



RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO

Volume 22, Number 1

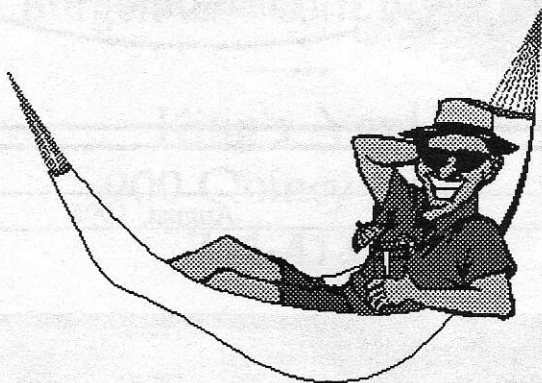
August, 1996



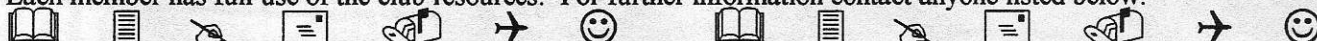
Peg Lynch, writer of "The Couple Next Door"



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: There WILL be aboard meeting on SEPTEMBER 5th
At the King's Residence



RETURN WITH US NOW... is the official publication of *The Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc.*, a non-profit organization. Cost of membership is \$25.00 for the first year with \$15.00 for renewal. Each member has full use of the club resources. For further information contact anyone listed below.



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From the

King's

Roost



Next week we head for a family reunion, and that brought back thoughts presented to our club by Dale F. Morgan, a retired Denver radio broadcaster. You have, we all have, the means to hand down to family members, the family history that is part of your own life. (seems like they made a tv program called this is your life)

All that you need is a simple recorder, such as Radio Shack has, or if you have better equipment, use it. Dale suggested that you start the dialogue with a few leading questions, and it will usually roll on from there. How did you two meet? What was Grandmas' favorite dish, or were you living in town when they had the big blizzard of xxxx? how long did Granddad drive his first car? What caused him to take up ????. What were some of his hunting or camping stories? Why did he go into??? or whatever? After one interview, your subject will start remembering they should tell you about, so be sure to have a follow-up interview.

Recordings of this nature would be enhanced by family

photos and similar memorabilia that could help start the conversations and bring back memories. This would be a great way for you to use some of your equipment for the enjoyment of the whole family and even those generations to come. After all, isn't that why you get and listen to tapes from the library? It brings back memories of times gone by.

Dale recommends that you place a microphone on a table between you, and even tape it in place. That avoids all of the noise from people handling the microphone. You may even want to hid the mic if your subject seems to be nervous. You can always edit out flubbs and be sure you are a good listener, not just the talker. Always start out with the date and location and the names of the parties you are interviewing. You may want to get into politics of the time, or what they thought about going into WW2, and did they do extra work for the war effort? One question leads to another. Be sure to draw out thoughts about events, so your subject can't get off with only a yes or no, and have you do all the talking.

Although today's video cameras are a great tool for catching the younger members of the family, you may find that older persons are more

withdrawn, so the simple recorder may be the better tool.

You should write out an outline that gives you a starting points, such as "Where were you born?" Where did you go to school, what was your major? and so on. Just think about it before you start the interview so you can keep the conversation going.

Dale made up a nice booklet to use as a guide, and still has some of them. If you would be interested in one, just send a self addressed 6X9 or larger envelope and \$5.00 to: Dale Morgan, 231 So. Bryant Street, Denver, CO 80219. We hear that Dale is not in the best health these days, but his work will help all of us and our families for years to come.

One of our members has recently retired and is looking at his collection of 10,000 to 15,000 OTR shows and wants any hints about preserving his tapes. He certainly doesn't want to loose his collection due to aging. Please send your send us your hints for caring for tapes. Send to RHAC, PO Box 1908, Englewood, CO 80150.

The COUPLE NEXT DOOR (ETHEL AND ALBERT)

Ethel and Albert following in the pattern set by Paul Rhymer's Vic and Sade, was a daily 15-minute comedy show built around an average couple and their lives in the little town of Sandy Harbor. Further following in the Rhymer pattern. Ethel and Albert were generally the only two characters who appeared, fleshing out other townspeople with their dialogue, but where Rhymer's comedy was deliberately absurd, Peg Lynch, writer of Ethel and Albert, cast her serial in a more realistic vein. "The big events in one's life occur only now and then, but there are some smaller events in everyday life that are familiar to every family," the announcer said "And it's these daily incidents that make up the private lives of Ethel and Albert."

Ethel and Albert were the Arbuckles. They had one daughter Suzy, and Albert was manager of an office in Sandy Harbor. Each day for a dozen minutes they chatted about these everyday incidents: their troubles with the new baby sitter; the fact that Ethel had made a \$5 bet with a neighboring housewife on the heavyweight championship fight to cancel out Albert's bet with the neighbor's husband; Albert's hassles exchanging a lighter for a cigarette case for his brother-in-law's Christmas present, only to learn that said brother-in-law had quit smoking. The result was an afternoon bright spot that, though it never rivaled

Rhymer's show for inspired lunacy, had a certain charm all its own.

Miss Lynch began the show at Station KATE, Albert Lea, Minnesota, in 1938; it opened on ABC in 1944, with the author playing Ethel and Richard Widmark cast as Albert. When Widmark left for movie stardom, Alan Bunce got the job, and held it until the show left the air in 1950. Bunce had never heard of Ethel and Albert when he auditioned for the role, and was generally considered the worst actor who tried out for the part. But as Miss Lynch recalled years later, he had certain Albertish qualities and was kept over the protest of 800 letter-writing fans. Robert Cotton was producer director through most of the network run; the show was billed for a time as "The Private Lives of Ethel and Albert". and was introduced to chimes playing "there's No Place Like Home."

Peg Lynch got her start in radio at an early age

From John Dunning's book "Tune in Yesterday."

Please note the RHAC reel numbers for Ethel and Albert are: 70 and 776

The number for "The Couple Next Door" is 5353.

The reason for the different titles is that ABC retained the rights for the name of "Ethel and Albert" so as time went on and PBS took on the program they could not use those names. As you listen you will not hear either name mentioned.

Peg Lynch (Mrs. Odd K. Ronning of Becket, MA) and her husband were guests of RHAC at a convention. Peg is quite a busy

lady, she wrote Ethel and Albert daily. She said she got up about 4 AM and wrote the script for that day.

A bit more about the lady Peg Lynch this is from RHAC newsletter June 1976 by member John Adams.

Peg Lynch got her start in radio at an early age as a script writer and woman's radio host for radio station KADE in Albert Lea, Minnesota. She wrote copy and hosted how for only \$70.00 a month. After the third day she thought something was missing, so she wrote a 3 minute skit, based on Easy Aces, which she listened to in high school.

Peg got her first network experience in Cumberland, Maryland and she was called to New York to write Ethel and Albert. She advised the network she would write the scripts but not act in them. Her scripts were 10 pages long for a 15 minute program. The normal 15 minute script was 8 pages so the pace was very rapid. She was tricked into doing the part of Ethel, and the actress who tried out for the part could not get her quality and timing to where it should be.

The Day The Radio Wouldn't Turn On

By RHAC Member Chuck Thomas
Bath, Michigan

The RCA console radio with the "magic eye" filling the living room with an erie green glow had been a fixture in our home since 1935.

With each move from Idaho to California to Oregon that has been made by my construction working family, the radio was put into its original wooden packing case and moved to the new house where it would be carefully unpacked and readied as the entertainment center of the new home. The ritual was observed even if the house being lived in at the time did not have electricity to power the radio. With the many moves made by the family, more than one house without electricity became our home.

One spring day in 1943, when living in Oregon, my mother turned on the power switch on the radio and nothing happened. There was to be no Lone Ranger for me that evening nor was my grand-father able to hear his beloved Alka-Seltzer Newspaper of the Air with Glenn Hardy.

The next day my grandfather and I walked to the nearest radio repair shop (due to our not having a telephone) to ask the technician to make a house call to remedy the problem. The examination of the set by the repairman revealed one of the large vacuum tubes to be burned out. Even worse, due to WW II shortages,

He was unable to supply a replacement tube for the set..

My resourceful mother turned to her "electrically inclined" younger brother who was in the Army Air Corps attending radio school in Chicago, and asked him to attempt to secure the needed tube for the radio. He was unable to obtain a new tube but he did locate a pawn shop owner who was selling individual used radio parts rather than selling the entire set. The needed tube was purchased and shipped westward.

How well I remember the day the mailman delivered the tube which had been carefully packed in a shoe box for its trip from Chicago.

The parcel was unpacked, the tube carefully unwrapped and another trip to the radio repair shop to ask the repairman to install the needed part. The defective tube was removed and the "new" used one was carefully installed. The radio was plugged in, the power switch turned on, and the "magic eye" began to glow. Radio entertainment had once again returned to the living room.

The old RCA continued to serve us well until 1949, when it was replaced by one of the new generation AM-FM combination radio phonographs. However, the glow of the "magic eye" is still missed.

Memories of Old Time Radio

By Roy Watte in Tokyo

A friend of mine living here in Tokyo, who was born and raised in New York City, and has offered the following. Quote;

Here are my memories of attending radio programs in New York when I was a kid.

A program I attended several times was "Juvenile Jury" on the Mutual Network as I recall, Jack Barry was the genial host and the panel of experts was composed of school kids my own age, something between 10 and 14.

My favorite was Robin Morgan, who later appeared on "I Remember Mama" on TV. I thought she was the most beautiful thing in the world. We both must have been about 11 or 12 at the time.

After the show as we passed through the lobby of the theater where the show was held, the kids on the show came to a window to wave to us fans. My most memorable experience was being able to get right next to the window and exchanging a kiss with Robin. When I later told my grandmother about this great happening, she asked me why I didn't take the glass away.

Robin Morgan later on to be a writer and a leading spokesperson for a rather radical brand of feminism.

"Juvenile Jury" had kids come on the show to ask advice of the panelist. A regular feature of the show, which was advertised by Gains Dog Food, was the appearance of a rare breed of dog that the panelist had to identify.

There was a rather prissy regular member of the panel, a girl a little older than the rest who never failed to name the dog.

The other show I attended was "Melody Ranch, the Gene Autry Show." Gene was my boyhood hero and every year he headlined a traveling rodeo that performed for a week or so in Madison Square Garden. On those Sunday evenings, he did his show from New York. The studio was smaller and narrower than the one for "Juvenile Jury" and the seats were just folding metal chairs. The stage was a raised platform and all the performers entered from the rest of the room. Gene Autry passed by real close and I was impressed by how short he was. The show was all on serial in a more realistic vein. "The script and they had an excellent sound effects man and a

cowboy band. This must have been around 1950.

Some how I was disappointed that we did not get any Wrigley's Double Mint Gum, the sponsor, although the tickets themselves were free.. My mother wrote in a few weeks earlier for them.

The last radio show I attended was the Garrison Keillor "Prairie Home Companion" in December 1994 at Town Hall in New York. These tickets cost \$27.00.

Times have changed.

From the memory of Paul Henriques "E" mail address (paulh@gol.com)

Please share your memories of your experiences attending to: Radio Historical Association of Colorado. PO Box 1908 Greenwood, CO 80150.

MEMORIES FROM CANADA

Some parts of Canada were ahead of parts of the US farm country in getting radio. Here is a note from one of our Canadian member's, William McDougall, who is currently residing in Niagara Falls, Canada.

I started to enjoy radio about 1944 and 1945. I was in bed with swollen glands and not going to school for a few weeks, I could listen to Big John and Sparky, Breakfast Club, Kate Smith, Helen Trent, and Our Gal Sunday, who was being held hostage in the old hunting lodge by old Uncle Ambros.

Bill was born in London, Ontario, and in those years, money was hard to come by, the neighbor across the street always seemed to doing great, new Caddie, etc. Her son was Freddy Higgmar, who played in Guy Lombardo's orchestra. In fact, my ex mother-in-law went to school with Guy, Carmen, and their sister.

We saw television come in 1948 (Denver came in much later) on a 7" Admiral. The commercials were always great, but try to watch the Detroit Red Wings Hockey game. When it was time to score, nothing but snow! In fact I still have one of these sets.

I started in radio in 1953, at the transmitter for \$28.00 per week. I was also doing operating at the studios, the control room had seven 16" turntables in-line, which was a stand up operation, and long hours.

I have played many of the old programs on these turntables. In 1956, after training for engineering, etc., I became Chief Engineer and today I have 1 AM and 3 FM's to look after.

Canada had some good old shows such as: Fun Parade, Don Messer and his Islanders, Hockey Night in Canada with Foster Hewitt, Northern Electric Hour, Mother Parheis' Musical Mysteries, Jimmy Dale (a very good kids program) Share the Wealth, For Valour, The Happy Song, Main Street Jamborees, Mark Kenny Ranch, Orange Crush Program, Toronto Star Program of Good Music, Canadian Superman Show, Just

Navy, and Western Canada had a lot of their own shows.

To sum it up, radio today is bad music, news casts are about murder and sex, but I guess that is life.

If I were to do things over again, radio I would never pick, and yet over the years I have worked with some great people, e.g. Lorne Green, Al Hamel(Susan Sumer's husband), and ABC's News Peter Jennings, who is a great person. His father was head of the news at CBC, Toronto, Canada years ago. I guess this is it.

Why not tell us about your favorite radio program and who was the best actor actress to play there parts.

One of my favorite programs was the Cavalcade of America as a dramatic historical program. Then for the light and delightfull were My Friend Irma, Life with Luigi, Halls of Ivy and so many others

RHAC member Jmim Gray has found a couple of booklets entitled "Death Valley Days as told by the Old Ranger" and has sent us a script from one of them. We will include this in next months issue.

RHAC had new catalogs printed in July. A few of the catalogs sent to new members went out without pages 299 and 300 in the regular library. If you are short these pages just drop us a note and we will send them to you.

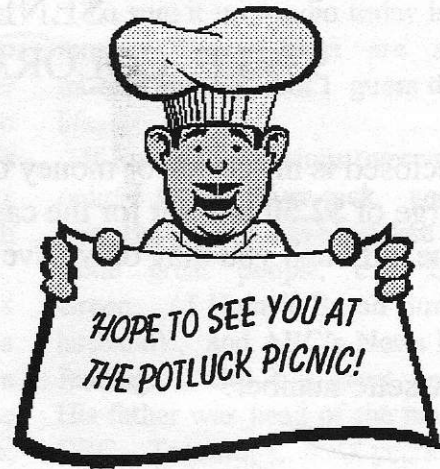
PS: If you want a new catalog, the price is \$20.00 for any member.

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Please help in the preservation of old time radio by supporting legitimate organizations who strive to preserve and restore the programs and related information.

RHAC Picnic
Saturday Aug. 10th 1:00
Bring a potluck dish
Bring a chair
Burgers and corn provided

King's Yard
900 Quincy Ave.
761-4139



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