# 

Did you vote yet? SPERDVAC Board of Directors' election is March 13

Volume 19, No. 3

The Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy

March 1993



The Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago re-created the CBS Radio Mystery Theater in Nov. The production of "The Suicide Club" featured (standing) director Himan Brown, Ken Nordine, Les Tremayne and Russ Reed. Seated are performers Dick Thorne, Jim Dolan, Sondra Gair and Jack Bivans (behind Tremayne). The museum will mark the anniversay of the first "Fireside Chat" this month.

Photo courtesy Museum of Broadcast Communications

## Comedy writer Bob O'Brien guests at March 13 meeting

Radio comedy writer Bob O'Brien will join SPERDVAC at our March 13 meeting.

O'Brien was a joke writer for Jack Pearl about 1937. He wrote comedy for Rudy Vallee, Edgar Bergen and Eddie Cantor, plus scenes

for Jack Benny.

Our guest also wrote for the Joan Davis Show and the Roma Wines Show starring Charles Ruggles, Mary Astor and Mischa Auer. And he was a staff writer for Bing Crosby's Philco Radio Time.

His television credits include work for Lucille Ball and Bob Hope.

The SPERDVAC meeting begins at 12 noon. It will be held at the South Pasadena Public Library, 1115 El Centro, South Pasadena. The meeting is open free to the public.

## Memosfor Members

We hope you'll forgive the late arrival of last month's Radiogram. Editor Dan battled illness and what's known in America as being just plain busy...

Credit department: In the General Library catalog page included with last month's newsletter, we accidently omitted names of some individuals who deserve acknowledgement for their contributions to the 1991 convention re-creations. We overlooked Shelley Herman, engineer on our Nick Carter production. Then we failed to credit Shelley again for his engineering work on the Hollywood Star Playhouse re-creation. Randy

Howard compiled and played the musical cues for that show, too.

Another accidental omission: Editor Dan left out the by-line on the nice article on Alice Faye in last month's newsletter. author is Tom Johnson, a SPERDVAC member residing in Pacific Grove, CA.

Denver radio/tv personality John Reyburn begins hosting an OTR rebroadcast program on March 14. His show airs on KNUS (710 AM), Sundays 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Parley Baer had a nice comedy part on the March 1 episode of the tv show Fresh Prince of Bel Aire. We thought we'd mention it because most of our members might not normally watch the program.

#### FRIENDS SPERDVAC

Bea Wain

(In memory of Andre Baruch)

Lillian Buyeff

(In memory of Elliott Lewis & Jack

Johnstone)

Veola Vonn Nelson

(In memory of Hanley Stafford & Frank

Nelson)

Jerry Burling

(In memory of Bob Jensen)

Art Hern

(In memory of Ed Prentiss)

**Audrey Marsh** 

(In memory of Mari Bell Sharbutt & Andre

Baruch)

Dix Davis

(In memory of Verna Felton, Bea Benaderet & Frank Nelson)

Jeanette Nolan McIntire

(In memory of John McIntire, Elvia

Allman, Howard Duff, Elliott Lewis &

James McCallion)

Kay St. Germain

(In memory of Andre Baruch)

Estelle Oppenheimer

(In memory of Jess Oppenheimer)

Parley Baer

(In memory of Mary Lansing & Howard

McNear)

Phil Cohan

(In memory of Andre Baruch & Elvia

Allman)

Naomi Lewis

(In memory of Dick Mack)

**Dorothy Geiger** 

(In memory of Milton Geiger)

Hy Averback

(In memory of Bob Sweeney)

Tyler McVey

(In memory of Lou Krugman)

Herb Ellis

(In memory of Bob Sweeney & Lou

Krugman)

Tim Behrens & Amzie Strickland

(In memory of Frank Behrens)

Norman Corwin

(In memory of Byron Kane, Fletcher

Markle & John McIntire)

John Wrisley June Foray

**Chuck Benedict** 

**Richard Murphy** 

**Dennis Crow** 

**Bob LeMond** 

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**Rosemary DeCamp Gary Papers** 

Alice Backus

Lucy Kibbee

William Conrad

John Guedel

Casey Kasem

Mary Jane Croft Lewis Joan Banks Lovejoy Charles Isaacs & Doris Singleton

Willard & Mary Anna Waterman

SPERDVAC is very grateful to these individuals who have contributed \$50 or more to our organization during the past twelve months.

## 3

## Shadows I have known

by Jim Harmon

I have met a number of the actors to play The Shadow. The original in the role (as a full-fledged central character) was Orson Welles. Several years before his death, he was trying to get a tv talk show on the air which he would host.

My late friend Bob Greenberg (a man who fitted the description "gruff but lovable" better than anyone I ever met) was working for his idol, Welles, and lured me to the show to be a guinea pig for the Great Man under the proposition that I would be called upon from the audience, identified, and allowed to ask the G. M. a question. That never happened.

But Welles did go through a lot of business with the audience (including me). I think it safe to say he "over-produced" the pilot, taking what should be a live show, only delayed on tape, and tried to edit and rearrange it like a movie, to make it better.

Long after the original guests, including Burt Reynolds and Dolly Parton, had taped their segments, Welles recruited a studio audience to produce audience reaction shots to nonexistent guests. A number of people in the business or connected with it got invited.

It was somewhat interesting to see the G. M. direct and in fact be directed by him, but after a while it became excruciatingly boring. Moreover, we were being asked to perform on cue and we were not being paid for it. Many people deserted. I heard Welles mutter in a stage whisper that could have reached Peoria, "It's like a bad play."

Welles singled on me and asked me to come down in front, and for some reason asked me to sit on an apple crate, my knees touching his. It was a silly position, but I felt Welles must have had some particular shot in mind. For several hours, I sat toe to toe with the Great Orson, his glare daring me to interrupt his concentration with some remark. My thought was that I was a pretty hefty guy and that Welles wanted someone in front of him who wouldn't be too great a contrast to his bulk. Later, from someone who saw the

completed tape (actor Tony Clay), I found that I had actually been doubling the back of Burt Reynolds' head. Apparently our hair and jackets were similar.

As time went on, Welles berated the crew and constantly dwindling audience to produce some vision he had of the perfect talk show. Finally, an end was called and after hours of non-paid crate-sitting, I asked a

# Chicago communications museum marks 60th anniversary of 1st 'Fireside Chat'

Adapted from a Museum of Broadcast Communications press release

Sixty years ago — March 12, 1933 — Franklin D. Roosevelt pioneered presidential communications on-the-air when he delivered his first "Fireside Chat" to the nation. To commemorate this historic event, the Radio Hall of Fame at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago will present "An evening with FDR" in the Cultural Center Theater.

The special program, which takes place on the anniversary of the night FDR first took to the air, begins with a 5:30 p.m. reception. Their special program begins at 6:30.

Roosevelt, in his "Fireside Chats," demonstrated the political power of radio and irrevocably changed the course of media and politics. His use of radio was so effective that for the first time people felt they were in direct contact with their president, sharing problems and ideas and participating in the administration of the country.

During his tenure in the White House, FDR broadcast 28 "Fireside Chats" to the nation. They were a significant factor in his election for unprecedented four terms. Roosevelt used radio to sell his plan of economic recovery to the nation.

The museum's commemorative program will include the complete broadcast of the first "Fireside Chat," followed by a discussion from members of a panel of experts. The panelists are Betty Winfield, professor of mass media history at the University of Missouri and author of FDR and the News Media; Studs Terkel, broadcaster and Pulitzer Prize winning author; and John Ferris, the archivist and Education Director for the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

The Museum of Broadcast Communication is located at the Chicago Cultural Center, Michigan Ave. at Washington St., in Chicago. The March 12 program is open free to the public, but advance reservations are required. Reservation can be made by phoning (312) 629-6023.

## New programs added to Archives Library collection

Archives Library catalog page 123-124, featuring 29 hours of radio broadcasts, is enclosed with this issue of the *Radiogram*.

Fans of The Mayor of the Town will enjoy the twenty shows on Archives tapes 1569-1578. Listening to the entire set gives listeners a sense of the transitions the program went through during its first season. Writer Jean Holloway made the program at times a drama; other times it was a light comedy. Many of them have a war-time flavor.

An interesting hour of housewifeoriented broadcasts is included on tape 1579. The soapers Edith Adams' Future and We Are Always Young ("the story of people who know the secret of facing life with a high heart") are more obscure shows. Neither episode has previously been in circulation. All three shows on this tape were recorded at Mutual-Don Lee outlet KHJ, Los Angeles.

There are three broadcasts of Screen Guild Theater, a series which has been very popular with our library

the upcoming Archives catalog page were written by Jean Holloway. Miss Holloway wrote many of the dramatic segments featured on the **Kate Smith Show**. Transcriptions of that series are

"The story of a woman past 35, forced to a brutal awakening to a world that had passed her by while she played beautiful wife to a domineering husband. Her story proves that beauty and a courageous zest for life are not to the young alone, but belong eternally to the young in heart."

— opening to Edith Adams' Future

patrons. They are on tapes 1580 and 1581.

Members who enjoy comedy may be interested in the spoof of **Red Ryder** on tape 1582 and the auditions of shows written and directed by comedy writer Charlie Issacs on tape 1583.

Many of the programs on this and

rare, but we have obtained discs of several dramatic portions. They are included on Archives tapes 1581, 1582 and 1586.

This catalog page begins the **Dangerously Yours** series, which later became **Matinee Theater**. We have already recorded several programs which will appear on the next catalog page. However, because they are ready, we are listing them on the next page so that interested members may check them out of the Archives library.

# About Jean Holloway

Jean Holloway, whose programs are featured in the upcoming Archives Library pages, began writing for radio when she was in college. In 1940, at the age of 21, she began writing dramatic sketches featured on the **Kate Smith Show**. Her first, "Kathryn Howard," aired Dec. 8, 1940.

She continued to write dramatic spots for the series through the early forties. The era's major performers appeared in her sketches, including Errol Flynn, Ingrid Bergman, Gertrude Lawrence and Orson Welles.

Holloway wrote adaptations of famous short stories and novels. One of her specialties was "bodice rippers"—stories of love, romance and conquering great obstacles.

She wrote them for the Kate Smith Show as well as for the CBS Sunday afternoon drama Dangerously Yours. When the latter series changed its title to Matinee Theater and its story lines were expanded to incorporate other types of stories, she still relied on love and romance for major ingredients in many of her radio plays.

She created Mayor of the Town and wrote half of its scripts during the series' first season. She also provided the sketches used on Frances Langford's Summer 1947 program broadcast in the Burns and Allen Show time slot. Later, she wrote many of the dramatic scripts used on Hallmark Playhouse.

# CART to air March benefit production

The California Artists' Radio Theater's March 21 benefit performance of "Arsenic and Old Lace" will air March 28 on KPCC-FM, Pasadena, 5-6:30 p.m.

The production stars Jeanette Nolan and Kathleen Freeman. The cast includes Dan O'Herlihy, Don Messick, Pat Butram, Sean McClory, Parley Baer, Richard Erdman, Linda K. Henning, Marvin Kaplan, Royal Dano, Elliott Reid, Bob Legionair and John Bliss. John Harlan is the announcer and the host is Les Tremayne.

The live March 21 performance begins at 3 p.m. at Temple Judea, 5429 Lindley Ave., Tarzana.. Tickets run \$25 to \$75. Pro-ceeds from the event will go to the Val-ley Mayors' Fund for the Homeless. Peggy Webber is the program's producer/director.

# Tapes now available from your Archives librarians

(These tapes will appear on the next Archives catalog page.)
Tape 1592

DANGEROUSLY YOURS "Windward Passage" 10-1-1944.

Stars Victor Jory with Gertrude Warner.

MATINEE THEATER "Wurthering Heights" 10-22-1944.

Stars Victor Jory with Gertrude Warner. Martin Gabel is

Stars Victor Jory with Gertrude Warner. Martin Gabel is the program's host. (First show under new title.)

#### Tape 1593 MATINEE THEATER

"Beloved Enemy" 10-29-1944. Stars Victor Jory with Gertrude Warner.

"My Favorite Wife" 11-5-1944. Stars Victor Jory with Betty Winkler and Martha Sleeper.

#### Tape 1594 MATINEE THEATER

"Penny Serenade" 11-12-1944. Stars Victor Jory with Betty Winkler.

"Scarlet Pimpernel" 11-19-1944. Stars Victor Jory with Gertrude Warner and Jackson Beck. Brief portion missing. Some background hum during entire show.

#### Tabe 1595 MATINEE THEATER

"Mr. and Mrs. Smith" 11-26-1944. Stars Victor Jory with Betty Winkler.

"Jane Eyre" 12-3-1944. Stars Victor Jory with Gertrude Warner. Script by David Victor and Herb Little Jr. Abrupt ending. (Note: Equipment malfunction during the original recording of the first transcription record resulted in loss of a small portion of the program.)

#### Tape 1596 MATINEE THEATER

"Hold Back the Dawn" 12-10-1944. Stars Victor Jory and Betty Winkler with Jackson Beck.

"Elizabeth the Queen" 12-17-1944. Stars Victor Jory and Judith Evelyn. Portions from cracked glass discs.

Damaged grooves in a short segment results in poor sound quality and needle skips. Some minor sound distortion.

#### Tape 1597 MATINEE THEATER

"A Stable in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania" 12-24-1944. Stars Victor Jory with Jackson Beck. Script by David Victor and Herbert Little Jr. Based on a story by Charles Tazewell. Abrupt end.

"Random Harvest" 1-7-1945. Stars Victor Jory and Gertrude Warner.

# HAPPY 60th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. & Mrs. Candy Candido (Married March 1, 1933)

## **SPERDVAC Directory**

All articles and artwork © 1993 by SPERDVAC unless otherwise indicated. Published monthly except December by the **Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama**, **Variety and Comedy**, a California non-profit public benefit corporation. Membership is open to all U.S. residents. Dues are \$25 for the first year and \$15 for renewals. Annual subscriptions to the *Radiogram* ONLY are \$15 in the U.S., Canada and Mexico and \$20 to other countries.

**SPERDVAC INFORMATION AND OFFICIAL BUSINESS:** P. O. Box 7177, Van Nuys, CA 91409-9712. (310) 947-9800.

MEMBERSHIP AND RADIOGRAM SUBSCRIPTIONS: Carrolyn Rawski, 7430 Gaviota Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91406.

**RADIOGRAM EDITOR:** Dan Haefele, 4366-D 136th St., Hawthorne, CA 90250-7108 (310) 973-5060. **LIBRARIES:** 

GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 1-500: Bob Steinmetz, P. O. Box 669, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266. GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 501-1000: Gene Ward, Box 635, Tujunga, CA 91043-0635. GENERAL LIBRARY - Cassettes 1001+:

TEMPORARILY CLOSED

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AUDIO SPERDVAC CATALOGS: Contact Bob Herman, 1329 Garrison, Port Orchard, WA 98366 (206) 876-5850. (For blind members only.)

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947-9800 for both General and Archives Libraries.
CATALOG PAGE & LIBRARY ORDER FORMS:
Carrolyn Rawski, 7430 Gaviota Ave., Van Nuys, CA

91406.

## Information, Please!

by Barbara J. Watkins

Does anyone have any information on radio stations playing old time radio in the Portland, Oregon area? I've looked through past issues of "Information, Please" and have found no reports from that area. Member Bruce Powell recently moved there and would like any information you may have. We'll print it here. If there is NO radio drama there, let us know that, too.

Steve Weeks sends us tidbits now and then of things he comes across. The latest included a mention by actress Joanne Woodward of the effect radio had on her, from the Atlanta Constitution, Dec. 30, 1992: you read the Woodward bio

materials, you inevitably come on a story about a bulky old floor-model radio in her Georgia living room and how that radio looked and felt to a little girl on the night Vivian Leigh won the Oscar for 'Gone With the Wind.' This was in the spring of 1940 when the girl was 10. She'd already been bitten by the acting bug. 'Yes, I can see it now,' she says. 'It was a round one, with a vacuum tube. My mother was probably in the room. That radio was so old. It was from the early 30's. To make it work, I had to wind the antenna around my finger." Steve also recommends reading "Close Listening: the Metaphysics of Reading an Audio Book," an article by Sven Birkerts in the Jan. 1993 issue of Harper's. Birkerts says "Reading is different from listening, yes, but in listening's limitations I have found unexpected pleasures."

For those of you living in Southern California, I invite you to read my monthly column "Radio Ramble" in the Southern California Senior Life newspaper. distributed free throughout the area. Each month there is a quiz about old time radio and the prizes are free Sunday brunches or early bird dinners for two at the Pasadena Hilton, Beverly Hills Hilton or Long Beach Hilton.

#### Calling all clubs...

If you are a Straight Arrow fan, then POW-WOW is the group for you. The latest issue, Vol. 7, No. 27, written by Bill and Teresa Harper, contains an article filled with information about our radio hero including his origin, the casting of the show, and some of the memorabilia created around the character, including the Injun-Uity cards separating the layers of Nabisco Shreaded Wheat, its sponsor. If you would like to subscribe, send \$5 for a year's subscription to POW-WOW, 301 East Buena Vista Avenue, North Augusta, SC 29841. And tell the Harpers that you read about it here. For those of you who are not familiar with the character, we invite you to check out the following tapes and hear what you've been missing: SPERDVAC Archives Library tape number 507 and General Library number 1118. Although the show was on from May 6, 1948 through June 21, 1951, only six shows are known to remain in existence.

Please send your questions, comments and information for this column to: Information Please, c/o Barbara J. Watkins, P.O. Box 561, South Pasadena, CA 91031. 'Till next time, spaceman's luck!

#### P.O. Box 561, McGEE'S CLOSET S. Pasadena, CA 91031

WANTED: Radio memorabilia and rent. Contact: Darryl Henley, 827 sheet music, magazines, books, stock 93635. certificates - anything related to radio WANTED: Buddy Clark audio and Pine Way, Absecon, NJ 08201.

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stars. Contact: Dennis Duffy, 625 Lost literature material, including radio shows and transcriptions. Willing to FOR SALE: Copy of John Dunning's trade via cassettes. Contact: Willis Tune in Yesterday. First edition, Antuck, 3815 Waverly Hills Road, hardcover, with wrapper, like new. Lansing, MI 48917. (517) 484-8607. \$100.00 post paid. Contact: Jack FOR SALE: Approximately 300 10" Palmer, 145 North 21st Street, Battle 78 rpm sound effects and music discs used on dramatic shows. Contains such Excellent copy of sounds as "Yukon wind," "Green HOLLYWOOD STARPLAYHOUSE Hornet car," Superman's flying sound, 4-13-1952, the pilot of Jimmy Stewart's etc. From early 30's to mid-50's. In western series. Any format. Will trade albums, with card files. Best offer over or cover costs, etc. Contact: Guy \$1500. Contact: Frank A. Coe, 832

dramatic productions produced in the WANTED: Tapes or records of air Spanish language. Reel-to-reel or checks featuring Don Sherwood (the cassette. Contact: Barbara J. Watkins, World's Greatest Disc Jockey), KSFO, P. O. Box 561, South Pasadena, CA



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#### SOME KEY REASONS FOR COMING

\*\*SPECIAL GUESTS (and only one teeny, weenie comment on each person's total career)

JOHN ARCHER...The Shadow: PARLEY Baer...Chester on Gunsmoke; HARRY BARTELL...Sherlock Holmes; DICK BEALS... Speedy Alka Seltzer; FRANK BUXTON... "The Big Broadcast"; STEWART CONWAY... sound effects: HERB ELLIS ... Sgt. Frank Smith on Dragnet: JIM FRENCH ... Mystery Playhouse; JOHN & LARRY GASSMAN ... Jack Benny workshop; PAGE GILMAN...Jack Barbour, One Man's Family; WAYNE KENWORTHY...Sound effects; MERRILL MAEL... Uncle Fletcher, Vic & Sade: DAVID OSSMAN... Norman Corwin's We Hold These Truths; ANNE WHITFIELD Phillips... Radio daughter of Phil Harris and Alice Faye; DOUG YOUNG... Augie Dawgie, Deputy Dog

- \*\*A jam packed program, including two re-creations of old shows, in the Golden Age manner. One will be The first Gunsmoke show ever done. Three of our guests were actually in that performance.
- \*\*A warm, intimate gathering where all attendees will get to meet every special guest.

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Call for information (206-488-9518) or just go ahead and send in your registration.

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Address	City	State	Zip	
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If you require special meals, please describe_				
I would like to have some tourist type informa	tion on Seattle/Washington StateYN	V		
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TOTAL CASH FEB. 29, 1992

TOTAL CASH FEB. 28, 1993

**INCREASE** 



#### Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama. Variety and Comedy Statement of Revenue and Expenditures for the Fiscal Year Ended February 28, 1993

REVENUE:
Library Fees       .\$29,212         Membership dues       .27,212         Convention 92       .17,235         Interest Income       .4,781         Donations received       .4,139         Printed Materials sales       .2,883         Merchandise Sales       .1,796         Miscellaneous       .982
TOTAL REVENUE \$88,240
EXPENDITURES:
Convention 92.\$17,413Newsletter costs.15,864Library Expenses4,661Printed Materials costs.2,259Capital Expenses.1,801Merchandise for resale.745
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES
Membership       3,506         Phone       2,448         Entertainment & Promotion       1,478         Repair & Maintenance       843         Postage       534         Rent       350         Miscellaneous       292         Bad Check Expense       280         Printing       279         Supplies       62         Tax and License       25
TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$52,839 EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES \$35,401

## Shadows

#### Continued from page 3

question of the G. M. for my radio research. He turned and stalked from the room without a word. Even though he had said nothing, my "interview" offered insights. I learned something of Welles' genius, and a lot more about his manners.

I met Bret Morrison a number of times over a twenty year period, but never really got to be friends with him the way I have some radio era actors. His voice was beautiful, but Bret was the opposite of The Shadow in appearance. Not tall and lean and black haired, Morrison was of only average height and rather plump, and He signed a number of autographs to me over the years. The first one said "May I be the only Shadow in your life." I was fortunate enough to have seen Morrison perform as The Shadow, but only in parody sketches for various Frank Bresee productions.

One of the actors who replaced Bret Morrison for part of a season of The Shadow was John Archer, who appeared in Anthony Tollin's Shadow re-creation for SPERD-VAC's 1987 convention. Also a well-known movie actor, Archer is certainly more visually like Lemont Cranston than Morrison, and his vocal performance projected a sincerity and very masculine kindness that many stars of the forties had. It was a pleasure to see this full-scale dramatization with other regulars such as Leslie Woods (Margot), Dwight Weist (Commissioner Weston), and announcer Andre Baruch.

I was never able to see Orson Welles perform as The Shadow, but from what I did see of him it was clear he always considered himself "The Master of Other Men's Minds."

\$98,677

\$35,405

\$134.082



## **SPERDVAC**

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