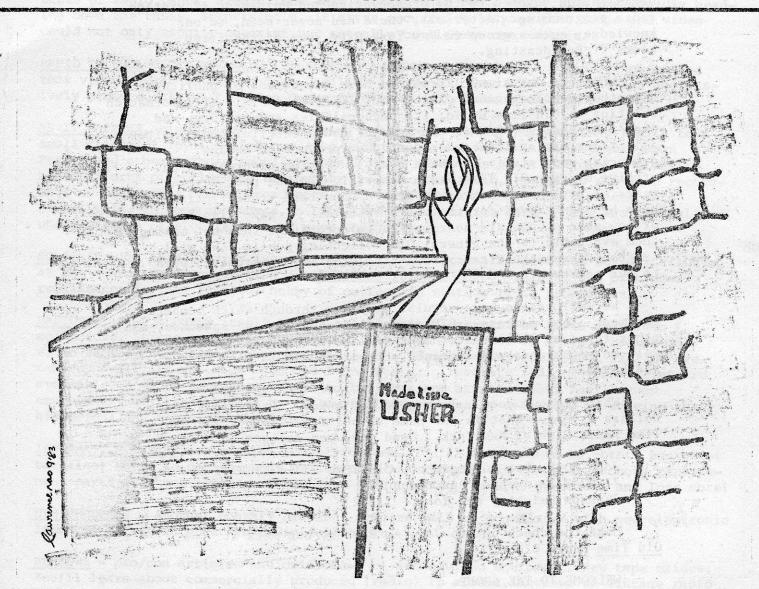


OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB OF NEW YORK
SPECIAL PREVIEW ISSUE
NOVEMBER, 1983
Lawrence Rao Production Editor



"...we put her living in the tomb! We heard the rending of the coffin, the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, her struggles within the coffin...

...the huge antique panels to which he pointed drew slowly back and outside the doors did stand the towering and enshrouded figure of Miss Madeline. There was blood on her white robes in evidence of some bitter struggle on every portion of her putrefied frame!"

Hello to Friends of Old Time Radio;

This is your personal invitation to join a fellowship of people whose first love is Old Time Radio. Several of us got together a few months ago and decided that there should be an organization devoted to the preservation and enjoyment of vintage radio programming. After all, there had never been, to our knowledge, such a group in New York City, one of the first homes of Broadcasting.

What are our aims? First, we have intentions of publishing a monthly news-magazine, called RADIOTEXT, chock full of information relating to Old Time Radio, its personalities and history, and what's happening TODAY in the area of radio entertainment. After all, there are still a few radio drama production houses producing good stuff. We have every intention of creating an archive of rare Old Time Radio material. In the past several years, I have heard horror stories of how rare transcriptions have been destroyed for the basic material. I have also heard of how some people are hoarding radio recordings thus not making them available to the general OTR collecting public. We will try to prevent these catastrophes by creating an archive, open to our membership and the general public.

We will try to have regular meetings through which members can meet other members, OTR personalities will give speeches, and other forms of OTR entertainment will be presented. We will welcome your ideas and comments on what you would like to see and hear.

What are our dues? I am glad you asked. It is only ten dollars a year. What is the name of our fellowship? The Old Time Radio Club of New York. Send your ten dollars to:

John A. Barber - President, Old Time Radio Club of New York 77-02 34th Avenue, Apartment B62 Jackson Heights, New York. 11372

Make the check out to John A. Barber, but mark it Old Time Radio Club.

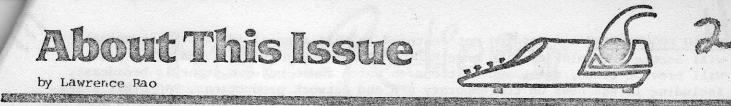
WELCOME TO THE GROUP.

Hope To See You Soon,

P.S. Please complete the questionnaire on the following page and return it with your dues.

About This Issue

by Lawrence Rao



SINCE THE INTRODUCTION of home video equipment, vintage radio collecting appeared to have fallen into a perpetual purgatory. Video quickly captured many dedicated radio enthusiasts. Some of the best hobbyists turned their backs on radio lured by beastial BETA and villanious VHS. The entire hobby diminished to a great degree.

THE DIVIDING LINE between video and audio had been drawn. Either you collected video tapes or radio tapes. Predictions were rampant that radio collecting was rapidly heading down the tubes. Surprisingly, it never occurred to anyone that radio and video could not only happily co-exist but actually complement one another.

RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES illustrated by BETA and VHS HI-FI audio, demonstrates that video and audio are running parallel paths. (Current SONY magazine ads aggressively promote BETA HI-FI video decks for "audio only" use to audiophiles.)

AS IT HAPPENS, vintage radio collecting had merely been in hibernation. Thanks to a small clique of loyal collectors like Jack Shugg, Max Schmid, Dave Siegel, John Furman and others, radio sustained the initial video onslaught. Through the determined efforts of collectors thoroughly committed to radio, new discs and wire recordings of previously 'lost' broadcasts were uncovered and unselfishly placed into circulation. In some instances, a familiar network series like ESCAPE was revitalized when episodes of excellent sound were unearthed.

SO IT IS with this preview issue of RADIOTEXT --- specially produced for distribution at the annual radio convention --- THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB OF NEW YORK proclaims a renaissance for the fabulous hobby of collecting vintage radio broadcasts.

RADIOTEXT WILL ADDRESS itself to the over-lapping interests of radio and video collectors. Strong emphasis, however, will always be placed on antique radio. Only video topics and articles that are radio-related in some unique aspect will be presented. We'll let you know what old films starring favorite radio personalities are available on video cassettes. Where to buy them and at what cost. You'll read competently written articles by fellow collectors equally concerned in sharing their historical and technical knowledge.

INFORMATION PLEASE - a regular monthly column. You'll learn where to obtain equipment bargains; where to get the best prices on blank tape; where to order factory replacement parts for home repairs. We'll even be answering reader's questions and lots more!

NEW PRODUCTS - another monthly heading. Members will be acquainted with new electronic items of direct interest to radio collectors.

REVIEWS - pro/con articles and criticisms of audio/video equipment. New tape oxides. You'll learn about commercially produced (radio) lp albums. Reviews of vintage radio series where you'll receive historical background and fun trivia of your favorite programs.

LETTERS TO RADIOTEXT - a reader's forum. Members are invited to send us their written views on radio topics or anything presented in the newsletter. Reader input can only serve to enhance RADIOTEXT insuring a better and more responsive club publication.

WHEN IT COMES TO RECORDING, 3 HEADS ARE EVEN BETTER THAN 2.

3-head recorders (with separate Erase, Record, Playback heads) allow Tape/Source monitoring for comparison during recording. They also allow for optimum performance by having the ideal wider record head gap and narrower playback head gap.

2-Head; during the recording process 3-Head; during the recording process only the source material is heard.

this time delay lets you hear the source and also hear the actual recording thru the playback head.

RADIO PROGRAMMING - a heading not featured in this special edition. It eventually will become a regular section once <u>RADIOTEXT</u> attains monthly status. This page will provide times, dates and stations on which radio entertainment is broadcast, including latest news on contemporary NPR and network productions. <u>RADIOTEXT</u> urges all members to keep us informed of what radio programming is being heard in your respective areas. (Send information to: Lawrence Rao, 1213 East 88th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11236)

THE RADIO ARCHIVES - the newsletter end-page. Every month it will feature nostalgic illustrations of radio's golden age. This editor will exert a determined effort to present reproductions of previously unpublished items. Members are invited to send any illustration they feel is of merit and interest.

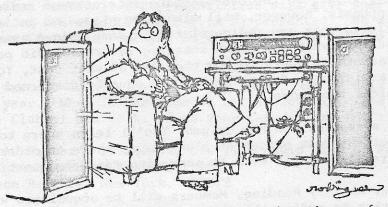
RADIOTEXT - official newsletter of THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB OF NEW YORK - is not in production. This preview issue was specially conceived to allow prospective members an opportunity to personally judge the caliber of monthly newsletter they will receive.

RADIOTEXT is committed to the promotion, preservation and collecting of antique radio broadcasts.

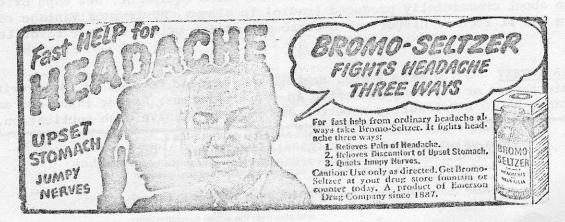
MEMBERS of THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB OF NEW YORK are cordially invited to submit any material they believe of interest to fellow enthusiasts.

MANUSCRIPTS sent to us for consideration must be typewritten, double-spaced and accompanied by a 9 x 12 SASE. Articles retaining political or religious themes will be rejected.

EDITOR-IN-CHARGE-OF-PRODUCTION - Lawrence Rao, 1213 East 88th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11236 Please send comments, manuscripts, questions, illustrations, radio programming information, et. al., to me directly.



"... To discourage illegal off-the-air taping of this live performance of Verdi's Aïda, we will intersperse fifteen-second recordings of barking seals at random intervals throughout this broadcast. Thank you."



Home Radiofor the Holidays

by Lawrence Rao

THANKSGIVING afternoon. Another turkey dinner has become a family memory. Smiles on everyone's face reflects the tell-tale contentment of stomachs stuffed to capacity with gravey, cranberries, sweet potatoes, turkey meat, vegetables and lots of Alka Seltzer. Everyone meanders into the living room where someone turns on the color TV. Uncle Stanley makes his traditional B-line to the most comfortable armchair and lights up his 45 cent coronacorona as he relaxes to watch holiday specials on the tube. But none of the networks are screening Thanksgiving specials. They were broadcast last week because it was a better time slot to capture the ratings. So everyone moans and groans (especially Uncle Stanley) and settles upon watching another rebroadcast of "Casablanca".

CHRISTMAS eve and the family is finally together for that once-a-year gathering of the clan. The Tree is bright and cheerful with holiday lights. There's an old fashioned festive atmosphere in the air. Even Uncle Stanley and Aunt Martha are speaking to one another despite their twenty-five year old feud. Eventually everyone settles into the living room to watch Christmas specials on the color TV. But there aren't any Christmas specials. They were all aired last week. So the family moans and groans and finally agrees to watch another re-broadcast of "Casablanca". (Aunt Martha verbalizes her annoyance at Uncle Stanley's imitation of Bogart.)

NEW YEAR'S has finally arrived. Uncle Stanley is back for the holiday dinner. He's anxious to watch his favorite New Year's broadcast of "The Horn Blows At Midnight". He's even captured the best armchair in the living room a full hour before the color TV is turned on. But "The Horn Blows At Midnight" isn't being broadcast this year. Instead, the networks are airing a live rock 'n roll show live from some night spot no viewer's ever heard of. And just to be sure viewer's don't miss their rock 'n roll New Year's Eve, the local stations are also bringing you some rock 'n roll broadcast. To someone like Uncle Stanley who believed Guy Lombardo played "noisey stuff", the situation is intolerable. And after dinner, he leaves for home never to be back till Easter.

FORTUNATELY, collectors of vintage radio broadcasts need not be blackmailed by the perversities of video programmers. Radio enthusiasts creatively enhance their holiday enjoyment by simply going to their cassette or open-reel collections featuring some of the greatest stars of Hollywood and classic radio.

HALOWEEN. A huge assortment of spine chillers are in circulation among radio collectors. Having a Haloween party? Then the Mercury Theater's production of "Dracula" (7/11/38) is an absolute must. Turn out the lights and listen to "The Flies" broadcast on The Black Mass (1963). Prefer more traditional gothic creepers? Then "The Uninvited" produced by Screen Director's Playhouse (11/18/49) is certain to solidify your bone marrow. Want something to terrify your party guests? Listen to "The Club of Dead Men" an outstanding radio episode from Nightfall broadcast in frightening FM-stereo.

Only "THE SHADOW" Knows!

THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS. It's a real challenge to select vintage radio programs for these holidays. However, these holidays traditionally over-lap one another and frequently seasonal vintage radio shows reflected the general Yuletime atmosphere of turkey and Christmas Tree decorating.

Only Fibber McGee & Molly could top-off Christmas morning. Their show of 12/25/51 was broadcast on Christmas Day and makes for wonderful Yuletime listening. (Be sure to hear their New Year's Day program of 1/1/52.) For Christmas Eve there's the Campbell Playhouse fabulous production of "A Christmas Carol" (1939) starring Orson Welles and Lionel Barrymore. An oft-produced favorite this Dickens classic can be heard in a more contemporary broadcast of "A Christmas Carol" on the CBS Radio Mystery Theater (12/24/75). Another version still, can be enjoyed on the BBC series Theater Royale. Their production stars Laurence Olivier and is complete in only 20 minutes. Nevertheless, it's quite excellent.

For comedy to help digest your turkey dinner there's the Abbott & Costello Program of 11/25/43 with guest Jane Wyman. This was a Thanksgiving show with lots of belly laughs. Don't forget to hear the Phil Harris/ Alice Faye Show of 12/19/48 titled "Santa Claus Benny" with guest Jack Benny. And the follow-up episode titled "Christmas Shopping For The Sponsor" 12/26/48.

For outright hilarity everyone should hear Fred Allen on the Town Hall Tonight broadcast of 12/22/37 in which Fred plays "Santa Claus On Strike". This skit became so famous that Fred Allen repeated it each year to the delight of his listeners.

No radio collector worth his tape would miss their annual shopping trip with Jack Benny. Each year Jack's been trying to buy Don Wilson the perfect Christmas gift. One year it was a gopher trap. Another year it was a set of water paints. All to the manical irritation of salesman Mel Blanc. One of the best of these annual shopping sprees of Jack can be heard on The Jack Benny Program of 12/5/54 ("Water Color Paints For Don").

If you're looking for off-beat Christmas radio entertainment then listen to Escape episode "The Cave" (12/29/50). It's a boy's fantasy on Christmas Day. Holiday radio with a mystery is brought to you on The Mysterious Traveler "Christmas Story" (12/27/51). Even The Shadow had a Christmas adventure titled "Joey's Christmas Story" (12/22/40) and "A Gift Of Murder" (12/21/41).

For pure World War II nostalgia listen to <u>Command Performance</u> special Christmas broadcast of 12/25/44. It's a two hour marathon program supposedly short-waved to GI's surrounded by the Germans amid the Battle of the Bulge. For Thanksgiving, there's <u>Command Performance</u> of 11/24/44 featuring Lionel Barrymore and an all-star cast.

Thanksgiving and Christmas are the sentimental holidays. So if that mood strikes you, then tune your ears to "A Very Private Miracle" (12/24/74) broadcast on the CBS Radio Mystery Theater. Also Mr. First Nighter "Little Town of Bethlehem" (12/24/45). The Truth Or Consequences show of 120/20/47 or Dragnet of 12/20/51 "The .22 Rifle". For plain fun there One Man's Family 12/21/47 "The Night Before Christmas".



TBANSHARING TO BARBA

WHATS THIS BUG SEGRET?

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF AN ELECTRICAL TRANSCRIPTION OR AN EXERCISE IN LOW TECH by

Jack Shugg

As co-host (along with Max Schmid) of WBAI's ORIGINAL GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO, I'm frequently asked where old time radio shows come from. Well, as most of you know, the majority of them have been around for years. Some come from old acetate recording tape --- the kind that falls apart if you even sneeze at it! --- and some come from E.T. discs. (No, that's NOT some little guy looking for a phone.) "E.T." stands for "Electrical Transcription". The E.T. was standard for the broadcast industry from the early 1930's.

They were cut discs used by broadcasters to keep a record of what was sent out over the air. Much the same as a modern radio station uses a logger tape. In most cases, they were never intended to be used for broadcast. Discs marked "Syndication" or "For Delay Broadcast" were made for air play and are usually of superior quality.

Now the questions: What are they? What are they made of? And, most of all, what do I do with them?

For the most part, they are 16" discs (records) made of thin film of either acetate or bakealite bonded over a platter of either aluminum or glass. Glass was used during the Second World War because aluminum was a war priority metal. This is why so few shows exist from the war years.

As to what you do with if you're fortunate enough to find some, is not so easy. First, you have to find a transcription table. This, for the most part, looks just like an ordinary record turntable. The main difference is the platter size. This table must have the capability of holding a 16" disc with plenty of clearance for the tone arm. Unlike the modern turntable which handles lightweight long playing records, this one must be able to handle some unusual weight.

The discs themselves weigh up to a pound apiece. In some cases, you will need a "record anchor". This is a lead weight locked in place over the discs on the spindle. It adds approximately five pounds to the load. So you see, the turntable must be heavy duty.

Keep prices down! For Victory and your own post-war security do these seven things: I. Buy only what you need and make things last. 2. Pay no more than ceiling prices.

3. Pay increased taxes willingly. 4. Pay off old debts and avoid new ones. 5. Live within present income. 6. Build up savings and life insurance for the future. 7. Buy and hold more War Bonds.

FORGET everything you've been told about tracking records. These things, tone-arms, and discs, track at ounces. REPEAT: Ounces, not grams. So don't even think about using your expensive hi-fi stylus and cartridge. You'll tear 'em to ribbons!

What you'll need, is a 16" or 12" tone-arm. The best one to do the job was made by REC-O-CUT. It's not easy to get one now-a-days. Then you'll need a #681-A cartridge with a D-6827 stylus. (A WORD OF WARNING! This stylus is 2.7 mil and will ruin any modern lp almost instantly.) You will note that on all 16" transcription discs there is the proper tracking weight for the disc in question. This will read on Ounces. All you need now is a pocket full of change.

Nickles, dimes, quarters and pennys. These are needed to weight the tone-arm for proper tracking. After a little experimentation, you'll get the hang of it.

Now as I've said, this is IOW-TECH at its worst. So you'll want to patch your ton-arm 'output' directly into the 'input' of your tape recorder. Yeah, I know that ain't the way you think it should be done. But that's the way to do it.

Now if you have a plant mister from your window garden, which I'll explain later, you're almost ready to record. And this is where it starts to get a little expensive. The 16" disc, by its nature, contains about 15 or 16 minutes of playing time PER SIDE. So for each half-hour show you must have TWO discs.

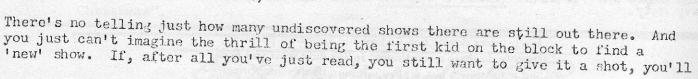
There are times the disc will end in mid-sentence. Therefore you will be required to "MATE" the discs, and there's where the expensive part comes in......

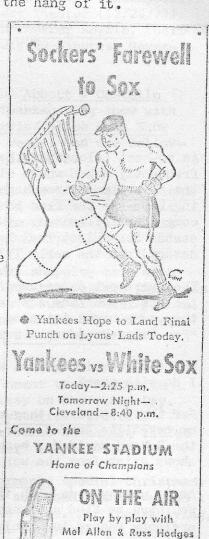
In order to "Mate" the discs, it will be necessary to record BOTH HALVES first, and then edit by splicing them together. At 7 1/2 ips, this means you can put only one show on a reel. If you intend to use any equalization, it's advisable to do it AFTFR the discs have been dubbed. This will save wear and tear on the discs. And you may be able to remove some of the surface noise.

Now for the plant mister. (Bet you thought I was kidding.) Since the last network to use discs gave them up in 1975 (and most in the 1950's), you can imagine the amount of crud in the grooves.

A simple washing with a little soap and water will remove most dirt. Sometimes, no matter what you do, you can't get rid of the surface noise. If you spray a light film of plain tap water on the disc while it's playing, you'll find a dramatic differences. I've also been told that a light spray with "pledge" or some other household furniture wax will also help reduce the noise. The're perhaps a hundred tricks you'll be able to teach yourself once you've acquire

tricks you'll be able to teach yourself once you've acquired the knack of things. (That is, if you still want to!)





WINS-1010

By White Owl Cigars

find that BOYNYON STUDIOS, Melody Pines Farm, Morris, New York 13808, can supply a lot of the equipment that you'll need.

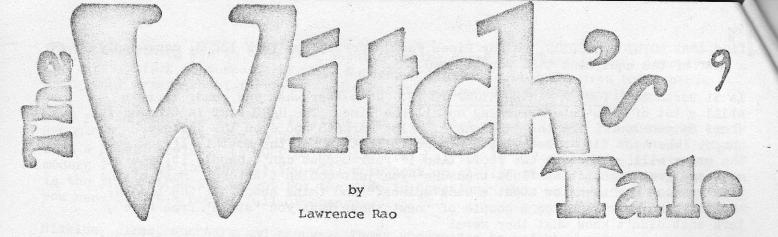


Is it worth it? YOU'RE DAMNED RIGHT IT IS. No matter what you read, there's still a lot of 'new' stuff turning up all the time. The HARD PART is finding it. Where do you look? Try the junk shops. Flea markets and even the anitque shops. When you find something, don't go in frothing at the mouth! If you do, the price will go through the roof. And if your budget can't handle it, you'll moan and groan about that 'lost treasure' you just couldn't afford. Most of the time you can buy them for about a buck apiece. And think about all the trades that'll come your way from a couple of 'new' shows that you 'stole' from some jerk that didn't know what they were!

I know most of you reading this will think: why all the bother? Well, my friend, to me it's like having Christmas in July...August or any other month. Just knowing that I'm the only person to hear a program since it was first broadcast. And THAT makes it worth it.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jack Shugg has been collecting vintage radio broadcasts for nearly twenty full years. During the decades in which he has so strongly influenced and sharply enhanced the hobby, Jack has consistently demonstrated his unselfish view-points of sharing all antique radio broadcasts regardless of rarity and/or unique sound quality. Along with his co-producer Max Schmid, Jack earnestly strives to offer radio hobbyists a full hour of authentic vintage broadcasts in their original, un-edited editions each and every Saturday mornings from 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM over radio station WBAI-FM STEREO. On behalf of all collectors of radio programs I have invited Jack to provide us with a continuing series of articles dealing with the lesser-known, technical aspects of salvaging discs, wire recordings and the delicate process of transferring them to contemporary open-reels and cassettes. LR





"If you gentlemen are wise," sternly advises a taxi driver waiting for a fare in the night darkened train station, "you'll take the first train back up North and forget the place [was] ever left you. That old house ain't been lived—in for nigh a hundred years —— for good reason. Folks here call it 'graveyard mansion' cause it's the house of the living dead!"

Classic dialogue sets a grim and frightening atmosphere for a terrifying excursion into perveted love and vampirism in "The Graveyard Mansion" produced on THE WITCH'S TALE in 1933. It's a haunting tale of two brothers arriving in a small Southern town one dark and lonely night to claim their inheritance of an ante-bellum plantation. An ancient mansion accursed with a gruesome secret that lurks amid the headstones and tombs of a neglected and long forgotten graveyard.

Written and produced by Alonzo Dean Cole, THE WITCH'S TALE was first syndicated in 1931. Broadcast initially twice each week, stories were complete in two 15 minute portions which were usually heard Monday and Wednesday nights at 7:30 PM. All episodes were studio recorded on electrical transcriptions by J. G. Byers of the Byers Recording Laboratory, New York City. When originally broadcast in New York City, the series was sponsored by Macy's Department Store. THE WITCH'S TALE was one of the few popular network programs that was not broadcast live over the air. Credited by radio historians as the earliest all-terror showcase, the series set the basic style and format of all aural horror that was later duplicated to a great degree by the more commonly remembered INNER SANCTUM and THE HERMIT'S CAVE.

Stories were marrow chilling yarns of vampires, witchs, haunted houses, black magic, demons, devils, souls lying restlessly in unhallowed graves. The early scripts were presented before the FCC set-up broadcast standards of censorship. Thus initial transcriptions contained themes of lust, sex and graphic violence. Even minor cursing, which later became absolute taboo on radio, was frequently incorporated into the dialogue.

During its entire radio run from 1931 to 1938, the series featured Old Nancy the Witch of Salem. She was a crackling voiced female whose dialect was a cultural combination of Dark Ages and Brooklynese. Against a stringed background of music that was deliberately melodramatic and harsh on the ears and nerve, Old Nancy spun yarns of murder, of madness, of mayhem and persistant terror. Never once did Old Nancy reveal her true age. In one program she's "...a hundred and eleven year old I be today...", while in another show she's "...a hundred an three year old I be today..." And she'd cackle a mocking laugh at us while Satan, her wise black cat, would purr and meow in a most threatening yaw.

"The terms of Mrs. Hawker's will were specific and clear," firmly declares the family attorney, "in spite of rather strange provisions. You're to reside in this house for a period of one year, during which time you'll sleep in the master bedroom upstairs

which was formerly occupied by Mrs. Hawker. You are not to pass so much as a single night away from here and you must spend at least three hours in that bedroom from every midnight to sunrise —— alone."

Dialogue from "The Hairy Monster". Certainly one of the finest horror stories presented on THE WITCH'S TALE. This unique journey into the shadowed depths of a haunted house is enhanced by an undefined menace whose presence is very real and very deadly. So superb is this spine tingler that it was slightly rewritten and broadcast on the CBS RADIO MYSTERY THEATER on 12/26/74 as "The Ghostly Private Eye".

Roger Bower is credited as series director. However, it is believed by some radio historians that a considerable number of broadcasts were actually directed (either in whole or part) by the series scripter/creator Alonzo Dean Cole. Little is known about Cole. In addition to his radio scripts, Alonzo Dean Cole was a frequent contributor to many mystery/horror pulp magazines of the day. He also penned scripts for later-dated radio programs like COUNTERSPY.

Being a studio recorded, syndicated series, cast members of THE WITCH'S TALE consisted of a stock company of contracted actors and actresses. Unfortunately, I've never been able to track-down the actual names of any of the performers other than that of Adelaide Fitzallen who portrayed Old Nancy the Witch of Salem.

Although LICHT'S OUT is traditionally credited for telling its audience to "...turn out your lights..." and enjoy another venture into macabre fantasy, the menacing invitation actually originated on THE WITCH'S TALE. In 1931, Old Nancy rattled her sinister laugh and told listeners: "We'll be gettin' down to our yarn-spinnin', if ye'll tell folks to douse all lights."

"Lookout for yourself if SHE loves you!" warns an old Roman inscription carved into an achient bronze statue of Venus. It's a life-sized artifact unearthed by two archaeologists in "The Bronze Venus" broadcast in 1933 on THE WITCH'S TALE. In the classic tradition of all great horror stories, the three thousand year old warning is jeered at by the historians. The younger of the two diggers foolishly places his engagement ring on the metalic finger of the bronze Venus and... Here again, we have a top-notch theme barely rewritten and presented in a contemporary radio production on the CBS RADIO MYSTERY THEATER on 4/30/74 as "The Venus d'lle". And both the 1933 and 1974 broadcasts are superb creepers.

Syndicated to networks and local stations alike, THE WITCH'S TALE enjoyed a season or two on CBS. But its greatest air glory spanned 1935-1938 when it was broadcast on Tuesday nights by Mutual.

Episodes of THE WITCH'S TALE having quality fidelity have long been sought by collectors of vintage radio horror. Original broadcast discs suffer a notorious reputation for their god-awful sound properties. Whether this is due to the age and bad storage of the discs or the technology that recorded them, remains undetermined. Program copies have long been in circulation. Most available duplicates are plagued with a plethora of audio problems which, in most cases, renders them totally unlistenable. A handful of episodes in extremely rare excellent sound do indeed exist. It's up to you, the collector, to seek them out from fellow radio enthusiasts. I guarantee your efforts will be —— shall we say, frightening!



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