daily stint for him. He didn't care whether or not she was an author, he said, and Hervey immediately suggested Hedda for the job.



Hedda Hopper's hats, her trademark, are decorated with everything from her name as on the sailor, above, to Christmas tree ornaments

When the man called Hedda, she thought it was a gag. "Write?" she yelled over the phone. "Why, I can't even spell!" That made no difference to him. To this day Hedda doesn't know how to operate a typewriter. Instead of hunting and pecking, she dictates her column into a machine. It now hits eighty-six metropolitan daily papers and thousands of small weeklies and dailies across the country.

Hedda's trademark is, of course, her mad headgear which has been widely publicized. One of her famous hats is a navy blue sailor on which gold letters two inches high spell out her name. Others feature windmills, gardens and Christmas tree ornaments. Luckily, she still retains the good looks which kept her a star in pictures for so many years and can wear them. On anyone else, they would be frightful. ■

THOSE WERE THE DAYS • WNIB- FM 97.1



PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE
FIRST TWO WEEKS IN APRIL

Because radio station WNIB will carry two live broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera our *Those Were The Days* program will start later than usual on the first two Saturdays in April.

Our April 7th program will begin at approximately 4:00 p.m. and will continue until 7:00 p.m.

Our April 14th program will begin at approximately 4:35 p.m. and will continue until 7:00 p.m.

We will resume our usual 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule on Saturday, April 21st.

SATURDAY, APRIL 7th TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME!

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (5-12-49) "You Could Look It Up" starring William Frawley in a baseball comedy by James Thurber. A midget helps cure a baseball team of its overconfidence. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (12:45; 16:10)

ABBOTT AND COSTELLO SHOW (1940s) Bud and Lou with Marilyn Maxwell, Skinnay Ennis and the orchestra, Ken Niles. An all-baseball show with Costello expecting to play ball for the New York Yankees in place of the ailing Joe DiMaggio. Program includes the famous "Who's On First" routine. Camel Cigarettes, NBC. (11:20; 10:20; 7:20)

READER'S DIGEST RADIO (4-14-47) "Story of Babe Ruth" A look at the colorful career of the Bambino. In the program, Babe is portrayed by an actor but he does appear in person to thank listeners for the many cards he received while hospitalized. Hallmark, CBS. (16:05; 14:15)

DAMON RUNYON THEATRE (1949) "Baseball Hattie" is a baseball "groupie" who follows and finally marries a pitcher for the New York Giants. The story is narrated by John Brown as "Broadway." Syndicated. (13:25; 13:30)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (5-4-52) Fun at the Los Angeles-Seattle baseball game with Jack, Mary Livingstone, Dennis Day, Don Wilson, Phil Harris, Rochester, Joe Kearns, Frank Nelson, Mel Blanc. Armed Forces Radio Service Rebroadcast. (10:25; 14:30)

SATURDAY, APRIL 14th HAPPY EASTER!

PHIL HARRIS-ALICE FAYE SHOW (4-2-50) Phil tells his daughters the story of the Easter Bunny. Elliott Lewis as Frankie Remley co-stars with Walter Tetley as Julius, Robert North as Willie, Mel Blanc and Arthur Q. Brian are guests on this Easter show. Rexall, NBC. (10:25; 6:48; 11:10)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (4-5-42) It's Easter

Sunday and Jack and the whole gang are on hand for the Easter Parade. Don Wilson, Phil Harris, Mary Livingstone (who reads a letter from Momma), Dennis Day, Rochester, Jell-O, NBC. (13:50; 14:50)

THE SHADOW (3-28-48) "Death and the Easter Bonnet" stars Bret Morrison as Lamont Cranston and Grace Matthews as the lovely Margo Lane. Margo buys an expensive hat for Easter and finds that it is a special hat meant for someone else. Blue Coal, Mutual. (14:35; 14:35)

FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (3-23-48) Molly wins a contest sponsored by Wistful Vista merchants and the prize is an Easter dress. Jim and Marion Jordan star with Gale Gordon as Foggy Williams, the weatherman; Bill Thompson as the Old Timer; Arthur Q. Brian as Doc Gamble, Harlow Wilcox, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the Orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (11:40; 11:45; 6:18)

SATURDAY, APRIL 21st SCIENCE FICTION — OR FACT?

SPACE PATROL (1950s) "Hidden Castle" — Commander Buzz Corey and Space Cadet Happy rescue a sweet young thing from a stranded space cruiser. Ed Kemmer is Corey, Lyn Osborn is Happy. AFRS rebroadcast. (11:14; 13:20)

DIMENSION X (5-27-50) "To The Future" starring John Larkin, Jan Minor. Narrated by Norman Rose from a story by Ray Bradbury. A man and wife from the year 2155 have "escaped" in time back to the year 1950 where they find themselves in Mexico at Fiesta time. Sustaining, NBC. (13:25; 15:45)

CBS RADIO WORKSHOP (1-17-56) "Brave New World" — Part 1. A fine radio adaptation of the novel by Aldous Huxley. Narrated by Huxley, the cast features Joseph Kearns, William Conrad, Bill Idleson, Vic Perrin. Ninety-six identical "beings" have been cloned from one human egg, all pre-conditioned for their role in a new society where people are "produced" assembly line-style in the image

THOSE WERE THE DAYS • WNIB- FM 97.1 SATURDAY AFTERNOONS • 1:00 UNTIL 5:00

of hero Henry Ford. This is the first broadcast in the series. Sustaining, CBS. (16:30; 12:20)

CBS RADIO WORKSHOP (2-3-56) "Brave New World" — Part 2. Continuing the exploration of the new world, we see "Improved" methods of love, entertainment, death. Sustaining, CBS. (15:15; 13:40)

QUIET, PLEASE (2-2-48) "Pathetic Fallacy" is the tale of a mechanical "brain" come alive with a crush on her inventor! Written and directed by Willis Cooper who created radio's "Light's Out." Ernest Chappell is host and narrator; Vicki Vola is the voice of the machine. Sustaining, Mutual. (13:00; 17:20)

SUSPENSE (9-9-62) "Strange Day in May" starring William Mason, Major Thomas Manning goes into space to try to determine what happened to two astronauts lost before him. AFRS Rebroadcast. (12:25; 10:30)

SATURDAY, APRIL 28th NINTH ANNIVERSARY SHOW "THANKS FOR LISTENING"

We're observing our ninth year on the air and an afternoon of anniversary broadcasts from radio's golden age will highlight our own birthday party:

BILLION DOLLAR SHOW (8-28-52) Clips from the past and memories from Bob and Ray, Fred Allen and others on a program celebrating the 30th anniversary of the first radio commercial (1). Sustaining, NBC. (15:15; 13:50)

COMMAND PERFORMANCE (1946) The 4th Anniversary broadcast of the Armed Forces Radio variety show prepared exclusively for military personnel around the world. Bob Hope introduces dozens of performers and clips from past Command Performance programs: Foy Willing and the Riders of the Purple Sage; Janet Blair; Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy; G.I. Jill; Kay Kyser; Jerry Colonna; Linda Darnell; Mel Blanc; Fred MacMurray; King Sisters; Francis Langford. AFRS. (14:15; 14:20; 11:17; 17:25; 20:10; 8:15)

CHASE AND SANBORN 100th ANNIVERSARY (Nov., 1965) This was the first of all the radio retrospective (or nostalgia) shows broadcast following the Golden Age of Radio. Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy host a

cavalcade of sounds from radio's heyday in observance of their long-time sponsor's centennial. It was broadcast as an hour-long segment of Monitor, NBC's answer to radio entertainment in the 1960s. Excerpts from the past feature Maurice Chevalier, Eddie Cantor, Jimmy Durante, Major Bowes, Rudy Vallee, W. C. Fields, Rosalind Russell, Fred Allen, Mae West, Alec Templeton, Carole Lombard, Clark Gable, Don Ameche, Mary Pickford, Charles Laughton, Jack Oakie, Ogden Nash, Ethel Barrymore and of course Edgar, Charlie, Mortimer Snerd and Effie Klinker. Chase and Sanborn, NBC. (14:50; 12:13; 13:10; 13:05)

And, thanks for listening. On May 5th we begin our 10th year on the air with the rebroadcast of a complete broadcast day from 1939. A special presentation during May, National Radio Month. Stick around, and don't touch that dial!



A HOST OF STARS provided the entertainment on the Chase and Sanborn 100th Anniversary Show in 1964. Bergen and McCarthy were at the NBC microphone on the first "official" revival on radio of sounds from the golden age. Shown with Edgar and Charlie are (clockwise from top) Rudy Vallee, Eddie Cantor, Don Ameche, W. C. Fields, Dorothy Lamour. The program will be heard on our *THOSE WERE THE DAYS* 9th Anniversary Show, April 28th.

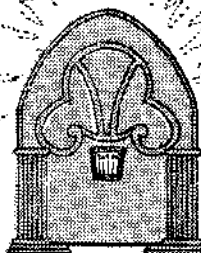
Do You Remember??

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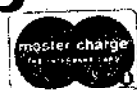
- ☐ The Green Hornet
- ☐ The Great Glidersleeve
- ☐ Laurel & Hardy
- ☐ Little Rascals
- ☐ Dracula—Orson Welles
- ☐ Little Orphan Annie
- ☐ The Lone Ranger
- ☐ Harry S. Truman
- ☐ This is Your FBI
- ☐ Captain Midnight
- ☐ Hopalong Cassidy
- ☐ Soap Operas, Vol. 2
- ☐ Hindenburg Disaster
- ☐ Terry and the Pirates
- ☐ Chandu The Magician
- ☐ Sgt. Preston of the Yukon
- ☐ Ripley's Believe It Or Not

- ☐ Fibber McGee & Molly, Vol. 1
- ☐ George Burns/Gracie Allen
- ☐ Laurel & Hardy (Another Fine Mess)
- ☐ Popeye—Orig. Radio Broadcast
- ☐ Mills Brothers, Orig. Radio Broadcast
- ☐ W.C. Handy, St. Louis Blues
- ☐ An Evening with Lum & Abner
- ☐ Major Bowes Original Amateur Hour
- ☐ Edgar Bergen/Charlie McCarthy
- ☐ Mr. Keen—Tracer of Lost Persons
- ☐ The African Queen, Garson/Bogart
- ☐ Way Out West, Laurel & Hardy
- ☐ Jack Armstrong—All American Boy
- ☐ Louis Armstrong Talks About Himself
- ☐ Little Orphan Annie, Capt. Midnight, Vol. 2
- ☐ The Enforcer, Humphrey Bogart Sound Track

- ☐ Frankenstein
- ☐ Flash Gordon
- ☐ The Whistler
- ☐ Superman
- ☐ Bela Lugosi
- ☐ The Shadow
- ☐ Charlie Chan
- ☐ Lassie
- ☐ Tarzan
- ☐ Tom Mix
- ☐ Mae West
- ☐ Dick Tracy
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- ☐ W.C. Fields
- ☐ Rudy Vallee
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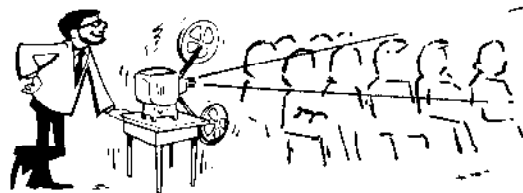
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Monday-Friday 11-5

Saturday 11-7:30

Sunday 12-5

NORTH WEST FEDERAL



MEMORY MOVIES

If you have a fondness for the "good old days," then you're invited to enjoy a **MEMORY MOVIE** on Saturday evenings at the North West Federal Savings Community Center Auditorium, 4901 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago. There's plenty of free parking in the large lot at the rear of the NWF office on Dakin street and CTA transportation to the door. Enter the Community Center thru the parking lot. Visitors who arrive by CTA should walk south along the side of the NWF building, then turn west to the entrance to the Center.

MEMORY MOVIES begin at 8 p.m. and doors to the auditorium open at 7:30 p.m. Donation is usually \$1.25 per person with all proceeds being donated to recognized charities.

ADVANCE TICKETS to all **MEMORY CLUB** movies are available at any office of North West Federal Savings or at the Saturday night showings.

Here's the line-up of coming attractions:

SATURDAY, APRIL 7th.

THE FIREFLY (1937) Jeannette MacDonald and Allan Jones star in a film version of the Rudolf Friml operetta. It's the "Donkey Serenade" musical! (\$1.25)

Jerome Cowan, Donald MacBride, William Damarest, H. B. Warner. A pair of good whodunits for radio fans. (\$1.25)

FRIDAY, JUNE 8th — 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9th — 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 10th — 2 p.m. & 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 14th

IN JAIL WITH LAUREL AND HARDY — An evening with Stan and Ollie as we present three of their best comedies, each with a prison theme: **PARDON US (1931)**, **LIBERTY (1929)** and **HOOSEGOW (1929)** (\$1.25)

REMEMBERING THE GREAT STAGE AND SCREEN SHOWS! — A special event as we present **IN PERSON**, on our stage, **JERRY MURAD'S HARMONICATS** in their own, exciting program featuring their big hit tune "Peg O My Heart" and other Harmonicat favorites. **ON SCREEN — COVER GIRL (1944)** starring Rita Hayworth and Gene Kelly in a big, beautiful World War II musical in glorious Technicolor. Benefit program for Kiwanis Club of Park Ridge. All seats \$5 per person.

SATURDAY, JUNE 23rd

IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE (1953) Presented in 3-D! Starring Richard Carlson, Barbara Rush, Charles Drake. An amateur astronomer in a small Arizona town spots a UFO landing in a nearby cave. Soon townspeople begin acting strangely, their minds and bodies taken over by alien creatures. **Special 3-D glasses will be provided.** Don't miss it if you can! (\$2.00)

SATURDAY, JUNE 16th

THE FLEET'S IN (1942) Dorothy Lamour, William Holden, Betty Hutton, Eddie Bracken, Cass Daley and Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra with Helen O'Connell and Ray Eberle. Navy romeo Holden tries to melt iceberg Lamour in this bright wartime musical. Songs include "Tangerine" and "I Remember You." (\$1.25)

SATURDAY, APRIL 28th

DOUBLE FEATURE! — CHARLIE MCCARTHY, DETECTIVE (1939) starring Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy, Mortimer Snerd, Robert Cummings, Constance Moore, Edgar Kennedy, Louis Calhern, Samuel S. Hinds. **PLUS: — GRACIE ALLEN MURDER CASE (1939)** starring Gracie Allen, Warren Williams (as Philco Vance), Ellen Drew, Kent Taylor,

Quick, Watson—the Needle!

REPRINT from RADIO VARIETIES, December, 1940

IF SIR Arthur Conan Doyle were writing today, he would have an easier job describing Sherlock Holmes to his readers than he did at the turn of the century. Instead of a careful inventory of Holmes' physical characteristics, he could have passed the description off with a single sentence.

"Sherlock Holmes", he might have said, "was a tall, spare man with piercing eyes, a resonant voice, a vibrant personality -- in short a Basil Rathbone with a flair for criminology".

Dr. Watson would be easier.

"Picture Nigel Bruce", our present-day Doyle would say. "Give him a battered doctor's bag, and dull his sense of humor, and you would see Dr. Watson as he was when he shared rooms at 221 Baker street with Mr. Sherlock Holmes."

The physical resemblance between Basil Rathbone and Sherlock Holmes, and between Nigel Bruce and Dr. Watson startled even Denis Conan Doyle, son of the famous writer of the Sherlock Holmes stories, when he visited NBC's Hollywood Radio City recently and saw a radio performance of one of his father's mystery thrillers for the first time.

"Admirable, absolutely admirable", Conan Doyle commented as he watched Rathbone and Bruce in action. "I have never seen a better portrayal of Holmes—and I have seen many. Bruce and Rathbone resemble almost to perfection my father's conception of the characters."

There is more than physical similarity between the NBC actors and their fictional counterparts. Holmes absorbed Sherlock Holmes during his childhood and youth

in England, and he knows the people Holmes knew, and the country where many of the cases described in Conan Doyle's books were set. He has wandered London's back streets, the Down country, and the bleak moors where Holmes and Watson tracked down "The Hound of the Baskervilles."

As for Nigel Bruce, his Scottish ancestry and his English education combine to give an authentic flavor to his interpretation of the bluff doctor, Holmes' friend, assistant and biographer.

Even the long-time friendship which bound Holmes and Watson together is duplicated in the real-life stories of Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. When World War I was raging, Rathbone and Bruce, both rising young British actors, served in their country's army.

When the war was over, Bruce, in spite of the effects of a serious wound, returned to the stage, and there renewed his friendship with Rathbone.

"Long ago, we arrived at the point where we can insult each other with impunity", Rathbone says. "I call him Willie, or Walrus. Usually Willie. It's simpler. And he calls me things that might not look well in print. We've never shared rooms in Baker street, but if we had, I think we might have got along about as Holmes and Watson did. Willie claims a better sense of humor than Watson—but that's purely his opinion".

That's the opinion of most of Hollywood, too—including Rathbone, who does not believe his own slanderous implication. Conan Doyle tells us that Sherlock's custom, in moments of re-



Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, his assistant, put their heads together to solve another spine chilling mystery on NBC's Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.

laxation, was to play his violin, or to listen to good music. He doesn't say much about Watson's lighter moments. But both Holmes and Watson, in the persons of Rathbone and Bruce, are practical jokers in their more relaxed moods on broadcast days. The

boisterous humor of Bruce and the pointed wit of Rathbone are used to advantage on each other,

and sometimes on long suffering Tom McKnight, who produces the Sherlock Holmes series.

Members of the cast of Sherlock Holmes have caused Rathbone some worry of late, because they insist upon taking his portrayal of Sherlock too seriously.

It all began when a small powder factory on the Pacific Coast was blown up. When Rathbone arrived for a rehearsal Sun-

Quick Watson, The Needle

day at NBC's Hollywood Radio City, every member of the supporting cast was waiting for him, and everyone had the same clipping, a complete story of the disaster. In chorus, they demanded, "Solve this, Mr. Holmes".

Rathbone escaped that one, but he couldn't get a way from the story. As further information appeared in the papers, it was collected by the actors, with the connivance of Bruce, and saved for the next week's show.

Faced with a showdown, Rathbone shrugged, and said, "Not a case for Holmes at all. That was simply an accident".

The newspapers, of course, carried the opinions of investigators, and their opinion was—accident.

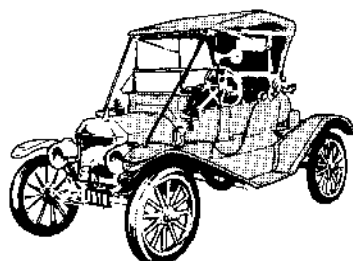
But Rathbone can't evade Holme's reputation. He still receives newspaper clippings of unsolved crimes, with requests for their solution. Not all are jokes from the cast. Some are serious. But, although he is a serious student of Holmseiana, Rathbone confesses he is no Sherlock in the matter of deductive powers, and so the cases will remain unsolved, unless the police do the work.

First heard on NBC in their "Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" series in 1939, Rathbone and Bruce now are in their second season on the air. Edith Meiser is author of the radio adaptations of the stories. Her treatment of the Holmes stories is heightened by the unique musical score, written and directed by Lou Kosloff, and interpreted by an instrumental group which makes use of the bassoon, French horn, electric organ, violin and trombone to produce the weird tonal quality which is an essential part of the show.

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WE GET LETTERS



CHICAGO—Thank you so very much for the most enjoyable February month of listening to one of our favorite comedians — Jack Benny. Our family never missed his Sunday 6 p.m. programs. We all loved him and when the end of his season came, my sister and I would cry. Mom would laugh at us and say we were foolish — that he'd be back in September. I've written to Wally Phillips about your Saturday afternoon program when one of his listeners inquired about where she could obtain tapes of the Cinnamon Bear and suggested they contact you. Also wrote to CBS Mystery Theatre suggesting they buy some of your good tapes.
—**MRS. FRED KARA.**

MELROSE PARK — Your February of Jack Benny shows was super!—**C.D. MC INTYRE.**
BERWYN — Would like to see future radio broadcasts dedicated to the Westerns: Hopalong Cassidy, Cisco Kid, Gene Autry, etc.
— **RICHARD MIKULECKY.**

CHICAGO—Thanks for Jack Benny month. It was necessary for me to be at work for the Saturdays in February due to upcoming Regional Staff Meetings. The Benny shows certainly made the time a lot more bearable. I was able to record the entire series of programs. GREAT STUFF!!!—**LARRY CASSIDY.**

(ED. NOTE — We've had a lot of favorable reaction to our Jack Benny month and it's our hope to do it again — with different Benny programs — next February. In the meantime, we'll try to offer a generous helping of Jack Benny material throughout the year.)

CHICAGO — I really enjoy listening to and taping your radio shows each week and I try to make an effort to be near the radio every Saturday. I don't have any memories of radio because I am only twelve, but my father does and he loves to hear the cassettes that I tape each week. My father would like to know if you have any schedules planned for Captain Midnight or Sgt. Preston of the Yukon.—**KRISTO KARR.**

(ED. NOTE— We'll probably have Captain Midnight and Sgt. Preston on the agenda during the summer months.)

RIVER FOREST — A few years ago you broadcast a series of EASY ACES and ONE MAN'S FAMILY episodes. At that time you mentioned other episodes you had already aired before I had discovered your show. Many of us grew up with these two shows, and would delight in rehearing them. I greatly enjoy your Saturday afternoon show and try to schedule my activities to be near a radio!—**AUDREY E. SCHMITT.**

(ED. NOTE—We'll do our best to try to bring you some of these shows in the future.)

LINCOLNWOOD— I am 14 years old. I listen to your radio show and I just subscribed to your Nostalgia Newsletter. I'm really glad you play your old radio shows. A couple of years ago my dad was telling me that every night at dinner, in silence, he and his family would listen to the radio shows. This stirred my imagination and I wondered what radio shows were really like. Now I have your shows and Newsletter to cure my imagination. Thank you.—**DAN JAFFEE.**

OAK LAWN—The article in the February issue (of the Newsletter) about the Armed Forces Networks really came at a good time. I was just browsing thru quite a bundle of letters (I wrote) from New Guinea. One, dated Feb. 18, 1944, noted one of the programs (on the Armed Forces station there). The call letters were 2GI. Being G. I. was to be a stickler for detail, so "Too G.I." speaks for itself! One program (on the air) was the "McGoo Booze Hour" which advertised such items as "McGoo's Juicy Jungle Juice," "McGoo's Luscious Latrine Lotion," "McGoo's Rugged Reducing Remedies" and "Mohair Cigarettes — not a puff in a carload." There was also a "Commercial" for "Sloppy Joes' Mortuary" whose clients seemed to be the former users of "McGoo's Juicy Jungle Juice."—**ELMER W. JENSEN.**

(ED. NOTE — Glad to hear that the G.I.'s in New Guinea had such quality programming during the war!)

CHICAGO — Sure enjoy Saturdays with you and old time radio. Any "Parkyakarkus" shows coming up? —**BERNIE NYQUIST.**

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X MINUS ONE

The Lifeboat Mutiny

From the horizons of the unknown are stories of the future. NBC presents a comedy science fiction story about two men that buy a lifeboat, 324-A, from Joe, an interstellar junkman. They are real estate men that are out to survey the planet "Trident" and this lifeboat that works by programmed buttons gives some very funny skits. 9/11/56.

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