Time Radio

The fourth issue July-August \$2.50

BOB & RAY



Old Time Radio

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<u>Bob and Ray's</u> droll wit endures

by Bill Wedo Los Angeles Times Syndicate

On this crisp fall evening in midtown Manhattan the discount photo stores and hole-in-the-wall boutiques already have covered themselves with their iron security gates. But the cavernous RCA recording studio between 42nd and 43rd streets is alive with laughter bouncing off the acoustical tiles.

The partitions have been pulled back and rows of folding chairs facing a small platform have transformed the hall into a makeshift theater. Hundreds of people are giggling, snorting, even howling at the two elderly gentlemen seated behind the mikes.

The two men are droll, and their performance is only a collection of skits, punctuated by sound effects of doors closing and phones ringing and interludes of a skating rink-style organ.

But the crowd is laughing.

There are ads for the Monomgahela Metal Foundry — "new, extra shiny ingots for home and office use" — and Einbinder Flypaper — "the brand you've grown to trust over the course of three generations." And there is laughter.

There is the dining-out review of the Little Bit of Honduras Bar and Grill, where everything on the menu is made of bananas — "green ones, yellow ones with small brown spots. . ." Or the soap opera Garrish Summit, the continuing story of intrigue among the socially prominent, who are "far removed from the squalid village below." And ther is more laughter.

If all this sounds like some bizarre private joke, take note that everyone there gets the point. Everyone, from the balding men in turtleneck sweaters to the young transvestite with the green-tinged hair, is in on the punch line. Everyone is laughing.

From approximately coast to coast, it's the Bob and Ray show.

Their work has been called everything from "a surrealistic Dickensian repertory company" to "house next door to reality."

Kurt Vonnegut has been puzzled by their melancholy off stage while Andy Rooney thinks they are interesting to meet separately only because you've never talked to two duller people.

But for Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding, success all comes down to making each other laugh.

The Bob and Ray show has been on the air in various incarnations and reincarnations for more than three decades. On radio television, movies. In commercials, daily programs and cameo roles.

Their latest "comeback" is a 14-week series of half-hour shows for National Public Radio that some stations began airing in February. [Orlando's WNFE-FM (90.7) will broadcast the program at 7 p.m. Sundays beginning April 22.] The same show last year earned them a prestigious Peabody Award and another bout with fame. But for Bob and Ray, whose popularity for three decades has waxed and waned but always endured, it's all something to be taken in stride.

Only blocks away from the recording studio in a small office suite tucked along a dead-end hallway of the 25th floor of the old Graybar building lies the secret of the longest-running comedy duo in show business.

It is the most unassuming of surroundings. Three small rooms hold some desks, file cabinets, a tape recorder and a relaxed clutter of boxed tapes and family memorabilia. All quite fitting for such unassuming people. A visitor is likely to be greeted at the door by a smiling Bob or a cordial Ray, like two congenial uncles

waiting to take you to a Saturday matinee. They are warm and polite, but for people enjoying the status of comedy institutions they are definitely not larger than life.

But don't let the looks or the casual demeanor fool you. In an entertainment business littered with yesterday's "stars," Bob and Ray are survivors — and perhaps a little bit more. Despite the dizzying changes in their profession, they have never lacked for work. They have local and national radio shows and have always enjoyed a busy slate of national and regional commercials besides lending their talents to such diverse ventures as Sesame Street and Electric Company segments and a 1970 Broadway play, The Two and Only.

They most definitely would not be fodder for their creation, Ralph "Mr. I Know Where They Are" Flinger, the tracer of old-time celebrities. It is true that, at times, they have been out of the limelight, but they have never been in the shadow.

As Ray explains, "We never gave a thought

to doing anything else."

It should come as no surprise that describing Bob and Ray's humor is a futile effort because even they can't do it. How do you describe the array of eccentric voices of the even more eccentric characters — Ray's toothless, gummy voice to portray Webley Webster or Bob's nasal, whining Pop Beloved?

Or story lines that take Mary Backstayge, Noble Wife, and her entourage to a palatial English estate, Moorswing, during which visit they are entrusted with a brown paper bag containing something they were to guard with their very lives and take to Pepe Le Coco, a resident of Casbah in Casablanca.

During the mid-1970's on their daily three-hour-plus show on radio station WOR-AM in New York, their sumptuous descriptions of the fabulous Bob and Ray buffet or their running commentary on the huge picture window being installed (complete with the background sounds of



hammering and sawing) were masterpieces of the imagination. And like any good jokes, to explain them is to lose their humor.

Even their success is low key, for although they have a devoted, almost cult, following, it is difficult to offer Bob and Ray talk at a cocktail party. Some know them only by name and some only by voice and some only by the fact they were once peddling beer as the voices of the cartoon Piels Brothers. Others jusk ask, "Bob and who?"

Those who hear Bob and Ray in action are convinced that they are a charming remnant of radio's golden age. But in fact the Bob and Ray show began as radio was being supplanted by television.

Massachusetts natives, Bob (born in Boston in 1923) and Ray (born in 1922 in Lowell) began innocently enough in 1946 on Boston station WHDH-AM when disc jockey Bob and newsman Ray improvised some on-air banter to amuse themselves. The two say that the chemistry was instantly apparent, and by 1951 they had struck off on their own.

Their humor, rather than being slashing wit or pratfall slapstick, is a combination of harmless satire, non sequiturs and just plain silliness. While they delight in poking fun at pomposity (witness gourmet-gourmand-raconteur Martin Leseour, the workd famous storyteller who can't remember the ending to any tale), they are more like playful nudges.

Topical humor? Controversy? "That's not our style," Ray says. "We don't do a lot of Margaret Thatcher jokes." It is an omission that both contend is less by their design than by their personalities.

"We try to stick to things everyone understands, the man caught in a traffic jam 20 years ago is the same as the one caught there today," says Bob.

But while neither offers much insight as to what makes them so funny, it is plain to see what they don't laugh at.

"America has lost its sense of humor," proclaims Ray, visibly upset, "I turn on

some of the cable shows and I see some of that filth and I turn it right off. Anybody can get a laugh by dropping their pants." Bob is mostly nodding as Ray takes on the nowlegendary early Saturday Night Live shows.

"You watch them doing jokes about cripples. I don't see anything funny about a cripple," he says.

These are ironic opinions when you consider that the pair once did a show with SNL regulars Gilda Radner, Jane Curtin and Laraine Newman, a show perhaps most memorable for a Bob and Ray version of Rod Stewart's "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy?"

"That was interesting because we didn't want to do it at first, but two of the show's writers, Al Franken and Tom Davis, convinced us it would work," says Ray. "I was wrong. It got a great reaction."

Now you might think that plain old-fashioned silliness — the Backstayge troupe once invested in a fast-food franchise, The House of Toast — but that is one word the pair doesn't like. "Silly? I don't think we're silly," says Ray, arching those bushy eyebrows looking genuinely puzzled. "The

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Three Stoges, now they were silly. We're not the type to put lampshades on our heads."

Sheer longevity may be part of the Bob and Ray mystique, but they won't accept that as the sole reason for their success. "We are very good at what we do," Ray says firmly.

Clearly, they do not want to occupy the dubious niche of being like for simply hanging around so long.

"Look at Bob Hope, I saw him on TV the other day and he surrounds himself with the prettiest girls and tells the same tired Army jokes from 40 years ago. I don't know why he bothers," Ray says.

Yet they readily admit that some of their most popular and lasting skits, such as Wally Ballou and Tippy the Wonder Dog, are simply continual updates of old material. As Bob says, they don't have to put a lot of time into them anymore because "they're really formulaic."

The difference between tired jokes and redoing old material may seem ambiguous. But it is clear to Bob and Ray and to their legions of fans. A 1982 hour retrospective of their work at the Museum of Broadcasting in New York broke attendance records, and demand for tickets to the National Public Radio tapings was enormous. They have published two books of their scripts and been inducted into the Broadcasting Hall of Fame. A Carnegie Hall concert is planned for the spring and there is a possibility of packaging the public-radio shows for records and tapes.

It all seems so odd in the little room on the 25th floor. Without the characters or the voices or the sound effects they seem so ordinary. What transformation takes place behind the mike? What is the secret to their comedy success?

Bob shrugs. Ray shrugs. Surely it must be the endless sessions of idea bouncing and retapings? Ray hems. Bob haws. How about all that poring over phone directories and newspapers for the zany character names such as Buddy Blodgett and Cmdr. Neville Putney? Both shake their heads. "We just think them up," says Bob.

"We're basically too lazy for all that," says Ray. "All we try and do is make each other laugh."

It somehow doesn't seem quite fair that Bob and Ray can reap such rewards without the customary creative head banging. One pictures the Muse, goddess of inspiration, not so much paying an occasional visit to the tiny office as staying for coffee doughnuts and a good game of Scrabble.

Oh yes, the secret of their sucess.

"We've been having fun for the last 30 years and making money doing it," says Bob.

It can't be that simple.

Can it?

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PEDERAL RADIO COMPANY
Distributors of Eleh Grade Radio Sets and Supplies
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Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce) gives moral—but hardly intellectual—support to keen-eyed Sherlock Holmes

Quick, Watson!

"The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" Lead Detective and Doctor a Merry Chase

Tune In Mon., 8:30 p.m. E.W.T. (Mutual)

A Reprint from Tune In Magazine, January, 1944

not ably, by Dr. Watson.

There's no better way to meet a parcel of black-hearted scoundrels than through the "Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." But the listener shouldn't worry—they always get their just rewards. No matter how devious the plotting and devilish the ingenuity of these master-criminals, that wonder-detective, the one and only Sherlock Holmes, gets his man—assisted valiantly, if

No reader of the famous stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle need fear that they've been spoiled in dramatization, for the program has kept the spirit and atmosphere of the tales intact, even though the scripts have been streamlined for modern ears. Basil Rathbone, as Sherlock, trots forth his seemingly miraculous but always logical deductions in supercilious Oxford accents to stupefy both Dr. Watson and (if truth must be told) his listeners. And Nigel Bruce, as the good doctor, delights the audience with a series of throaty "Harrumphs" and exclamations of "Rot!" while he consistently demonstrates that his head is

as thick as his waistline.

Both actors are eminently suited in appearance and training to the roles they play (on screen for Universal, as well as on the air for Mutual). Wiry, six-footer Basil Rathbone made his entrance into the world in dramatic fashion at Johannesburg, South Africa, during threatened native uprisings. After forsaking an engineering career to join a stock company managed by his cousin, Frank Benson, his schooling in old English roles was interrupted by the first World War—in which he received the Military Cross. Since then he has been a stage, screen and radio favorite on both sides of the Atlantic.

Nigel Bruce has had a colorful and adventurous life, too. Born in Ensenada, Mexico, as the younger son of a British baronet he was educated in traditional English schools. A brokerage business was cut short by the first war, in which he was woulded and invalided for three years. After his recovery, he discovered his field was comedy and has been convulsing audiences ever since.

The pair combine in these thrillers with eminent success, as they pile up evidence and chase their quarry through the English country lanes and crowded London streets they know so very well.



Hello Again, Radio

P.O. Box 6176 Cincinneti, Chio 45206



LOVE TO HAVE ONE OF THESE BALXIES? SEND 91.50

Letters

Dear Bob,

I wanted to thank you for sending me the extra copies of the Old Time Radio Digest with my speech in it. That was very thoughtful of you, and something I never heard of anyone else ever doing. I will pass the extras on to people that I don't think are subscribers. Maybe you will pick up a couple of new subs from that.

I really do enjoy your publication. It definitely fills a hole in the OTR publishing field. I sure hope the "Digest" becomes a financial success.

Again, many thanks. Sincerely, James L. Snyder

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for issue 3 of "Radio Digest". I enjoyed "The Lux Radio' article very much. Always was one of my favorites. Please, in some future issue I'd love to see a write up and photo of Jim Ameche (Jack Armstrong, 1933-1938). Also the "I Love A Mystery" bunch. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely, Mr. J. Sekeres Cleveland, Ohio

Radio Book Collecting

by Edward Carr

Before I begin this column, let me start off with WOW! When Bob Burchett came up to me at the 1983 convention at Newark, N.J. and said "Ed we went to press," I could hardly believe it, about 8 months prior Bob had asked me to do a column dealing with any aspect of radio I wanted. I agreed and came up with the above heading as it has become an off shoot of radio program collecting with me.

How long till the 1st issue? As everyone is aware by now Collectors Corner is now merged, leaving the field open for a generally circulated magazine, if anyone cares to put one out, dealing in Radio. About 3 months we want to be 3 issues ahead. No delays in getting it out on time. Here it is Nov. 1983 and the 1st issue has made it finally and is now backed up by at least 3 months of news, reviews and everything else you'd want in a magazine dealing with radio.

The questions asked of course are will it last? Is it something I need? Will it help me in my radio endeavors and can I afford it? The standard answer holds true here, for only you the subscriber can answer it. Try a years subscription and give it a chance, you the readers hold its fate in your hands.

One last thing I would like to publicly announce my sincere thanks to the person who edits and corrects my spelling. If you could see what I send them you'd cry. (Hey leave this in, get away with that eraser). And now to radio book collecting. Since the middle of 1983 a number of new books have appeared that might be of interest to those of you who collect not

only books but radio shows. They are

small in stature but large on information.

I was disappointed in their size when I first received them. I am thinking, what can they possibly say that overall really would be of interest. The first one is: His Typewriter Grew Spurs a biography of Fran Striker—writen by Fran Striker Jr. Available from Questco, P.O. Box 832, Lansdale, PA 19446. Price \$9.00 postpaid. I believe this is correct.

Is a son proud of his father, you better believe it and in his book Mr. Striker, Jr. gives you just this throughout.

He has given the facts with the information on hand passed down to him from his father, facts relating to the origin of the Lone Ranger, facts that Mr. Striker not only gave us the Ranger but the Green Hornet, Crimson Fang, Crystal Gazer, what you never heard of the last two, tell the truth neither did I till I read the book. You see there is more to Fran Striker, Sr. than meets the eye, and you'll discover how much more when you read his book. Fran Striker, Sr. not only wrote scripts he also wrote books, comic strips and helped with the writing of the movie.

I think you have the idea now. I highly recommend it.

The 2nd book, again a small size softbound but I found to hold an enormous amount of information, and the log compiled by that genius of compilation, whew! Ray Stanich. The Sound of Detection, Ellery Queen's Adventures in Radio by Francis M. Nevins, Jr. and Ray Stanich. Cost \$6.95 postpaid and available from Brownstone Books, 1711 Clifty Drive, Madison, IN 47250.

Here we are given the origin of Ellery Queen, his rise to stardom through books and a radio series, the trials of the two men who collaborated to give us this gentleman of the quick mind, able to ferret out the smallest clue and bring to justice those wrong doers of society. (After that last sentence I quit) Oh yes, the log, most

helpful to Queen fans. There seems to be only a few shows in circulation, I hope we can surface alot more this year. Another book well calculated to keep you reading.

And now it gives me great pleasure to tell you I received numerous letters from people saying they enjoyed the initial issues of Old Radio Digest, and that they applaud the idea of where to get books on radio, and for that many thanks, and to Armand Di Filippo for the following. 505 Radio Questions Your Friends Can't Answer by Harry Castleman and Walter J. Podrazik. Nov 1983, 51/2 x 81/4, 160 pages ISBN 7211-0, \$3.95 paper. LC 83-42742 Directly from Walker and Company, 720 5th Ave., New York, NY 10019. Questions concerning everything your radio set has emitted since before 1930 on up.

For those of you who enjoy the Goon Show the following should be of interest. BBC Enterprises is offering many albums and tapes featuring these programs, for a free catalog write.

BBC Enterprises LTD.

BBC Records and Tapes The Langham Portland Place London WIA 1AA United Kingdom

Ask for BBC records and tapes catalog. More on this next time or if interested in information before hand send a SASE to me at my home address and I'll forward it to you. 216 Shanev St., Boyertown, PA. 19512.

Two books of interest and that are hard to find:

Tune In Yesterday. Dunning, Prentice Hall, Inc., Book Distribution Center, Rt. 59 at Brook Hill Dr., West Nyack, NY 10995 \$8.95 plus \$1.77 ship/hand, soft only. A Thirty Year History of Programs Carried on National Radio Networks In The United States 1926-1956. Summers.

The Ayer Company, Inc., 99 Main St., Salem, NH 03079, \$20.00 plus \$2.00 ship/hand, hardbound.

That's it for now, the above I know will help a number of people.

Enjoy



A TECHNICAL GUIDE TO COLLECTING OLD TIME RADIO A BRC PUBLICATION

Old Time Radio's newest and most exciting publication ever is nearing completion. It's a one time only book, which will be marketed and sold for years to Old Time Radio Enthusiasts across the U.S. and Canada.

It's destined to become the "bible" of collectors everywhere. . . The most comprehensive and complete "handbook" ever published on this most unique hobby. . . It's a technical reference book loaded with tips and techniques on how to get the best sounding recordings of old time radio possible, but it's much much more!!

"A Technical Guide" probes the many questions collectors are always faced with—cassette versus reel, double speeding and double tracking, four track or two track, equipment, setting levels, equalizing, a detailed sound quality analysis of a typical radio show. . . Connections between tape recorders are also covered, equipment recommendations, recording tape—"used" Ampex 641, monitoring systems, tape editing, disk dubbing. . . ALL THESE TECHNICAL QUESTIONS ARE COVERED, PLUS MANY MORE.

But "A Technical Guide" is a lot more than a technical guide—Other exclusive sections include tips on getting your collection organized and preparing your catalog, FIVE methods are listed for building your collection and getting the best-sounding copies, plus a chapter covering a veriety of ways of getting more enjoyment out of the hobby other than listening. A complete listing of OTR clubs and publications is also provided along with sources for equipment and blank tape.

Well over 40 pages of useful information are offered in the book, plus a special section on the history of old time radio collecting—a guest appearance by collector/dealer Joe Webb are included.

It's all inclusive—a thorough how-to book on the hobby for both beginners and

veterans—written and researched by Bob Burnham, a collector/dealer for over 10 years, and former broadcaster, engineer and production director in the Detroit area.

We've included ALL THIS MATERIAL but would like to add two additional sections with your help. . . We feel the dealers involved in selling radio programs and supplies to radio program collectors play a major part in the growth and development of the hobby. In addition, the collectors themselves are of course, the backbone of old time radio. For these reasons, we are pleased to announce effective immediately, BRC PRODUCTIONS is accepting both commercial and non-commercial advertisements in this one-time-only book. Noncommercial ads will be featured in a section amounting to a "Collector's Directory." The "Dealers" section will include both a classified section as well as display adsfull page, half page and quarter page ads available at reasonable rates. All advertisers may purchase a copy of the book at discount rates.

Commercial Advertising Rates

Applies to all individuals or companies offering a service or product of interest to old time radio collectors—

Display Ads—All copy should be camera ready.

Full page—\$18.00/Page size is 5½ x 8½" Your original should be proportional to this size. No charge for reduction.

Half Page—\$10.00 Quarter Page—\$ 6.00

Classified - Commerical

30€ per word including name and address. No minimum.

Non-Commercial Advertising Rates
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BRC Productions

Old time radio recordings, services and supplies

P.O. Box 39522 Redford, Michigan 48239-0522

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Other OTR Belated	Activities			
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WRITING.

Technical Talk and Radio Rumblings

by: Bob Burnham

Sometimes we as collectors get a little too wound up in the listening and trading part of old time radio to actually keep tabs on exactly what our tape decks are doing when we're making recordings for our trading friends. It's probably worth considering. too, that as collectors, we can fall into one of two categories-The "quantity" collector who trades for and gets anything and everything he can get his hands on and is not as critical of sound quality and the "quality" collector whose collection is generally much smaller in size, may include only certain programs. Perhaps the best type of collector is the latter type or at least a combination of the two types. There are many collectors who don't even listen to much of their collection-keep a good reserve of "unlistened to" shows to help out in trading for other programs the do want and do want to listen to. The fact of the matter is it's really a collector's own personal choice which if any part of his collection he listens to for pure enjoyment. What every collector should be concerned with listening to, and monitoring are the recordings he sends out to his fellow collectors.

The actual recording process, or specifically copying a reel onto another reel or cassette is in theory a very complex process. We as collectors, aren't concerned so much with what goes on inside our tape recorders but the many stages of amplification inside-equalization necessary for the recording process, the bias frequency, etc. are all critical for the proper operation of our equipment. But what is also critical to proper operation of the equipment is its proper use by the operator!

As equipment "operators," old time radio collectors can be especially demanding on their tape recorders. They operate equipment for many long hours (days!) without rest, use lower cost tape yet still assume their equipment will give optimum performance without fail. The best equipment will, and the best tape will, but since most collectors have a limited budget, the optimum situation may not always be present.

How can we as budget minded recordists serve our fellow collectors best? We can, as mentioned, monitor the copies we make for others. This doesn't mean closely listening to each tape in its entirety—most of us don't have time for that. . . If we're using three headed tape decks, we can monitor the recording as it is being made. Keep the 'monitor' switch in the "tape" position compare the quality of the sound between "tape" and "source" position. There should not be a major difference between the two. Levels in particular, should not drop when you switch from "source" position to "tape" position. If the levels do drop significantly, this means one or more of the following problems exist: Recording tape is of unacceptable quality; your tape deck's heads are dirty and/or worn and/or out of alignment; or there is another problem with your tape deck such as tape guides are out of alignment, tension and/or pinch roller problems, or bias or other internal adjustments in your deck need professional attention.

Setting levels properly are, of course, extremely important to assure the best signal to noise ratio (maximum signal and minimal tape hiss). In my upcoming book, "A Technical Guide to Collecting Old Time Radio Programs," I suggest the meters are adjusted so they peak at 100% ("0" VU). I also have stated it's okay for meters to occassionally peak into the "red", but never high enough so they are "pegged" at +3 VU. In general, it is best to level your recordings as high as possible without overmodulating (saturating) the tape. This, as you may know, causes distortion. Levels which are too low degrade the S/N ratio, making more noise and less radio program for your fellow collectors.

Some programs are trickier to set levels on than others. Their levels may be very high at the opening fanfare of the show, then may be "droopy" for most of the rest of the show. In general, it is a bad practice to tamper with levels during a recording, but certain very slight adjustments are acceptable. Any adjustments you do make should be made very unobtrusively-don't make it obvious you're adjusting the levels--do so very gradually. Also, if you find that the meters suddenly "blast" into the red unexpectedly, it's a sign you set your initial levels incorrectly. You should find the "peak" recording level of the program first, set your maximum level based on that peak, then if necessary, start your recording over again, at the beginning. The extra minutes you spend doing this will be greatly appreciated by others, and you'll be helping to insure the quality of old time radio.

As I state in my book, don't get so wound up in the quantity of old time radio that you forget about the quality. I attach no value to 1000 reels of muffled garble, but I attach a great deal of value to 10 reels of clear, crisp old time radio with perfect levels. I think most collectors would feel the same way.

Again, a quick plug for my already mentioned book—its publication is planned for late this summer or early fall. Watch for ads here in Radio Digest In addition, a collector's directory is planned, as a bonus section of the book. If you'd like to be listed in the book, write me for information. The text itself will consist of over 40 pages, plus the directory. Commercial advertising space will also be available to dealers.

Enough plugging! Next column, we'll talk a little about recording tape—the best types to use for old time radio programs and why. I would also like to hear from you regarding your specific questions of a technical nature

relating to old time radio. . Write me in c/o Radio Digest, or at P.O. Box 39522, Redford, Michigan 48239-0522. . . and keep those tape heads clean, in the meantime!



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OOPS...

In the last issue part of the Ruth Feldman article, "Growing Up Gifted," was left out. Sorry about that. The missing segment starts after "You were the"— on page 12 half way down the second column, and ends with "Chicago—a decision I have, at".

only girl who would speak up in class."

On the other hand, I was hypersensitive to being regarded as a smart-alec, so I carried modesty to extremes. Once a kindly woman I met on a train told me I sounded like Ruthie Duskin, the Quiz Kid. I never let on that I was.

Other female Quiz Kids also had difficulty coming to terms with their reputation as "brains." Naomi Cooks Mann, my successor as the show's "cute little girl," believes that she and I "made it" as Quiz Kids because we fit the image the public wanted: females who were appealing and smart "but not too smart." She feels her efforts to live down her Ouiz Kid tag by getting in with the most popular high school crowd caused her to slide by with easy courses, avoiding science and math, and to postpone becoming assertive and defining career goals. Vanessa Brown, the Ouiz Kid who became a glamorous movie and stage star and then left it all for marriage and motherhood says her title of "Hollywood's IQtie" cost her some jobs. "In Hollywood," she told Life in 1953, "having a mind is alright if you conceal it behind a low-cut bosom." Some 15 years later, when actress Iill St. John mounted a PR

campaign as "the beauty with brains," Vanessa said to herself, "Now we've arrived."

Joan Moy Smith, who teaches gifted children in Naperville, Ill., recalls her only Quiz Kid appearance. "The reactions of other children made me verv uncomfortable. Older children would come to the classroom door and peer in at me. Some classmates drew away, as if I'd changed. Others were eager to be pals. I didn't enjoy feeling lonely and different, so I stopped answering questions in class. This seemed to reassure old friends, though it vexed my teacher, who kept handing me books to read." Joan adds that, "the afternoon before my appearance, the band director, attempting to cheer me up, told me I didn't have to say anything on the program. He added, 'It's better to be quiet and thought dumb than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.' So that night, I didn't raise my hand, although I knew several answers. The next day at school I felt relieved to be treated like an ordinary person again."

Many smart girls were closet scholars like Joan. They quietly did their assignments and pulled their A's — even became valedictorians, as I did — yet managed not to call attention to their intelligence. But being the most famous girl Quiz Kid made it difficult for me to hide.

By the time I got to college, with "Quiz Kids" behind me, I had weathered enough ribbing and summoned enough inner strength to realize I should be myself, and anyone who held my IQ against me was someone I didn't want for a friend.

But living down the label car-

ried a price. As a little girl, I loved to read and spent most of my waking hours with my nose buried in Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, Bultinch's Mythology, or The Secret Garden. My mother, fearing I would become a bookworm, steered me into more "well-rounded" activities like cutting, pasting, and clay-modeling. As I grew into puberty and yearned for social acceptance, I spent less and less time in intellectual pursuits. I also chose Northwestern over the unrelentingly cerebral University of

RADIO ACTRESS ROLLY BESTER DEAD

by George Wagner

Noted radio actress Rolly Bester died of cancer in New York City on Thursday, January 12, 1984. She was 66.

Rolly Bester was probably best known for her role of Gloria Mulvaney on the middle-1940s soap opera, BARRY CAMERON - THE STORY OF A SOLDIER. She was also a semi-regular on THE FAT MAN and other programs. She afterwards appeared on television on the early Sid Caesar shows.

Mrs. Bester apparently got into radio while appearing in several Broadway productions shortly before World War Two. She also appeared in the 1950 motion picture WITH THESE HANDS, a feature-length documentary on the clothing industry produced by the Garment Workers' Union.

In 1960 Rolly Bester became director of casting for the Ted Bates Advertising Agency in New York City. She also did voice-overs for commercials.

Mrs. Bester is survived by her husband, Alfred Bester, 70, one of the best radio script writers. Alfred Bester began his literary career in the late 1930s with stories in such science fiction and fantasy magazines as THRILLING WONDER STORIES, ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, and UNKNOWN WORLDS. He also wrote plot outlines and dialogue for comic books and newspaper comic strips.

Rolly Bester encouraged her husband to try radio writing, and the results were excellent scripts for such programs as THE SHADOW, NICK CARTER - MASTER DETECTIVE, and CHARLIE CHAN. Bester's NICK CARTER show "The Drums of Death" (March 25, 1944) is truly a gem. It is a tale of ghastly horror shot through with a strange and subtle humor. One of Bester's SHADOW programs currently in circulation is "The Man Who Was Death" (February 29, 1948). It is one of the best of the later SHADOW programs.

Alfred bester later wrote extensively for television, but he is best known today as a science fiction novelist. His novels THE DEMOLISHED MAN (1952) and THE STARS MY DESTINATION (1956) are regarded as genuine classics of modern science fiction.



Sources: SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE, March, 1984; THE BIG BROADCAST; THE SHADOW SCRAPBOOK; personal knowledge.

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THEATRE 10:30
    412 The Thing In The Hall; S.H. - Case Of The Devil's Foot
413 Ghost Town Hermit; The Yellow Wallpaper
414 The Wendy Sue; The Screaming Skull
POPEYE (15 min)
415 The Beanstalk; Robin Hood; Runaway Trolley; At The Zoo
CHALLENGE OF THE YUKON
     416 12/13/47 White Man's Law; D1/10/48 Tago The Half Breed
     17 02/06/48 The Shepard Dog; 04/24/48 A Diamond Pin Secures Loan For Grubstake
418 06/26/48 The Breakup; 10/04/48 The Criminal Mountie
419 12/01/48 Ned Johnson's Mine; 12/03/48 Strike On Mission Creek
 THE SHADOW (New & Rare Shows)
     420 02/20/38 Hounds in The Hills; 02/27/38 The Plot Murder
421 03/06/38 The Bride Of Death; 03/13/38 The Silent Avenger
     422 03/20/38 The White Legion; 02/12/39 Hypnotic Death
423 02/19/39 Friend Of Darkness; 02/26/39 Horror In Wax
424 G3/05/39 Sabotage By Air; 12/17/39 Murder Incorporated
                 12/24/39 The Stockings Were Hung; 12/31/39 The Cat That Killed
      425
     426 01/07/40 Murder In The Death House; 03/03/40 Death On The Bridge
427 03/10/40 The Laughing Corpse: 10/13/40 The Isle Of The Living Dead
428 02/03/41 The Chess Club Murders; 06/27/54 The Vengeance Of Angela Molan
 THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPACE (Including New & Rare Shows)
429 06/15/47 The Convertable Caper (AFRS); 11/09/47 The Bow Window Caper
              UN,15/47 The Convertable Caper (AFRS): 11/09/47 The Bow Window Caper 01/04/48 The One Hour Caper; 01/25/48 The Gold Key Caper (6) 08/01/48 The Dry Martini Caper; 08/08/48 The Blue Beard Caper 08/22/48 The Vaphio Cup Caper; 10/24/48 The Insomnia Caper (AFRS) 10/31/48 The Fairley Bright Caper; 11/07/48 The S.Q.P. Caper (AFRS) 11/28/48 The Quarter Eagle Caper; 12/12/48 The Bouncing Betty Caper 01/16/49 The Bumpass Hell Caper (AFRS); 03/27/49 The Love Letter Caper 04/17/49 Report On Edith Hamilton (AFRS); 04/10/49 The Stopped Watch Caper 06/05/49 The Overjord Caper; 05/01/49 The Battle Of Belvedere (AFRS) 06/19/49 The Annel of Eve Caper: 08/07/40 The Chammion Caper; 08/07/40 The Chammion Caper; 08/07/40 The Chammion Caper; 08/07/40 The Chammion Caper
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                 08/09/49 The Overgord caper; 08/07/49 The Champion Caper
11/08/49 The Apple Of Eve Caper; 08/07/49 The Champion Caper
11/08/49 The Cheesecake Caper; 12/08/49 The Flopsy, Mopsy And Cottentail Caper
Death Of Dr. Duvall; 11/17/50 The Caper Over My Dead Body
11/24/50 The Terrified Turkey Caper; 12/01/50 The Dog Bed Caper
      438
      439
                 1)/24/50 The Terriffed Turkey Caper; 12/03/50 The Dog Bed Caper
12/08/50 The Dry Gulch Caper; 12/15/50 The 25/123559 Caper
12/29/50 The Prodigal Panda Caper; 01/05/51 The Biddle Riddle Caper
      443
                  01/12/51 The Red Star Caper: 01/19/51 The Cloak And Dagger Caper
      444
                  01/26/51 The Chateau McLeoud Caper; 02/02/51 The String Of Death Caper
      446
                 02/09/51 The Sure Thing Caper; 02/16/51 The Soap Opera Caper
02/23/51 The Shot In The Dark; 03/02/51 The Crab Louie Caper
03/09/51 The Spanish Prisoner Caper; 03/16/51 The Sinister Siren Caper
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 449 03/30/51 The Vendetta Caper; 04/13/51 The Civic Pride Caper
THE JACK BENNY SHOW (New Shows)
     450 05/08/38 Mother's Bay Show; 05/15/38 Murder In The Library
451 05/22/38 The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer, Pt. 1; 05/29/38 Adv. Of Tom Sawyer, Pt. 2
452 06/05/38 Adv. Of Tom Sawyer, Pt. 3; 06/12/38 w/Joan Bennett
  THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE
      453 02/06/42 Auto Class; 02/22/42 Selling The Drug Store
454 03/01/42 Swami Gildersleeve; 03/15/42 One Of The Ten Best Dressed
               03/29/42 Letters To Servicemen; 04/26/42 The Goat
05/03/42 Ship Christening; 05/10/42 The Mystery Voice
05/17/42 The College Chum; 05/31/42 Dinner For Judge Hooker
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                06/07/42 The Sneezes; 06/14/42 The Play
06/21/42 The Father's Day Chair; 06/28/42 In Love
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      460 09/06/42 The Golf Tournament; 10/04/42 Planting A Tree
461 10/11/42 The First Cold Snap; 10/18/42 The Water Commissioner
                  10/25/42 First Day On The Job; 11/01/42 A Pal To LeRoy
                10/25/42 First Day On The Job; 11/01/42 A Pal To LeRoy
11/08/42 A Quiet Evening At Home; 11/15/42 College Chum's Son
11/22/42 Thanksgiving Dinner; 11/29/42 Attending The Theatre
12/06/42 The Toothache; 12/20/42 The Christmas Program
12/27/42 LeRoy's Xhestry Set; 01/10/43 A Visit From The McGee's
01/17/43 The Momer's Club Speech; 01/24/43 Sabotage In Summerfield
01/31/43 The New Fire Engine; 02/07/43 Leila's Sister
03/14/43 Income Tax Time; 03/28/43 Springtime In Summerfield
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   470 04/04/43 Auto Repairs; 04/11/43 Auto Accident With Hooker
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           05/09/43 The Wedding Suit; 05/16/43 The Spooky Burton Home
          06/26/43 The Wedding Solve, 05/10/43 The Memorial Day Parade 06/06/43 The Wedding Shower; 06/13/43 Honeymoon Preparations 06/27/43 The Big Day; 08/29/43 Vacation At Grass Lake 09/12/43 The Bond Drive; 09/19/43 Preparing For Lella FEAN INVESTIGATION
JEFF REGAN, INVESTIGATOR w/Jack Webb
   477
           07/17/48 The Prodigal Daughter; 07/24/48 The Lonesome Lady
   478 07/31/48 The Lady With The Golden Hair; 08/07/48 The Man Who Like The Mountain
          08/14/48 The Diamond Quartette; 08/21/48 The Man Who Came Back
         08/28/48 The Man In The Door; 09/04/48 The House By The Sea
09/11/48 Cain, Able, And The Santa Maria; 09/25/48 The Lady With No Name
          10/02/48 The Man With The Key; 10/16/48 The Lost Lady
483 11/20/48 The Pilgrim's Progress; 11/27/48 The Man Who Fought Back
JEFF REGAN, INVESTIGATOR & PETE KELLY'S BLUES
484 12/11/48 The Gambler And His Lady (JR); 07/24/51 The Wounded Man (PK)
PAT NOVAK FOR HIRE W/Jack Webb
   485 03/06/46 Fleet Lady (AFRS)(G); 03/13/46 Reuban Kelloway Out Of The Bay (AFRS)(G)
          03/27/46 Doreen Wilder's Brother (AFRS)(G): 11/24/46 Lee Underwood 04/02/49 The Joe Feldman Case (AFRS)(G); 04/16/49 The Dixie Gillian Case 04/23/49 The Body In Pat's Boot (AFRS)(G); 05/07/49 The Missing Shirts
           05/14/49 Geranium Plant; 05/21/49 The Letter From St. John (AFRS)(G)
           06/11/49 The 5.5. Calcutta; 06/18/49 We Want Joe Dineen
           08/03/49 The Corpse In The Closet (AFRS)(G); 1949 George Lampson
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          #13 Adv. Of The Garrulous Bartender; #14 Adv. Of The Vanishing Favorite
         #15 Adv. Of The Embittered Secretary; #16 Adv. Of The Talking Bullet
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   495 #19 Adv. Of The Violent Virtuoso; #20 Adv. Of The 4th Round Knockout 496 #21 Adv. Of Three On A Match; #22 Adv. Of The Roughneck's Will
  495 #27 Adv. Of The Green Doubloon; #22 Adv. Of The Sobbing Bodyguards
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502 #33 Adv. Of The Kandy Killing; $34 Adv. Of The Undecided Bride
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           #35 Adv. Of The Gold Worshipper; #36 Adv. Of The House Divided
FORT LARAMIE w/Raymond Burn
   504 01/22/56 Playing Indian; 01/29/56 Boatwright's Story
505 02/04/56 Squaw Man; 02/12/56 Woman At Horse Creek
           02/19/56 Boredom (G); 02/26/56 Captain's Widow
         03/04/56 The Shavetail; 03/11/56 Hattie Pelfrey
   507 03/04/56 The Shavetail; 03/11/56 Hattie Pelfrey
508 03/18/56 The Beasley Girls; 03/25/56 The Coward
509 04/01/56 The Lost Child; 04/15/56 Stagecoach Stop
510 04/22/56 The New Recruit; 04/23/56 The Capture
511 05/06/56 Never The Twain; 05/13/56 War Correspondent
512 05/20/56 Sold; 05/27/56 The Sergeant's Baby
513 06/03/56 Don't Kick My Horse; 06/10/56 The Young Soldier
514 06/17/56 The Winter Soldier; 06/24/56 The Loving Cup
515 07/01/56 Trooper's Midow; 07/08/56 Talented Recruits
516 07/16/56 The Qid Fnews; 07/22/56 Soutred Tail Returns
   507
          07/15/56 The Old Enemy; 07/22/56 Spotted Tail Returns
           07/29/56 Nature Boy; 08/05/56 The Massacre
    517
          08/12/56 Assembly Line; 08/19/56 Goodbye Willa
         08/26/56 The Chaplin; 09/02/56 The Return Of Hattie Pelfrey 09/09/56 Buffalo Hunters; 09/16/56 The Patrol
    521
           09/23/56 Woman At Horse Creek (repeat of 02/12/56);09/30/56 A Small Beginning
          10/07/56 Galvanized Yankee; 10/14/56 Still Waters
          10/21/56 The Indian Scout; 10/28/56 Army Wife (Last Show)
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