

Past Times

No. 30 THE NOSTALGIA ENTERTAINMENT NEWSLETTER \$5.00

Revisiting the Movies' Reluctant Gangster

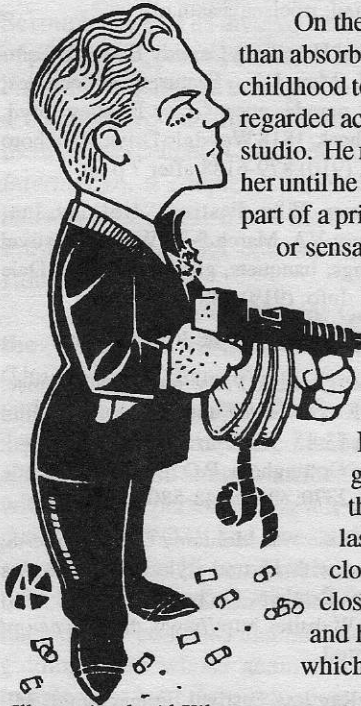


Illustration by Al Kilgore

On the surface, the life of James Cagney might make for a less than absorbing book. Sure, he rose from a dirt-poor Lower East Side childhood to become an internationally renowned star, but he always regarded acting as "just a job," and was happy to get away from the studio. He married his sweetheart at age 23 and remained devoted to her until he died. He had a handful of close friends and a few hobbies, part of a private life which hadn't the merest hint of anything gaudy or sensational.

All of which makes it even more impressive that John McCabe's new book *Cagney* (Knopf; 468 pages, hardcover; \$29.95) is such a deeply enjoyable read.

But McCabe is uniquely qualified to write about Jim (the actor disliked "Jimmy," attached to him by Warner Bros.). An actor of long standing himself, McCabe was ghostwriter for the ironically titled book *Cagney By Cagney*, the research for which began a friendship in 1973 which lasted until Cagney's death. Further, McCabe was very close to Pat O'Brien and Frank McHugh, two of the actor's closest friends. McCabe's understanding of Cagney as artist and his intimate knowledge of the man illuminate this book, which is also the product of prodigious research.

O'Brien used to call Cagney "the faraway fella," and if he seemed remote at times it's because he was absorbing, thinking, reflecting—gathering material for future performances, but mainly just marveling at the wonders of life. (A hobby of long-standing was writing poetry, much of it quoted here.) He was among the most articulate of actors, and his detailed reflections about his friends and his world are incisive and delightful. His comments about the films in which he appeared are often negative, although McCabe balances things with more objective evaluations.

Cagney's life was not always placid. He frequently battled with studio chief Jack Warner (he hated playing gangsters and longed for more varied roles, as well as a better salary). In 1934 he was briefly, and mistakenly, thought by a publicity-seeking DA to be a Communist sympathizer. Possibly the most controversial aspect of Cagney's life is one he thought perfectly rational: in 1940 the Cagneys adopted two children; to ensure that Jim's concentration in learning lines would not be disturbed, the kids were given a separate, smaller house on the property, where they lived with a housekeeper. This remoteness practically guaranteed problems for the children in later life, although Jim certainly loved them and seems to have been a doting father when he had time for them.

Cagney illuminates the essence of the man and celebrates the gifts of the actor in graceful, elegant prose. John McCabe is best known for several volumes about Laurel & Hardy; as a lifelong L&H devotee, I have to admit I'm a trifle miffed that he has accomplished his finest writing in a work about another subject. (Available in bookstores.)

Radio's Best in a Box

If you know a youngster who's heard about old-time radio and wants to know what it's like...or if you do a lot of driving and want some imaginative entertainment along for the ride...or if you just want to reacquaint yourself with a whole bunch of radio's finest shows, you can't do any better than **Old Time Radio's Greatest Shows** (Radio Spirits #4018; \$59.98), a 20-cassette, 30-hour extravaganza which has representative examples of most of the best shows of the era.

The 60 programs here cover radio's peak years artistically, if not financially (primarily the post-war era and the '50s). They range from the Jack Benny show of January 17, 1943 to a *Suspense* episode ("Fleshpeddler," starring the future *Star Trek* cast member DeForest Kelley) from August 4, 1957. Note that this collection is not intended as an all-inclusive history of "golden age" radio: you won't find soap operas, news programs, or the daytime action-adventure shows for kids. You will, however, find a great variety of prime-time shows, all of which are still marvelously entertaining.

Each 90-minute cassette has three shows, which means that the middle show is split at the halfway point. These breaks are very sensitively done; the fade-out and fade-in is engineered so that not a moment of the program is lost. The tapes are generally grouped by theme, so that Tape 1 has great comedians (*Burns & Allen*, *Jack Benny*, *Jimmy Durante*); Tape 2 is Westerns (*The Lone Ranger*, *The Cisco Kid*, *Hopalong Cassidy*); Tape 20 is detective drama (*Johnny Dollar*; *Richard Diamond*; *The Saint*) and so on. Each show is complete and unedited, including the original commercials, and all have excellent sound quality.

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Love Vintage Movies, Big Bands, Old Time Radio?
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NOSTALGIA NEWSWIRE

Hearty congratulations to **Universal Home Video** and particularly senior vice president **Charlie Katz** for continuing to mine the vaults for more treasures; new VHS releases include the **Deanna Durbin** features *Up in Central Park*, *Something in the Wind*, and *For the Love of Mary*; the 1952 **Ozzie & Harriet** feature *Here Come the Nelsons*; and three westerns starring **Buck Jones** in Universal's new "Matinee" series. Some **Tom Mix** material will be released soon... **Arthur Rand** joined the **Ink Spots** in 1952 as the successor to the original lead tenor, **Bill Kenny**; he's worked to keep the quartet's sound alive. He's one-fourth of The Legendary Ink Spots, who've been working together since 1980, and who have a new album on cassette: *If I Didn't Care and Other Great Hits*. Watch for a review in our next issue; in the meantime, you can order it for \$12.95 postpaid from Macrotone, P.O. Box 566, Patton CA 92369; (909) 793-2524... **George Burns** is being saluted in a very nice way, in two new dolls sold exclusively at Toys "R" Us. One shows George as he looked in 1932 at the start of his radio career, and the other depicts him in 1991 for his 95th birthday TV special. Both dolls are about 9" tall and retail for less than \$20; more info at <http://www.exclusivepremiere.com>... **The Vitaphone Project** reports that 68 more of these vintage shorts have become candidates for restoration, thanks to the discovery of both mute prints and soundtrack discs. They include films by such hot '20s dance bands as **Waring's Pennsylvanians**, **Paul Tremaine**, **Abe Lyman** and three shorts by the great **Earl Burtnett** orchestra—not to mention other favorites such as the **Rollickers**, the **Revelers**, **Billy Jones & Ernie Hare**, the **Yacht Club Boys** and **Van & Schenck**. A typical restoration for a one-reel short costs \$2500 to \$3,000. For more info, write The Vitaphone Project c/o **Ron Hutchinson**, 5 Meade Court, Piscataway NJ 08854... A new stamp honoring *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) as the first narrative film was unveiled January 19, part of a new series commemorating great people and events of the 20th century... *Past Times* salutes clarinetist **Don Byron**, who has already done much to introduce the public to the zany klezmer music of **Mickey Katz**; he's now making people aware of the great music of **Raymond Scott**, and of **John Kirby**, the bassist who led the "Biggest Little Band in the Land" in the late '30s. His newest album, *Bug Music* (Nonesuch) makes plain the previously unexplored traits shared by Scott, Kirby and **Duke Ellington**. Fans of Raymond Scott will also want the new CD by Holland's **Beau Hunk's Sextette**; *Manhattan Minuet* (Basta) uncannily recreates 14 of Scott's quirky originals in high fidelity sound. Although hard to find in US record stores, you can order on-line from <http://www.basta.nl>... Actor-singer **Paul Robeson** made a handful of films in the '30s, mainly in England; Kino on Video will soon release VHS cassettes of *Song of Freedom*, *Jericho*, *Big Fella* and, most enticingly, *Body and Soul*, a silent film directed by legendary black filmmaker **Oscar Micheaux**. All have been mastered from 35mm archive prints, and *Body and Soul* has a new jazz score. Contact Kino at (800) 562-3330; <http://www.kino.com>... A recent *New York Times* article pointed up some controversy over the new **Kansas City Jazz Museum**, which opened in September; the small building has exhibits honoring **Louis Armstrong**, **Duke Ellington**, **Ella Fitzgerald** and **Charlie Parker**, only the last of whom is a Kansas City musician (wonder if anyone at the museum has heard about that city's Coon-Sanders Nighthawks or Bennie Moten?)... The estate of the late **Ray Bolger** has donated \$2.5 million to UCLA to start a musical theater program... **Lionel Hampton** is performing again, and he's also filed a \$10 million lawsuit against three firms which sold the halogen lamp which caused his apartment to be set ablaze last January... **Frank Sinatra** was just given a special Award of Merit from the American Music Awards, and **Jelly Roll Morton** was inducted as an "early influence" into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame...

When ordering books reviewed in *Past Times*, please note that prices are retail and do not include shipping. You should add \$4.00 for the first book, .75 each additional book, plus applicable state sales tax.

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Past Times

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CALENDAR

Please send notice of forthcoming events to: Past Times, 7308 Fillmore Drive, Buena Park CA 90620. Be sure to include a phone number for additional information.

FILM EVENTS & FESTIVALS

Memphis Film Festival, Hollywood Casino, Memphis TN, August 5-8. Dozens of movies screened; memorabilia on display and for sale. Guests include Frances Dee, Joan Leslie, Sean McClory. Info: P.O. Box 40272, Memphis TN 38174; e-mail: rnielsen@aetn.org

Eight Annual Hopalong Cassidy Festival, Cambridge OH, May 1-2. Featuring collectibles, screenings, parade, guest Grace Bradley Boyd. Info: Jon Cheek, 1818 Woodglo Drive, Asheboro NC 27203; (910) 879-6188 after 7 p.m.

Williamsburg Film Festival, Holiday Inn, Williamsburg VA, March 5-7. Western festival has screenings, banquets, guests including Dale Robertson. Info: (919) 688-1130.

MUSIC EVENTS & FESTIVALS

Jazz-N-Aweigh Jazz Party and River Cruise, Riverside Resort Hotel and Casino, Laughlin NV, March 13-15. Trad jazz bands spotlighted. Info: Diane Cottingham, P.O. Box 7370, Seattle WA 98133-2370; (800) 348-5800.

Swing 'n' Dixie '98, Monterey CA, March 5-8. Jazz festival with 15 trad-style bands and plus new Dorsey Brothers Orchestra. Info: 1-888-349-6879; Website: <http://www.dixiejazz.com/monterey.html>.

Zehnders Ragtime Festival, Frankenmuth MI, April 23-26. Ragtime concerts, vaudeville night, seminars, silent movies with ragtime accompaniment. Info: (800) 863-7999.

Great Falls Jazz Festival, Great Falls MT, April 30-May 1. Traditional jazz, ragtime, swing. Info: Montana Dixieland Jazz Festivals, P.O. Box 856, Helena MT 59624; (406) 449-7969.

OLD-TIME RADIO/TV EVENTS

REPS Radio Showcase VI, Seattle, June 19-20. Convention will spotlight "Radio Families," with many performers from the world of OTR in attendance. Info: Showcase VI, P.O. Box 723, Bothell WA 98042; e-mail: hrrmikes@aol.com

COLLECTIBLES SHOWS & EVENTS

Houston, Texas Autograph Show and Sale, Holiday Inn (7787 Katy Freeway), Houston TX, February 8. Info: (281) 807-9797.

South Jersey's Movie, TV, Autograph Memorabilia Show, Holiday Inn, Cherry Hill, NJ, February 21-22. Info: (609) 795-0436.

Hollywood Collectors and Celebrities Show, Beverly Garland Hotel, 4222 Vineland Ave., Hollywood CA, April 4-5. Info: Ray Courts P.O. Box 5040, Spring Hill FL 34611; (352) 683-5110

Movies

Selznick's Vision 20/20

Darryl Zanuck creatively guided—down to the tiniest detail—over one thousand films, both as a producer for others and as the head of a major studio. David O. Selznick was just as involved in every stage of production, but once he left MGM to form his own company, he managed to make only a comparative handful of films. Most of them were excellent (*A Star Is Born*, *Rebecca*, *Intermezzo*), a couple of them were only halfway successful (*Duel In the Sun*, *The Paradine Case*), but one was the classic Hollywood movie.

In **Selznick's Vision: Gone With the Wind and Hollywood Filmmaking** (University of Texas Press; 256 pages, paperback; \$30.00), author Alan David Vertrees argues that Selznick's contribution was something far different from the "meddling" with creative personnel, as it's sometimes described. GWTW had three directors and something like 15 screenwriters; this has been seen as indecision on Selznick's part, but Vertrees contends that Selznick was the guiding hand whose acumen and artistic imagination kept the production together.

Key to this was Selznick's creating the position of Production Designer, now a requisite part of any film's staff. Through dozens of illustrations, Vertrees shows how William Cameron Menzies gave the film a coherent look despite the changing directors. (Menzies himself directed a few scenes, among them the famous pullback shot of the wounded soldiers; Victor Fleming helmed most of the film, with Sam Wood substituting for six weeks. George Cukor, the scheduled director, did so only briefly, but assisted Vivien Leigh greatly during rehearsals and throughout the production.) The contributions of screenwriter Sidney Howard and Selznick's role in shaping the final script are also examined.

Vertrees spent ten years poring through the Selznick archives—memos, scripts, storyboards and all manner of correspondence. While there are many previous books about the production of GWTW, this one will rank as an authoritative source, one which establishes Selznick as the film's guiding intelligence. (Available in bookstores or on-line from <http://www.amazon.com>.)



Zanuck: Crazy Like a Fox

Darryl F. Zanuck has been remembered more for his coarse and flamboyant personality than for his accomplishments. At a lavish 1954 party held at Ciro's in honor of his daughter, Zanuck suddenly tore off his shirt and attempted some chin-ups on a trapeze; the spectacle was printed in *Life* and became an indelible image of the producer. He was a frequently profane, cigar-chomping, driven man whose extramarital escapades in his office and elsewhere were legendary (writer Nunnally Johnson said that Zanuck thought sex was "something you did on a desk").

George F. Custen argues in **Twentieth Century's Fox** (Basic Books; 435 pages, hardcover; \$27.50) that Zanuck's real contributions to American culture have been overlooked. Unlike the other studio moguls, Zanuck was a gentile, and not from New York. His childhood was divided between Southern California and his birthplace of Wahoo, Nebraska, and the Midwestern values of his maternal grandparents had a profound effect on his movies. Zanuck's early triumphs came at Warner Brothers, where he invented the Rin-Tin-Tin series, guided *The Jazz Singer*, redefined the gangster genre with *Little Caesar* and gave new life to the musical with *42nd Street*. Zanuck was a very involved producer, constantly refining details large and small of several movies simultaneously. His amazing involvement and energy only increased in 1933 when he formed a new company, Twentieth Century, which in 1935 merged with the struggling Fox studio.

Custen's book is loaded with detail, most of it illuminating but some of it unnecessary; he could have used Zanuck's skillful editing. He has a tendency to make a point, make it again, and finally obscure it through a mass of examples. He sometimes makes claims for the producer that are questionable (he writes that Zanuck discovered James Cagney, but John McCabe's new Cagney biography maintains that Jack Warner saw and signed the actor at the insistence of Al Jolson), and there are some inaccuracies (a scene attributed to 1928's *The Singing Fool* is actually from 1935's *Go Into Your Dance*, made after Zanuck left Warners). Still, Mr. Custen makes a very persuasive and well-documented case for Zanuck's skill in all elements of filmmaking, and shows how he reflected and influenced American cultural values.

Remembering the Movies' Artists and Artwork

The Stars of Hollywood Remembered by J.G. Ellrod (McFarland & Co.; 196 pages, softcover; \$38.50) can best be described as a selective necrology/tribute book. There is no pretense in the selection of performers: those chosen are plainly and without apology the author's favorites. A follow-up to Ellrod's 1989 book *Hollywood Greats of the Golden Years*, this book also briefly discusses the careers of the recently deceased. Eighty-two actors and actresses are discussed, with a photo, brief career summary and filmography for each. The individual essays take a chronological approach to the actor's life until the time of his or her initial film work. The subject's personal life is omitted until a wrap-up at the end of the entry. Perhaps most disappointing is the "...and then he died" approach to many entries. While the actor's career during the "golden years" is always detailed, the reader could easily think these actors were dormant for the last twenty years of their lives. Late in life career surges by the likes of Don Ameche and Helen Hayes are virtually ignored. Further, we wonder how one can mention Gene Kelly in even the most brief of discussions without citing *Singing in the Rain*, or Dorothy Lamour without including the *Road* pictures.

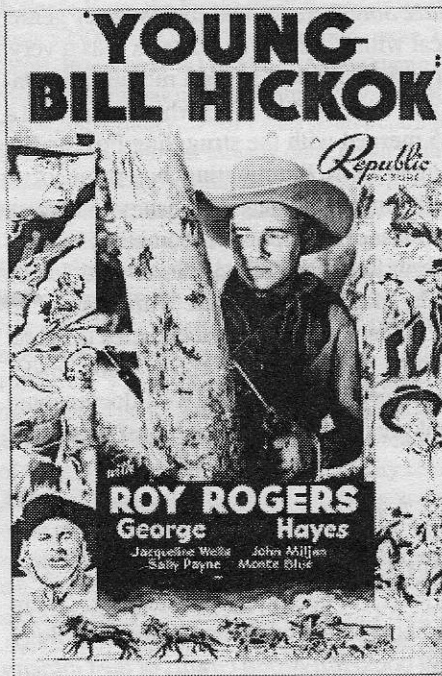
Collecting Movie Posters: An Illustrated Reference Guide to Movie Art—Posters, Press Kits, and Lobby Cards by Edwin E. Poole and Susan T. Poole (McFarland & Company; 160 pages, softcover; \$30) is a good book for those of us who have a great interest in movie art, but possess little technical knowledge. The authors explain such terms as "one sheets" and "window cards" that are common vocabulary to the experienced collector but a foreign language to the novice. The history of movie art is discussed, formats are explained and guidelines for grading and obtaining these items are given. For anyone thinking of entering the now very expensive field of movie memorabilia collecting, this book will be a great resource. (Available from McFarland & Co., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640; (910) 246-4460.)

—Rob Stone

Western Film Books Corralled

Among the various movie genres, the Western is the one that's always left for dead, but which keeps springing back to life. The studio heads who wrote off Westerns after the sound revolution didn't foresee that the Western would roar back into popularity in the mid-'30s. The horse opera would continue to be wildly popular on movie screens through the '40s, and became a mainstay of TV all through the '50s. There haven't been as many big-screen Westerns since that decade, although two of them have been awarded the Oscar for Best Picture in the '90s—*Dances With Wolves* and *Unforgiven*.

Those two films and twelve others are profiled in **The Golden Corral** by Ed Andreychuk (McFarland & Co., 192 pages, paperback; \$32.95 postpaid). Among them are the vintage favorites *Stagecoach*, *Red River*, *High Noon*, *Shane* and *The Searchers*. Andreychuk, whose first book this is, writes well and does a fine job of explaining why each film deserves its classic status. Further, he provides much interesting background on each film's production and also provides historical information about events in the film. (The *Red River* chapter includes a concise profile of Old West cattle rancher Richard King, whose real-life success driving livestock into Abilene echoes a plot point in the movie.) A full synopsis and credit listing is given for each film, and 28 photos supplement the text.



More of the correlation—or lack of it—between the real West and its Tinseltown counterpart is shown by Western aficionado Buck Rainey in his newest book, **Western Gunslingers In Fact and On Film** (McFarland; 352 pages, paperback; \$38.00 postpaid). It's great fun to see the contrast between the real characters and the glamorized recreations offered by Hollywood. As Rainey notes in one example, "The movies have generally depicted a highly romanticized version of Belle Starr and her escapades, à la luscious Gene Tierney...In reality she was a hatchet-faced woman with the disposition of a coiled rattlesnake." Stills of the real Starr and her filmed counterparts bear this out. Rainey provides the true histories of Billy the Kid, the James-Younger Gang, the Dalton-Doolin Gang, Belle Starr, Wyatt Earp, Wild Bill Hickok and Bat Masterson, then gives a full filmography for each, detailing the storyline and providing quotes from original reviews.

Most of the films listed are from the '30s and '40s (B-Westerns and serials included), but any film depicting the given personality is fair game. The Billy the Kid filmography, for example, includes everything from an eponymous 1911 Vitagraph one-reeler to such recent items as *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*. A great idea for a book, very well realized.

A related book is Ron Lackmann's **Women of the Western Frontier in Fact, Fiction and Film** (McFarland, 214 pages, hardcover; \$48.00 postpaid). Most of the book is devoted to "Fact," with the fictional and filmic reincarnations of these ladies summarized at the end of each chapter. You'll certainly find a lot of eye-opening information about Belle Starr and Calamity Jane, and other women who fall into the categories of "Gunfighters' Wives and Lovers;" "Female Entertainers;" "Prostitutes, Madames and Gambling Ladies;" and "Remarkable Respectable Women." As with the Rainey book, it's a hoot to see the wide gulf between the real women and their filmed representatives, but it's also interesting to learn that many of the real-life characters were very media-savvy and tried to attract photographers and journalists for publicity. A brief selection of Western silent films featuring these women is followed by longer and more detailed selections of sound features and television series. Lackmann's interesting journey through the distaff side of Western history is illustrated with scores of photos, including some movie stills and advertising artwork. (All of the above available from McFarland & Co., Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640; 1-800-253-2187.)

Listen Tight, Pilgrim

One of the towering giants of American movies finally has a biography to equal his stature. Newly available in paperback, **John Wayne: American** by Randy Roberts and James S. Olson (Bison Books; 752 pages, paperback; \$25.00) is a model for future film biographers, beautifully explaining the elusive qualities that made Wayne such a fascinating actor and man.

As a performer, Wayne kept reinventing himself; he played young outlaws, old lawmen, detectives, tycoons, screenwriters, and fighting men in every conflict from the Alamo to Vietnam. Wayne was at various times hero or villain, subtle actor or ham. The films ranged from Poverty Row cheapies to multimillion-dollar epics, from indelible classics to forgettable turkeys—but even the duds have their reason for being in Wayne's filmography and mythology.

As a person, he was likewise a study in contrasts, capable of behaving graciously or outrageously. Somehow all of these contradictions seemed of a piece. The authors quote critic Michael Wilmington's perceptive observation: "John Wayne does...stand for America. He embodies its contradictions...its charms, its flaws, its strengths, weaknesses, grossness, and beauty." Wayne was determined to do what he wanted to do, and become what he wanted to be; for good or for bad, that's a uniquely American way of life. As the authors note, Wayne never served in the military, and spent almost all of his life in prosperous Southern California—but he's revered as a hero because as man and actor he personified individual liberty.

How he reinvented himself from the lonely son of a mismatched Iowa couple to an internationally beloved icon is exquisitely detailed here. The compelling narrative combines biography with film analysis, not forgetting Wayne's importance in the larger fabric of American culture. Wayne is examined as man, actor and symbol in this extensively researched book, which somehow manages to be briskly paced and consistently entertaining. Refreshingly, the authors have no political axes to grind, nor do they see Wayne as a saint; he was a contradictory human being, and his occasional weaknesses made him all the more interesting. Full notes on sources and a filmography are included. (Available from University of Nebraska Press, 312 N. 14th Street, Lincoln, NE 68588; (402) 472-3581.)

Musical Talent In Gene's (Movies)



Among his many other accomplishments, Gene Autry defined the "singing cowboy" genre of B-Westerns—which, judging by its popularity, was a considerable feat. After Autry first made his mark in 1935, dozens of other musical cowpokes followed his trail, among them Roy Rogers, Tex Ritter, Smith Ballew and even, briefly, John Wayne. Ten of Gene's best early films are currently available as **Gene Autry: The Singing**

Cowboy Collection (Madacy Music Group; \$29.95).

All of these black and white features were originally made for Republic between 1936 and '38, and their running time varies between 54 and 60 minutes, most running exactly an hour. The earliest, *Man of the Frontier* (originally titled *Red River Valley*) was Autry's first picture of eight he would make in 1936; the most recent is *The Man From Music Mountain*, made in 1938. In between are *Oh, Susanna!*, *The Old Barn Dance*, *Public Cowboy No. 1*, *The Old Corral*, *Rootin' Tootin' Rhythm*, *Round-Up Time In Texas*, *Yodelin' Kid From Pine Ridge* and *Springtime in the Rockies*.

As B-Westerns go, these films are Class-A product. They're fast-paced, the camerawork and editing is well above par, the production values are impressive, and the action sequences are still exciting. Most were directed by Joseph Kane, with Mack V. Wright at the helm for *Rootin' Tootin' Rhythm* and stunt-sequence director B. Reeves "Breezy" Eason piloting *Man of the Frontier*.

If these films are formulaic, the combination of action, music, comedy and a little romance (but *only* a little) is a very successful recipe. Smiley Burnette adds a lot of the comedy relief, not to mention some wonderful novelty songs. It's a pleasant surprise to see Lon Chaney Jr. and former silent comedian Milburn Morante in *The Old Corral*, and former silent star Betty Bronson is still lovely as Autry's gal in *Yodelin' Kid From Pine Ridge*. A number of folks we recognize from two-reel comedies also show up, among them James C. Morton, Charles Middleton and Lew Kelly.

The music is terrific throughout, especially if you're a fan of western swing. Among the musical guests are The Light Crust Doughboys (in *Oh, Susanna!* they play "Tiger Rag" in a nicely shot and edited scene, then accompany a song by Smiley Burnette in drag!), the Stafford Sisters (featuring young Jo), the Maple City Four, Al Clauser and his Oklahoma Outlaws, and even Walter Shrum and his Colorado Hillbillies.

These tapes are advertised as being complete and uncut, mastered from Gene's personal copies. They look like good 16mm prints, reasonably sharp and with good tone quality. The sound is also strong and clear; we do wish, however, that they hadn't been cropped quite so much for this video release—it's evident from the main titles that a little bit of the top and sides of the frame is missing. Still, there's rarely a splice or even a faint scratch in the source prints. Especially when you're only paying about three bucks per feature, this entertaining package is well worth the price; we hope that there will be future releases of these fine early films starring Public Cowboy No. 1. (Available in video stores; for further information: Madacy Music Group, Inc., P.O. Box 1445, St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada H4L 4Z1.)

Westerns on the Small Screen

America's love affair with the Western hit a fever pitch in the 1950s; movie screens were presenting such classics as *Shane* and *The Searchers*, and television screens were offering a wealth of horse operas. Some were sophisticated, such as *Gunsmoke* or *Have Gun, Will Travel*; others were aimed at kids, like *Hopalong Cassidy* and *The Gene Autry Show*. Some stressed color and adventure (*The Cisco Kid*); others were quietly whimsical (*Maverick*). The first TV Western was *The Lone Ranger*, debuting on September 15, 1949; a decade later there were 32 Western series in prime time.

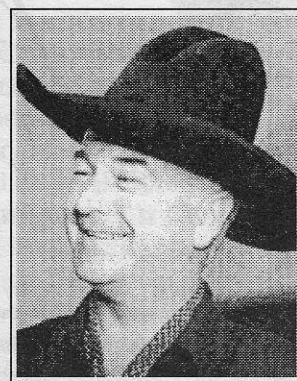
An army of actors populated the landscape of the '50s TV Western, and every one of them seems to be documented in **Television Western Players of the Fifties** by Everett Aaker (McFarland & Co., 576 pages, hardcover; \$88.00, postpaid). Aaker, who oddly enough lives not in the Southwest but in Chester, England, has amassed a wealth of information about every cast member who appeared regularly in a Western series between 1949 and '59. From Lee Aaker (no relation), who played Corporal Rusty in *The Adventures of Rin-Tin-Tin*, to Victor Sen Yung, who played houseboy Hop Sing on *Bonanza*, the careers of 307 actors and actresses are very fully profiled.



Gail Davis as Annie Oakley

What's very gratifying is that Aaker doesn't limit his discussion to a given actor's career in TV Westerns. Instead, he encompasses the entire career, providing along with the biographical sketch a list of each performer's television series and a full filmography. Helpfully, he also provides the sources for information in each profile. Many of these performers were only incidentally associated with TV Westerns; for example, Hoagy Carmichael's sole stint in this field was playing the ranch handyman Jonesy in the first season of *Laramie*, but Aaker gives us a fully detailed account of his entire career anyway. As a result, this book is very useful beyond its immediate scope, especially since the work of many of the actors (among them Terence de Marney, a British stage and radio actor who played in *Johnny Ringo*, or Don Diamond, who appeared as "El Toro" on *The Adventures of Kit Carson*) is not well documented otherwise. Most performers are shown in a portrait or scene still.

In addition to a full index and bibliography, Mr. Aaker provides a catalog of Western series which aired during the '50s, listing the production company, beginning and ending air dates, number of episodes produced, network affiliation, format, series synopsis and a list of regularly appearing players. This is a well-written, entertaining and extremely well-researched book which will be a delight for TV Western fans and very useful for other scholars of popular culture. (Available from McFarland & Co., Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640; (910) 246-4460.)



William "Hopalong" Boyd

Performers of the Golden Age

Theda Bara

A Biography of the Silent Screen Vamp, with a Filmography

Ronald Genini

168pp. \$29.95 library binding 0-7864-0202-4
43 photographs, filmography, bibliography, index

"Unravels the fascinating trajectory of this cinematic vamp.... A useful volume in silent American film"—*Choice*. Through newspaper accounts, film reviews, interviews and other sources, this is a comprehensive record of the life of one of Hollywood's first female stars.

Kate Smith

A Biography, with a Discography, Filmography and List of Stage Appearances

Richard K. Hayes

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Long ago, before the advent of umpteen-screen multiplexes and cinder-block crackerboxes, the theaters in which movies were shown were just as special as the films themselves, as proven by **The Last Remaining Seats: Movie Palaces of Tinseltown** (Balcony Press; 136 pages, softcover; \$32.00). Despite a drab and confusing cover which makes the book look as though it's about Italian sculpture, the volume really is a treasure-trove of gorgeous color photographs, taken over the past seven years by Robert Berger and Anne Conser. The text by Stephen M. Silverman is limited to an overview of vintage Los Angeles-area theaters and a single-paragraph descrip-

tion of each of the sixteen houses shown; we really could have used some captions under the photos to help us appreciate the architectural details and intricate designs which are so beautifully displayed. Some of these theaters are beautifully restored and still in daily operation; others are dormant, but could have their full luster reclaimed. We hope that the glorious photographs in this book might make the city fathers of Los Angeles, and the owners of these properties, realize what rare and valuable jewels they are. (For information: Balcony Press, 2690 Locksley Place, Los Angeles, CA 90039.)

Martin Scorsese contributes a quotes about the glamour of old movie palaces to the above volume. He spent a considerable amount of time in these shrines to cinema, as shown by **A Personal Journey With Martin Scorsese Through American Movies** (Miramax Books/Hyperion; 192 pages, hardcover; \$40.00). Scorsese truly loves classic films of the '40s and before, which makes it frustrating that his downbeat, violent films so rarely reflect the entertainment and societal values of the movies he cherishes. Still, his gifts for storytelling are evident as he narrates a parade of movies—spanning from the silent era through the mid-'50s—which have inspired him. There's an emphasis on the director's importance which practically excludes everyone else involved in making films (the chapters are entitled "The Director's Dilemma," "The Director as Storyteller," et cetera), and there's a superabundance of films noirs (even the musical is largely discussed in terms of "post-war malaise"). But there are some valid insights, dozens of beautifully reproduced stills, and some interesting evaluations of forgotten films and their makers. (Available in bookstores.)

Some of our favorite films were made before the advent of sound. If you're just starting to become interested in films made before 1930, you may want to read **The Silent Screen** by Richard Dyer MacCann (Scarecrow Press; 272 pages; \$44.50, cloth; \$22.50, paperback). MacCann has written twelve books, including five lengthy anthologies about various aspects of the silent cinema. The current book is a selection of essays from those books, repackaged with an eye toward the reader with a casual or growing interest in silent films. Included are pieces about Griffith, Thomas Ince and Stroheim; Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks; and Sennett, Chaplin and Keaton with Lloyd and Langdon sharing a final essay. One of the more enjoyable pieces is "Some Sad and Happy Endings," a meditation on the post-career lives of some silent stars. This introduction to silent film history does its job in brisk and interesting fashion. (Available from Scarecrow Press, Inc., 15200 NBN Way, P.O. Box 191, Blue Ridge Summit PA 17214; 1-800-462-6420.)

The most universally recognized figure of the silent cinema, and perhaps of all 20th Century culture, is the subject of **The Chaplin Encyclopedia** by Glenn Mitchell (B.T. Batsford; 288 pages, paperback; \$19.95). As he notes in his introduction, Mitchell has had to limit the book's entries to items concerning Chaplin's work; an exhaustive work about his entire life and its influence "would probably dwarf most public buildings." As with Mitchell's earlier, excellent Encyclopedias devoted to Laurel & Hardy and the Marx Brothers, the comedian's films, the cast members, frequent themes in the work, and biographical highlights are very fully detailed, accompanied by a wealth of unusual photographs, advertisements, poster art and other illustrations. Mitchell's writing is both scholarly and entertaining, and the tremendous amount of detail makes this an essential volume for the Chaplin bookshelf. (Available from Trafalgar Square, North Pomfret VT 05053; 1-800-423-4525.)

Most film history books seem to fall into two basic categories. There are the hardbound books packed with information; they're often printed on low grade paper and have a "Library binding" instead of a dust jacket. Then there are the flashy, full color, large format "coffee table" style books, generally lacking in scholarship but with impressive graphics. **The Young Oxford Book of the Movies** by David Parkinson (Oxford University Press; 162 pages, hardcover; \$25.00) is a pleasant rarity that combines the best of both genres.

In this handsome book, full of color illustrations, Parkinson has provided a broad range of useful and interesting information on film history and filmmaking. The title of the book indicates that this book is aimed at the young reader; however its appeal should be universal. A chronological approach is taken, followed by sections on various genres. Finally, there's a good, succinct explanation of filmmaking.

The illustrations are a standout feature. Lobby cards, posters, schematic drawings, scene stills and even oddities like cigarette cards are liberally sprinkled throughout the book. When discussing venous genres, Parkinson has included a "Films to Watch" list. Here, we can voice some criticism. While the lists give a number of great suggestions, they omit some crucial early films in favor of lesser yet newer films. For example, in the "Teenage" category the Brat Pack flop *St. Elmo's Fire* is suggested, but *The Blackboard Jungle* is not mentioned. In the "Cops" list, *Beverly Hills Cop III* appears, while the film should have been listed in the "Never Should Have Been Made, Much Less Suggested Viewing" category.

Those minor criticisms aside, the book is a fine effort and would be perfect for the casual read, and also as an introductory text for secondary level media courses. (Available in bookstores; for information: Oxford University Press, 198 Madison Ave., New York NY 10016.) —Rob Stone

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Bud & Lou's Full Story

If you share an affection for the suave, gravel-voiced straight-man and his roly-poly sidekick who couldn't understand the unusual nicknames on a certain baseball team, you'll certainly enjoy **The Abbott & Costello Story** by Stephen Cox and John Lofflin (Cumberland House; 306 pages, softcover; \$22.95), a book that's as entertaining as a good A&C movie, and a lot more entertaining than some of them. The authors certainly know what's what and who's who, leaving very few "I don't know's" in this exhaustive and affectionate history.

Previously published in 1990 as *The Official Abbott & Costello Scrapbook*, this updated edition is chock-full of rare photographs and loving tributes from the team's co-workers. Patty and Maxene Andrews recall the fun on the Universal sets, and the lavish entertaining at Costello's home. Director Charles Barton describes the pleasures and pitfalls of dealing with the occasionally temperamental comedians, and also notes the elaborate practical jokes that marked the A&C sets (often with pie filling). The comedians' relatives—including Bud and Lou's children, Bud's nephew Norman Abbott (later a director himself) and sister Olive Abbott—shed a lot of fascinating light on the private lives of the teammates.

The book provides much biographical material (often in direct and well-documented rebuttal to earlier books). A complete filmography combines credits and synopses with factual sidelights and scene stills. The television programs of 1952-53 are amply detailed. Even the Hanna-Barbera cartoons which Bud gave voice to in the '60s are thoroughly documented, with original art, reminiscences from voice actors Stan Irwin and Don Messick, and a complete list of the 156 entries, with synopses. Unfortunately, there isn't a detailed list of the team's radio shows (probably an impossibility), but a chapter about their air work has some wonderful stories from their script girl at NBC—of all people, Helen Gurley Brown!

Rare candids, newspaper clippings, promotional artwork and family snapshots are just a few of the visual treasures which adorn the text. This affectionate tribute beautifully captures the personalities of Bud and Lou; it also lovingly describes the craft of their comedy, and the lasting effect it had on their audiences. (Info: Cumberland House Publishing, 431 Harding Industrial Park Drive, Nashville TN 37211.)

Laughmakers From the UK on Film and CDs

While the British were, and continue to be, ardent admirers of American comedians and musicians, unfortunately we Yanks haven't fully repaid the compliment. A lot of us like Monty Python, and we may have seen a Noel Coward play or two, but we claim Stan Laurel and Chaplin as American and ignore scores of other English comics. Jimmy Durante, Ed Cantor and Spike Jones are all well-known in the UK, but how many folks Stateside have heard of Max Miller, Robb Wilton, Arthur Askey or George Formby? A new U.S. video release and two CDs available as imports will help introduce Americans to the wide variety of vintage English humor.

Do yourself a very large favor when viewing **The Best of British Film Comedy** (Acorn Media; \$29.95) and watch the ending first. This 91-minute documentary (actually called *To See Such Fun*), which for some unnecessary reason has been split onto two videocassettes, never identifies any of the performers until a roll-call at the very end. Without the absence of a narrator or subtitles indicating who's who, this can be a very frustrating experience for the uninitiated. Furthermore, the timing of many routines is ruined by having other unrelated clips cut into them, commenting on the action.

What remains is a hyperkinetic, "Laugh-In" style potpourri of clips, many of them too short to make any impression. Post-1950s performers, such as Tony Hancock, Spike Milligan and Peter Sellers, are also here—but the majority of the footage is from the '30s and '40s. Despite the inadequacy of the presentation, a number of the performers still charm and delight, particularly the gawky, banjo-uke strumming George Formby, and the doleful, sluggish Robb Wilton. (Available from Acorn Media Publishing Inc., 7910 Woodmont Ave., Suite 350, Bethesda MD 20814-3015; (800) 999-0212; <http://www.acornmedia.com>.)



Max Miller



George Formby

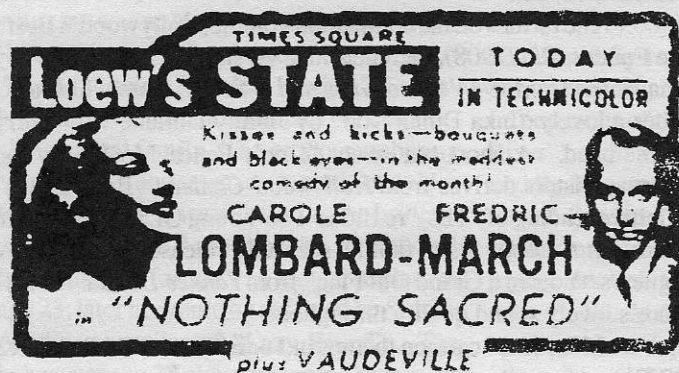
You'll get a better impression of these performers by listening to their vintage recordings on **You Have to Laugh, Don't You?** (A Living Era CDAJA 5210; \$13.00), a CD which contains comedy cuts made between 1926 and 1950. The American ear may have a bit of trouble at first comprehending the rough Cockney speech of monologist Max Miller or the Lancashire accent of multi-voiced Norman Evans (heard as three characters in a sketch entitled "Joe Ramsbottom Buys a Piano" but careful attention will repay the listener. Clapham and Dwyer provide the mind-bending "Surrealist Alphabet" ("A for 'Orses, B for Mutton..."), a few of whose references are a trifle too British to get, but anyone can enjoy Reggie Gardiner's larynx-stretching impressions of "Trains."

Hodges' raspberry-flavored "Everything Is Fresh Today," George Formby's eye-opening "When I'm Cleaning Windows," and Arthur Askey's flighty "The Bee Song." And if you are absolutely dead-set against becoming an Anglophile, Phil Harris, Spike Jones, Jimmy Durante and Frank Crumit represent the New World.

Many of the same stars and a couple of the same recordings are on **You Must Remember This...Vintage Comedy Songs** (Conifer/Happy Days 52272), but the CD provides a number of new laughs. The comedy of the earthy Cockney Gus Elen and the suave, slyly saucy Ronald Frankau are just two of the varied offerings. The exuberant Tony O'Shea laments that "Nobody Loves a Fairy When She's Forty," while the genial Norman Long takes us for a spin in "My Little Austin Seven." Nellie Wallace majestically suggests "Let's Have a Tiddly At the Milk Bar," while basso profundo Malcolm McEachern serves a decidedly more potent brew in his lower-than-low-pitched "Drinking." Among the Brits here are Durante, Cantor, Louis Armstrong and Molly Picon, whose "Busy, Busy" a diary of a New York shopgirl's hectic life—is worth the cost of the CD in itself. (Available from Worlds Records, P.O. Box 1922, Novato CA 94948.)

A Wealth of Classic, Rare and "Groovey" Vintage Films On New Laserdiscs

There's something special about the new laserdisc edition of **Hollywood Rhythm** (Kino on Video K966; \$99.98), a three-disc collection of musical shorts produced mainly by Paramount in the early '30s. We told you about the VHS edition in issue 29; surprisingly, the same 31 shorts have been put into a different order for the laserdisc version, and thematically the new groupings make much more sense. For example, the three Bing Crosby/Mack Sennett shorts are now presented together, the shorts spotlighting composers have been grouped as "Men Behind the Music," and the Armstrong, Calloway and Ellington shorts have been combined as "Red Hot Jazz." (On the other hand, the earliest shorts are joined as "Awkward Beginnings.") There's a very nice new four-page insert with a history of these shorts by historian Richard Barrios, who also provides informative biographies of the performers. The laserdisc edition emphasizes the fine quality of the original source prints, most of them 35mm fine grains.



The above new release from Kino is an improvement over the earlier edition, but sadly the firm's new release of David O. Selznick's **Nothing Sacred** (Kino on Video ID3924SZ; \$39.98) is not. This screwball comedy with Fredric March and Carole Lombard, filmed in three-strip Technicolor in 1937, is in the public domain. It was released on laserdisc by Lumivision in 1993 (LVD 9318; \$39.95) and as a DVD last year (DVD 1497; \$24.95). Kino's new laserdisc is razor sharp and has lovely sound (the source is listed as an "original 35mm nitrate" provided by Selznick), but the color is so muted as to be almost nonexistent. (We brought it to an acceptable level by cranking the color intensity all the way up on our monitor.) Furthermore, there are significant marks and spots all through the print. By contrast, the Lumivision disc is also sharp, has rich, full color, and is taken from a better condition print. Lumivision's edition includes two silent Mack Sennett two-reelers with Lombard (*Campus Vamp* and *Matchmaking Mama*) which have color sequences. There's also a touching home movie in color, showing Gable and Lombard at home and on a camping trip. The only advantage of the new Kino version is that the original trailer appears in much better condition than on the Lumivision.

There's no problem whatsoever with Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment's new 50th Anniversary edition of **Miracle on 34th Street** (TCFHE 0107280; \$29.98). The print is in its original beautiful black and white, with a full range of gray tones and super-sharp focus. Likewise, that gorgeous crisp '40s Fox sound is here in its full glory. This is the ultimate way to see Edmund Gwenn

as Kris Kringle triumph over the "freethinking" of Maureen O'Hara. Surprisingly, nobody at Fox knew how to promote this movie in 1947—at least that's certainly the impression given by the five-minute trailer included as a bonus on this laserdisc. A Fox producer, Mr. Shaffer, who hasn't yet seen the movie but takes credit for it, bemoans the vague trailer that the studio publicity hacks have assembled. He visits Fox contract players Rex Harrison, Anne Baxter, Peggy Ann Garner and Dick Haymes—all of whom *have* seen the film and stress its best points. There's no mention of Christmas or Santa Claus at all in this trailer, which promotes the film as "Hilarious! Romantic! Delightful! Charming! Tender! Exciting! And Yes, It's *Groovey!*" Fortunately, the public discovered the film anyway.

Definitely not a Christmas movie is **Kiss Me Deadly** (MGM/UA Home Video ML 106553), a tough, gritty 1955 film noir directed with great style by Robert Aldrich and mesmerizingly photographed (despite a thin budget) by Ernest Laszlo. Filmed in black and white with a moderate widescreen image (the 1.66:1 aspect ratio necessitates mild letterboxing), this Mike Hammer detective drama involves a runaway from an asylum (Cloris Leachman, terrific in her first film), a crooked physician and a very dangerous box. This atomically-charged drama has great performances from Ralph Meeker, Albert Dekker and Paul Stewart. The new disc has the long-lost original ending, which is only about a minute longer but which has a vastly different outcome for the two lead characters. The shorter, common ending is included as a bonus. Which is better? We actually prefer the short version, but it's nice to have them both. The original trailer—with one shot from the "lost" ending—is also included.



Finally, a recent MGM/UA four-disc box set offers **The Best of Bette Davis** (ML 105226; \$125.98), and while might be other features we'd nominate for that title, certainly *Jezebel*, *Dark Victory* and *Mr. Skeffington* are among her best. Those three films are newly-transferred for this release, and have outstanding sound and picture quality. But our favorite disc is mainly taken up with original trailers for 31 Davis films, providing a digest history of her career at Warners. Starting with her supporting role in the 1932 George Arliss vehicle *The Man Who Played God* and spanning 16 years to the 1948 comedy *June Bride*, the trailers are a delight. They allow us to see footage from obscurities such as *The Girl From Tenth Avenue* and incidentally show how Bette's star rose as Ann Dvorak's fell. Some have interesting framing devices, such as the milquetoast husband who wants to go see Bette's new film *Housewife*, or the chatty girls in the theatre talking about *The Great Lie* (one half expects a guy in the next row to tell 'em to shaddap). The *Jezebel* trailer is a reissue item; all others are originals and are generally in fine condition. Miss Davis' wide-eyed histrionics sometimes seem a little absurd when concentrated into one brief scene after another, but these trailers are gems of splashy showmanship—and unlike today's trailers, they don't give away the whole story. (Available from retail outlets or by mail from Ken Crane's LaserDisc, 15251 Beach Blvd., Westminster CA 92683; (800) 624-3078.)

Vintage Musical Soundtracks, Lost and Found

Recently, a bunch of new CDs with soundtracks taken from vintage movies have been released by a label called Great Movie Themes. This is an imprint of a firm called Promo Sound AG, which is evidently based somewhere in Europe, although the CD releases themselves don't specify where. The much more liberal copyright laws in Europe make such releases possible; although they're technically bootlegs here in the States, it is nice to have the soundtracks for movies that the U.S. rights owners haven't issued.

As an example, there's **Star Spangled Rhythm/Footlight Parade** (Great Movie Themes CD 60013), which combines a 1942 Paramount release with a 1933 Warner Bros.-Busby Berkeley classic. The tunes from *Rhythm* include "Hit the Road to Dreamland" by Dick Powell, Mary Martin and the Golden Gate Quartet, "I'm Doing It for Defense" by Betty Hutton, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson's "Sharp as a Tack," and Bing Crosby's "Old Glory." The sound quality is quite good; ditto for the *Footlight Parade* songs, which include the main title overture and "Sittin' on a Backyard Fence"—in addition to the three big numbers ("Honeymoon Hotel," "By a Waterfall," "Shanghai Lil") which are available domestically in better sound on the TCM/Rhino CD *Lullaby of Broadway: The Best of Busby Berkeley at Warner Bros.* (TCM/Rhino R2 72169).



Rosemary Lane, Dick Powell

Hotel lobbies in the original "Hooray For Hollywood" by Benny Goodman's band with Dick Powell; the crooner is joined by Rosemary Lane for "I'm Like a Fish Out of Water." Goodman and company give us a great, although abbreviated, "Sing Sing Sing," and a great Quartet number called "I've Got a Heartful of Music." The score is by Johnny Mercer and Richard Whiting; sadly, the latter died within a year of this film. (Available from Worlds Records, P.O. Box 1922, Novato CA 94948.)

Evidently somebody at a small Stateside CD label called Howards International loves this movie too, since on their Hollywood Soundstage imprint they've released **Hollywood Hotel** (HSCD-4008). All of the film's songs are included, along with an "exploitation record" issued to promote the film (with alternate takes of four songs). In addition, the version of "Silhouetted in the Moonlight" is longer than that in the film; a final bonus is an unreleased Goodman Quartet version of "House Hop." (Available from Howards International, P.O. Box 466, Middle Village, Flushing NY 11379-9998.)

Getting back to legitimate, authorized releases—the folks at TCM/Rhino have continued their wonderful series of soundtrack collections. In between major multi-disc projects such as the forthcoming *Fred Astaire at RKO* package, they're releasing some delightful single CD collections.

Flying Down to Rio/Hollywood Hotel (Great Movie Themes CD 60008) combines Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers' first teaming from 1933 with the score from a great 1937 Warners musical (why, why, WHY hasn't MGM/UA released this on video?!). *Rio* has Fred singing the title number, Ginger crooning "Music Makes Me" and both of them duetting to "The Carioca." The

Academy Award Winning Music From MGM Classics (R2 72720) has 15 winners for either Best Song or Best Score ranging from *The Wizard of Oz* to *Doctor Zhivago*. Most of these titles are well-known, but it is nice to have Frank Sinatra's "White Christmas" from *Anchors Aweigh* (1945 winner for Best Scoring of a Musical Picture). It's particularly valuable to have Betty Hutton and Howard Keel's duet on "Anything You Can Do" from 1950's *Annie Get Your Gun*, since the Irving Berlin estate has thus far prohibited a video release.

Similarly, a batch of previously-released favorites are joined by some welcome rarities in **Hollywood's Best: The Thirties** (TCM/Rhino R2 72907). Along with an even longer version of "Hooray For Hollywood" than on either of the above *Hollywood Hotel* CDs, there's Allan Jones singing "The Donkey Serenade" from 1937's *The Firefly*, a great arrangement of "Jeepers Creepers" with Louis Armstrong from *Going Places*, and Dick Powell crooning "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby" from the 1938 Warner epic *Hard To Get*.

The rarities on the companion volume, **Hollywood's Best: The Forties** (R2 72908), include a nice version of "Paper Doll" by Lena Horne from 1944's *Two Girls and A Sailor*, from which also comes a lovely "Inka Dinka Doo" by Jimmy Durante with Harlan James' band. A short but sweet "Don't Fence Me In" by the Andrews Sisters derives from *Hollywood Canteen*. Bette Davis' definitive reading of "They're Either Too Young Or Too Old" from *Thank Your Lucky Stars* finally sees CD release, ditto Jimmy Cagney's "You're a Grand Old Flag" from *Yankee Doodle Dandy*. There's lovely sound quality throughout.

Most of the cartoon themes in **Toon Tunes** (Kid Rhino R2 72752) are from the TV era (some as recent as *Animaniacs*), but we'll wager you'll enjoy hearing the original early '30s 78 of "Tommy the Popeye the Sailor Man" by Billy Costello; the original *Tom & Jerry* theme; and a hot rendition of "The Woody Woodpecker Song," with Grace Stafford (Mrs. Walter Lantz) providing Woody's voice throughout. Almost all of the 50 tracks are from original soundtracks; a few are from vintage kiddie records, and for some reason the "Merrie Melodies" theme is in a newly recorded expanded arrangement. (All Rhino releases available from Rhino Direct, 1-800-432-0020).

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Music

Visionary Vintage Music From Jazz Oracle

Some wonderful and obscure hot music from the 1920s has been made available thanks to the trio of dedicated collectors who run the recently-formed Jazz Oracle label. Colin J. Bray, John R.T. Davies and John Wilby have started off this enterprise with a handful of new releases that should be in the collection of everyone who loves the hot sounds of the Jazz Age.

The Halfway House Orchestra (Jazz Oracle BDW 8001) collects the complete recorded works of a hot little band who played nightly at a supper club located halfway between New Orleans and Lake Pontchartrain. The leader was cornetist Albert "Abbie" Brunies, brother of trombonist George Brunies and part of a remarkable musical family. The group, numbering between five and seven men, made two sides for OKeh (this session featuring the brilliant clarinetist Leon Roppolo, who soon would be committed for life to a mental asylum at age 23; later he would be replaced by Sidney Arodin, co-writer of "Lazy River"). The balance of the 22 sides presented here were made for Columbia during five recording field trips to New Orleans. This is somewhat more polished and pop-oriented music than standard New Orleans fare, but there's plenty of musical heat in each selection, particularly on "Snookum" and the uptempo 4/4 rendering of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," surely the hottest version of this tune ever put to wax. Five of the sides were originally rejected and survive only as test pressings; another one ("Wylie Avenue Blues") was issued only in Australia. There's no discernable musical or technical defect in these sides, all of which are great fun and beautifully remastered by John R.T. Davies.

Anyone who wants to hear true New Orleans jazz as played by black bands in the '20s is obligated to purchase **Oscar**

Continued on Page 12

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Hot, Happy Music From the '20s on CD

Hot and happy music from the '20s and early '30s continues to be reissued in great amounts on CD, praise be. Some of the new releases come from foreign labels; others come from tiny, one-man domestic companies, and occasionally a giant U.S. mega-label will express interest in its own heritage. Some recent examples:

Ruben Reeves: The Complete Vocalions 1928-1933 (CBC 1-039; \$17.00) is a recent release from Timeless-Historical, a label based in Holland, which for the past few years has been issuing some excellent discs of obscure American jazz. Typical is this offering, which spotlights a young black trumpeter signed to Vocalion in the wake of Louis Armstrong's phenomenal success for the OKeh label. The little band, modeled after the Hot Five and billed as Ruben "River" Reeves and His Tributaries (or "His River Boys"), made a dozen sides in Chicago in the Summer of 1929. This 21-track disc also includes two 1928 sides made for clarinetist Fess Williams, three more commercial dance-band sides issued as by "The Hollywood Shufflers," and four final selections made in December 1933. The band benefits from lyrical pianist Jimmy Prince and clarinetist Omer Simeon (and later Darnell Howard); vocalist Blanche Calloway, Cab's elder sister, takes center stage on six selections. Reeves is a talented and engaging trumpeter, and admirably does not imitate Armstrong, following his own instincts as a jazz soloist.

Coon-Sanders' Original Nighthawk Orchestra Volume Two (The Old Masters MB 112; \$14.00) is an essential purchase for anyone who loves '20s hot-dance music. The 23 beautifully-transferred tracks here, made between March 1926 and June 1928, are an unbroken string of classics. Pianist-vocalist Joe Sanders' skills as an arranger come across on pop tunes of the time ("I Ain't Got Nobody," "Is She My Girl Friend?," "Ready For the River"); more importantly, he really blossomed as a composer during this time, as shown vividly by gems such as "Roodles," "Louder and Funnier," "Slue Foot," and "Hallucinations." Sanders' gifts as an arranger may not be as well known as Duke Ellington's, but he similarly played the whole band like a virtuoso. Drummer-vocalist Carleton Coon and trumpeters Bob Pope and Joe Richolson are pretty phenomenal, too.

We wish the major labels' reissues would more consistently show the care taken by the little independents. A case in point is **The Music of Prohibition** (CK 65326), released by Columbia/Legacy as the companion soundtrack CD to the A&E documentary series. A tip-off is the packaging, which proclaims, "Booze is banned and Swing's the thing!" Huh? Prohibition ended in 1933, and the Swing Era didn't begin until 1936. For that matter, what on earth are sides by Cab Calloway of "Take the A Train" and "Minnie the Moocher" from 1941 and '42 doing here? Fortunately, the balance of the 22 tracks are from 1919 (Bert Williams' pre-Prohibition warning "The Moon Shines on the Moonshine") through 1933 (the Dorsey Brothers' "Shim Sham Shimmy"); we'll forgive the inclusion of Chick Webb's 1934 "Stompin' At the Savoy" and the State Street Swingers' 1937 "You Drink Too Much." Most of these sides are well known and frequently reissued (Ellington's "The Mooche" and "Mood Indigo"), but it's very nice to have a gorgeous transfer of "Bootlegger Blues" by the Mississippi Sheiks. The California Ramblers' "Sweet Georgia Brown," an electrically-cut item from May 1925, sounds great, but the acoustic "Charleston" from a month earlier has added echo and sounds like it's dubbed from the old, harsh-sounding Biograph LP. The sound quality is variable but generally quite good, a major improvement over Columbia's documentary soundtrack for *The Great Depression*.

Music can deliver a much more potent kick than booze or other chemicals (not to mention a healthier one!). If you've run out of Prozac, latch on to a copy of **You Must Remember This: The Happy Album** (Conifer/Happy Days 52261). All 26 tracks are relentlessly optimistic ("Shout For Happiness" by Ray Noble with Al Bowlly; "My Troubles Are Over" by the Sunshine Boys). Fortunately, the consistently strong quality of the music keeps this from ever being cloying. Many of the items are by British bands, and it's nice to have their versions of early '30s American tunes ("Smile, Darn Ya, Smile" by Ambrose; "Happy As the Day Is Long" by Jack Hylton). A few Yanks are along, too, among them Whispering Jack Smith, Al Jolson, Fats Waller and Spike Jones (who provides the finale with the laughing chorus of "Holiday For Strings"). The music is uniformly upbeat and entertaining, the transfers are excellent, and Hugh Palmer's liner notes are extremely well-detailed. A happy surprise, indeed. (All available from Worlds Records, P.O. Box 1922, Novato CA 94948; 1-800-742-6663; <http://www.worldsrecords.com>)

BG, Long, Whiteman and Dorseys on CD

On July 13, 1935, the King of Swing proved that he could swing as mightily with a small, relatively quiet group as he did with a big band. That's the date when Benny Goodman joined pianist Teddy Wilson and drummer Gene Krupa for the first Trio session. When vibraphonist Lionel Hampton joined in August 1936, the threesome became a Quartet, and one of the most dynamic groups in jazz was formed. The new 3-CD set **Benny Goodman: The Complete RCA Victor Small Group Recordings** (RCA/BMG 68764-2) contains all 67 studio tracks made by the combos, including 20 alternate takes not included on the Bluebird LP series *The Complete Goodman*. Most are instrumentals (vocalist Helen Ward joins in on a few tracks) and most of the tunes are standards ("After You've Gone," "Who?", "Dinah"). After Krupa left BG, the percussion was handled variously by Hampton, Buddy Schutz or the wonderful Dave Tough (who's magnificent in the superb "Opus 1/2"). Wilson's delicate and infinitely creative piano, Hampton's dynamic vibes, Krupa's constantly creative drumming and Goodman's masterful clarinet are a delight throughout; the transfers are generally excellent. So is the fine booklet essay by Loren Schoenberg. It fully documents each session—as well as the historical significance of the group, which broke racial barriers as well as musical ones.



One of the most entertaining of the "also-ran" big bands was led by a left-handed violinist named Johnny Long. He had only one bona fide hit—a swinging arrangement of "A Shanty In Old Shanty Town"—but his band was powerful, and boasted a number of good soloists who had been with better-remembered bands (Ernie Caceres and Willie Schwartz from the Glenn Miller band; ex-Goodmanite Allan Ruess). **Johnny Long & His Orchestra** (Collectors' Choice Music CCM-008-2) has 22 tracks; the first nine are from a *Fitch Bandwagon* show done in February 1943, with the remaining airchecks from the Hotel New Yorker and the Meadowbrook Ballroom. "Shanty" is here, along with a slew of standards that had been hits for other bands. The performances are uniformly fine (especially a parody version of "It's a Sin to Tell a Lie"); ditto the sound quality,

except for some weaknesses during the *Fitch* show. A fine souvenir of a forgotten band. (Available from Collectors' Choice Music, 1-800-923-1122.)

The granddaddy of the Big Bands, in many ways, was Paul Whiteman's fantastically popular (and at 36 pieces, *very* big) band of the late '20s. A new budget-line release, **The Best of the Big Bands - Paul Whiteman** (Sony Music Special Products A 28437), includes ten selections from 1928 through 1932. Eight of them appeared on a similarly titled LP in 1983, which was in nasty rechanneled stereo; fortunately, they've all been remastered for this new CD and have fine, clean monaural transfers. Most are classics featuring cornetist Bix Beiderbecke ("That's My Weakness Now," "Sweet Sue," "China Boy," "Gypsy"). The two new titles are "Choo Choo," a hot instrumental written by saxophonist Frank Trumbauer, and an arrangement of "Body and Soul" featuring the falsetto vocal of Jack Fulton. No liner notes or discographical information here, but a lot of fine '20s music for a very low price. (Available in retail stores and from Collectors' Choice Music.)

Two of Whiteman's alumni, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, were extremely busy studio musicians after leaving the "King of Jazz" in February 1928, and remained so until forming their first touring band in April 1934. During that time, they released a number of "Dorsey Brothers Orchestra" sides, even though these were strictly by studio groups. All 47 of the sides made between February 1928 and January 1930 have been released on **The Dorsey Brothers' Orchestra Vol. 1** (Jazz Oracle BDW 8004) and **Vol. 2** (BDW 8005). These are fine examples of well-played commercial dance music with an occasional hot solo. These sides don't pretend to be jazz, but "Coquette," "Let's Do It," "Mean to Me," "Breakaway" and others all have their delights, among them the smooth alto sax playing of the wonderful Arnold Brilhart. Both CDs have excellent notes by rock guitarist/jazz buff Jeff Healey, full discographical information, and wonderful transfers by John R.T. Davies. Some rare alternate takes are another bonus. (Available from Jazz Oracle, 25 Queensgrove Road, Scarborough Ontario, M1N 3A9, Canada; (416) 698-0336.)

Wise Choices From Jazz Oracle

Continued From Page 11

"Papa" Celestin/Sam Morgan (BDW 8002), since, as John Wilby writes in excellent liner notes, only 35 sides by both bands were recorded during the decade of the Crescent City—and 23 of them are on this CD. The first 17 feature cornetist Celestin, who seems to have recruited a different band for each of five sessions. From the driving "Original Tuxedo Rag" (a remarkable performance, beautifully recorded for an acoustic) to the easygoing "Papa's Got the Jim-Jams," to the mysterious "It's Jam Up," these precious records display the wide array of musical modes within New Orleans jazz. Celestin was the featured soloist in his band, but Morgan's nine-piece group was much more interested in a collective ensemble sound than in spotlighting single voices. It was a gorgeous texture in its eight sides, all made in New Orleans in 1927. "Steppin' On Gas," with its driving bass and interplay between the saxes and brass, has to be one of the most joyous and endlessly fascinating records ever made, and its a joy to have properly transferred at last.

It's hard to come up with enough superlatives to describe the exhilarating, incredibly rare music that's been preserved on Jazz Oracle's **Curtis Mosby/Henry Starr** (BDW 8003). Pianist-singer Starr really is the star of this collection, appearing in both bands of drummer Mosby, then as a soloist and finally as an internationally popular cabaret entertainer in the company of vocalist Ivan Harold Browning. The 25 tracks come from a mind-boggling array of obscure sources; "Riverboat Shuffle" and "Night Blues," two superb small-band sides, come from a long-lost one-of-a-kind pressing; some of the solo sides were made for the tiny Flexo label (makers of a limited nonbreakable disc). Others for Columbia were released only in Los Angeles; others were made for the Regal-Zonophone label in London, and the final track is a 1941 unissued test made in London for HMV. Despite the variety of sources and settings, Starr is consistently spectacular; his fluid pianistics and charming vocals on "Eyes" and "When I'm Walkin' With Sweetness" are confirmation that he was a major talent. Congratulations are due to the collectors whose coordinated efforts made this CD possible. (Jazz Oracle, 25 Queensgrove Road, Scarborough Ontario, M1N 3A9, Canada; (416) 698-0336.)

Latin Rhythms of the Past

Big-Band jazz with a Latin flavor is the fare served up by **Maracas, Marimbas and Mambos: Latin Classics at MGM** (TCM/Rhino R2 72722; \$17.00). The 18 tracks were recorded for MGM musicals such as *Bathing Beauty* and *Nancy Goes to Rio*. All have a lively sound, with 12 in true stereo. Xavier Cugat gets the spotlight here, his band appearing on 11 of the titles, although other artists such as Carmen Miranda and Ethel Smith add some variety. A few gringos are along for the ride, among them Esther Williams, Van Johnson and Virginia O'Brien (Johnson's Portugese singing on "Boneca De Pixe" is pretty good, however). Will Friedwald's notes are insightful.

If the MGM disc whets your appetite for more Cugat, you'll definitely want to take advantage of the series from Harlequin Records which chronicles the latin bandleader's early recordings. Thus far, there are seven discs covering Cugat's commercial waxings and broadcast transcriptions from 1933 through 1945. The latest one is **Xavier Cugat: Cuban Love Song 1939-1940** (Harlequin HQ CD 103; \$17.00), with 24 of the commercially-issued sides from those two prolific years. Joining the Cuban numbers are a few pop sides, such as "Green Eyes." The band has a great sound, with enticing percussion and a rich string section accenting the brass. Vocalists Lina Romy, Miguelito Valdes, Carmen Castillo and others add their own talents; two rarities are "Batucada" and "Ah! Que Bonita Eres Tu," the latter seeing its first release here.

Carmen Miranda is best remembered in the States for her 1940s musicals, but her recording career in Brazil began much earlier, as evidenced by **Carmen Miranda 1930-1945** (Harlequin HQ CD 94; \$17.00). Most of the 24 tracks were recorded between December 1929 and 1938, with a final two numbers made after she conquered Broadway in May 1939 and Hollywood soon after. The influence of American hot dance-band music is strongly felt in some 1930 selections, which have a fast, agitated two-beat rhythm. Others are much closer to her later trademark sound, such as "Moleque Indigesto," a title which makes us wish the lyrics had been translated into English in the accompanying booklet. The transfers by Charlie Crump on this and the Cugat disc are excellent throughout. (Available from Worlds Records, P.O. Box 1922, Novato CA 94948; 1-800-742-6663.)

British Bands, and Bowllly Too



Harry Roy

Harry Roy stage show at the Leeds Empire from October 1936 is valuable, very funny, and full of breathtaking hot music. (There's a Harry Roy Appreciation Society, which you may contact at 68 Stoneleigh Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 8XY England.)

More dignified music from the same period is provided on **Ambrose: The Continental** (CDEA 6002), but if there are fewer antics, the level of musicianship is just as impressive. The title track is an illustration, going from spicy rhumba to driving hot jazz to smooth dance music within three minutes. Bert Ambrose had been a violinist but is solely a leader on these 25 tracks; the arrangements rival Ray Noble's and Isham Jones' for the most inventive of the early '30s. Many of the tunes are standards ("The Way You Look Tonight," "Too Marvelous For Words," "When Day Is Done") but the obscurities ("I'm All In") and the occasional novelties ("My Kid's a Crooner") are wonderful as well. Vocalists Sam Browne, Elsie Carlisle and Jack Cooper are charming; all facets of this superb band are beautifully represented on this CD.

Smooth swing from 1945 and '46 is presented on **Lou Preager: Cruising Down the River** (CDEA 6000), named after the pop standard which Preager discovered through a songwriting contest. Preager's band sounds like Les Brown's: a rich saxophone section is accompanied by a tight rhythm section and occasional, delicate piano fills (possibly Preager's own work or that of his young pianist Billy Penrose, who was more prone to playing boogie numbers such as the hot "Dodgin' Around"). Not many of these 25 tracks are well-remembered tunes ("Ashby De la Zouch" and "Good, Good, Good" are among the better-known tunes, along with "Sophisticated Lady," "Don't Take Your Love From Me" and the title number), but all are worthy of rediscovery.

The sound quality on all three of these debut Vocalion releases is absolutely superb. The original recordings are brighter on the Roy and Ambrose collections, but there's no faulting the flawless transfers by Michael J. Dutton. Our only regret is that the information about personnel and recording dates is rather slight. We hope this will be corrected in the future Vocalion releases which we eagerly anticipate. (Available for \$15.99 each in retail outlets such as Tower Records; for further information, contact Vocalion, P.O. Box 576, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 6YW, England.)

While there were many great British dance bands, the finest male vocalist to appear with them was unquestionably Al Bowllly, whose warm, slightly husky tenor brought life to hundreds of records in the '30s. Most of the best-known were made with Lew Stone or Ray Noble's bands, but he appeared in a wide variety of musical settings until his death in the Blitz in April 1941. **Al Bowllly and the Great British Bands** (Flapper PAST CD7088; \$19.00) presents the singer in 22 tracks made between 1931 and '40.

Two of the lesser-known Ray Noble tracks are here, and three with Lew Stone. The others feature him with Geraldo, Carroll Gibbons, Roy Fox, Arthur Lally, Oscar Rabin, Ronnie Munro and other bandleaders. Bowllly's magnetism and his ability to put over every kind of pop song come across forcefully here. The quality of the original records varies widely (some were made for low-budget labels), but overall this is a fine-sounding and creatively produced collection. (Available from Worlds Records, P.O. Box 1922, Novato CA 94948.)

Good Music in Small Packages

If you're eager to learn about various aspects of America's musical heritage, but don't have a lot of time or dough to spend on the education, some new book-and-CD packages offer a brisk and entertaining tour through many musical genres. The Friedman/Fairfax MusicBooks series is a group of compact books with compact discs. These 64-page hardcover volumes may be small (measuring 6 3/4" by 5 3/4"), but they're filled with rare photographs and packed with information. (Some of these were originally published in a larger format, the size of an old CD "longbox," and have been repackaged in the smaller design.)

Satin Dolls: The Women of Jazz by Andrew G. Hager takes us through the entire history of jazz, with an emphasis on sub-genres in which women particularly excelled. Perhaps this book should have been subtitled "The Women Singers of Jazz," because there's nothing here about instrumentalists such as trumpeter Valaida Snow, or all-female orchestras such as the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. The many sidebars about individual artists are interesting (although one photo caption mistakenly notes that Ella Fitzgerald was once a member of Dizzy Gillespie's band, when actually it was the other way around), and the photos are superb—we particularly loved rare portraits of Ethel Waters, Annette Hanshaw and Lee Wiley. We also appreciated the full index, as well as the lists of suggested books and recordings for further information.

The accompanying CD has 20 well-chosen tracks, in generally fine transfers. Ranging from the blues ("Gimme a Pigfoot" by Bessie Smith) through modern jazz ("Farmer's Market" by Annie Ross), most of the selections are from the big-band era, with some rarities included—such as "St. Louis Blues" by Maxine Sullivan with John Kirby, and the Ivie Anderson-Duke Ellington version of "All God's Chillun Got Rhythm."

Selling for only \$13.50 each, these inexpensive and information-packed volumes are a great way to learn more about artists whom you love, and those you've never heard of. Other titles in the series include Big Bands, Swing Kings, The Story of the Blues and Western Swing, which we'll review in future issues. (Available in book and record stores; info: Friedman/Fairfax, 15 West 26th Street, New York NY 10010; (212) 685-6610; <http://www.metrobooks.com>.)

A Trio of Connie (or Connee) Boswell CDs

Fans of Connie or *Connee* Boswell (she changed the spelling in the late '30s because not having to dot an "i" helped her write autographs more quickly) have much to be grateful for these days. Three CDs have recently been issued, providing a full picture of the recordings that she made apart from her talented sisters Martha and Vet. The most exciting release is the most recently recorded, **Connee Boswell Sings Irving Berlin** (Simitar 55442).

This album of Berlin standards was recorded in June 1958 and originally released on the Design label, a budget-line imprint. (It was later reissued as *The New Sound of Connee Boswell Singing the Irving Berlin Song Folio*, a title which emulated the popular Ella Fitzgerald "Songbook" series.) The album had Connee in superb voice, giving wonderful fresh interpretations of the Berlin songs (her sensitive reading of "There's No Business Like Show Business" is just one standout, and her magnificent "How Deep Is the Ocean" is another). The arrangements by Warren Vincent were wonderfully creative, and the orchestra boasted such fine players as trombonist Will Bradley, guitarist Mundell Lowe and drummer George Wettling. Unfortunately, Design sabotaged the quality of the original by pressing it on low-grade, hissy vinyl. Further, the original stereo mix was a disaster, with Connee's vocals separated onto the left channel and a nasty echo chamber effect on the right.



Thankfully, the folks at the Simitar label are merely reissuing these old Design masters—in many cases they're resurrecting them. In this case, the original two-track masters are mixed correctly for the first time, with Connee's vocals properly centered and the go-around echo eliminated. The full beauty of the arrangements (which employ a lovely, understated string section) and the sensitivity of Connee's interpretations comes across vividly on the new CD version. The full-color reproduction of the original cover art, and Rob Bamberg's excellent liner notes, are two extra touches of class.

Don't let the budget price of the current edition (usually 8.98 or less) fool you into thinking that this recording is in any way slipshod—this is a magnificent album, a lost gem waiting to be rediscovered.

We fervently hope that Simitar will issue the companion volume in which Connee sings Rodgers and Hart classics. (Available in retail stores; for further info: Simitar Entertainment, 300 Annapolis Lane N., Suite 140, Minneapolis MN 55447-5443; <http://www.simitar.com>.)

Heart and Soul (ASV/Living Era CD AJA5221; \$13.00) presents 25 of Connee Boswell's solo outings from 1932 through 1942, while **Deep In a Dream** (Harlequin CD 80; \$17.00) has 22 tracks ranging from '32 through 1945.

Since both collections are drawing from the same body of work, one might expect some duplication of titles. Seven tracks appear on both CDs: "Amapola," "All I Do Is Dream of You," "Gypsy Love Song," "The Carioca," "Deep In a Dream," "One Dozen Roses" and "Sand In My Shoes." These tracks are much better transferred on the ASV/Living Era disc, with a full range of bass and treble. The Harlequin transfers sound thin and muffled in comparison, with the most dramatic difference showing up on "One Dozen Roses."

Even so, the Harlequin CD is well worth owning, given that it has 15 tracks otherwise unavailable, including a hot version of "Way Down Yonder In New Orleans," first recorded for V-Disc in 1945 with a great band led by trumpeter Yank Lawson. While jazz was always closest to Connee's heart, she does a wonderful version of "Look For the Silver Lining," a swinging transformation of "Martha (Ah! So Pure)" and a wonderfully urgent oddity called "The Panic Is On" also make this well worth having. The Dorsey Brothers, Bob Crosby and Woody Herman lend their bands to several tracks.

The Harlequin CD emphasizes Connee's jazzier records, while the ASV definitely puts the spotlight on ballads, with "I Cover the Waterfront," "That Old Feeling" and "Stormy Weather," among others. There are still a couple of good uptempo tracks, though, notably the duets with Bing Crosby on "Basin Street Blues" and "Bob White." Taken together, the three CDs demonstrate the remarkable versatility of the singer who was Ella Fitzgerald's inspiration. (Available from Worlds Records, P.O. Box 1922, Novato CA 94948.)

Canaries Galore in Musical Aviary

Despite a nice run of hits in 1947 and several fine records on either side of their career year, one vocal trio hasn't been on CD until now. **The Best of the Dinning Sisters** (Collectors' Choice Music CCM-045-2; \$15.95) collects 25 tracks made for Capitol from 1943 through 1951. The Dinning trio was originally comprised of sisters Jean, Lou, and Ginger; Lou was replaced by non-sister Jayne Bundesen in 1946, and then by younger sister Tootsie in 1949. They have a smooth sound, with a fondness for unusual harmonies; they also exemplify good taste, with little of the gaudiness that sometimes marred the Andrews Sisters' records. Their recordings of "Where Or When," "Once In a While" and "The Way You Look Tonight" are delicately beautiful, while "Sentimental Gentleman From Georgia" and "He Like It! She Like It!" show that they definitely had a sense of humor. The sound is just dandy throughout this 75-minute collection; our only regret is that the booklet notes, while providing a full history of the trio, don't say much about the recordings, so we're not sure who the gentleman is who sings with the Dinnings on "Homesick-That's All," nor who's the Bob Crosby soundalike with them on "Oklahoma Hills." Still, a very nice remembrance of—or introduction to—a talented trio.

Ginny Simms may be best remembered as part of Kay Kyser's gang (she sang with Harry Babbitt, Sully Mason, Ish Kabibble and the ol' Perfesser himself from 1934 to '41), but she had a very successful solo career for the first half of the '40s, recording for Columbia, appearing regularly on radio and starring in films for RKO, Universal and MGM. Her career wound down rather quickly after 1945; she left MGM after Louis B. Mayer became a little too interested in her, and exited from Columbia Records when they signed Dinah Shore. After the early '50s, she concentrated on being a wife and mother, but made two returns to the recording studio—a brief appearance on a Kay Kyser reunion album for Capitol, and a ten-track album in 1960 for the budget-line Tops label. That collection, **Ginny Simms: Love Is Here to Stay** (Simitar 55642; \$8.98) is now on CD, and it shows that her lovely voice hadn't lost anything with the years. Her throaty vibrato is dramatic, but never overly so; the ten songs are mainly ballads, and good ones, such as "Where Or When," and "Can't Get Out of This Mood," which Harry Babbitt had sung with Kyser. The arrangements are generally excellent if sometimes a bit busy; the sound quality on this CD is superb, far better than on the original LP. Ginny never recorded again in the final 34 years of her life, so we're very lucky to have this lone stereo, superbly recorded example of her talent.

A great singer of the big-band era who's still performing today is Connie Haines, who sang with Harry James and Tommy Dorsey before going solo in 1942. Among her many accomplishments was playing the role of Julie, the role made famous by Helen Morgan, in a road show version of *Show Boat* in the '50s. Record producer Dave Pell didn't know about this when he asked Miss Haines to record an album of Morgan's songs in 1957—he simply wanted to give a fine singer a chance to record again. The result, newly available on CD, was **Connie Haines Sings a Tribute to Helen Morgan** (Simitar 55472; \$8.98). Haines, wisely, doesn't attempt to emulate Morgan's manner. And even though stylistically they're poles apart—Morgan was quiet and timorous, while Haines is lusty and dramatic—the songs and singer are well matched. The charts by Lew Raymond are mighty tasty, and a real bonus is an unreleased alternate of "Why Was I Born" that's a full two minutes longer than the one used. As for the others, "Yesterdays," "Mean to Me," "More Than You Know," "Bill" and the rest are timeless classics, lovingly presented here. (Both of the above available in retail stores; info: Simitar Entertainment, 5555 Pioneer Creek Drive, Maple Plain MN 55359; <http://www.simitar.com>)

An actress and comedienne who should have received more recognition as a truly fine singer is **The Charming Miss Edie Adams** (Varèse Sarabande VSD 5797; \$13.98), whose aptly titled 1958 mono LP for the RKO-Unique label has been reissued on CD. It sounds a whale of a lot better here than it did on the awful vinyl pressings, allowing us to fully appreciate the delicacy of Edie's gorgeous voice, and the lush orchestrations of Joe Leahy. Four of the songs are rarities by Rodgers and Hart. A novelty tune, "He Don't Wanna Be Kissed," was co-written by Edie's husband, the great Ernie Kovacs; after his untimely death in 1962, Edie spent much of her time seeing that his film and video legacy was preserved and catalogued, an accomplishment for which posterity should be forever grateful. Although this fine collection is short (25:02), it's delicious. (Available from Varèse Sarabande, 1-800-VARESE-4.)

Doris & Les CDs Deserve Renown

The recent two-CD release **The Complete Doris Day With Les Brown** (Collectors' Choice Music CCM 029-2) is cause for rejoicing. Beyond the fact that it's wonderful to have all 42 of the Brown/Day collaborations together in one package for the first time, over and above the splendid performances, the transfers, credited to one Ken Robertson, are absolutely stunning. Even if you have multiple copies of these tracks in your collection, you need this two-CD set. Virtually every track sounds as if you're in the recording studio with Les, Doris and company. There is no surface noise whatsoever, and the frequency range is fully defined from the lowest plunking of the bass to the highest trumpet note.

The liner notes (by Joseph F. Laredo) unfortunately don't give any indication of the source materials, but it sounds as though the original metal masters have just been unearthed in pristine condition from a forgotten vault. The fact that these transfers are from Sony Music/Columbia (a label whose CD reissues have varied wildly in sound quality from album to album and even from track to track) gives one hope that the company has finally figured out a way to properly present its incredible treasure trove of vintage records.

As to the music—it is likewise superb; disc one tends to have more of the uptempo swingers (including "I Ain't Hep to That Step, But I'll Dig It" and the great novelty "Alexander the Swoose"). The massive hit ballads "Sentimental Journey" and "My Dreams Are Getting Better All the Time" appear toward the end of the first CD, and consequently the second disc is mainly ballads—someone was obviously hoping to strike gold again.

They're lovely items ("We'll Be Together Again," "In the Moon Mist"), and the occasional uptempo number, such as the very rare "The Deevil, Devil, Divil," adds variety. Other rarities in the package include the excellent "All Through the Day" and "Are You Still In Love With Me?," the latter seeing its first release here.

Musically, Doris and Les have tended to be underrated; maybe it's because they were so consistently excellent that listeners became jaded. These astounding new transfers ought to make quite a few people realize how glorious this music is. (Available from Collectors' Choice Music, 1-800-923-1122; <http://www.ccmusic.com>)

Swinging on the Strings

Besides designing the classic rock guitar and pioneering multi-track recording, Les Paul was a great guitarist without the technical trickery, as proven in a new two-CD set, **Les Paul: The Complete Decca Trios - Plus** (Decca/MCA MCAD2-11708). The 50 waxings from 1936 through 1947 display Les in a variety of settings, from down-home blues with Georgia White to smooth pop with Dick Haymes, the Andrews Sisters and Bing Crosby (including "It's Been a Long, Long Time" and two takes of "Gotta Get Me Somebody to Love"), to jazz and Hawaiian material with his own Trio. Les was a pretty good band all by himself, as he shows in four 1936 tracks as "Rhubarb Red," where he plays, sings and plays a hot harmonica. Ten previously-unreleased tracks are included, including two numbers with Helen Forrest and seven tracks by the Trio. Not all of Paul's Decca tracks are here (there are 13 more with Georgia White, and still more alternate takes), but this comprehensive collection shows how fine a musician Les Paul was in real time, without overdubbing. Steven Lasker's transfers and Joseph F. Laredo's booklet notes are superb.



Dave Apollon

Dave Apollon may not be the widely-revered legend that Les Paul is, but that's only because rock 'n' roll is generally not played on mandolins. Fans and players of that instrument, however, love Apollon for his humor, his showmanship, and his jazz chops. Born in Kiev in 1897, Dave escaped from the Russian revolution by sailing to the Philippines, where he performed in Manila. From there, he came to San Francisco in 1919 and became an immediate hit in vaudeville, where his thick Russian accent, his wise-cracking humor, and his eccentric dancing were enjoyed as much as his terrific mandolin playing (these elements of his act are preserved in several Vitaphone shorts, some available on laserdisc). In 1925, Apollon met a group of Filipino string players whose leader had left them. This was obviously a natural match-up, and Dave Apollon and his Manila Orchestra became a hit in clubs, vaudeville, films and recordings here and abroad. **Dave Apollon: The Man With the Mandolin** (Acoustic Disc ACD-27) is a two CD set chronologically collecting all 51 of Apollon's recordings from 1930 through 1956, including selections from the soundtracks of his films. (Apollon also made three albums in the late '50s for Coral, after he'd begun a long residency in Las Vegas.) The wide variety of material, from The Second Hungarian Rhapsody to the jazzy "Mandolin Blues," is amazing, as is Apollon's virtuosity (check out his version of "Lover," a number which Les Paul also chose as a showpiece). The well-illustrated booklet, with notes by fellow mandolinist and producer David Grisman, is a gem, and the transfers by Paul Stubblebine are excellent. This terrific release restores to public view the artistry and humor of a little giant who should be better remembered. (Available from Acoustic Disc, P.O. Box 4143, San Rafael CA 94913; (800) 221-DISC; <http://www.dawgnet.com>)

A happy surprise is the first "authorized" compilation of recordings by another string-instrument wizard. **Cliff Edwards: Ukulele Ike** (Sony Music Special Products A 26475; \$8.98) is a budget-line, ten-track release, but one with several extra classy touches. The ten selections, ranging from 1924's acoustic "Fascinatin' Rhythm" to 1934's electric "Love Is Just Around the Corner" are freshly and beautifully transferred. The booklet insert actually has full information on each track (gleaned from the late Larry Kiner's Cliff Edwards discography published by Greenwood Press). For a low-priced release, this is an excellent introduction to Edwards' hits.

Another Edwards CD for the connoisseur, **Cliff Edwards "Ukulele Ike": 1930s Radio Transcriptions** (Collectors' Choice Music CCM-018; \$16.00) claims to include 12 tracks from a June 1947 Edwards ABC radio show, with the remaining ten numbers from the "1930s," but in fact all date from the late '40s, when Edwards was prolifically making transcriptions. Similarly, the first track is listed as "Oh! Honey, It's So Funny," but the song is actually "Hang On to Me," which Cliff had first waxed in 1928. However, the tracks are enjoyable and well-transferred. Cliff gives us a parade of standards ("Ain't We Got Fun," "Ain't Misbehavin'," "If You Knew Susie"), and since he's accompanied mainly by a vocal quartet, his ukulele is heard to good effect. (Both Edwards CDs available from Collectors' Choice Music, 800 W. Thorndale, Itasca IL 60143; 1-800-923-1122.)

Two Sides of Country Music

Those of you who enjoy *real* old time music—that is, the music played on banjos, fiddles, guitars, mandolins and harmonicas by folks in the South—will have a feast with a recent release remastered by Craig Maier and Rick Carlson of Diamond Cut Productions. As with previous Diamond Cut releases, many of the 22 tracks of **Ernest V. Stoneman: Edison Recording 1928** (County CD 3510) are unissued rarities, existing only in test pressings from the Edison archives.

Stoneman was a carpenter who, after hearing Henry Whitter's hit record "Wreck of the Southern Old '97," decided he was a much better singer and ought to be making discs himself. He undertook this new career with a vengeance, making records for OKeh, Gennett, Plaza, Victor and Edison between 1925 and 1929. On the tracks heard here, Stoneman's guitar, harmonica and plaintive tenor are backed with a fiddle and a banjo or second guitar. The songs are real old-time mountain songs, full of sentiment ("My Mother and My Sweetheart"), faith ("I Remember Calvary") and advice ("It's Sinful to Flirt"). The sound quality is spacious and full, very nice indeed considering the age and the condition of the original. (Available from Diamond Cut Productions, P.O. Box 305, Hibernia NJ 07842.)

A country singer who by comparison is practically a city slicker is celebrated in **Tex Ritter: Vintage Collections** (Capitol Nashville 8-36903-2). Most of the 11 tracks are from Tex's 1942-47 hitmaking heyday, with a 1952 remake of "High Noon" and the 1961 hit "I Dreamed of a Hillbilly Heaven" completing the package.

Maurice Ritter was actually a pre-law student at the University of Texas at Austin when he met folklorist John Lomax before long his career goals had turned from law to acting and music. A role as a singing cowboy in the 1929 Broadway production of *Green Grow the Lilacs* led to radio and records, but the big break came in 1933 when Tex emulated Gene Autry and began making movies for Grand National. He was signed to the new Capitol label by co-founder Johnny Mercer in 1942, and had a slew of hits, which are as fresh and enjoyable on this CD as they were 50-odd years ago. The previously unissued "I Was Out of My Mind" and "Waitin' and A'Worryin'" are great fun, as are the sagas of "The Pony Express" and "Pecos Bill." (Available in retail stores

Documenting the Careers of Three Jazz Greats

Music of Two World Wars

Lee Wiley was one of the most distinctive, and most overlooked, singers in the golden era of popular songs. Her voice—a contralto, deeper than that of her contemporaries—is usually described as “smoky,” but we prefer the way she was billed on radio in 1938: “The lady with the blue velvet voice.” She mainly sang ballads, and had a direct, intimate way of portraying a lyric. In **Lee Wiley: A Bio-Discography** (76 pages, softcover) authors Len Selk and Gus Kuhlman pay glowing tribute to a lady whose talents, then as now, deserved wider recognition. Kuhlman first met Miss Wiley in 1950 and remained a close friend until her death in 1975. His concise biography draws from her scrapbooks and the memories of family and friends. Occasionally, an associate of Wiley’s is not fully identified, and key information about her family background is strangely placed at the very end of this section. It’s surprising to learn through Selk’s discography how prolific Lee was in the recording studio (she had occasional long spells between sessions, which interrupted her career momentum). Original issue on 78 or broadcast transcription is followed by later releases on LPs, CDs and cassettes. Unfortunately, only the stock numbers of these collections are provided; a page or two identifying “RCA LPM-1408” and the like is sorely needed. Still, the authors’ enthusiasm for Miss Wiley’s artistry comes across vividly; several rare photos decorate the text. (Available for \$20.00 per copy plus \$3.00 postage (in the US) or \$6.95 to Canada and overseas from Gus Kuhlman, 311 Independence Blvd., North Brunswick NJ 08902.)



Lee Wiley

World War I, ironically, prompted some hugely enjoyable music, as demonstrated in **Songs of WWI From Original Recordings** (Take Two Records). This two-CD or cassette, 40 song collection beautifully captures the political conflicts (“I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier”), the jingoism (“The Yanks Started Yankin’”), the poignancy (“My Buddy”), the humor (“K-K-K-Katy”) and horror (“My Dream of the Big Parade”) of the Great War.

Most of the discs, from 1914 through 1919, are acoustically-recorded, but are beautifully transferred by Doug Schwartz. The artists include John McCormack, Al Jolson, and most prominently Billy Murray, who probably made several albums’ worth of WWI songs by himself. Some lovely period sheet music graphics, courtesy of Ian Whitcomb, adorn the equally lovely and reflective essay by Bill McKenna. (Available as two cassettes for \$19.95 or two CDs for 24.95 from Good Music Record Co., P.O. Box 1935, Ridgely MD 21681-1935; 800-538-4200.)

World War II was an even nastier sequel, but likewise it prompted a lot of great music—much of it recorded exclusively for the armed forces on V-Discs. The lieutenant who headed the Navy’s V-Disc program, one E.P. DiGiannantonio, is now the producer of a new V-Disc series available from Collectors’ Choice Music. We’ve sampled a couple of these items, which are on the V-Disc label but which have no stock numbers.

Charlie Spivak (14.95) is a two-CD set running 78 minutes total (it could’ve just fit on a single disc), with all 24 of the stratospheric trumpeter’s big-band waxings for the label. His theme, “Stardreams” isn’t here, but lovely versions of “Laura” and “I’ll Remember April” are. The sound is generally very good, even though these transfers are made from the original coarse-groove “Formvar” pressings. Some items are studio recordings, others are airchecks, a situation which is the same in **Billie Holiday** (9.95), a disc containing all eight of her tracks issued by V-Disc. The sound is a wee bit raspy, but it’s great to hear Billie live. The live tracks of “Don’t Explain” and “Do You Know What it Means to Miss New Orleans” are from 1947, since Louis Armstrong introduces Billie as “my co-star in the picture”—1947’s *New Orleans*. (Available from Collector’s Choice Music, P.O. Box 838, Itasca IL 60143-0838; 1-800-923-1122.)



Charlie Parker

The career of another great jazz chanteuse is exhaustively chronicled in **Lady Day’s Diary** by Ken Vail (Castle Communications; 208 pages, softcover; \$19.95), which provides a day-by-day account of Billie Holiday’s work from the time she joined Count Basie in March 1937 until her death in July 1959. Each live engagement, broadcast and recording session is noted, with the musical personnel of each performance identified as fully as possible. The dynamic graphics really tell the story, however. Dozens of fully-captioned photographs are accompanied by original news clippings, advertisements and reviews, bringing Billie’s story to life with an immediacy not found in conventional biographies. (Street maps of New York City and Hollywood place the locales of various nightclubs and recording studios, a classy and informative touch.) While this book focuses on her career, the controversies and tragedies of Billie’s private life are inevitably disclosed.

The same is true for the subject of Mr. Vail’s other recent book. **Bird’s Diary** (Castle Communications; 176 pages, softcover; \$19.95) is likewise a daily document of alto saxophonist Charlie Parker’s career from his revolutionary recordings in February 1945 though his untimely death at 35 in March 1955. As with Holiday, Parker was an innovative artist who gained a legion of bedazzled fans; he similarly was bedeviled by heroin, suffered mental and physical breakdowns and died far too young. The same splashy graphic style is a highlight of this book; Parker’s career is docu-

mented a little more minutely than Holiday’s, since only ten years can be covered instead of 22. In addition to the wealth of photographs, ads, original reviews and other interesting ephemera (Parker’s own handwriting of his composition’s unusual title, “Klact-oveseds-tene”), there are lengthy quotes from broadcast interviews and occasional reminiscences from fellow musicians. Reading these books is like going through the artists’ own scrapbooks—exceedingly well-detailed scrapbooks, however. Both are very absorbing, and evocative of the world in which these two artists lived, created and perished. While published by a British house (a division of the Penguin Group), these books are widely available in the States and can be ordered from bookstores or from <http://www.amazon.com>.

Johnson and Scott Tickle Ears and Ivories

CDs of Titanic Proportions

The folks at Biograph Records continue to release more classic ragtime on CD. **James Scott: Classic Ragtime From Rare Piano Rolls** (Biograph BCD 149) celebrates the music of one of the "Big Three" ragtime composers (Scott Joplin and Joseph Lamb being the other two in the estimation of most ragtime scholars). James Scott was a Missouri native who showed a love for music from childhood, and his father had encouraged this by buying him a piano. At 16, young Scott got a job as a window washer for a local music store, and when he displayed his pianistic abilities for the owner, he was promoted to demonstrating the newest sheet music. New titles by Joplin caught his fancy, and Scott began writing his own rags. He had many compositions published between 1906 and 1922, and worked additionally as a music teacher and as organist in several Kansas City movie theaters.

His rags tend to have a little less emotional variety than Joplin's—where Joplin's pieces go from a happy strain to a poignant one, James Scott's seem to be self-assured almost constantly. Even his "Rag Sentimental" seems more determined than wistful. All of them, however, are delights. This CD is taken from a 1974 master tape whose sound quality is excellent despite its age; the rolls are "arranged," that is produced mathematically from sheet music rather than played. Even so, the 15 tunes and "performances" are lovely, and the liner notes by producers Trebor Tichenor and Michael Montgomery are insightful.



James P. Johnson

On the other hand, all 13 rolls used for **James P. Johnson: Parlor Piano Solos From Rare Piano Rolls** (Biograph BCD 150) were originally played by the man best known for writing "Charleston," "Old Fashioned Love," and "Carolina Shout." The latter tune appears here, along with seven more of his creations ("Caprice Rag" shows up twice) and five Johnson performances of tunes by other composers. These rolls, made between May 1917 and June 1921, show ragtime turning into jazz. One wonders how "Caprice" or "Carolina Shout" could ever have been marketed as sheet music for the amateur player, since they abound in dazzling

keyboard runs, offbeat syncopations and complex harmonies—lovely to hear but mighty tough to play. Although the source tapes are from 1970 and '72, they sound just fine. (Available from Biograph, 35 Medford St., Suite 203, Somerville MA 02143; <http://www.biograph.com>.)

The sound is slightly less than pristine on **James P. Johnson: Running Wild (1921-1926)** (Tradition TCD 1048), which appears to be taken from 1940s 78s drawn in turn from Johnson's '20s piano rolls. (The metronomic beat and lack of diminuendo and crescendo point to these being taken from a player piano rather than a live performance.) Even so, this 11-track collection is great fun; the "Runnin' Wild Medley" including both "Charleston" and "Old Fashioned Love" is valuable, and it's wonderful to have Johnson's performances of "Muscle Shoals Blues," "Sugar," "Harlem Choc'late Babies On Parade" and others available. (Available from Tradition, Shetland Park, 27 Congress Street, Salem MA 01970; <http://www.TraditionRecords.com>.)

Having recorded prolifically in the '20s, Johnson curtailed his jazz activities in the '30s (with the exception of several sessions with Clarence Williams' Jug Band), preferring to write extended semi-classical pieces. The best known, "Yamekraw—A Negro Rhapsody" appears on **The Original James P. Johnson** (Smithsonian Folkways CD 40812), a collection of 20 piano solos which Johnson recorded for Folkways founder Moses Asch between 1942 and '45. The pianist had a happy renaissance in the '40s, performing in concert, on radio shows, and also recording for Decca and Blue Note. These sides for Asch may have been dearest to his heart, however, since Asch was unconcerned about commercial appeal and let Johnson record anything he wished. Eight of the 20 tracks here have never been released before, including lovely versions of "Aunt Hagar's Blues" and "Sweet Lorraine" and Johnson's own extended composition "Jazzamine Concerto." Considering the notorious disorganization of Asch's archives, the gorgeous sound quality is remarkable. (Available from Smithsonian Folkways Mail Order, 414 Hungerford Drive, Suite 444, Rockville MD 20850; (800) 410-9815; <http://www.si.edu/folkways>.)

With a multi-multi-million dollar movie and a Broadway musical reawakening interest in the ill-fated ocean liner which sank on her maiden voyage in 1912, maybe it's no surprise that there are two recent CDs which aim to recapture the authentic music of the ship's little band. **Titanic - Music As Heard On the Fateful Voyage** by the White Star Orchestra (Rhino R2 72821) is a production of the indefatigable musical archaeologist (maybe in this case an oceanographer as well) Ian Whitcomb. In addition to writing a lovely and fully-detailed essay about the ship's actual musicians (notes which were just nominated for a Grammy, incidentally), producer Whitcomb also plays piano, accordion and ukulele and recites the somber poem "The Convergence of the Twain." The rest of the 23 selections were likely played by the original White Star Orchestra in the instrumentation heard here (two violins, two pianists, viola, two cellists and a bass; there must be some overdubbing here, as six musicians take the place of the original eight). The selections range from light classics such as "The Merry Widow Waltz" and "The Glow Worm" to "Oh, You Beautiful Doll" and the new hit "Alexander's Ragtime Band." Despite the tragic event being commemorated, this is lively, delightful music. The packaging includes sheet music art and Titanic memorabilia. (Available from Rhino Direct, 1-800-432-0020.)

Ian Whitcomb is adamant that the last song played by the White Star Orchestra as the ship went down was "Songe d'Automne," which appears as the final number on the Rhino CD. "Nearer, My God, to Thee," the song of legend, is the finale of **Music Aboard the Titanic** (Inside Sound ISC 2896)—although it must be admitted that annotator Kenneth Kreitner admits that this is more legend than fact. Only three of the tunes on the Rhino disc are also heard among the 17 selections on the Inside Sounds release, but the mixture of light classics and current pop items is much the same. The instrumentation is similar but has a bigger sound, and conductor/composer Carl Wolfe has added two new instrumentals, "Leaving Queenstown" and the heartbreaking "Fateful Hour." The packaging is not as elaborate as on the Rhino release, but this is still a heartfelt and well-done project, one which any Titanic buff should own. (Available from Inside Sounds, P.O. Box 171282, Memphis TN 38187.)

The Past Times CD Sale!

We've just acquired these factory-fresh compact discs from the folks who ran Vintage Sound Works, and are making them available at bargain prices. *Quantities are limited*, so please specify alternate titles with your order. All titles are in stock now, but once they're gone, we can't guarantee that we'll have more of 'em, so order now.

FROM COLLECTOR'S CLASSICS:

THE CLARENCE WILLIAMS COLLECTION:

Volume 1, 1927-28 The composer-pianist-singer and his wonderful little band romp through 25 selections such as *Candy Lips*, *Cushion Foot Stomp*, *Baby Won't You Please Come Home* and *Back in Your Own Backyard*. Hot jazz and fun, fun, fun.
CCD-19.....\$14.98

THE ORIGINAL MEMPHIS FIVE COLLECTION:

Volume 1, 1922-23 Trumpeter Phil Napoleon, trombonist Miff Mole and their gang provide hot jazz in 23 acoustic sides, lovingly remastered by John R.T. Davies. Titles include *My Honey's Lovin' Arms*, *Jelly Roll Blues*, *Hot Lips*, *Chicago*, *Sister Kate* --all of 'em new songs when these were cut!
CCD-16.....\$14.98

FROM MEMPHIS ARCHIVES:

ISHAM JONES: Swinging Down the Lane Jones' early band is revisited here in 18 tracks--some acoustics, some electricals. All of the performances are wonderful, especially on Ish's own songs *It Had to Be You*, *I'll See You in My Dreams* and the title cut.
MA7014.....\$11.98

ART TATUM: California Melodies The amazing pianist is heard here in 24 rare tracks from a 1940 Los Angeles radio show. Some are Tatum favorites (*Elegie*, *Tea For Two*), others are rarities (*I Cried For You*, *I Thought About You*, *This Can't Be Love*). All are superior recordings.
MA7007.....\$11.98

FROM TAKE TWO RECORDS:

PHIL HARRIS: ECHOES FROM THE COCOANUT GROVE Phil's great early band is heard here in rare transcriptions from 1932-33. Vocals by Phil, The Three Ambassadors, Leah Ray, Jack Smith and others. The tunes include *Got a Date With an Angel*, *Rockin' Chair*, *Mimi*, and the very funny *How's About It*.
TT416CD.....\$12.98

GENE AUSTIN: A TIME TO RELAX At last, a CD devoted to the guy who created the style followed by Bing Crosby, Perry Como and other "intimate" singers. Austin casts his spell on *I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling*, *My Fate Is in Your Hands*, *Love Letters in the Sand* -- and *My Blue Heaven*, too.
TT414CD.....\$12.98

LIBBY HOLMAN: MOANIN' LOW The Broadway star torches her way through *Can't We Be Friends?*, *A Ship Without a Sail* and *Body and Soul*. Jazz fans will enjoy the Roger Wolfe Kahn band on *Cooking Breakfast For the One I Love* and The Cotton Pickers on *He's a Good Man to Have Around*.
TT415CD.....\$12.98

THE FIRST TORCH SINGERS: Volume One, The

Twenties Fanny Brice, Helen Morgan, Ruth Etting, Libby Holman, Sophie Tucker, Belle Baker, Lee Morse, Kate Smith, Annette Hanshaw, Frances Williams and Eva Taylor carry the torch on 20 great selections, including *More Than You Know*, *The Man I Love* and *Then You've Never Been Blue*.
TT 407.....\$12.98

THE FIRST TORCH SINGERS: Volume Two, 1930-

34 The "golden age" of torch songs revisited, with Ruth Etting, Helen Morgan, Libby Holman, Marion Harris, Ethel Waters, Kate Smith, Adelaide Hall, Lee Morse, Frances Langford, Mildred Bailey and others. Songs: *Love For Sale*, *Stormy Weather*, *My Old Flame*, more.
TT 412.....\$12.98

THE FIRST CROONERS: Volume One, The Twen-

ties First in a series to highlight the development of crooning. Features 20 early crooners: Bing Crosby, Dick Powell, Gene Austin, Jack Smith, Rudy Vallee, etc. *Sentimental Baby*, *Broadway Melody*, more.
TT 411.....\$12.98

GUS ARNHEIM: Echoes From the Coconut Grove

(1931) Arnheim's full-toned (and often pretty hot!) orchestra from transcribed radio shows. Vocals by Bing Crosby (first known broadcast), Loyce Whiteman, Donald Novis, Harry Barris and others. Songs: *Sweet Georgia Brown*, *Out of Nowhere*, more.
TT 410.....\$12.98

THE BOSWELL SISTERS: Syncopating

Harmonists From New Orleans (1930-35) Rare commercial cuts, and unreleased selections from their 1930 radio shows! Among the tunes are *The Object of My Affection*, *I'll Never Say Never Again*, more.
TT 406.....\$12.98

RUTH ETTING: Goodnight My Love (1930-37)

Features rare discs from the height of Ruth's popularity to her premature retirement in '37. Her gorgeous, plaintive voice adorns *Let Me Sing and I'm Happy*, *Exactly Like You*, *Goodnight My Love*, more.
TT 403.....\$12.98

BUDDY CLARK: Band Vocals From the Thirties

(1934-37) Features the young crooner with the bands of Freddy Martin, Eddy Duchin, Benny Goodman. *Stars Fell on Alabama*, *Bye Bye Baby*, more.
TT 402.....\$12.98

KATE SMITH: Emergence of a Legend (1930-39)

Kate's pure, golden voice is featured in records from the decade in which she rose to stardom. Among the songs are *You Call It Madness*, *The Continental*, and her theme *When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain*.
TT 401.....\$12.98

SUNBEAM/OJL RECORDS:

BIX BEIDERBECKE: Bix Restored (1924-1927)

The brilliant jazz cornetist is saluted in this lovingly remastered 3-CD set which includes *every* Bix track (including alternates) from his debut with the Wolverines to the September 1927 finale of the Jean Goldkette band. Includes rarities such as *Adoration* and all three versions of *In My Merry Oldsmobile*. Also included: Bix's first and best tracks with the Frank Trumbauer band--*Singin' the Blues*, *I'm Comin' Virginia*, more. The transfers by John R.T. Davies are superb!
BXCDD 1-3 (3 CD Set).....\$44.98

DIAMOND CUT PRODUCTIONS:

UNRELEASED EDISON LATERALS 1 This is a 21-track anthology of hot and happy dance-band music, electrically recorded by Edison in 1928 and '29 and unreleased until now! Your feet will tap when you hear The California Ramblers' *Cause I Feel Low Down*; Winegar's Pennsylvania Boys' *My Gal Sal*, more.
DCP201D.....\$15.98

THE CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS: Edison Later-

als 2 One of the best hot dance bands of the '20s romps through 20 tracks from 1928 and '29. Despite their extreme rarity, these tracks have excellent sound quality. Songs include *You're the Cream in My Coffee*, *Button Up Your Overcoat*, *Tiptoe Through the Tulips*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, more.
DCP301D.....\$15.98

HOT DANCE OF THE ROARING '20s

Here's a brand new collection of unreleased Edison material from 1928 and '29, a 21-track marathon of beloved songs like *Let's Do It*, *Singin' In the Rain*, *I'll Get By* and *Makin' Whoopee*—along with wonderful obscurities such as *Sunny Skies* and *Wipin' the Pan*. The bands include the Piccadilly Players, the Seven Blues Babies, and the orchestras of Bernie Stevens, Al Friedman, B.A. Rolfe and Phil Spitalny. Fun!!
DCP202D.....\$17.98

TEXAS ROSE/OJL:

MILTON BROWN AND THE MUSICAL BROWNI-

ES Here's the band that really started Western Swing! With fiddles, banjo and guitars in their line-up, you might mistake this for a hillbilly band, but uh uh—these fellows played jazz with a southwestern flavor. Brown was a terrific and personable singer, with a warm and versatile voice. This 5-CD set has everything the group ever made, almost six hours' worth of great tracks such as *Sweet Jennie Lee*; *St. Louis Blues*; *Copenhagen*; *Some of These Days*; *Avalon*; and *Right or Wrong*. Also included are the 14 tracks with the band led by younger brother Derwood Brown after Milton's untimely death. The sound quality is stunning.
TXRCD1-5.....\$64.98

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Radio/TV

Golden Reruns from the '50s

If you weren't around to see many of the classic television shows of the early '50s, you can take an intensive crash course in early TV history with a new box set of seven VHS videocassettes. **Classic Television: Your Favorites From the 1950s** (Marathon Music & Video; \$29.95) is a well-chosen selection of shows.

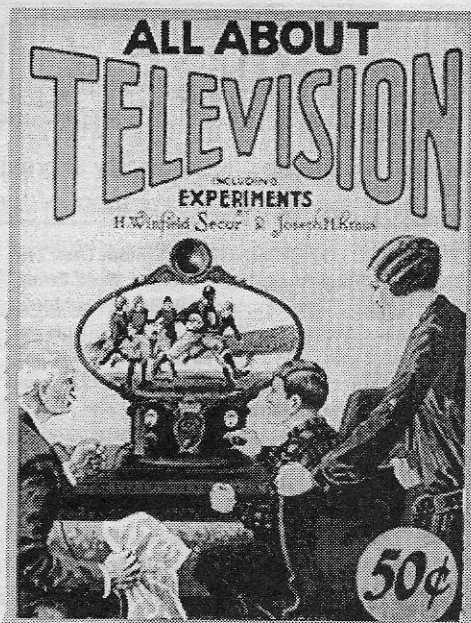
The 17 series selected include a number of comedy shows (*Jack Benny*, *Caesar's Hour*, *Milton Berle*, *NBC Comedy Hour*), a few sitcoms (*Burns & Allen*, *Mama*, *Topper*, *I Married Joan*), dramatic shows (*Racket Squad*, *Suspense*), a few quiz shows (*\$64,000 Question*, *You Bet Your Life*, *I've Got a Secret*), one musical show (the famous Dorsey Brothers *Stage Show* from 1956 introducing Elvis Presley) and one adventure show for the kids (*Space Patrol*).

Each 90-minute, standard-play tape is supposed to represent one night of the weekly prime-time schedule. To the producers' credit, most of the shows actually aired on the night represented. For example, the *Texaco Star Theatre* with Milton Berle and the *\$64,000 Question* both aired on Tuesdays. The "Friday" tape is a misnomer, though, since Jack Benny's show aired on Sundays throughout the '50s and *I Married Joan* was on Wednesdays. In addition, the episode of *I've Got a Secret* is from the 1964-67 period when Steve Allen was host.

Overall, this is a very enjoyable collection. Each show is prefaced with some historical background delivered by one Dale Reed. These programs are in the public domain (at least they'd better be!), so one can't expect pristine quality, but generally the prints used are in surprisingly fine condition. (The end credits of *Topper* have sour sound, the beginning of *Racket Squad* is a bit splicy, and the Benny show is dupey looking, but the Berle/Texaco show looks terrific and is wonderfully funny; ditto the Burns & Allen and Sid Caesar shows.)

The programs yield some fun surprises. *The NBC Comedy Hour* has radio favorites Hans Conreid and Bill Thompson, the former as a virtually silent straight man to Jonathan Winters, the latter performing his "Wallace Wimple" and "Old Timer" voices from the *Fibber McGee* show. Stan

Continued on Page 32



earlier and bigger impact than in the States; curiously, the history of early British television is virtually ignored in the chronology which accompanies the photos. Scottish inventor John Logie Baird's "Televisor" from 1920 is the earliest set shown, with other English televisions made by HMV and Dynatron showing how advanced television had become in England by the late '30s.

The earliest Stateside TV is a General Electric "Octagon" from 1928—a large cabinet with an eight-sided wooden panel on the top, which frames a tiny screen. Even stranger is a 1929 Western Television, a plain, square cabinet with a channel control that looks like a ship's wheel and a small round screen that resembles a porthole. A 1939 General Electric model has a 5" rectangular screen, a push-button for each of three possible channels, and a separate unit to receive the audio. Two 1950 Emersons have cabinet-top antennae that look like beautiful large, golden rings instead of "rabbit-ears." From 1940 on, most of the televisions depicted are of U.S. origin, although there is a French 1949 model made by La Voix de Son Maitre (His Master's Voice), and a spindly-looking 1956 Italian model made by Watt.

Mr. Collins notes that TV design was somewhat limited by the need to keep the larger volume of parts inside a cabinet that could still fit easily into an average living room. Even so, there's a wide variety of sizes, shapes and materials employed. The earliest sets are wood cabinets which emulate large radios; later models are plastic, some of them modeled after portable radios. Many have doors to hide the screen during non-viewing hours. Some are frankly old-fashioned (a 1949 DuMont looks like a radio of 25 years earlier) and others are futuristic (spacy-looking Sentinels and Firestones from 1948 through '50).

Along with the wealth of gorgeous photos, there are covers of radio magazines of the '20s and '30s, predicting what the television of the future will look like. A few vintage TV-related toys also show up, such as a small metal replica of an ABC remote-broadcast truck, with a cameraman aiming his trusty image-orthicon from the back seat. We do wish that there was more to the text—the accompanying chronology documents key moments in TV's early history, but there aren't any captions describing the individual sets shown. However, this parade of vintage boob-tubes from Stromberg-Carlson, Farnsworth, Scott, Fada, Capehart, Stewart-Warner and other long-ago manufacturers shows us that the actual televisions can be as fascinating to look at as the programming. Sometimes even moreso. (Available in bookstores; information: General Publishing Group, Inc., 2701 Ocean Park Blvd., Suite 140, Santa Monica CA 90405.)

A Colorful Collection of Vintage Tubes

You have to take careful notice of the plural in the title of **The Golden Age of Televisions** by Philip Collins (General Publishing Group; 132 pages, softcover; \$15.95). It's not a history of TV in the '50s; rather, it's a lavishly illustrated, beautifully crafted full-color chronicle of television set design.

Most of the sets shown in lovely, crisp photographs (taken by Garry Brod) are from television's infancy—the book is more than halfway finished before we progress beyond 1950. This is no doubt because the conventions of TV design hadn't yet been firmly established, and because there were more manufacturers in those early experimental days. Most of the earliest sets shown here are from England, where TV made an



Sherlock Holmes on American Radio, Part 2

By Lawrence Nepodahl

The Sherlock Holmes series which starred Richard Gordon for NBC finished its run on December 24, 1936. There would be no Holmes series for almost three years. However, radio wasn't completely devoid of Sherlock Holmes during this period. The wonder boy of The Mercury Theater On The Air, Orson Welles, presented a production of William Gillette's play on September 25, 1938. Welles, who wrote this radio version, achieved what he set out to do. That is, to perform *The Immortal Sherlock Holmes* as faithfully to Gillette's play as possible.

The great detective's zenith as far as radio is concerned started on Monday night, October 2, 1939, in a new series which originated from California. Basil Rathbone, who had already portrayed Sherlock Holmes in two films for 20th Century Fox, would become the best remembered actor to depict Holmes in two media. So would the actor who joined him as Dr. Watson, Nigel Bruce.

Their first radio adventure was *The Sussex Vampire*. Rathbone and Bruce would continue together until 1946, with around 218 shows to their credit. Many of the actors from the pair's film exploits could be heard throughout these numerous shows. Mary Gordon continued playing the long suffering housekeeper, Mrs. Hudson. Dennis Hoey appeared as Inspector Lestrade in 1943 and '44, with Frederick Worlock taking up the same role in later stories. Both were tall men playing a diminutive character, but that was the magic of radio. Casual listeners could imagine Lestrade any way they wanted, and Sherlockians could use their minds' eye to envision the books' description of a sallow, rat-faced, dark eyed fellow. Bromo Quinine Cold Tablets sponsored the series, which aired over NBC in 1939. Knox Manning was the announcer and visitor to Dr. Watson.

The 1939, 1940 and 1941 shows were all stories from the Conan Doyle canon, adapted for radio by Edith Meiser. For the most part, the scripts were recycled from the previous series. An unprecedented occurrence happened on January 12, 1941; this was the start of a six part adaptation of the most famous Sherlock Holmes story, *The Hound Of the Baskervilles*.

After March 1st, 1941, Sherlock Holmes was off the air. He returned on April 30, 1943. This date began a new series with Mutual, which would be the show's network until Fall 1946. Their new sponsor would remain with them through all those years too; Petri Wine (probably the best remembered of the Holmes sponsors). The prolific Edith Meiser was still turning out standard and original tales, but after writing Holmes scripts for 13 years, she was becoming tired. Her last writing output was *The Sinister Wind Bells*, broadcast on July 17, 1944. But we were not to hear the last of Ms. Meiser.

Two men now took over the writing for the following week's adventure, *The Strange Case of the Aluminum Crutch* Denis Green, who was an actor on the stage and screen, and Leslie Charteris, creator of Simon Templar, a.k.a. The Saint. During his outing as a writer for the Holmes series, Charteris went under the pseudonym of Bruce Taylor, derived from the names of the show's producer (Glenhall Taylor), and second lead (Nigel Bruce). The pair's two year collaboration would find them writing more pastiche scripts than Meiser ever had, mainly because the Conan Doyle canon stories had already been done and redone. The order given from the sponsor's top brass was to keep the audience tuned in and



listening. As a result, the series embraced the sensational with tales such as *The Apparition At Sadler's Wells* and *The Adventure Of the Phantom Iceberg*. Owen Babby and Bob Campbell were the announcing visitors to Dr. Watson during this period of 1943 and '44.

A few months into 1945, Charteris decided to jump ship, but a true student of Sherlock Holmes boarded

the boat with Denis Green. He was the literary writer, critic and music historian Anthony Boucher. The scripts became more imaginative and better structured when Boucher joined, starting with the very first Green/Boucher collaboration, *The Book of Tobit*, which aired on March 26, 1945. Bill Forman was the interloper for that evening's adventure, with Harry Bartel taking over the announcing duties for the season.

The year 1946 found Rathbone, Bruce, Green, Boucher, and the sponsor Petri Wine still together, along with stock players Mary Gordon and Frederick Worlock. Filling out the casts were radio pros such as Peggy Webber, Carl Harbord, Eric Snowden, and the unsung hero of Old Time Radio, Joseph Kearns. All stepped before the microphone to join in on the Sherlock Holmes exploits.

The whole show was running like a well stoked Special. The derailment came after the final show of the season on May 27, 1946, entitled *The Baconian Cipher*. Sadly, it was to be Basil Rathbone's last radio portrayal of the wisest man whom Watson has ever known. There was nothing anyone could say or do to alter Rathbone's decision to leave the series. Simply put, his contract was up and he wanted out.

The public still wanted to hear Sherlock Holmes on their radios. When the fall of 1946 arrived, the series had a new network (ABC), a new sponsor (Kremel), and a new actor to utter, "The Game's Afoot." Tom Conway, who was popular in films after the war, mainly for his filmed portrayal of another sleuth, The Falcon, was chosen to fill Rathbone's shoes. Nigel Bruce stayed on as Dr. Watson, getting top billing at this point. Joseph Bell was back as announcer/visitor, now hawking hair products instead of coffee. The whole assembly stepped up to the microphone on October 12, 1946, in the case entitled *The Stuttering Ghost*. The final performances for Conway and Bruce came with the end of the season on July 7, 1947, a program entitled *The Adventure of the Iron Maiden*.

The fall of 1947 found even a bigger upheaval, literally, for the Holmes series; the whole show was taken lock, stock and barrel back to New York. John Stanley, an actor who sounded very much like Rathbone, now donned the deerstalker, with the British actor Alfred Shirley presenting a rather ill-tempered portrayal of Dr. Watson.

Edith Meiser was back at the helm as writer when Cy Harrice (announcing for Clipper Craft Clothes) paid a visit to the doctor on September 28, 1947, to hear the good doctor's rendering

Continued On Page 22

The Ultimate in *Suspense*!

The history of "Radio's outstanding theatre of thrills" is very fully delineated by authro Martin Grams, Jr. in **Suspense: Twenty Years of Thrills and Chills** (Morris Publishing; 470 pages, paperback; \$29.95). This mammoth volume is exceedingly well researched, giving us practically a week-by-week history of the show, which ran from June 17, 1942 (after a trial episode as part of CBS's *Forecast* series on July 22, 1940) until September 30, 1962—the very last day of network radio drama until the *CBS Radio Mystery Theatre* began in 1974.

June Havoc, who in addition to appearing on the program married its long-time director, William Spier, contributes the lovely foreword, recalling that she earned the cast and crew's admiration when she carried on with her lines even after a prop gun set her skirt on fire. Anecdotes such as this from personnel on both sides of the mike permeate the text, some of them obtained from vintage articles, most of them newly acquired by the author. Writers Lucille Fletcher and Ray Bradbury, performers Elliott Reid, Roddy McDowall, Parley Baer and Red Skelton, and sound man Ray Kemper are just a few who contribute their reminiscences.

Following the lengthy history of the radio program (running 139 pages) is a well-detailed account of the TV counterpart, which ran from 1949 through 1954. Full logs for each version follow, giving detailed credits and synopses for all 945 radio shows and 260 TV episodes. Alphabetical listings of the episodes are included for easier reference. Chapters about the program's awards, competing shows, movies based on the series, and *Suspense* magazines, novels and comics complete the picture. The occasional illustrations include advertisements and stills taken during rehearsals.

The book is marred only by the occasional typo (the possessive "its" is routinely given as "it's," which of course is a contraction of "it is"). Still, this is a very impressive work, thoroughly researched and written in a straightforward style. Fans of the program will find this an essential reference. Mr. Grams' all-encompassing volume provides so much information that those wishing to learn about the series will have very little left to keep them in suspense. (Available for \$29.95 plus 3.00 shipping from Martin Grams, Jr., P.O. Box 189, Delta PA 17314; (717) 456-6208.)

Holmes' Sleuthing on the U.S. Airwaves, Part 2

Continued From Page 21

of *The Case of the Dog Who Changed His Mind*. Edith Meiser presented more of her own self-penned stories than the Doyle adaptations for the season, which ran through the rest of 1947 and into early '48. These stories included *The Laughing Lemur of High Tower Heath*, *The Cadaver Of the Roman Toga*, and *The Adventure of the Serpent God*. However, she was not well pleased with the handling of the series, so she left her writing post when the show took its summer hiatus.

Howard Merrill, Max Ehrlich and Leonard Lee were the writers who contributed separately to the series when it resumed on Sunday, September 12, 1948. Ian Martin and George Spelvin (a name used when an actor wishes to remain anonymous), could now be heard as Dr. Watson. John Stanley still humbly approached the Sherlock Holmes character. He was given an award from the Sherlock Holmesian society, "The Diogenes Lantern," over the air at the end of his performance of *The Blue Carbuncle*, on December 26th. But even Stanley's award didn't help the show's poor reviews and ratings in late 1948 and early 1949. When the producers bounced the show back to Hollywood that fall, they also bounced John Stanley.

They replaced him with a man who was quite familiar with Sir Arthur's creation, having played Holmes when Tom Conway was under the weather, on March 10, 1947, in a tale entitled *The Egyptian Curse*. He was veteran radio character man Ben Wright. Eric Snowden was enlisted as his colleague, Dr. Watson. He had also portrayed the physician



Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce in action.

on a broadcast. Two years earlier, on February 25, 1946, he had played Watson (to Rathbone's Holmes), in *The Terrifying Cats*. Herb Allen was the announcer for the sponsor—once again Petri Wine. Even Denis Green, doing a solo act as writer, was back. I would wager the sponsors and producers were hoping to rekindle a radio romance with the public. Instead, they ended up like Don Quixote. They trotted along into the new decade, but the concentration for the power boys, now, was television. American radio was beginning its descent.

Sir John Gielgud and Sir Ralph Richardson starred in a Holmes radio series of British origin in 1955. State-side, Mr. Holmes returned briefly, 27 years later, in the guise of Kevin McCarthy. This was on the anthology

series *The CBS Radio Mystery Theatre*, with host E.G. Marshall. The periodic hour-long canon adaptations included *A Study In Scarlet*, *The Sign of Four*, *The Red Headed League*, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*, *The Beryl Coronet*, and the most famous story of them all—*The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Sherlock Holmes' popularity is undiminished across the Atlantic, on the shores of his origin. In this country, it seems doubtful that the great detective's adventures will ever be aired as a series again. Except for an occasional recreation, radio drama has been abandoned. This writer is president of the Sherlock Holmesian society, "The Listeners Of The Modern Mazarin Gramophone." We are devoted to the Baker Street residents' representations on stage, screen and—especially—in the wonderful world of radio drama. (For those interested in our group, send a SASE to: Lawrence Nepodahl, L.O.T.M.M.G., 1230 Vienna Blvd., Dekalb, IL 60115.)

No matter who stepped before the microphone to portray the great detective, it was a grand and glorious time—Sherlock Holmes on American Radio.

Editor's Note: Several of the Rathbone & Bruce programs, with scripts written by Anthony Boucher and Denis Green, were restored (with new introductions) and released in 1993 by Simon & Schuster Audio. They're available in bookstores, and from Radio Spirits.

When Radio Was Program Guide

February - April 1998

When Radio Was is a syndicated radio program broadcast on 300 affiliate radio stations from coast to coast. Up to five hours of *When Radio Was* can be heard in most parts of the country on these 300 affiliates. Some affiliates run the program Monday through Friday, some air the program on weekends and some do both. Check with your local *When Radio Was* affiliate for exact times of broadcast. To find out what radio station in your area carries *When Radio Was*, call 1-847-524-0200 extension 234, Monday through Friday between 9 AM and 5 PM Central Time.

FEBRUARY 1998

Broadcast Week One

Frontier Gentleman 3-23-58 "The Actress" w/ John Dehner / **Burns & Allen** 2-20-47 w/ guest, Al Jolson (Pt. 1)

Burns & Allen 2-20-47 w/ guest, Al Jolson (Pt. 2) / **Lights Out** 10-27-42 "Mungahra" w/ Arch Oboler

The Green Hornet 1-20-48 "A Matter of Evidence" w/ Robert Hall / **Fibber McGee & Molly** 2-12-46 "Fibber's New Suit" w/ Jim and Marian Jordan (Pt. 1)

Fibber McGee & Molly 2-12-46 "Fibber's New Suit" w/ Jim and Marian Jordan (Pt. 2) / **Box 13** 2-14-49 "The Perfect Crime" w/ Alan Ladd

Suspense 5-1-48 "The Blind Spot" w/ Edmund O'Brien / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-13-40 "Plane to Canyon City" Episode #14 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Two

The Shadow 1-24-38 "Murder in E-Flat" w/ Bill Johnstone / **The Jack Benny Program** 2-16-41 "Jack's Birthday Party" (Pt. 1)

The Jack Benny Program 2-16-41 "Jack's Birthday Party" (Pt. 2) / **Dragnet** 4-12-55 "The Big Tie" w/ Jack Webb

Have Gun, Will Travel 1-18-59 "Three Bells To Perido" w/ John Dehner / **The Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy Show** 10-5-52 w/ guest, Rosemary Clooney (Pt. 1)

The Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy Show 10-5-52 w/ guest, Rosemary Clooney (Pt. 2) / **Crime Classics** 2-3-54 "The Incredible History of John Shepherd" w/ Lou Merrill

The Shadow 1938 "Murder In Wax" w/ Orson Welles / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-15-40 "Left to be Killed" Episode #15 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Three

The Six Shooter 3-7-54 "Cheyenne Express" w/ James Stewart / **The Great Gildersleeve** 9-23-45 "Leila Returns" w/ Hal Peary (Pt.1)

The Great Gildersleeve 9-23-45 "Leila Returns" w/ Hal Peary (Pt. 2) / **Escape** 7-11-51 "The Island" w/ Harry Bartell

Gangbusters 1940s "Rumboldt Vault Robbery" / **Father Knows Best** 2-19-53 "Modernizing the Home" w/ Robert Young (Pt. 1)

Father Knows Best 2-19-53 "Modernizing the Home" w/ Robert Young (Pt. 2) / **The Black Museum** 1950s "The Raincoat" w/ Orson Welles

Suspense 3-7-46 "The Black Path of Fear" w/ Cary Grant / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-18-40 "The Prison Riot" Episode #16 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Four

The Whistler 1-28-48 "Night Final" w/ Bill Foreman / **My Favorite Husband** 3-18-49 "Give Away Program" w/ Lucille Ball (Pt. 1)

My Favorite Husband 3-18-49 "Give Away Program" w/ Lucille Ball (Pt. 2) / **The Lone Ranger** 1-8-54 "White Leader"

Boston Blackie 1-22-46 "The Disappearing Body" w/ Richard Kollmar / **The Life of Riley** 10-19-46 "Riley Sues the Bus Company" w/ William Bendix (Pt. 1)

The Life of Riley 10-19-46 "Riley Sues the Bus Company" w/ William Bendix (Pt. 2) / **The Mysterious Traveler** 4-4-50 "The Man From Singapore" w/ Maurice Tarplin

The Shadow 12-15-40 "The Killer's Rendezvous" w/ Bill Johnstone / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-20-40 "The Steam Plant" Episode #17 w/ Clayton Collyer

MARCH 1998

Broadcast Week One

Gunsmoke 11-14-52 "Professor Lute Bone" w/ William Conrad / **Burns & Allen** 12-4-47 w/ guest, Bing Crosby (Pt. 1)

Burns & Allen 12-4-47 w/ guest, Bing Crosby (Pt.2) / **Sergeant Preston of the Yukon** 10-29-48 "The Phantom Gang" w/ Paul Sutton

The Green Hornet 5-25-46 "Polarized Glasses" w/ Robert Hall / **Fibber McGee & Molly** 2-19-46 "Fibber and Doc Dine Out" w/ Jim and Marian Jordan (Pt.1)

Fibber McGee & Molly 2-19-46 "Fibber and Doc Dine Out" w/ Jim and Marian Jordan (Pt. 2) / **Dragnet** 3-29-55 "The Big Death" w/ Jack Webb

Suspense 3-15-45 "Cricket" w/ Margaret O'Brien / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-22-40 "Wolfe Vs. the Yellow Mask" Episode #18 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Two

The Shadow 1-5-41 "The Leopard Strikes" w/ Bill Johnstone / **The Jack Benny Program** 3-18-45 "How Jack Met Mary" (Pt. 1)

The Jack Benny Program 3-18-45 "How Jack Met Mary" (Pt. 2) / **Box Thirteen** 1-24-49 "The House of Darkness" w/ Alan Ladd

Have Gun, Will Travel 1-25-59 "The Teacher" w/ John Dehner / **The Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy Show** 12-26-54 w/ guest, Hopalong Cassidy (Pt.1)

The Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy Show 12-26-54 w/ guest, Hopalong Cassidy (Pt. 2) / **Arch Oboler's Plays** 5-20-39 "Crazy Town" w/ Edmund O'Brien

The Saint 10-29-50 "It's Snow Use" w/ Vincent Price / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-25-40 "The Secret Empire" Episode #19 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Three

Broadway Is My Beat 2-17-50 "Dion Hartley Case" w/ Larry Thor / **The Great Gildersleeve** 10-21-45 "Leila's New Friend" w/ Hal Peary (Pt. 1)

When Radio Was Program Guide

February - April 1998 Continued

The Great Gildersleeve 10-21-45 "Leila's New Friend" w/ Hal Peary (Pt. 2) / **Escape** 2-12-49 "The Lost Special" w/ Ben Wright

Gangbusters 1940s "The Three Safecrackers" / **The Abbott & Costello Program** 2-1-45 w/ Bud Abbott & Lou Costello (Pt. 1)

The Abbott & Costello Program 2-1-45 w/ Bud Abbott & Lou Costello (Pt. 2) / **Tales of the Texas Rangers** 8-10-52 "Last Stop" w/ Joel McCrea

Suspense 7-4-46 "An Evening's Diversion" w/ Leon Ames / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-27-40 "Million Dollar Ransom" #20 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Four

The Screen Director's Playhouse 4-24-49 "The Sky's the Limit" w/ Fred Astaire / **My Favorite Husband** 4-1-49 "April Fool's Day" w/ Lucille Ball (Pt. 1)

My Favorite Husband 4-1-49 "April Fool's Day" w/ Lucille Ball (Pt. 2) / **The Lone Ranger** 6-16-54 "The Shrimp Butler" w/ Brace Beemer and John Todd

Boston Blackie 1-29-46 "The Jim Williams Case" w/ Dick Kollmar / **The Life of Riley** 10-26-46 "Job in South American Jungle" w/ William Bendix (Pt. 1)

The Life of Riley 10-26-46 "Job in South American Jungle" w/ William Bendix (Pt. 2) / **This Is Your FBI** 11-1-50 "Backstage Shakedown" w/ Stacy Harris

The Shadow 2-9-41 "Man Who Lived Thrice" w/ Bill Johnstone / **The Adventures of Superman** 3-29-40 "Torpedoes of Destruction" #21 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Five

The Whistler 2-4-48 "Undertow" w/ Bill Foreman / **Our Miss Brooks** 4-23-50 "Economy Drive" w/ Eve Arden (Pt. 1)

Our Miss Brooks 4-23-50 "Economy Drive" w/ Eve Arden (Pt. 2) / **Richard Diamond, Private Detective** 12-31-49 "Thomas Jason Case" w/ Dick Powell

APRIL 1998

Broadcast Week One

Boston Blackie 7-30-46 "Freighter Crew Plans Mutiny" w/ Dick Kollmar / **The Life of Riley** 11-2-46 "Riley and Peg Both Run for Office" w/ William Bendix (Part 1)

The Life of Riley 11-2-46 "Riley and Peg Both Run for Office" w/ William Bendix (Part 2) / **The Third Man** 1950s "Slow Boat To China" w/ Orson Welles

Suspense 2-20-47 "Always Room At The Top" w/ Anne Baxter / **The Adventures of Superman** 4-1-40 Episode #22 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Two

Gunsmoke 11-21-52 "Fingered" w/ William Conrad / **Burns & Allen** 1-24-46 "George in a Clark Gable Movie" w/ George Burns & Gracie Allen (Part 1)

Burns & Allen 10-24-46 "George in a Clark Gable Movie" w/ George Burns & Gracie Allen (Part 2) / **Dimension X** 5-13-50 "Almost Human" w/ Santos Ortega

The Green Hornet 1940s "Disaster Rides the Rails" w/ Al Hodge / **Fibber McGee & Molly** 2-26-46 "Missing Fountain Pen" w/ Jim and Marian Jordan (Part 1)

Fibber McGee & Molly 2-26-46 "Missing Fountain Pen" w/ Jim and Marian Jordan (Part 2) / **Dragnet** 1-23-50 "The Big Betty" w/ Jack Webb

The Shadow 3-30-41 "Voodoo" w/ Bill Johnstone / **The Adventures of Superman** 4-3-40 Episode #23 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Three

Dr. Christian 4-11-51 "No Change in Plans" w/ Jean Hersholt / **The Jack Benny Program** 9-14-52 "Bob Crosby Replaces Phil Harris" w/ Jack and all his gang (Part 1)

The Jack Benny Program 9-14-52 "Bob Crosby Replaces Phil Harris" w/ Jack and all his gang (Part 2) / **The Black Museum** 1950s "The Pigskin Glove" w/ Orson Welles

Lights Out 6-8-43 "Organ" Hosted by Arch Oboler / **The Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy Show** 10-2-47 w/ guest, Richard Widmark (Part 1)

The Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy Show 10-26-47 w/ guest, Richard Widmark (Part 2) / **Pete Kelly's Blues** 9-5-51 "Kelly Is Kidnapped" w/ Jack Webb

Suspense 9-9-48 "Big Shot" w/ Burt Lancaster / **The Adventures of Superman** 4-5-40 Episode #24 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Four

Frontier Gentleman 3-3-58 "Gentle Virtue" w/ John Dehner / **The Great Gildersleeve** 10-28-45 "Peavy's Wife is Ill" w/ Hal Peary (Part 1)

The Great Gildersleeve 10-28-45 "Peavy's Wife is Ill" w/ Hal Peary (Part 2) / **Escape** 2-19-49 "The Orient Express" w/ William Conrad

Gangbusters 1940s "The Case of the Sledge Hammer Handicap" / **The Martin & Lewis Show** 6-5-49 w/ guest, Henry Fonda (Part 1)

The Martin & Lewis Show 6-5-49 w/ guest, Henry Fonda (Part 2) / **Tales of the Texas Rangers** 8-17-52 "Cover Up" w/ Joel McCrea

The Shadow 3-23-41 "Death Prowls At Night" w/ Bill Johnstone / **The Adventures of Superman** 4-8-40 Episode #25 w/ Clayton Collyer

Broadcast Week Five

The Adventures of Sam Spade, Detective 9-3-50 "The Farmer's Daughter Caper" w/ Howard Duff / **My Favorite Husband** 4-8-49 "Gum Machine" w/ Lucille Ball and Richard Denning (Part 1)

My Favorite Husband 4-8-49 "Gum Machine" w/ Lucille Ball and Richard Denning (Part 2) / **The Lone Ranger** 5-12-54 "Infernal Machine" w/ Brace Beemer

Broadway Is My Beat 3-31-50 "Hope Anderson" w/ Larry Thor / **The Aldrich Family** 3-3-49 "Aldrich Family is Planning a Trip" w/ Ezra Stone (Part 1)

The Aldrich Family 3-3-49 "Aldrich Family is Planning a Trip" w/ Ezra Stone (Part 2) / **The Clock** 1940s "My Loving Wife"

OTR Laughs Galore

If you could use a few more laughs, we'd recommend **Old Time Radio Comedy & Laughter**, another one of the box sets in Radio Spirits' "Smithsonian Collection" series. Available as four cassettes (#5014, \$24.98) or four CDs (#5015, \$34.98) the collection includes twelve shows originally broadcast between 1945 and '55. (None of them appear on previous Radio Spirits compilations, incidentally.)

As with the other Smithsonian collections, the commercials have been edited from the programs, most of them now running about 25 minutes. (An Anacin commercial remains in an episode of *Our Miss Brooks*, however.) The terrific sound quality that is a hallmark of Radio Spirits' releases is here once again; for those of us who grew up with dupey, off-speed multi-generation tapes of old radio shows, it's wonderful to consistently have this kind of you-are-there fidelity.



The selections include a terrific Jack Benny show (Jack's violin practice drives next-door-neighbor Ronald Colman nuts); an Abbott & Costello program in which Lou becomes sheriff of North Hollywood (with a broadcast version of "Who's On First" as an added bonus); and a 1952 *Fibber McGee & Molly*, with Pet Milk replacing Johnson's Wax as the sponsor. A Milton Berle radio show from March 30, 1948, finds him struggling with his monologue but getting laughs with his "savers"; that September, he'd become a smash on TV. The *Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy Show*, from June 1953, celebrates their 16 years on the air with rare clips from earlier shows and a guest appearance from old co-star Nelson Eddy. Episodes of *The Bickersons*, *Burns & Allen*, *The Life of Riley*, *The Great Gildersleeve*, *Our Miss Brooks*, *Duffy's Tavern* and *My Favorite Husband* are delightful.

So is the 60-page booklet by Anthony Tollin. This one has a fine history of radio comedy, elaborately detailed credits and information about each show, and an introduction by legendary comedy writer Irving Brecher, creator of *The Life of Riley*. A very classy and very funny package. (Available from Radio Spirits, P.O. Box 2141, Schiller Park IL 60176; 1-800-RA-DIO-48.)

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Caped Crusader, Dynamic Duo

We'd be willing to bet that there have been many playground arguments over which superhero was better, Superman or Batman. While these two DC Comics stablemates may have been rivals for the affections of several generations of school-boys, they occasionally teamed to right wrongs. One example of their teamwork is preserved on **Superman With Batman and Robin on Radio** (Radio Spirits), available as four audiocassettes (stock number 5012; \$24.98) or as five CDs (5013; \$39.98).

Last year, Radio Spirits issued the first 27 episodes of *Superman* in a boxed set; those shows came from the 1940-42 syndicated series. The 27 shows in the current set come from the 1942-49 Mutual series, dating from September 4 through October 10, 1945. Batman and Robin (voiced by Matt Crowley and Ronald Liss) figure in the first 14 shows, an adventure entitled "Dr. Bly's Confidence Gang." We then have a brief two-part story, "The Meteor From Krypton," in which Clark Kent reveals the danger which Kryptonite poses to Superman (a flashback reworks the series' first episode).

The Batman episodes have much of the emphasis on Lois Lane, who has been abducted and then framed for the murder of a federal agent. The three superheroes do their best to exonerate her, even though the Dynamic Duo are at one point separated, and Batman is later shot by a gang of thugs. These episodes are particularly valuable, since Batman and Robin, surprisingly, never had their own radio series. (A never-broadcast audition show is available on Radio Spirits' *Old Time Radio Showbiz Teams*.)

The compact disc edition of this set has four CDs containing six shows each, and a fifth CD with three shows. The programs have been edited from their original length of 14:30 to about 12:00 each, a Kellogg's Pep commercial having been omitted. (Trust us, you'd be gnashing your teeth while enduring one of those long, high-pressure commercials after another.) The sound quality is absolutely flawless, and the 54-page booklet by Anthony Tollin is a keepsake in itself, filled with fascinating anecdotes from cast and crew, full information about each episode, rare photographs, and an introduction by Jackie Kelk, radio's Jimmy Olsen. You won't find a finer package in Gotham City or Metropolis. (Available from Radio Spirits, Inc., P.O. Box 2141, Schiller Park, IL 60176; 1-800-RADIO-48.)

Radio's All-Time Classics and Greatest Comedies in New Collections

Continued from Page 1

As usual for the Radio Spirits folks, they've gone several extra miles to make this a first-class package. The original airdates, episode titles and stars of each show are listed on the back of the box, but inside you'll find a fully-illustrated, extremely detailed 64-page booklet by radio historian Anthony Tollin. There you'll find a show-by-show description, giving full background on each series, and full credits for each of the episodes included here (and we mean full, not only listing each actor and his role, but also crediting the writers, directors, music directors and sound-effects men where known).

One of the pleasures of this set is that it allows you to sample series which you haven't heard before. If you haven't listened to *Casey*, *Crime Photographer*, *The Quiz Kids* or *The Mel Blanc Fix-It Shop*, for example, here's an inexpensive way to make their acquaintance—between favorites such as *The Green Hornet*, *Gunsmoke* and *Lights Out*.

Along with this potpourri of great radio, Radio Spirits has similar 20-tape collections devoted to particular genres. **Comedy From the Golden Age of Radio** (Radio Spirits #4123; \$59.98) is another 60-show extravaganza, each tape providing three episodes from a great comedy series. The package is pretty evenly divided between comedy-variety programs (*Abbott & Costello*, *Bob Hope*, *Charlie McCarthy*, *Fred Allen*, *Jack Benny*, *Milton Berle*, *Red Skelton*) and situation comedies (*The Aldrich Family*, *Amos 'n' Andy*, *The Bickersons*, *Burns & Allen*, *Duffy's Tavern*, *Fibber McGee & Molly*, *The Great Gildersleeve*, *The Life of Riley*, *Lum & Abner*, *My Favorite Husband*, *Our Miss Brooks*, *Ozzie & Harriet* and *The Phil Harris-Alice Faye Show*).

Since comedy is a notoriously perishable commodity, it's surprising how well almost all of these shows hold up. *The Aldrich Family* shows may be a bit quaint, and some of the topical jokes in Bob Hope's monologues may be a little confusing (although his monologue from November 9, 1948—the day after Truman defeated Dewey—is fascinating), but overall these shows are still fresh and funny.

The earliest show is a Charlie McCarthy program from May 30, 1943 with guest star Walter Pidgeon, and the latest is a Jack Benny show from February 20, 1955 (three months before his radio program ended); it's a wonderful episode in which the local scout troop, the Beverly Hills Beavers, put on a small-pint version of the Benny show. The kid actors are superb, and Benny showed a lot of class (and courage) in giving them the lion's share of this episode. Guest stars are a special treat on many episodes: Shelley Winters visits Duffy's Tavern, James Mason does two stints with Fred Allen, and the star-studded Jack Benny sketch "Murder at Romanoff's" includes suspects Frank Sinatra, Rosalind Russell and Gene Kelly.

The booklet for this set runs 36 pages. It's a smaller page count, since only 20 series need be covered, but it's a larger size, which allows for several very nice photographs. Anthony Tollin again provides excellent, concise overviews of each series and a synopsis for each episode. Again, all shows are complete and uncut and the sound quality is uniformly fine. The most popular shows on radio were comedies, and this set provides 60 wonderful reasons why. (Available from Radio Spirits, Inc., P.O. Box 2141, Schiller Park, IL 60176; 1-800-RADIO-48.)



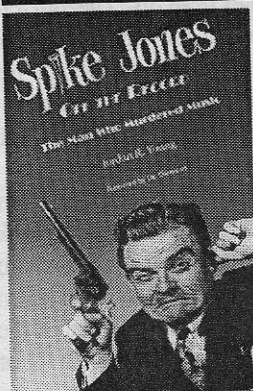
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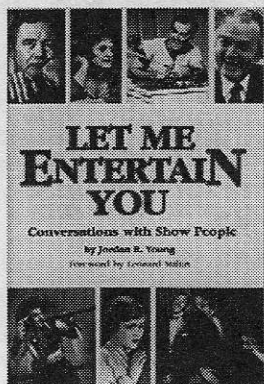
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A Century of Laughter: Remembering George Burns

By Frank Bresee

Comedian George Burns was a show business phenomenon. Over the years, he achieved great success in all aspects in the world of entertainment: vaudeville, stage, motion pictures, television and radio.

He began his career as early as 1902 in and around New York, first singing for coins on street corners. George Burns once told me that when he was a five year old on the streets of New York City, he followed an organ-grinder around and danced to his music. "The people clapped for me, and I got my first feel of an audience," he said. He earned pocket change and finally learned a few fancy steps to entertain the crowds. When he was seven years old, he formed the Pee Wee Quartette with three of the neighborhood children. They were quite a novelty and were quickly hired to perform in back yards, smokers and stags.

In those early years, Burns had many jobs. He worked as a dance instructor and in local theatres in the New York area. But his ambition was to become a vaudeville star, because he felt it was the only way he could become famous and financially independent. Later, he sang with five boys and four girls in an act called "The Fourth of July Kids." He starred in a seal act, "Flipper and His Friend." (George told me that he was Flipper!)

It was in 1923 that he met Gracie Allen. Within a short time, they teamed up and began an act performing in theatres around New York, Brooklyn and the Bronx. A story he has told many times, and repeated on my radio show, involves the beginnings of the Burns & Allen team. "Originally, I had all the funny jokes and Gracie played it straight. But even her straight lines got laughs. She had a very funny delivery, and great timing. Probably the greatest timing of anyone in the business. The audience laughed at her straight lines, and they didn't laugh at my jokes. I knew right away I had to change the routine. I gave her the jokes. I said, 'Gracie, how's your sister?,' and she talked for 25 years...and I became a star."

Milt Larsen, owner of the famous Magic Castle club in Hollywood, has one of the largest collections of vintage phonograph records in the world—over 60,000. Not long ago, he played for me a copy of Burns & Allen's first comedy record, "Dizzy, Pt. 1 and 2," recorded for Columbia in London on October 3, 1930. It is just as funny today as when it was recorded 68 years ago. To give you an idea of the crazy comedy that made them popular, here are a couple of lines from the record:

GEORGE: Gracie, you're too smart for one girl.

GRACIE: I'm more than one. My mother has a picture of me when I was two!

Their first radio show in the early '30s co-starred them with Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians. The Burns & Allen radio show was always in the top ten of all comedy shows, and in 1950 the program switched to television for eight years with happy results and high ratings. Gracie retired from show business in 1958 and passed away from heart disease in 1964.

George Burns continued to appear in theatres and on television shows. After recovering from open-heart surgery in 1974, he co-starred with Walter Matthau in the film *The Sunshine Boys*,

playing a part originally slated for his late, dear friend Jack Benny. His portrayal earned him an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actor, which prompted a whole new career in popular films such as *Oh, God!* He also wrote ten best-selling books, and made four albums, having a hit single with "I Wish I Was Eighteen Again."

George joined me on my *Golden Days of Radio* program and during the interview told me he thought the audiences were much smarter than they had been many years before. "Television has smartened everyone up—now everyone owns a theatre. They watch so much TV they know all about show business. When Gracie and I did our television show, we showed the film to a 'live' audience and recorded the laughter. After the program was over and the show was being put together, we would sometimes augment the laughs. I would never touch a good laugh—but if you didn't want a gag to flop completely, and the gag wasn't that good, you'd put in a little tiny laugh, so it sort of half flopped. We would sweeten the show a little bit. If we showed the program to an audience and they didn't laugh, they wouldn't laugh at home either. We didn't try to fool the audience."

I asked George what he thought of TV comedy shows today that add so many laughs. His response: "If the shows are around all season, it's fair!"

Broadcaster-historian Frank Bresee is the longtime host of "The Golden Days of Radio."



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by FRANK BRESEE & BOBB LYNES

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More Than a Straight-Man

We're a little late in getting around to reviewing **George Burns & Friends** (Metacom #0701156; \$24.95), a six-cassette tribute which was first released late in 1995. Since this box set is still widely available, and since we'll take any excuse to pay tribute to our beloved Mr. Burns, we thought we'd better let you know about it.

Each cassette runs 60 minutes, one complete half-hour show per side. Naturally, there are a number of excellent Burns & Allen programs here—eight of them to be precise, ranging from a November 1942 episode with Eddie Cantor to a June 1949 episode with Rudy Vallee. (Several of these episodes have evidently not been available before, since they don't appear in Jay Hickerson's mammoth guide to all circulating radio shows.)

Along with George's droll wit and Gracie's scatterbrained charm, the guests provide lots of laughs, too—particularly in the January 1948 episode when George and Jack Benny become Gypsies. Rita Hayworth, Charles Laughton, Mickey Rooney and James & Pamela Mason also appear with the Burnses, and Al Jolson stops by in a February 1947 outing to help George and Gracie celebrate their 15th anniversary on radio.

One of the nicest touches of this box set is that it also includes guest appearances made by George on other people's shows. Gracie comes along to a Jack Benny show from January 12, 1947—a rather exaggerated and not too funny bit in which she tries to emulate Lauren Bacall. However, George's turn singing Jack's composition "When You Say 'I Beg Your Pardon,' Then I'll Come Back To You" in a January 1952 episode is wonderful. (This show, by the way, is an Armed Forces edition, minus the original commercials.)

Also well worth hearing are "Sugar Throat" Burns' two visits to Bing Crosby's show on consecutive weeks in 1948, truly meetings of two great crooners. In the first, George tries vainly to sing "It Might As Well Be Spring," and in the second he tries to get a deal with a record label.

The sound quality is very good overall; the information on the shows is limited to the original airdates, but all in all this is a fine tribute to a great talent who was much more than just a straight-man. (Available in retail stores; info: Metacom, 5353 Nathan Lane, Plymouth MN 55442; (612) 553-2000.)

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Classic '50s TV on Video

Continued from page 20

Freberg also shows up as a puppeteer, with a "Cecil"-type character named Grover getting almost all of his airtime. *The Alan Young Show* prominently features Franklin Pangborn as a fussy clerk in a men's clothing store. Walter Pidgeon guests on *I've Got a Secret*, displaying 1920s and '30s movie stills of up-and-coming stars. *This Is Your Life* salutes Mack Sennett, with a number of his comic stars paying tribute. *Suspense*, a live TV drama based on the radio show, stars Walter Matthau and has a hilarious animated Auto-Lite commercial.

Science Fiction fans will particularly enjoy the episode of *Space Patrol*, which is great fun and surprisingly compelling, despite the primitive special effects. The comic-book dialogue ("Smokin' rockets!") is charming, too.

Especially when one considers the price—ten and one-half hours of programming for \$29.95—this nicely-designed, well-planned package is a very good introduction to the early days of television. (Available at retailers such as Costco, and by mail for \$29.95 plus 3.50 shipping from Entertainment Distributing, P.O. Box 22738, Eugene OR 97402-0421.)

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 "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" w/ Pinky Tomlin
 "Blue (and Broken-Hearted)"
 "Sweet Georgia Brown"
 "When the Bloom is On the Sage" w/ Crosby

"I Like Mountain Music"
 "Bidin' My Time"
 "Chinatown, My Chinatown"
 "When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam" / "My Pretty Girl"
 "Victory March" w/ Dick Powell
 "Ida! Sweet as Apple Cider"
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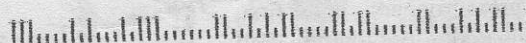
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