

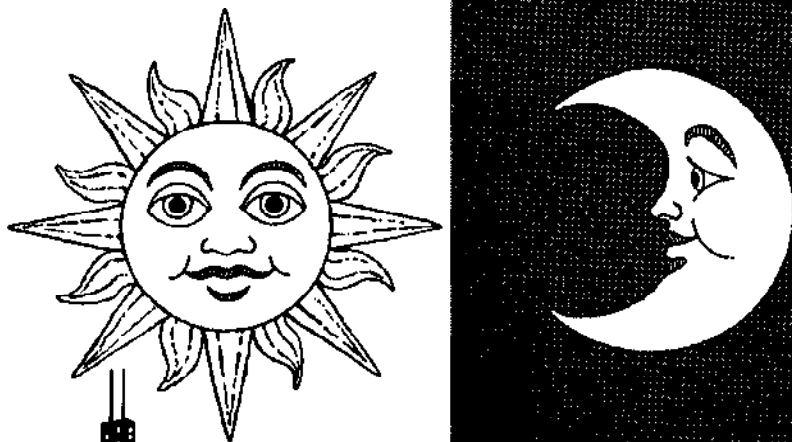
CHUCK SCHADEN'S  
**NOSTALGIA DIGEST** AND  
**RADIO GUIDE** ©

JUNE — JULY, 1994



BING CROSBY

# ALL NEWS ALL DAY ALL NIGHT



News when *you* want it—any time, day or night.

## WBBM Newsradio 78

# NOSTALGIA DIGEST®

BOOK TWENTY

CHAPTER FOUR

JUNE-JULY, 1994

## HELLO, OUT THERE IN RADIO LAND!!

THE 1994 NOMINEES to the Radio Hall of Fame have been announced and we're pleased to note that the list contains a number of outstanding performers and programs.

In the **PIONEER** category, the nominees are the late **Eve Arden**, star of *Our Miss Brooks*; the late **Red Barber**, legendary sports broadcaster; **Ralph Edwards**, creator/host of *Truth or Consequences* and *This Is Your Life*; **Red Skelton**, classic comedian; and **Les Tremayne**, star of *First Nighter* and one of radio's most talented actors.

In the **PROGRAM** category, the nominees are **Bob and Ray Show**; **Burns and Allen Show**; **CBS World News Round-Up**; **One Man's Family**; and **Your Hit Parade**.

Nominations to the Radio Hall of Fame were made by the 46 member National Steering Committee, representing radio executives from around the United States.

Radio Hall of Fame ballots have been mailed to over 3,700 radio executives, broadcast historians and members of the Radio Hall of Fame and the Museum of Broadcast Communications. The voting deadline is August 1, 1994.

Winners in each category will be inducted into America's only Radio Hall of Fame during a nationally broadcast ceremony from Chicago on Sunday, November 6th.

Each of the nominees **PIONEERS** and **PROGRAMS** will be highlighted on selected *Those Were The Days* broadcasts during June and July.

And if you're a member of the Radio Hall of Fame/Museum of Broadcast Communications, be sure to cast your ballot.

**D-DAY, THE INVASION** of Normandy, one of the most important and significant events of the second world war took place fifty years ago this June.

As part of our continuing *Those Were The Days* series on Radio and World War II, listeners will hear extensive coverage of the invasion as originally broadcast on the networks of the United States.

Beginning with the first unofficial reports in the very early morning hours of June 6, 1944, and continuing through the late afternoon of the next day, we will offer an amazing selection of vintage news programs, specials and invasion-related broadcasts to give you a sound picture of what it was like to be at home on the Home Front during a tense couple of days in the midst of World War II.

The D-Day coverage will occupy three entire TWTD programs during June.

Another WW II related program, *We Will Never Die*, will be presented on July 2. This documentary is a dramatic account of the Jewish people during wartime. It was originally broadcast live from the Hollywood Bowl on Independence Day, 1944.

And on July 16, we'll present selected network coverage of the historic Democratic National Convention that nominated Franklin D. Roosevelt for an unprecedented fourth term as president of the United States.

Complete details can be found on pages 24-28.

Thanks for listening.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chuck Scheder".



# NOTES FROM THE BANDSTAND

## Bing Crosby, the Big Bands And All That Jazz

BY KARL PEARSON

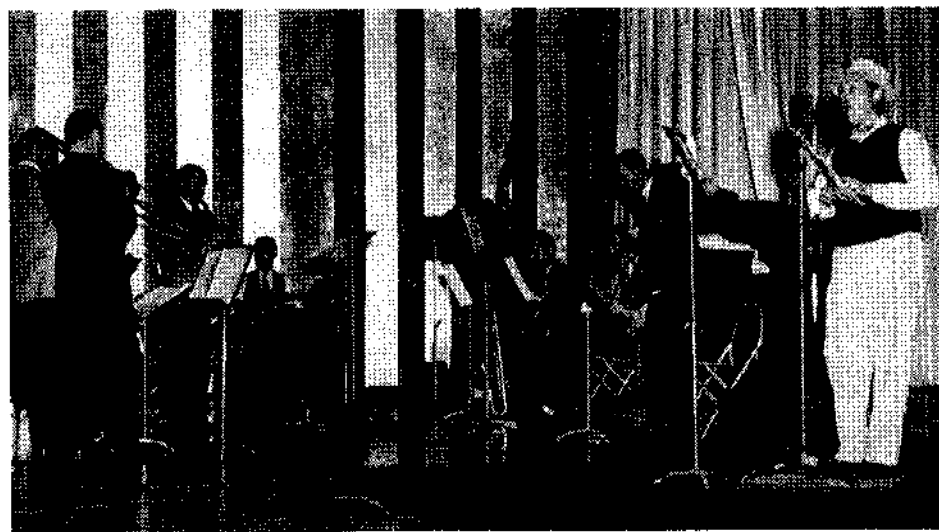
### COVER STORY

Jazz," as Whiteman was often referred to in those days, took Crosby and Rinker and teamed them up with another young singer named Harry Barris. The trio, known as "The Rhythm Boys," became an integral part of the Whiteman orchestra, and Bing was also featured as a soloist with the band. Crosby and the Rhythm Boys made a number of memorable recordings with Whiteman, including "I'm Coming, Virginia," "From Monday On," and "You Took Advantage Of Me." During Bing's three and a half year tenure with the Whiteman band he also sang with backing by some of the country's finest musicians, including Red Nichols, Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, and the legendary Bix Beiderbecke.

The Rhythm Boys left Whiteman in 1930 and eventually hooked up with West Coast bandleader Gus Arnheim. Once again Crosby was featured with The Rhythm Boys and as featured soloist and was heard on broadcasts from the Cocoanut Grove of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

In 1931 Bing parted company with Arnheim, Rinker and Barris and went out on a solo career of his own. After appearing in several Mack Sennett comedy shorts and making a few recordings for Brunswick he landed a radio contract with CBS. Within a short time Bing Crosby replaced Rudy Vallee as the most popular singer in the nation.

As his popularity skyrocketed Bing's



BING CROSBY appeared on the Kraft Music Hall with Jimmy Dorsey and his orchestra.

record sales climbed, even in the depths of the Depression. Once again Crosby was backed on broadcasts and recordings by many of the finest New York and Hollywood musicians. Bing even hired the great jazz guitarist Eddie Lang as his permanent accompanist. Many of the Crosby recordings of this period were backed by studio orchestras led by Lennie Hayton, Georgie Stoll and Victor Young, but Bing also found time to make recordings with established bandleaders like Duke Ellington, Isham Jones, Don Redman and Guy Lombardo.

Bing had several radio sponsors during his first few years, including Cremo Cigars, Chesterfield Cigarettes and Woodbury Soap. The sponsor he is most often associated with was Kraft Foods. The "Kraft Music Hall" first opened its doors on NBC's Red Network in December of 1935. The one-hour music-variety program, heard on Thursday nights, featured Bing and comedian Bob Burns along with music supplied by Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra.

Crosby made a number of relaxed recordings with Jimmy's band, including "I'm An Old Cowhand" and "Peckin.'" Both Crosby and Dorsey were under con-

tract to the new Decca label, which had been formed by Brunswick's Jack Kapp in 1934. Priced at 35 cents, the Crosby Decca releases sold extremely well, while the Decca roster of stars grew over the next few years. Kapp used a number of his Decca stars (including Crosby) in various recorded pairings, figuring that two stars could sell twice as many recordings as one.

Over the next two decades Bing made some of his best sides with a number of great big bands and jazz artists. In 1936 Bing shared the Decca microphone for the first time with Louis Armstrong, idol of many jazz musicians. The Crosby-Armstrong alliance was a productive one, and over the next twenty years there would be a number of Armstrong-Crosby encounters on records and radio. In later years Bing featured both Louis and his All Stars on a number of his radio shows. When swing bands became popular with the record buying public Jack Kapp had Decca's roster of dance bands appear on record with Bing. Jimmy Dorsey's band made several more records with him, and the orchestras of Jack Teagarden, Woody Herman and Lionel Hampton were also used, along

Last Fall MCA Records released a lavish 4-volume compact disc set titled "Bing Crosby: His Legendary Years." The set presents a representative slice of Der Bingle's recorded output for Brunswick and Decca Records and spanned the years of 1931 to 1957. Many of the recordings have been unavailable for quite some time, and a number of previously unissued performances were thrown in for good measure. While listening to this set I was reminded of how frequently the "Old Groaner" recorded in a big band or jazz setting.

To this day Bing Crosby is recognized as a major force in American popular music. Tin Pan Alley songs, holiday numbers, Hawaiian music, cowboy songs and many other kinds of music were given the Crosby treatment in motion pictures, on radio, records and television. But upon listening to the MCA boxed set one is amazed with Bing's big band/jazz performances. They contain a typical degree of Crosby casualness. Although referred to often as "The Crooner," Bing truly swung out on his jazz outings. Crosby, who had a true love of jazz, featured many of the best musicians on the scene on both his recordings and broadcasts.

Bing Crosby's first big break in the entertainment field came in 1926, when he and partner Al Rinker were hired by bandleader Paul Whiteman. Whiteman, one of the first bandleaders to hire a vocalist to interpret song lyrics in a dance band, had employed tenor Morton Downey three years earlier. "The King of

## BING CROSBY

with the fine band led by Bing's younger brother Bob. On some of the Decca sessions small groups from within the big bands were also used to back Bing, including Woody Herman's Woodchoppers and Bob Crosby's Bob Cats.

Jimmy Dorsey left the Kraft Music Hall after two seasons and was replaced by conductor John Scott Trotter, former pianist and arranger with Hal Kemp. Trotter's scores provided the perfect backing for Bing's vocals. Trotter was a versatile arranger who could adapt to Bing's wide variety of material. A number such as "Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams" as arranged by Trotter might feature a smooth string section, while a number like "Small Fry" might feature a small dixieland-style group. The Trotter band also featured the best Hollywood studio musicians, including cornetist Andy Secrest (who had replaced Bix Beiderbecke in the Paul Whiteman band), Red Nichols (in later years), and a young drummer named Lindley Armstrong "Spike" Jones.

As host of the Kraft Music Hall (and later Philco Radio Time and the Chesterfield Program) Bing had an endless progression of guest stars, many of them musical. Jazz-influenced singers such as Connee Boswell and Ella Fitzgerald and bandleaders Duke Ellington and Claude Thornhill appeared on the Crosby Show. When jazz fiddler Joe Venuti's career was in decline, Bing backed him on several of his shows and helped renew Venuti's career. By the mid-1940's Bing began to feature an occasional guest small group on his weekly radio series. The Nat King Cole trio and Artie Shaw and his Gramercy Five were just two of several smaller groups that Bing featured.

In 1944 Crosby made a trip to Europe to entertain the troops stationed over-

-4- Nostalgia Digest



BING CROSBY

seas. While in England he had the opportunity to sing with Major Glenn Miller and his American Band of the Allied Expeditionary Forces. Bing and Glenn had known each other for many years, having first recorded together with the Dorsey Brothers in 1929 (Glenn made the arrangements for that session). Bing sang with the AEF band on its weekly half-hour show on the BBC and also replaced Sergeant Johnny Desmond (vocalist with the AEF band) on his fifteen minute show over the BBC. For this one occasion "Sergeant Johnny Desmond Sings" was retitled "Bing Crosby Sings." Backed by Major Miller, Bing sang several of his current hits, including "White Christmas," a big hit with the GI's.

In the postwar years Bing continued his love of jazz and big bands. He made many more sessions with John Scott Trotter and did guest appearances on records with Xavier Cugat, Eddie Condon, Jimmy Dorsey and others. Many years later Bing even made an LP with Count Basie and his big band. For those interested in hearing some of Bing's big band and jazz excursions, check out "Bing Crosby: His Legendary Years" (MCAD4-10887) or "Bing Crosby and Some Jazz Friends" (Decca GRD-603). ■

## Radio's D-DAY Coverage

BY JIM WARRAS

Ike's bombers, fighters and gliders may have dominated the air over Normandy on June 6th, 1944, but the airwaves were clearly up for grabs. If anything, the Germans could claim an opening victory. It was a German broadcast, at 6:37 a.m. London time (12:37 a.m., June 6th, Eastern/War Time) that first announced the invasion. Few people on either side believed the announcer. Too many false alarms had turned off too many people.

Everyone knew there would be a new Allied landing somewhere in Europe (the slow-moving offensive in Italy clearly wasn't going to win the war by itself). But where would the landing come... and when?

Allied leaders wanted to keep Hitler guessing as long as possible, so pre-invasion planning included a massive deception campaign. By early 1944, Nazi generals were shuffling troops from the Balkans to Norway. They expected a landing in France, true enough, but would it be the main attack or just a feint? Listeners in Europe, Britain and North America waited for that first bulletin.

On the evening of May 27th, Berlin Radio warned its listeners to stand by for "sensational news." It turned out to be the introduction of a German violinist, playing an instrument made in 1626. Big stuff for fans of old violins, I suppose, but clearly not the "sensation" most

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*Jim Warras retired as a news writer after 30 years with Columbia Broadcasting System and the National Broadcasting Company. He has a special interest in the World War II years.*

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listeners were waiting for. Three days before the actual landings, it was American radio's turn... or, more accurately, the Associated Press'. An A.P. "practice" message from London accidentally hit the teletypes... announcing "FLASH EISENHOWERS HEADQUARTERS ANNOUNCE ALLIED LANDINGS FRANCE." Frantic orders to "BUST THAT FLASH" went out just two minutes later... in plenty of time to keep it out of newspapers, but too late for "instantaneous" radio news. NBC and CBS both announced the "FLASH"... and the "BUST."

Early Tuesday morning, June 6th, came another bulletin... not from the major American networks but from the Germans. So no wonder, when New York City's WOR interrupted a Harry James Dance Band program with a report that "the Allied invasion had begun," it spent more time reminding listeners that this was "an unsubstantiated enemy claim" than with speculating about whether the Germans might have gotten it right this time.

Actually, General Eisenhower *meant* for them to get it right. He deliberately delayed his own announcement of the Normandy landings some three hours to keep the deception campaign going as long as possible.

As things turned out, the German broadcasters were wrong as much as they were right in those early invasion hours. True enough, they announced heavy fighting near Caen, the goal of the British landings. But they also credited Allied paratroopers with capturing a German airfield near Calais... where Ike wanted the Germans to *think* we were coming. U.S. networks passed along this report... undoubtedly cheering listeners

## D-DAY

at first, only to let them down later when there was no further word of a "captured airfield." Meantime, two Panzer divisions stayed close to Calais . . . where the Germans did NOT need them.

More sobering was another radio report that morning of D-Day. It announced Allied liberation of the British Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey. They had been under German occupation since June, 1940. Now H.V. Kaltenborn speculated the Allies would build airfields on the islands, to support invasion forces on the French mainland. Unfortunately, Jersey and Guernsey remained in German hands until the end of the war . . . enduring near-starvation at times because the occupiers could no longer deliver food.

But Allied D-Day reports, that were *meant* to deceive, also got through . . . like broadcasts from exiled leaders in London, implying their peoples should expect orders from Eisenhower soon to help win back their freedom. S.H.A.E.F. (Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force) was able to censor all these speeches . . . all except one. Renegade French General, turned maverick French freedom-fighter Charles DeGaulle wrote his own speech . . . which may have led to unnecessary deaths, by encouraging *immediate* uprisings in *all* parts of France, not just in areas where invasion troops could lend support.

When the King of Norway took to the air, on the other hand, did he know his people would not be freed until the final German surrender in May, 1945? What he probably *did* know is that his broadcast helped keep Hitler worrying about a possible Allied landing in Norway . . . keeping still more German troops from heading for Normandy. It's doubtful the King's listeners included Hitler himself. He and Goebbels spent the night

of June 5th-6th at Berchtesgaden. Goebbels was awakened early but Hitler had taken a sedative, so aides let him "sleep in" until 10 a.m.

American broadcasters, though, like their German counterparts, were up early . . . on both sides of the Atlantic. The initial German invasion bulletin was followed, at 3:30 a.m., EWT by confirmation from S.H.A.E.F. that "Allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies this morning on the northern coast of France." Like the BBC, all four U.S. radio networks . . . NBC, CBS Mutual and ABC (no longer N.B.C.'s "Blue Network," thanks to government anti-monopoly order) had competing staffs in London, ready to feed invasion news to America as best they could.

According to NBC correspondent John MacVane, the real competition was among NBC, CBS and ABC. Writing after the war, in his autobiography: "On the Air in World War II," he said most of Mutual's people worked part-time, and were not under as much pressure to be at the "scene of the action." According to MacVane, the top people at NBC and CBS agreed early on to stay away from "sensationalism," stressing instead "calm, candid opinion and 100 per cent accuracy." If the radio of that day didn't always meet these standards, consider the tools it had to work with and the conditions under which it did that work.

First, there was the deception campaign referred to earlier. While reporters searched for the truth, Allied leaders used the news to keep Hitler guessing. The Allies had German Intelligence convinced there were three times as many troops ready to assault France as there actually were. The Germans also believed the main Allied invasion force would come across the narrowest part of the English Channel from Dover to the previously-noted Calais. The genius of this was that, even after Allied troops were ashore in



D-DAY LANDING ON THE BEACH AT NORMANDY, FRANCE

Normandy, all the public references (from Ike and Churchill on down) to "the first in a series of landings" kept many German leaders (from Hitler on down) believing the biggest blow was yet to come.

Behind all this deception were some very real Allied fears. Looking back on their earlier assaults, those in North Africa, Sicily and Anzio went comparatively smoothly. But the commando raid on Dieppe was a disaster, and a German counter-attack nearly drove American troops off the beach at Salerno.

Less than a month before D-Day, Eisenhower's own Chief of Staff, General Walter Bedell Smith, rated chances of getting ashore and staying ashore in France at no better than 50-50. Perhaps that is why Ike prepared two announcements to read on June 6th: the famous one announcing the invasion and a second, which never left his pocket, announcing a withdrawal from the French beaches. The way things turned out, no one can quarrel with the Allied deception strategy. It undoubtedly saved many lives — on both sides — by shortening the

war. But one can still sympathize with harried journalists of the time, pressured by bosses, readers and listeners to find out what was really happening.

Getting that information was just "half the fun" if you were a radio reporter covering World War II. Getting it "home" could be the biggest pain of all. Nearly a quarter of a century earlier, it was "news" that first demonstrated to Americans what commercial radio could do for them. A single station in Pittsburgh broadcast the 1920 presidential election returns. Now four networks covered a world war for those same Americans, from half a world away. But, to reach its audience, that war news first had to cross an ocean via short-wave. If you were in London, of course, you used the BBC (after clearing your copy with censors.)

Trouble was, even the first-rate BBC transmitters couldn't always reach America when you wanted them to. Though the Germans were in no position to jam them, bad weather or sun spots often produced the same results. Sometimes, signals to the U.S. had to be



## D-DAY

routed via North Africa. Sometimes North Africa sounded even worse than London. And, always, short-wave broadcasters could never be completely sure if anyone was listening. All a newsman could do was speak into a microphone at the appointed time and hope an alert engineer in North America would pick him up. To communicate with the "home office," there was no direct-dial telephone, bouncing signals off a satellite. There was only the cablegram... which sometimes was understood and sometimes reached you in time, but not always.

Probably the biggest short-wave/cable "SNAFU" of the war involved NBC's MacVane, while he was covering the fighting in North Africa in November, 1942. Army officials in Washington cabled MacVane to prepare an "Army Hour" broadcast for the following Sunday... a whole hour, live, from Algiers. Though MacVane had only four days to write and produce the show, he somehow assembled a cross-section of fighting men, from Generals to G.I.'s, and even organized an impromptu jazz band. Come Sunday night, all was ready until Algiers got an air raid warning and nervous French engineers turned off their transmitter. But an aide to General Mark Clark intervened, and the transmitter went back on the air just five minutes before the broadcast was due to start. Despite noise from exploding German bombs, no one involved with the show was hurt and all sides agreed everything sounded great.

MacVane expected cabled congratulations from New York. What he got was a question. Why hadn't he transmitted the TEN minutes of "Army Hour" materials requested? It seems a second cable, which MacVane never got, reduced his air time to ten minutes. But even that segment never made it to New York.

To confuse the German bombers, the French engineers, without telling anyone, changed their transmission frequency... and NBC engineers never found it. But the show wasn't a total loss. It had a single listener: An R.A.F. Spitfire pilot, who picked it up accidentally while returning to his base. He loved it.

NBC and the Army were both so embarrassed, the incident was hushed up until after the war. But no one could hush up the undependability of short-wave. Major networks demonstrated it every night as they "called in" correspondents from around the world during live news broadcasts. Many times, there would be no answer at all. And the biggest story of the war was just over the horizon.

But, if battlefield reports couldn't always be live, why not record them? Answer: with what? The Germans had perfected the first magnetic tape machines, but they were not about to share them with us. The BBC used portable disc recorders, with some success. When an American radio reporter headed for the front lines, however, his top piece of "technical" equipment was a small typewriter.

The only other option was a wire recorder, complete with spools of wire that usually began to tangle as soon as you looked at them. No wonder American radio news from Europe, since before the war, had emphasized LIVE reporting (the correspondent reading into the microphone what he had written on this typewriter) and LIVE interviews, if they were available. Now, though, American reporters were following American soldiers onto a battlefield where live broadcasting just wasn't possible, at least not at the beginning. The trouble was, the afore-mentioned wire recorders were not only unwieldy, they were heavy!

Preparing to board a ship for Normandy, reporter MacVane borrowed a "portable" recorder from the Army that



D-DAY — A VIEW FROM THE BEACH AT NORMANDY. A line of warships form a breakwater for invasion forces.

weighed at least 50 pounds. Nevertheless, he strapped it on his back and began doing interviews before the ship sailed. The plan was to send the spools of wire back to London, for censorship and broadcast after the landings were underway. Only one small problem: the recorder did not have a monitor or playback feature. So MacVane didn't find out until later that his batteries were too low and all his interviews were useless. He did know the unit was too heavy to be taken aboard a landing barge (if the barge overturned, the 50 pounds on his back would be more than enough to drown him.) That left MacVane with his typewriter. Both arrived in France unscathed.

With short-wave and recorders so unreliable, senior radio reporters had a

tough choice picking their assignments for the Normandy landings. Going ashore with ground troops (like MacVane) meant going away from the transmitters, needed to get their stories back home. Less-senior reporters, like NBC's Ed Haaker, wound up having it both ways. On the morning of June 6th, he flew with a B-26 bombing radio over the French coast. After returning to England, Ed was, as he put it, "one of the few NBC correspondents with dry feet." So he hurried back to London and anchored many of the early D-Day feeds to New York, including his own account of that bombing raid.

Back on Omaha, MacVane thought things were finally beginning to go his way. Before heading ashore, he jotted

## D-DAY

down a radio frequency labeled "First Army News Service" obviously designated for news transmissions from the beaches back to London. It took a while but, late on the day *after* D-Day, MacVane found a military transmitter and an Army officer willing to let him use it. BBC picked up the report clear as a bell; the first radio signal from any correspondent in Normandy. Then the U.S. Army Signal Corps got into the act. Its London headquarters didn't know MacVane's frequency was one of those assigned to journalists, so it refused to let NBC send his eagerly-awaited words back home.

A couple of weeks later, using a BBC frequency, it was CBS' Bill Downs who got official credit for the first broadcast from Normandy. MacVane's terse comment: "I was not happy." By then he was in a London hospital. He broke an ankle while attempting to jump across a Normandy ditch.

As noted earlier, NBC was far from alone in all-out radio coverage of the Normandy landings. While Ed Haaker was recounting his bombing raid, listeners to CBS heard the capable and familiar voice of Edwar R. Murrow, also in London. Another broadcast veteran, Charles Collingwood, led CBS coverage from the beaches. ABC's George Hicks stayed aboard one of the larger ships in the invasion fleet. That network was more liberal in its use of news recordings, and Hicks' account of a German air raid on the fleet remains a Normandy classic.

Many of these correspondents later followed Allied armies across France and into Germany coping with field transmitters (and field censors) as best they could. Haaker found one listener where he least expected, in Berlin. It happened after the

war, while NBC was setting up shop in the former German capital. Introducing himself to the German woman hired by NBC to be his secretary, the woman told Haaker she already knew the name. She had heard him many times during the war, while monitoring Allied broadcasts for the German Foreign Ministry.

Looking back on D-Day, and how radio covered it, hindsight can be a hinderance as well as a help. Because we now know the landings were followed by the unconditional surrender of Germany just 11 months later, it's hard to realize how easily Normandy could have turned into disaster.

Had Hitler known when and where we were coming (and had he known for sure we were NOT coming ashore anywhere else,) who knows what those idle Panzer divisions would have done to American and British soldiers while they were still disorganized on the beaches?

During more than 30 years in radio and television news, I always worked hard to learn the truth and report it as quickly as possible. So did the radio reporters covering the Normandy landings. While we can appreciate their struggles with primitive recorders, unreliable transmissions and sometimes unreasonable censors, we can also be thankful these reporters didn't always get it right.

Better to learn the truth a little late, if it helps save lives on a stormy day in June. ■

*(ED. NOTE — Be sure to tune in to Those Were The Days on the first three Saturdays in June to hear radio's D-Day coverage. On June 4th you'll hear a conversation with former NBC News Correspondent Ed Haaker — mentioned in Mr. Warras story — who will offer an eyewitness report of his view of radio's D-Day coverage. See listings on pages 24 and 25.)*

# STARS on SUSPENSE

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**4** KIRK DOUGLAS  
Story of Markham's Death  
10-2-47

**5** FIBBER MC GEE & MOLLY  
Backseat Driver  
2-22-51

**6** CARY GRANT  
Black Path Of Fear  
3-7-46

**7** BOB HOPE  
Death Has A Shadow  
5-5-49

**8** DANNY KAYE  
I Never Met The Dead Man  
1-5-50

**9** BURT LANCASTER  
The Big Shot  
9-9-48

**10** AGNES MOOREHEAD  
The Thirteenth Sound  
2-13-47

**11** RED SKELTON  
The Search For Isabel  
11-3-49

**12** JAMES STEWART  
Consequence  
5-19-49

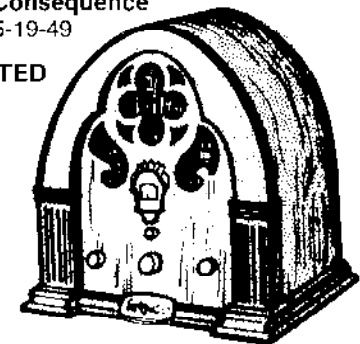
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Ken Alexander  
Remembers . . .

## The Old Trains



I've witnessed this scene countless times while waiting for a commuter train to take me downtown:

A young mother and her small child are standing on the station platform. Suddenly the crossing gates lower, the red warning lights begin to flash and the bell rings. The mother points toward the west where the approaching train is rounding the bend and says to the child, "Look! Here comes the choo-choo!"

The child jumps up and down with excitement.

A pleasing scene it is. There is only one thing wrong: the approaching train is *not* a "choo-choo." The child has never seen a "choo-choo"; neither, probably, has the mother.

A "choo-choo" was a train pulled by a steam locomotive — a big, powerful engine made of solid iron. Hooked on behind was a tender, or coal car, carrying the coal, which was burned to convert the water in the boiler into steam. It was the steam that pushed the pistons, which turned the locomotive's wheels.

The fireman shoveled the coal into the boiler while the engineer operated the engine.

Steam locomotives were not painted shiny yellow or sky blue like the diesel-electrics of today; they were black, and from their stacks poured smoke and soot and cinders.

The pistons and piston rods and wheels were out in the open, in full view, and when a train started up you could see the piston rod slowly push forward, forcing the wheel to turn. With each stroke of the piston, a *choo* would rend the air. Very slowly at first the train would move, but gradually the *choo's* would become closer together as the engineer opened the throttle and the train gathered speed.

When a train was highballing on a straightaway, the pistons would be pumping so fast that you could hardly hear the individual *choo's*.

*That* was a "choo-choo" train.

The whistles on the steam engines had a lonesome sound. The horns on modern diesel-electric engines have a sharp, brassy sound, something like a raspy trombone; the old steam whistles had a sound which, although it carried far, was mellower. And oh, so lonesome — especially at night.

On the top of each engine was a bell, which *looked* like a bell.

I have never lived more than about a half-mile from the Chicago & North Western's West Line. (The West Line, formerly called the Galena Division, runs from the downtown terminal out through Oak Park, Elmhurst, Wheaton and other suburban towns to Geneva.)

When my family lived in the 3800 block on W. Fulton, the 600 block on N.



THE CHICAGO AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY'S West Line slices through Chicago on a concrete embankment. A solitary figure waits to board a downtown-bound passenger train at the Austin stop (Parkside Avenue) on a cold February day in 1934. (Photograph by Alfred W. Johnson courtesy of the Krambles Archive.)

Springfield, the 200 block on N. Karlov, and the 700 block on N. Drake, we were in earshot of the North Western trains. Now living in one of the western suburbs, I'm still less than a half-mile from the train.

In pre-Amtrak days, the North Western had not only commuter trains originating in North Western station, but cross-country trains as well. There was the "Twin Cities 400," which went to Minneapolis-St. Paul — 400 miles in 400 minutes. The "Iron and Copper Country Express" went up into Michigan, the "Kate Shelly" to Omaha. Then there were the "City" trains, which went out west: the "City of Denver," "City of Portland," "City of Los Angeles" and "City of San Francisco."

These trains — streamliners, we called them — were drawn by yellow diesel engines, and the coaches, too, were yellow.

The Jet Age had not yet begun, and air travel was nowhere near as popular as it is today; people who needed to travel cross-country usually went by rail.

I once saw Bing Crosby in North Western Station; he had just gotten off the "City of Los Angeles." Standing next to the engine in the trainshed, Crosby posed for a photographer with the

the engineer and the fireman. The three stood side-by-side, their arms around one another's shoulders, and opened their mouths as if they were blending their voices in song.

The Old North Western Station was a busy place in those days. In addition to the thousands of commuters passing through the building each day, there were thousands of travelers coming from, or going to, the northern, northwestern and western parts of the country.

On the second, or train-level, floor was a spacious waiting room with a high, vaulted ceiling. At the west end of the waiting room was the Gateway restaurant; at the east end, a lunch counter. There were several stands where one could buy newspapers, cigarettes, candy bars and magazines.

Near the center of the waiting room was a wide marble staircase which led to the first, or street-level floor, where the tickets were sold. There was also a drug store on the first floor.

On both the first and second floors were banks of lockers, where travelers could store their luggage while they had a meal or went to State Street to shop between trains.

<sup>\*</sup> This may give you some idea of just how busy a place the North Western Sta-



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## THE OLD TRAINS

tion was in the 1950s: the barber shop, on the first floor, had 18 chairs.

The building was only four or five stores tall, but it was a grand old railroad depot. It was demolished a few years back and replaced by a high-rise office building called the North Western Atrium Center.

While the old cross-country streamliners afforded the traveler some measure of luxury, the commuter trains of that year got you where you were going and that was about all they did.

The coaches not being air-conditioned, on a hot day the passengers would open the windows. This allowed a breeze to enter the car, but the breeze carried with it soot and smoke and coal dust — especially if one was riding in a coach close behind the engine. A white shirt or a white blouse wouldn't remain white for long.

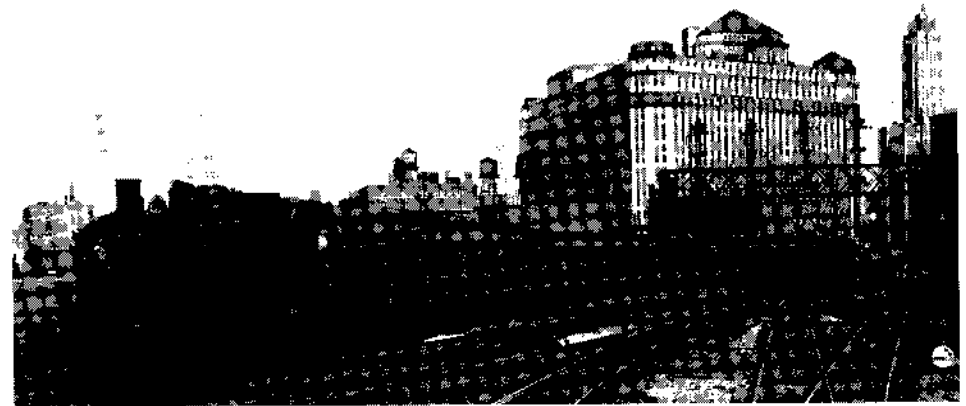
As I recall, some of the coaches were unheated. Some of the cars were combination cars — half passenger coach and half baggage car. In these, there might be a stove in the baggage section.

Some of the coaches had gas lights. I can remember seeing the conductor walking through the aisle at night with a taper to light the gas in the globes hanging from the ceiling.

Two kerosene lanterns, one on the right and one on the left, hung on the rear end of the last coach of the train.

Some of the suburban stations that didn't have a depot had a shelter for commuters so that they wouldn't have to wait outdoors for their train. This shelter was, in fact, the body of an old wooden baggage car with the trucks removed.

Every freight train in those days — and up until a few years ago — had a caboos on the tail end, in which the conductor and a brakeman rode. There was something picturesque, something cozy about a caboos.



THE CHICAGO AND NORTH WESTERN on Halsted Street near the Merchandise Mart in downtown Chicago, some years ago. (Photograph by Alfred W. Johnson courtesy of the Krambles Archive.)

A little electronic gadget — a box about eight inches square — which you can see on the rear end of the last car of a freight train, mounted on top of the drawbar, has replaced the caboos. I don't believe, though, that any gadget can really take the place of a caboos or the men who rode in it.

Late one summer night years ago, I stood at a grade crossing in one of the suburbs waiting for a long freight train to pass. It was quiet. Because the train was moving slowly, it was not making much sound, and by the time the caboos reached the spot where I was standing, the noisy engine was probably a mile away.

I was just a couple of feet from the track when the caboos finally pulled past. The conductor sat at the open window, and as the caboos passed, he said to me, "Does this train look all right to you?"

Can the electronic gadget do *that*?

For nine years — from 1948 to 1957 — I worked for the Chicago and North Western, although my job had nothing to do with trains. I worked in the general offices downtown, in the Land & Tax Department, and my job was issuing rental bills on the company's 13,000 leases for the use of railroad property.

There were no computers in the office in those days. I pounded out the bills on an old L.C. Smith manual typewriter; then I posted the bills with a pen in huge ledgers weighing about 25 pounds apiece.

Some of the men in the office smoked cigars; each man who did, had a spittoon — a cuspidor, if you will — on the floor beside his desk.

In the office and out on the road, railroading has changed in the past 40 years. And so have I.

When I was young, the steam locomotive — the old "iron horse" — was on the verge of obsolescence; gradually taking its place was the diesel-electric. What a thrill it was to see one of those streamliners come gliding along the track, sleek and bright yellow with a thin green stripe! This was the train of the future.

Now that the future has arrived and nostalgia has set in, I find that my feelings have changed. I can see streamlined trains every day now, and I no longer find them exciting.

What thrills me today is the recollection of an old steam engine pulling a train through the countryside with its pistons pumping, its stack puffing coal smoke, and its lonesome whistle blowing. ■

# Dear Diary

## Those Were The Days

BY MARY FRAN GODWIN PURSE

It was the series "The Home Front" on "Those Were the Days" that made me begin my search through my treasure box of diaries, letters and souvenirs of the WW II years, as well as of the months and years beyond, when I entertained the "boys" and later worked in radio.

Everyone has memories, but we diary-keepers can pull incidents out of our past with clearer recollection. I even have my mother's diary to help me with the war years, and more. Hers covers 1932 to 1960. I began a five-year diary in 1936, but wrote in it only 11 months. In 1939, I began in earnest, with lengthy entries, and have been at it ever since, in one form or another.

We all know about the many stars who entertained the troops, but there were plenty of unknowns who did it, too, and I was one of them. In May, 1944, I was an unsophisticated 21, studying voice (classical, of course), a light soprano. I went with a church group from Evanston on a bus to Fort Sheridan on a Sunday evening to sing at their Vespers service. ("...with the Methodists," says my mother's diary. We were Episcopalians.) My mother played for me, and I sang "Panis Angelicus," and "How Beautiful Upon the Mountains." Then, says my mother's diary, "later on, in the USO, 'Star Dust' and 'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes.' The boys loved it." (This was my mother writing, remember.) So that was how it started. We went again, adding

*Mary Fran Godwin Purse is a long-time listener of Those Were The Days, a long-time subscriber to the Nostalgia Digest, and a long-time diary writer.*

"Jeanie With the Light Brown Hair" and "I'll Get By" to our song-bag.

In August, 1944, the newly-formed Music in Hospitals Committee of the Illinois Federation of Music Clubs asked me to inaugurate their venture with a program at Vaughan General Hospital in Maywood.

Having exhausted my mother's repertoire, I took another pianist, Alice Shearer, and off we went. I must have prepared a light classical program for them... I'm sure that's what the ladies of the Federation expected. My diary reported: "The singing at Vaughan Hospital was wonderful. I sang for the ambulatory patients — the were so sweet. They seemed to enjoy the program, and asked for several songs afterward. Then we went into their recreation room, where they requested everything from "Ave Maria" to "White Christmas."

I remember we didn't have the music to "Ave Maria," so I sat down and accompanied myself as far as I could remember and finished the piece "a capella." Then we remembered that Deanna Durbin had sung a song in "Three Smart Girls" that was just up my alley: "Il Bacio." They all knew the tune and sang "LA! LAA, la-la LA! LAA" along with me.

We received a letter from the Red Cross Speaker's Bureau giving us the report from the hospital: "This was a big thrill. The entertainers went over in a big way — especially the second part of the performance, which was in the recreation room and a much more intimate affair. They begged for just one more song, over



MARY FRAN GODWIN PURSE listens to her father, commentator Earl Godwin, on the radio during the 1940's.

and over." We were asked back, and this time we scurried around for the popular sheet music of the day. The Federation of Music Clubs probably didn't have that type of program in mind, but we were there to raise the spirits of the wounded service men, and *they* called the shots. But we did do light classical things too. I know I sang "The Italian Street Song," from "Naughty Marietta," at least once, probably more.

So far, so good. But there were a lot of fellows who couldn't get to the recreation rooms, so we began what soon became the norm for these visits: a piano was pushed from ward to ward, and I strolled through the room, singing and visiting with the bed-ridden men. Ambulatory patients often followed us, standing in the doorway. I didn't need a microphone, so I could move freely. Now and then, to give me a rest, Alice played some George Gershwin solos. They *sounded* like pop music.

We went to the US Naval Hospital at Great Lakes many times, and to others:

Gardiner General, the Marine Hospital, McIntyre Dispensary. I believe many of the hospitals we visited were hotels turned into hospitals for the duration. I'm not sure of that. After each visit, the Red Cross sent a follow-up letter, letters I treasure.

In October, 1945, I went to New York, got into a Broadway show, as one of three singers in Michael Todd's production of Moliere's "The Would-Be Gentleman," starring Bobby Clark. Clark was one-half of the old vaudeville team, Clark and McCullough. Bobby's "shtick" was painted-on glasses, but he left them off for Moliere. One of the leads was Gene Barry, later "Bat Masterson" of TV fame. I was understudy to old-time movie star June Knight, a shapely blonde. I was neither shapely nor blonde, and was terrified for fear she'd be sick. Luck was with me. She stayed healthy.

I continued to entertain in hospitals through the American Theater Wing War Services. This time I had to audi-

## DEAR DIARY

tion, just as one would for a regular show. For each trip, I would be assigned a pianist, whom I would meet on the way to the hospital. No rehearsals! Those pianists were remarkable, they could play anything, even if I didn't have the music! Although the war was over, hospitals were still full of wounded service men. One of our trips, probably to Fort Dix, NJ, John Kieran, newspaper columnist, well-known for being a panelist on "Information, Please," was in the party. He was lots of fun.

By now, I was singing only the pop songs of the day and old standards: "I'll Be Seeing You," "I'll Walk Alone," "The White Cliffs of Dover," "Always," "Easter Parade," "Three Little Sisters," ("AND TELL IT... TO THE MARINES!" remember? How they loved *that* one!) songs from "Oklahoma," and other Broadway shows, "I'll Get By," "Long Ago and Far Away," "Oh, What is Seemed to Be," "I'll Be Home for Christmas," lots of Irving Berlin, Noel Coward, Jerome Kern, Rodgers and Hart and Hammerstein, and so many more. Now I use these songs (and their precious sheet music) when I sing for nursing homes and retirement groups. I hate to think what would have happened if I'd had to sing *today's* pop songs!

To back up a bit, before I went to New York, I went to visit my father in Washington, D.C. (My parents were divorced.) On June 18, 1945, General Eisenhower, having returned from Europe to a ticker-tape parade in New York, came to Washington to address the Congress. My father was Earl Godwin, nationally known news commentator, and known then as "Dean of White House Correspondents." We had passes to get into the Capital, and were among those lining the corridor to catch a glimpse of the great man as he walked

through. A man my father knew was walking in "Ike's" group, and he pulled my dad into the procession. I hung on to my father's hand, and when he was introduced to the General, he said, "I'd like you to meet my daughter." "I'm glad to meet you," said "Ike" and *shook my hand*. My hand felt enchanted for days after. Two days later, when I boarded the train for Chicago, I was still in a daze. A man on the train spoke to me, saying, "You look as though something wonderful has happened to you." "I shook hands with Eisenhower," I told him. He said he understood perfectly. We all worshiped "Ike."

Having a father in broadcasting was exciting for me. Originally a reporter and columnist, he began news broadcasting locally in Washington for a dairy company in the late '30's. Then Henry Ford decided to have a nightly 15-minute news broadcast on the NBC Blue Network. The Ford slogan then was "Watch The Fords Go Buy," and my dad's program was "Watch The World Go By with Earl Godwin.") At that time, I was in Appleton, WI, at the Lawrence College Conservatory. The Appleton Post-Crescent printed a picture of me, with a radio and clock set at 7 p.m. The headline was "Coed Hears Father Nightly." (Do we still call them "coeds"?)

Getting my picture in the paper was not the only exciting thing for me. Earl seemed to know everyone in Washington and everyone knew him. He'd take me through the Senate and House office buildings and drop in on the bigwigs and introduce me. I even had a few moments with President Roosevelt in his private office. I was a very nervous high school girl, but FDR put me at ease right away with his famous charm and few funny stories.

Kay Kyser was one of my great favorites in 1939. He did his show from the Mayflower Hotel in Washington that year, while I was visiting my dad. We



EARL GODWIN

sashayed down the aisle in our formal clothes to the reserved seats in the front row. My diary says, "Kay looked right at me once." Thrill!

My father got me into Walter Winchell's column while I was in that Broadway show. Winchell spied us in the Cub Room of the Stork Club. Next day his column read: "Earl Godwin, doing the Stork with his lovely daughter. She's in 'Would-Be Gentleman.'" My co-workers were impressed. None of *them* had made Winchell!

Earl began to appear on the early "Today" show as their White House correspondent. Later he had a TV show of his own, called, "Meet the Veep," where he and Vice-President Alben Barkley, his good friend, discussed issues of the day.

After my show closed in 1946, I went to work for the Blue Network myself, only now it had become the new American Broadcasting Company. I

remember wishing my job could be at NBC, as ABC, like the Blue Network before it, seemed, in those days, like a step-child in the radio industry, not the giant it is today. It didn't get the biggest stars, or the first-rate shows. Where NBC had Toscanini and the NBC Symphony, ABC had Paul Lavalle and the Cities Service Orchestra. My job was in the Music Library, naturally.

Every day we had to deliver a stack of sheet music to an empty studio with an organ in it, for "standby." An organist named Arlo had to be ready each day in case of emergency to fill air time with organ music. Each week, too, we sent two sets of orchestrations to Washington by train for local programs. Seems primitive, doesn't it?

What I liked best about working for ABC was that we shared studios with NBC in the RCA building, and I could go to many of the great shows they were producing, like Kay Kyser's Kollege of Musical Knowledge, the Telephone Hour, Voice of Firestone, and NBC Symphony broadcasts. Fred Waring was on every morning for a half hour and needed a big audience, so I could often go to that. Some of the evening shows were broadcast twice, once for the east coast and three hours later for the west. The Telephone Hour was one, and if I couldn't get into the first one, I could get into the 11:00 one. What a thrill it was when I got a front seat to a broadcast starring glamorous, sexy Ezio Pinza! (I once had a black kitten named Ike Pinza, for my two idols.)

I still keep a diary, though not in such great detail. I now write in a five-year diary, with room only for a few lines a day, and I love to read back to the earlier days. Looking through the first one, I found 1936 to be a year when *everyone* played Monopoly (I played several times a week, after school), went to the movies and *listened to the radio!* ■

## SCENES FROM JACK BENNY'S 39th BIRTHDAY PARTY!

A GOOD TIME was had by all who attended the Centennial Birthday Party held at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in honor of the 61st anniversary of Jack Benny's 39th Birthday! The Those Were The Days Radio Players offered a tribute to Jack Benny with the performance of Ken Alexander's original radio script based on the Benny program and characters.



MEMORIES OF JACK BENNY are shared by Chuck Schaden, Bobby Blumofe (Jack's grandson) and Joan Benny (Jack's daughter).



JOHN SEBERT, left, winner of the Jack Benny Sound-alike Contest, is shown in a scene with Ed Gilliland, who took the role of Frank Nelson.



TECHNICIANS Rick Garofalo, Mike Wierama and Jim Zaremski recorded the event and provided audio effects.



OFFICIAL CAST PHOTO: THOSE WERE THE DAYS RADIO PLAYERS

Benny Birthday Photos by Margaret Warren



WEATHERMAN HARRY VOLKMAN, who appeared as the Dennis Day character gives an autograph to SOUND MAN Len Kunka.

<b>JUNE</b>			<b>Old Time Radio Classics -- WBBM-AM 78 SEVEN NIGHTS A WEEK MIDNIGHT to 1:00 A.M.</b>			
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
<p><small>PLEASE NOTE: Due to WBBM's commitment to news, <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> may be preempted occasionally for late-breaking news of local or national importance. In this event, vintage shows scheduled for <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> will be rescheduled to a later date. All of the programs we present on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are syndicated rebroadcasts. We are not able to obtain advance information about storylines of those shows so that we might include more details in our <i>Radio Guide</i>. However, this easy-to-read calendar lists the programs in the order we will broadcast them. Programs on <i>Old Time Radio Classics</i> are complete, but original commercials and network identification have been deleted. This schedule is subject to change without notice.</small></p>			<b>1</b> Roy Rogers Adventures in Research	<b>2</b> Rogue's Gallery The Bickersons	<b>3</b> Mr. District Attorney Lum and Abner	<b>4</b> The Clock Superman
<b>5</b> Fibber McGee & Molly Horatio Hornblower	<b>6</b> Lone Ranger Sgt. Preston	<b>7</b> Green Hornet Burns & Allen	<b>8</b> Sgt. Preston The Bickersons	<b>9</b> Jack Benny Hidden Truth	<b>10</b> Directors Playhouse Ma Perkins	<b>11</b> Six Shooter Superman
<b>12</b> Cisco Kid Third Man	<b>13</b> Scarlet Queen Gold Coast Show	<b>14</b> X Minus One Bob Elson	<b>15</b> Six Shooter Gold Coast Show	<b>16</b> Box Thirteen Bob Elson	<b>17</b> Black Museum Gold Coast Show	<b>18</b> Life of Riley Superman
<b>19</b> Jack Benny Famous Jury Trials	<b>20</b> Archie Andrews Lum and Abner	<b>21</b> Gangbusters-Part 1 Third Man	<b>22</b> Gangbusters-Part 2 Jack Benny	<b>23</b> Gangbusters-Part 3 Burns & Allen	<b>24</b> Dragnet Horatio Hornblower	<b>25</b> Green Hornet Superman
<b>26</b> The Falcon Burns & Allen	<b>27</b> Phillip Marlowe Magic Detective	<b>28</b> Horatio Hornblower The Clock	<b>29</b> Lone Ranger Bob and Ray	<b>30</b> The Shadow Ma Perkins	<b>July 1</b> Cavalcade of America Guest Star	<b>July 2</b> Great Gildersleeve Superman

<b>JULY</b>			<b>Old Time Radio Classics -- WBBM-AM 78 SEVEN NIGHTS A WEEK MIDNIGHT to 1:00 A.M.</b>			
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
<b>3</b> Burns & Allen Cisco Kid	<b>4</b> Lone Ranger Sgt. Preston	<b>5</b> Luke Slaughter Lum and Abner	<b>6</b> Fibber McGee & Molly Mr. District Attorney	<b>7</b> Archie Andrews Dr. Susan	<b>8</b> Suspense Mr. District Attorney	<b>9</b> Boston Blackie Superman
<b>10</b> Jack Benny 1 of 3 Third Man	<b>11</b> Crime Photographer I Love A Mystery #1	<b>12</b> Fred Allen I Love A Mystery #2	<b>13</b> Weird Circle I Love A Mystery #3	<b>14</b> Screen Guild Theatre I Love A Mystery #4	<b>15</b> Crime Club I Love A Mystery #5	<b>16</b> Lone Ranger Superman
<b>17</b> Jack Benny 2 of 3 Third Man	<b>18</b> Lone Ranger I Love A Mystery #6	<b>19</b> Fibber McGee & Molly I Love A Mystery #7	<b>20</b> Murder At Midnight I Love A Mystery #8	<b>21</b> Sam Spade I Love A Mystery #9	<b>22</b> Phillip Marlowe I Love A Mystery #10	<b>23</b> Murder By Experts Superman
<b>24</b> Jack Benny 3 of 3 Burns & Allen	<b>25</b> Murder By Experts I Love A Mystery #11	<b>26</b> Life of Riley I Love A Mystery #12	<b>27</b> Mysterious Traveler I Love A Mystery #13	<b>28</b> Great Gildersleeve I Love A Mystery #14	<b>29</b> Escape I Love A Mystery #15 (Conclusion)	<b>30</b> Duffy's Tavern Superman
<b>31</b> I Was A Communist Bob and Ray	<b>Aug. 1</b> Dimension X Adventures in Research	<b>Aug. 2</b> Suspense This is Nora Drake	<b>Aug. 3</b> This is Your FBI Mr. District Attorney	<b>Aug. 4</b> Lone Ranger Backstage Wife	<b>Aug. 5</b> Crime Photographer Walter Winchell	<b>Aug. 6</b> Mysterious Traveler Superman



# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1-5 P.M.

## JUNE

*Radio and World War II*

# D-DAY

## The Sixth of June, 1944

### SATURDAY, JUNE 4th

★ **FIRESIDE CHAT** (6-5-44) President Franklin D. Roosevelt reports to the nation on the capture of Rome. "Yesterday, on June 4, 1944, Rome fell to American and Allied troops. The first of the Axis capitals is now in our hands. One up and two go to!" ALL NETWORKS. (14:10)

★ **D-DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 2 am EWT. First unofficial reports of the invasion, without Allied confirmation. NBC, CBS. (13:45)

★ **D-DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 3 am EWT. Richard Harkness, Morgan Beatty, Robert St. John with more coverage of the invasion, but there's still no Allied confirmation. NBC. (12:35)

★ **D-DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 3:32 am EWT. First Allied news that the invasion has begun. Edward R. Murrow reads General Eisenhower's Order of the Day to the troops of the invasion forces. H. V. Kaltenborn reports: "The final chapter in the history of the Second World War is being written." News correspondent Herbert M. Clark reports from London to describe the invasion fleet. Ike is heard from SHAEF headquarters. NBC. (23:40)

★ **D-DAYS NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 4:15 am EWT. Correspondent Wright Bryan, first man to return to London from the invasion, offers an eyewitness description of the first parachute drop of the invasion. NBC. (16:30)

★ **D-DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 6 am EWT. Bob Trout brings listeners up to date on invasion news. Major George Fielding Elliott describes the tone of the invasion and mood of the troops. Trout tells of New York's reaction to invasion news: churches open for special D-Day services; war plants have prayer services. "At last the liberation of the continent of Europe has started." Charles Shaw, in London, has a dramatic account of the events surrounding the invasion. CBS. (23:40)

★ **D-DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 9 am EWT. Correspondent Ed Haaker, "just back from a flight over part of the battle area with the Ninth Air Forces" tells of the

treatment of news correspondents just prior to the invasion. NBC. (7:15)

**OUR SPECIAL GUEST** will be former NBC correspondent **ED HAAKER** who recalls a momentous day in the history of World War II.

★ **VALIANT LADY** (6-6-44) 10 am EWT. Excerpt from one of the few regularly scheduled programs to be broadcast on this day. Announcer Dwight Weist urges listeners to buy Bonds. Cheerios, CBS. (8:10)

★ **LIGHT OF THE WORLD** (6-6-44) 10:15 am EWT. Usually the "day to day story of the Bible" told in soap opera terms, this invasion day episode puts aside the regular continuing story to present stories of "man's faith in God." General Mills, CBS. (13:10)

★ **AUNT JENNY'S REAL LIFE STORIES** (6-6-44) 11:45 am EWT. Announcer Dan Seymour says, "The long-awaited D-Day is here." Aunt Jenny, just returned from church, offers a prayer for the safety and success of our men and boys in the invasion. Her regular story continues, but at the close of the broadcast Aunt Jenny has a World War II message for wives and mothers. Spry, CBS. (13:00)

★ **KING GEORGE VI** (6-6-44) 3 pm EWT. The King of England in a special broadcast to "his people at home and overseas" and throughout the United States of America. He asks for prayers for peace and victory. CBS. (8:30)

### SATURDAY, JUNE 11th

★ **D DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 4:30 pm ETW. Don Hollenbeck with news bulletins. Morgan Beatty reports on President Roosevelt's news conference at the White House. Don Goddard tells of FDR's Invasion Prayer. NBC. (30:00)

★ **PASSING PARADE** (6-6-44) 7:15 pm EWT. Storyteller John Nesbitt looks 100 years into the future.

to June 6, 2044: a school teacher in the 21st Century tells his students about the invasion of Europe during World War II. CBS. (14:00)

★ **D-DAY SPECIAL FEATURE** (6-6-44) 7:30 pm EWT. Actor Ronald Colman reads "A Poem and Prayer for an Invading Army," written especially for D-Day by Edna St. Vincent Millay. NBC. (14:35)

★ **GINNY SIMMS SHOW** (6-6-44) 8 pm EWT. Ginny sets aside her regular program of popular music for a special D-Day broadcast, but she does sing "The Victory Polka." A U.S. soldier, wounded in action, sends a message to his wife, a nurse also serving in the service of her country; Navy Commander Dr. Wassell describes how wounded are treated; Navy Chaplain Walter Peck, who was at Pearl Harbor, offers a message of hope and faith. NBC. (29:20)

★ **BURNS AND ALLEN SHOW** (6-6-44) 9 pm EWT. Announcer Bill Goodwin says, "We realize the tenseness of the situation and this program will be interrupted for any important invasion flashes." But the scheduled broadcast proceeds as planned. George is down in the dumps until he gets a telegram from Kansas City. Cast includes Mel Blanc, Frank Nelson, Elvia Allman. Swan Soap, CBS. (29:30) **NOTE: *The Burns and Allen Show* is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Program category.**

★ **D-DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 9 pm EWT. Ben Grauer offers a recap of the nation's reaction to the D-Day invasion, switching to NBC affiliate stations across the country. NBC. (29:15)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (6-6-44) 9:30 pm EWT. Jim and Marion Jordan with the King's Men and Billy Mills and the orchestra in a special D-Day broadcast. Fibber and Molly and their sponsor "are mighty proud to be associated with the radio industry which at this moment is fulfilling its promise of instant communications in time of world crisis." Instead of their regular comedy format, the McGees host a program of "songs of the services dedicated to our fighting forces on all fronts." NBC. (29:55)

### SATURDAY, JUNE 18

★ **PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT** (6-6-44) 10 pm EWT. President Franklin D. Roosevelt addresses the nation on the evening of the D-Day invasion and asks the nation to join him in prayer. His address is followed by a special presentation from Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians who offer "Onward Christian Soldiers" and "Battle Hymn of the Republic." NBC. (14:55)

★ **BOB HOPE SHOW** (6-6-44) 10:15 pm EWT. "Nobody feels like being funny tonight," says Bob Hope in this special abbreviated broadcast from the Van Nuys Aerodrome in California. "God bless those kids across the English Channel." Frances sings "Ave Maria" and Stan Kenton and the orchestra present a medley of service tunes. This is Hope's last show of the 1943-44 season. NBC. (14:20)

★ **FRED WARING'S PENNSYLVANIANS** (6-6-44) 10:30 pm EWT. Another special Invasion Day program of inspirational and patriotic music to "help ease the tension we are all feeling." Selections include "We're Going In, We're Coming Back," "The Navy Hymn" and "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean." NBC. (20:10)

★ **RED SKELTON SHOW** (6-6-44) 10:50 pm EWT. Red's last radio broadcast before entering military service tomorrow is a much-abbreviated show, with Harriet Hilliard, Ozzie Nelson and the orchestra, and announcer Marvin Miller. Red, as Junior the Mean Little Kid, in a touching D-Day sketch. Ozzie and Harriet sing "What Do We Do in the Infantry?" NBC. (9:50)

★ **D-DAY NEWS SPECIAL** (6-6-44) 11:30 pm EWT. NBC News attempts to pick up a short wave broadcast from London, a wire recording of correspondent George Hicks now famous account of the D-Day landing on the beach. There are many technical difficulties, and while waiting for the report, NBC switches to Chicago for dance music by Roy Shields and the orchestra. Finally, we hear George Hicks' dramatic description of the D-Day landing and invasion on a French beachhead. NBC. (29:55)

★ **INVASION NEWS SPECIAL** (6-7-44) 11:45 am EWT. Daytime drama "David Harum" begins, but is interrupted after only a few seconds for a short wave broadcast from London. Tom Traynor, war correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, has an eyewitness account of the beachhead at France. NBC. (14:30)

★ **KATE SMITH SPEAKS** (6-7-44) 12 Noon EWT. "Invasion Day has come and gone," Kate says to her listeners and tells of the reaction of the people in the United States. Ted Collins has latest news reports. Kate recites "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Sanka Coffee, CBS. (14:15)

★ **LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL** (6-7-44) 1 pm EWT. Papa David has an invasion prayer and comments. Then to the regular, continuing story featuring Ralph Locke as Papa David and Alice Reinhart as ChiChi. Ivory Soap, CBS. (14:00)

★ **CRISCO'S RADIO NEWSPAPER** (6-7-44) 1:30 pm EWT. Bernadine Flynn and Ed Roberts from Chicago; Alan Jackson reports on the invasion from CBS World News in New York; Richard C. Hotelet in London. Bernadine Flynn talks about reaction on the home front in Chicago. Crisco, CBS. (13:30)

★ **GUIDING LIGHT** (6-7-44) 2 pm EWT. In an Invasion Day sermon, Dr. Gaylord tells his neighbors what D-Day means to the town of Five Points. War bond messages in place of regular commercials. General Mills, NBC. (15:00)

★ **INVASION NEWS SPECIAL** (6-7-44) 5:30 pm EWT. W. W. Chaplain reports from London. BBC reporter Robin Duss describes the landing, indicates that Allied casualties will be heavy. SHAEF issues D-Day Communique #4: "Allied troops have cleared all the beaches of enemy." NBC. (14:35)

# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

## WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1-5 P.M.

# JUNE — JULY

**PLEASE NOTE:** The numerals following each program listing for Those Were The Days represents timing information for each particular show. (9:45; 11:20; 8:50) means that we will broadcast the show in three segments: 9 minutes and 45 seconds; 11 minutes and 20 seconds; 8 minutes and 50 seconds. If you add the times of these segments together, you'll have the total length of the show (29:55 for our example). This is of help to those who are taping the broadcasts for their own collection. **ALSO NOTE:** A ★ before a listing indicates the vintage broadcast is of special interest during the 50th anniversary of World War II.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 25th

**TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES** (10-18-47) Ralph Edwards stars in radio's top audience participation show. "If you don't tell the truth, you'll have to pay the consequences." Contestants from the studio audience go thru their paces. Miss Hush contest for the March of Dimes. Harlow Wilcox announces. Duz, NBC. (28:25) **NOTE: Ralph Edwards is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Pioneer category.**

★ **FIRESIDE CHAT** (6-12-44) President Franklin D. Roosevelt launches the Fifth War Loan Drive, just a week after the D-Day invasion. "... we must continue to forge the weapons of victory. Whatever else any of us may be doing, the purchase of war bonds and stamps is something all of us can and should do to help win the war." ALL NETWORKS. (12:10)

**BOB AND RAY** (8-21-50) Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding with their particular brand of comedy and satire. Offering "The Loves of Linda Lovely," a spoof of soap commercials, and a discussion on the origin of the Hamburger. Participating sponsors include Pepsi Cola and Dial Soap. WHDH, Boston. (29:19) **NOTE: The Bob and Ray Show is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Program category.**

★ **WORDS AT WAR** (6-13-44) Special abbreviated edition of the program, part of NBC's 24-hour drive for war bonds. A dramatization of stories from Ernie Pyle's book, "Here's Your War." Sustaining, NBC. (11:45)

★ **JACK BENNY PROGRAM** (6-4-44) Jack opens this (pre-D-Day) broadcast with a serious message about gas rationing and the Black Market. It's the last show of the season for Jack, Mary Livingstone, Phil Harris, Don Wilson and Eddie "Rochester" Anderson. There's lots of talk about the end of the 1943-44 season and what the gang will be doing during the summer. Mel Blanc appears as insurance salesman Herman Peabody. Last program in the Grape Nuts series, NBC. (28:00)

**OUR MISS BROOKS** (1-8-50) Eve Arden stars as English teacher Connie Brooks at Madison High school, with Gale Gordon as Principal Osgood Conklin, Jeff Chandler as biology teacher Phillip Boynton, Richard Crenna as student Walter Denton. Another merry mix-up as Walter Denton writes an editorial about the Board of Education.

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Colgate, Drene, Palmolive, CBS. (29:20) **NOTE: The late Eve Arden is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Pioneer category.**

### SATURDAY, JULY 2nd

**FLYWHEEL, SHYSTER AND FLYWHEEL** (1992) Program number nine in the series of re-enactments of the 1932 Marx Brothers radio show. Cast features Michael Roberts as Groucho Marx as Waldorf T. Flywheel and Frank Lazarus as Chico Marx as Emmanuel Ravelli, with Loreli King as Miss Dimple. David Firman and the orchestra. BBC. (26:48)

★ **WORDS AT WAR** (7-4-44) "War Criminals and Punishment" starring Ned Weaver with host Carl Van Doren. The story asks, "What are we to do with Adolph Hitler?" Johnson's Wax, NBC. (28:46)

**YOUR HIT PARADE** (7-10-48) Frank Sinatra stars with Beryl Davis, Ken Lane and the Hit Paraders, Axel Stordahl and the orchestra, announcer Hy Averback. Presenting the top tunes of the week "as determined by Your Hit Parade survey, which checks the best-sellers in sheet music and phonograph records, the songs most heard on the air and most played in the automatic coin machines — an accurate, authentic tabulation of America's taste in popular music." Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC. (27:10) **NOTE: Your Hit Parade is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Program category.**

★ **WE WILL NEVER DIE** (7-4-44) A special broadcast from the Hollywood Bowl. "the scene of one of the nation's most spectacular pageants. This mammoth memorial is dedicated to the two million civilian Jewish dead of Europe." Written by Ben Hecht, the pageant and broadcast are a "living testimonial of the suffering of the Jews and their hopes and achievements." Musical score by Kurt Weill, symphony orchestra under the direction of Franz Waxman. The huge cast includes one thousand volunteer actors and actresses, led by Edward G. Robinson, Edward Arnold, Joan Leslie, John Garfield, Akim Tamiroff, Sam Levine, Paul Henreid, J. Edward Bromberg. A dramatic, moving presentation. KFWB, Hollywood. (29:35; 29:30; 21:00; 15:55)

### SATURDAY, JULY 9th

**RED SKELETON SHOW** (5-13-49) Red finds a lost dog and tries to find the owner. Finally, he tries to give the dog to Junior, the Mean Little Kid. Cast includes Rod O'Connor, Verna Felton, Lurene Tuttle, Pat McGeehan, the Four Knights, David Rose and the orchestra. Tide, NBC. (29:24) **NOTE: Red Skeleton is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Pioneer category.**

**WE TAKE YOU BACK** (3-13-58) On the 20th Anniversary of the CBS World News Roundup, the beginning of regular news broadcasts on CBS, newsmen Edward R. Murrow, Robert Trout, Dallas Townsend, William L. Schrier, H. V. Kaltenborn and John Daly reminisce about the "new form of journalism" which began in 1938. Sustaining, CBS. (29:50) **NOTE: CBS World News Roundup is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Program category.**

**FORD THEATRE** (5-16-48) "Counsellor At Law" starring Les Tremayne in "a thrilling story of a great criminal lawyer... the private and public life of a poor East Side boy who has reached the pinnacle of the legal profession." Host Howard Lindsay introduces the story, based on the book by Elmer Rice, adapted for radio by John Houseman. Les Tremayne was called in one hour before the broadcast to replace the actor originally scheduled for the starring role. Ford Motor Co., NBC. (26:00; 16:18; 18:20) **NOTE: Les Tremayne is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Pioneer category.**

**WE WANT A TOUCHDOWN** (9-28-39) Red Barber. "famous sports commentator," moderates a quiz rivalry with contestants from Colgate and New York Universities. It's "Radio football with all the color and thrills of a real game!" Sustaining, MBS. (29:10) **NOTE: The late Red Barber is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Pioneer category.**

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-1-51) Book 82, Chapter 1. This is the first of 22 fifteen-minute chapters from Book 82 by Carlton E. Morse. This sequence of programs concern Clifford Barbour's new job and his new girlfriend. Miles Laboratories, NBC. (15:00) **NOTE: One Man's Family is a 1994 Nominee to the Radio Hall of Fame in the Program category.**

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-3-51) Book 82, Chapter 3. (Chapter 2 is missing and not available.) Miles Labs, NBC. (15:00)

### SATURDAY, JULY 16th RADIO AND WORLD WAR II FDR'S FOURTH TERM NOMINATION

★ **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION** (7-20-44) Ben Grauer reports on the second day of the historic convention from the Chicago Stadium. "The convention and the nation has known for days that Franklin D. Roosevelt will be returned as their choice for President of the United States... but there's no clear majority who the choice for vice president is." Reports by reporters Robert St. John, H. V. Kaltenborn, Richard Harkness, Morgan Beatty, Don Fisher. News of the

assassination attempt on Acolph Hitler and his associates. NBC. (29:20)

★ **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION** (7-20-44) Opening speech by Sen. Sam Jackson of Indiana who talks about FDR's good health, vigor and abilities; the dangers of making a change now; negative remarks about Thomas E. Dewey, Republican candidate for president; FDR's depression successes; and the invasion of Normandy, 45 days ago. NBC. (33:30)

★ **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION** (7-20-44) Coverage continues from the Chicago Stadium. Bryson Rasch gives a "color" report from the scene; Martin Agronski has an exclusive "scoop" interview with Vice President Henry A. Wallace, the man who wants to be re-nominated). There are problems with the seating of the Texas delegation; H. V. Kaltenborn discusses the Hitler assassination attempt and Democratic platform strategy. (5:30; 7:00; 11:00)

★ **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION** (7-20-44) Coverage of the official balloting for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States. The historic vote that gives Franklin D. Roosevelt his unprecedented fourth term nomination. Robert St. John with news updates. NBC. (16:50)

★ **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION** (7-20-44) Ben Grauer and Robert St. John with coverage of the opening of the evening session of the convention. Danny O'Neill sings the National Anthem. Speaker is Congresswoman-elect Helen Gahagan Douglas, wife of actor Melvyn Douglas, now serving in combat. NBC. (11:55)

★ **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION** (7-20-44) NBC convention coverage continues from the Chicago Stadium for a speech by international correspondent Quentin Reynolds who tells the delegates (and the radio audience) that the boys in the service know what they're fighting for. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, speaking from a secret undisclosed location, makes his acceptance speech for the nomination to a fourth term as the Democratic candidate for president. NBC. (30:00)

★ **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION** (7-20-44) Coverage of a spontaneous demonstration in behalf of Henry A. Wallace as candidate for a second term as FDR's vice president. The second day of the convention is adjourned. H. V. Kaltenborn comments. NBC. (15:00)

— PLUS —

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-4-51) Book 82, Chapter 4, Miles Labs, NBC. (14:58)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-5-51) Book 82, Chapter 5, Miles Labs, NBC. (14:52)

**JULY SCHEDULE  
CONTINUES  
ON NEXT PAGE**

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# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WNIB-WNIZ • FM 97 • SATURDAY 1-5 P.M.

## JULY

SATURDAY, JULY 23rd  
WE REMEMBER DINAH SHORE

**DINAH SHORE'S OPEN HOUSE** (1-24-46) Dinah welcomes guest Frank Sinatra for a sketch about what it will be like to be a married couple 50 years later, in 1996! Cast features announcer Harry Von Zell and actor Frank Nelson. Dinah sings "That Old Black Magic" and "How Deep is the Ocean." Frank sings "Day by Day" and they team up for "Tea for Two." AFRS rebroadcast. (30:00)

**CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LOWER BASIN STREET** (7-14-40) Milton Cross with a program of musical satire, blues and jazz, based around the "three B's" — barrelhouse, boogie-woogie and the blues. Featured performers include "diva" Dinah Shore, a singer "who lights fire by rubbing two notes together," Paul Lavalle and the orchestra, and guest star Jelly Roll Morton. Sustaining. NBC. (30:00)

**SUSPENSE** (5-5-52) "Frankie and Johnny" starring Dinah Shore as Frankie with Lamont Johnson as Johnny in the re-creation in song and story of an American legend. Produced and directed by Elliott Lewis. AutoLite, CBS. (29:30)

★ **TIME TO SMILE** (5-27-42) Eddie Cantor stars with regulars Harry Von Zell, Bert Gordon and Dinah Shore. Guest Gracie Allen joins in the fun in this remote broadcast before and audience of 1,500 Marines at Camp

Elliott, San Diego, California. Ipana, Sal Hepatica, NBC. (29:15)

**DINAH SHORE SHOW** (10-15-54) Announcer Art Baker introduces Dinah, the Skylarks and Frank deVol and the orchestra. Dinah sings "This Ol' House," "I've Got a Crush on You" and "High and the Mighty." Chevrolet, NBC. (14:30)

**OUR SPECIAL GUEST** is *Nostalgia Digest* columnist and film historian **BOB KOLOSOSKI** who will be on hand to talk about the movie career of Dinah Shore.

— PLUS —

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-6-51) Book 82, Chapter 6, Miles Labs, NBC. (14:58)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-7-51) Book 82, Chapter 7, Miles Labs, NBC. (14:56)

SATURDAY, JULY 30th

★ **LUX RADIO THEATRE** (5-27-46) "Music For Millions" starring Jimmy Durante, Margaret O'Brien, Frances Gifford and Jose Iturbi in a radio version of the 1944 movie. A woman waits for word from her husband who is overseas during World War II. William Keighley is host. AFRS rebroadcast. (21:20; 16:20; 11:25)

★ **WORDS AT WAR** (7-11-44) "Captain Retread," based upon the book by Gerald Holland, is about an officer from the first world war, again in uniform during WW II. Craig MacDonal stars. Carl VanDoren hosts. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (28:40)

**SPEAKING OF RADIO** (7-30-44) **The Jack Benny Program.** Part 6 in the 12-part audio documentary culled from Chuck Schaden's conversations with performers, writers and others associated with Jack Benny's radio shows and laced with clips from Jack's radio broadcasts. In this segment, Jack Benny recalls the Benny-Allen feud. Jack's life story in music; Allen's tribute to Benny; Allen and Benny in vaudeville. (30:50)

★ **WORLD NEWS TODAY** (7-30-44) Douglas Edwards and CBS correspondents with first hand news from the world's political and battle fronts. "British troops at the eastern end of the Normandy line have uncorked a powerful new drive... the Americans have not been stopped in their push southward. On Europe's eastern front, the Russians are closing in on Warsaw and the city's suburbs already are under artillery fire. Hitler has ordered Warsaw's garrison to hold out at all costs." Admiral Corporation, CBS. (24:25)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-8-51) Book 82, Chapter 8, Miles Labs, NBC. (14:49)

**ONE MAN'S FAMILY** (1-11-51) Book 82, Chapter 9, Miles Labs, NBC. (14:52)

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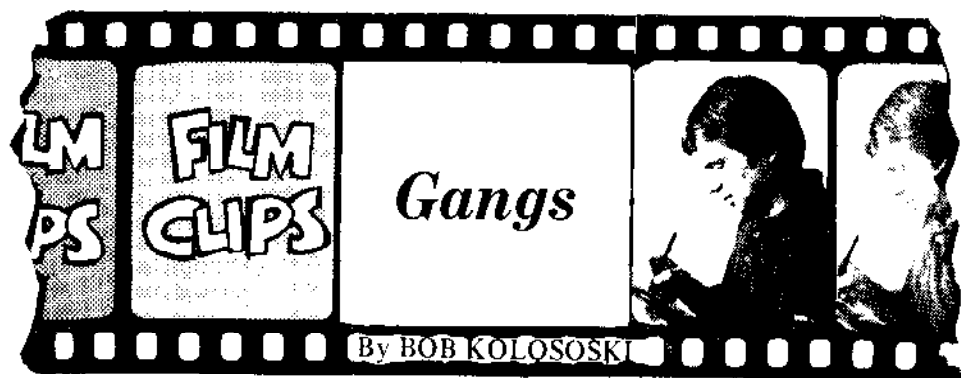
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Movies are made to make money. If a movie is made and realizes a profit then the producer is likely to make another movie. However, if the movie made loses money then the producer is likely to be pounding the pavement in search of an honest job. It takes a courageous producer to make a film that comments on the woes of society and hopes that the public will pay to see his "message to the masses."

Lately a few courageous producers have tackled current social issues and gained not only the respect of the critics but made a profit.

The problem of gangs in our cities and suburbs is a challenge to our society that must be met and resolved. That message and that problem have been addressed by other generations of Americans and American filmmakers. Gangs are not a new problem but a continuous blight of the 20th century.

Gangs and their teen-aged members have been the subjects of dozens of movies, but none more powerful and disturbing than one of the first to tackle the subject. *THE PUBLIC ENEMY*, released by Warner Brothers in 1931, shocked a nation trying to cope with a depression by overlooking social problems as teenaged hoodlums. James Cagney, as Tom Powers, painted a convincing portrait of a street punk who graduated from petty crime to murderer before his 21st birthday. Director

William Wellman was able to deglamorize the rise and fall of Tom as his ascent on the ladder of crime paralleled his descent into a private hell. Tom was never more than a young hood who loses his small circle of friends to rival gang violence. For Tom there never was any hope of a normal life because he chose violence and murder as a way of life. The film made Cagney a star, and launched him into a career of celluloid crime that kept him blasting away into the fifties.

More importantly his studio, Warners, would continue to produce films that took aim at the social ills of America in the 1930's. Cagney was put into a couple of other films that took a hard look at teen-age gangs. In *THE MAYOR OF HELL* (1933) he played the new warden of a reform school plagued by a crooked reform system. This time Frankie Darro was the wayward youth. He wanted to go straight and Cagney was there to help the kid. It wasn't great social commentary, but it was at the very least an attempt at presenting the problems of juvenile crime to the public.

In 1938 Cagney would return to the gangster film in a big way. *ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES* was really James Cagney meets *The Dead End Kids*. The kids were Hollywood's version of a New York street gang. Introduced in the 1937 film *DEAD END* the six junior gangsters were Billy Halop, Leo Gorcey, Huntz Hall, Bobby Jordan, Bernard Punsley, and Gabriel Dell.

The kids in *DEAD END* are victims of the slums and are given the choice between good and evil. Joel McCrea represents the slum kid who chose education and hard work and Humphrey Bogart the kid who chose crime as his life's work. The film definitely had a message. In the end the kids haven't really been influenced by McCrea's heroics or Bogart's violent death. They head home no wiser than they were when the day began.

But in *ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES* they met their match with Cagney. Cagney's Rocky Sullivan is a true gangster who grew up street-wise and survivor-tough. He's always one step ahead of the kids, and an easy hero for them to worship. He has the power to turn the kids into hardened criminals or shut the door on their passion for crime. He is the hero/villain who chooses his own path into eternity by faking a coward's death.

The *Dead End Kids* would never meet another Rocky, and probably should have turned in their switchblades after this film. They went on to make a few more movies at Warners and then a few at other studios before they distilled down to the *Bowery Boys*. The boys were comic shadows of the kids and any chance to take them seriously was lost when they left Warners.

William Wellman took himself and his work a little more seriously, and directed the 1933 feature *WILD BOYS OF THE ROAD*. Frankie Darro was cast as a good kid from a good home who leaves when the depression devastates his father's career. The film was another noble effort by the Warner Brothers to use film for more than glamour shots of movie stars.

The rest of the film industry in the thirties tried their best to ignore what was in the morning headlines. However, once in a while over at Metro in one of the *CRIME DOES NOT PAY* series (short subjects), teen crime would be the sub-



JAMES CAGNEY

ject. Mickey Rooney became the reigning "tough kid" at Metro in the 1936 film *THE DEVIL IS A SISSY*. Compared to the gang activity going on over at Warners, *Sissy* was just that. Then Rooney was cast in *BOYS TOWN* with Spencer Tracy, and overnight Metro was in the social commentary business. *BOYS TOWN* was the story of Father Flanagan and his belief that there was "no such thing as a bad boy." The critics called it corn, but the public loved it and Tracy was given plenty of screen time to expound the problems of boys growing up in broken homes and the slums. MGM followed it up with *MEN OF BOYS TOWN*, but it was a pale copy of the original and failed to excite any social reformers.

Before the thirties faded into the forties, war had taken over the headlines. Domestic problems gave way to the world issues that threatened life in America. Teen-aged gangs and youth violence was overshadowed by the massive death and destruction ripping Europe apart. When America entered the

## GANGS

war in 1941, movies shifted to war-related subjects, and abandoned any desire for social reform. There were global nuts to crack, and the movie industry was ready to save the world from dictators and Asian warlords. Meanwhile, juvenile gangs grew stronger in numbers in most large cities. The massive effort and energy given to win the war left the door open for gangs to expand unchallenged. The Zoot Suit riots in Los Angeles was nothing more than a massive gang fight. Hollywood focused on the positive aspects of American life, and dropped the subject of gang crime for the duration.

In 1949 Universal tried to resurrect the subject with the film *CITY ACROSS THE RIVER* based on Irving Shulman's book *The Amboy Dukes*. Tony Curtis and Richard Jaekel were well-cast as members of the Brooklyn street gang, but the public didn't want to be reminded that America was less than perfect. The film received good reviews and poor box office receipts. The subject of juvenile delinquency (as it was now labeled) was

shelved until the time was right to tackle the problem.

In 1955 two films came out that caught the public just right, and gangs on the screen were back in business. *THE BLACKBOARD JUNGLE* was a terrifying look at teen violence in public high schools. Glenn Ford gave a great performance as a teacher trying to control super-punk Vic Morrow. Rock 'n' roll was used as the theme music (first time in a motion picture) and it caused a wild sensation in the music industry. *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE* wasn't as scary as *THE BLACKBOARD JUNGLE*, but it starred James Dean and let the public know that there were gangs in the suburbs of Los Angeles.

Through the fifties juvenile crime soared and someone decided that the best way to treat social disease was to set it to music. *WEST SIDE STORY* was a hugely successful Broadway play before it hit the screen in 70 mm Technicolor Panavision. Suddenly teenage gangs were fashionable and producers scrambled to discover the new Dead End Kids of the 60's. Dennis Hopper and Sal Mineo were often cast as "troubled teens."

The breakdown of the studio system in the sixties spelled doom for many a film genre. The juvenile delinquent film was a luxury for a big studio such as MGM. For independent filmmakers it was a gamble that very few decided to take.

In the eighties the street gangs on the TV series *HILL STREET BLUES* were treated with far more realism than most movie gangs. Gangs are a wound to our society that needs the attention of everyone from parents to the president. Otherwise, that wound will never heal.

Making honest, significant movies about gangs will give insight into the human aspects of the gang problem. It won't solve the problem, but it will help. The gangs are all around us, and always have been. Unless we act now they always will be. ■

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## I Fell in Love With the Jungle Girl!

BY RICHARD S. FISHER

At precisely 3:15 p.m. on July 19, 1941 I fell madly in love with *Jungle Girl*!

It started out like all Saturdays since I had gotten my newspaper route. I had no idea what a momentous day this was to be nor that it would have an effect on my entire life.

I arrived at the newspaper office to fold and block my newspapers as usual. When I had finished I rode my bike to the Rio Theatre in Columbus, Indiana and put my bike inside the lobby with my papers. I gave the ticket girl one thin dime and used my other dime to buy a Clark bar and a Coca-Cola.

I went into the theatre and sat down to watch my usual Saturday afternoon Western before delivering my papers. A new serial was starting this Saturday called "*Jungle Girl*." The opening credits of the serial started and I soon found this serial was to be different because it starred a girl. Her name was "Nyoka." When Nyoka appeared on the screen in her *Jungle Girl* costume I FELL IN LOVE for the first time in my life. I was all of 11 years old!

When the serial was over I walked out of the Rio into an even brighter and sunnier day. As I delivered my papers I realized that for the next 14 weeks my delivery of papers would be 45 minutes later than normal as I would see the serial, the movie and then the serial again before I left on my route. My customers would never know why but I was in love and I wanted to see all of Nyoka that I could.

*Dick Fisher, of Cincinnati, Ohio, is a lifelong fan of Frances Gifford and this is the story of how he finally met his screen idol.*



FRANCES GIFFORD as NYOKA

Shortly after all 15 chapters of the serial were over, World War II broke out and Nyoka slowly but surely faded from my memory. They re-released the serial in 1947 and Nyoka was again on the screen and my memories of my first lover returned but soon faded. It wasn't till 35 years later that I happened to see a movie poster of *Jungle Girl* in a movie poster store and a flood of memories returned.

Nyoka was played by Frances Gifford (her name was actually Mary Frances Gifford). She was born on December 7, 1919 in Pasadena, California and was the daughter of an electrical engineer.

I decided to see if I could find her. I soon found that many people were also looking for her and that no one knew where she lived or even if she was living.

\* I put an ad in a movie newspaper to see if I could find anyone who knew where



## JUNGLE GIRL

she was and how she might be contacted. I received several responses but all were asking that if I heard anything would I please let them know. So after several months I gave up.

About a year after I placed the ad a gentlemen in Las Vegas called me on the telephone and told me he had heard that Frances was working as a volunteer librarian at a library in Pasadena, California. I immediately called the library and they told me she was no longer working there and they were not permitted to give me her address or phone number. I asked if I wrote her in care of the library if they would consider forwarding my letter to her. They agreed to do this!

I wrote and in a couple of weeks I received a letter back from Frances. I couldn't believe it! She would not give me her address but said I could reply to the library and they would forward the letters.

We continued to correspond for six months or so and then she gave me her actual address. I asked if I could call her and talk to her and she gave me her phone number. We spent many hours on the phone over the years. It turned out she had no copies of any of her movies so I sent her video cassettes of those I could scare up off of TV. She really appreciated that.

One promise I had to make to her was that I would not under any circumstances give out her address. Many people were still writing to me about where she was and I asked if I could forward mail to her and she said OK. For many years I acted as a mail distributor to many of her fans.

Then one of my biggest thrills occurred. I had to go to Los Angeles on business and I called her and asked if I could take her to dinner. She agreed and I spent several hours with her that day. What a thrill to actually take Nyoka to dinner. We talked about her movies and

her career and her life in general. An unforgettable day, I would never in my wildest dreams in 1941 have thought that this would someday be possible.

Frances appeared with several of the top actors of her day but was usually the girl who was trying to take someone away from the male lead. She also was featured in a Life magazine article of Nov. 15, 1937 and appeared as the Hurrell girl in Esquire magazine. Frances told me that they took thousands of pictures of her during her career and has no idea where any of them went.

Some other things she mentioned that might be of interest were that she did not want to do "Jungle Girl" but since she was under contract she had no choice. This of course is the one thing most people of my age remember her for. Time magazine of May 12, 1941 even reviewed "Jungle Girl" and gave Frances excellent reviews. She said that they had to be on the set by 6 a.m. and that there were many many long hours of shooting each day. She said that southern California can be quite cold at that hour and she nearly froze to death!

She also co-starred with Johnny Weismuller in "Tarzan Triumphs" as Zandra from Polyandra and her biggest memory of that film was that Cheeta the monkey bit her. Cheeta did not like Frances and she did not like him!

The movie that Frances thought would make her a real star was "The Arnelo Affair" made in 1947. The movie was written and directed by Arch Oboler, radio's "master of suspense," and starred George Murphy, John Hodiak, and Frances Gifford (as Murphy's perfect wife). The movie received reviews that were OK but not great. Mr. Oboler was very disappointed, according to Frances.

Frances was not only interested in acting but had a great love of classical music. She was interested in many things and even though she did not attend college she took correspondence courses in



FRANCES GIFFORD and ARCH OBOLER take a break during the filming of "The Arnelo Affair" in 1947.

Egyptian history and classical music among many other things.

Frances could never understand why people were so interested in her. She was just another movie actress and often said that movie people are just like everyone else. Try as hard as I could, I could never make her understand why movie people are so special to many.

I was fortunate enough to come across some tapes of her appearance on Lux Radio Theatre. I sent her copies of these and she was so glad to receive them. They brought back many happy memories and she told me she loved to appear on that show. All of the people who ran the show were very nice and rehearsals always went smoothly.

In *Cliffhanger* magazine, Spring 1983, there is a quote from Richard Denning about Frances which seems to sum up most actors' feelings about Frances. He said "She was a very warm, friendly, feminine and lovely person. She was a pleasure to work with, and my only regret is that I didn't get the opportunity

to know her better." I couldn't have said it better.

Over the years the letters, phone calls, Christmas and birthday cards were sent and received.

I knew she had emphysema as she had always been a heavy smoker. In the last couple of years we could only write most of the time; she was on oxygen and could not talk on the phone.

Frances was a real lady, a very warm, wonderful and very giving person even though the circumstance under which she lived for several years were not the best. She always called me her favorite fan. I will sorely miss her.

She passed away January 22, 1994 at the Brighton Convalescent Center in Pasadena, Calif. of emphysema. She was cremated and is at rest at Holy Cross Cemetery, Culver City, California. ■

*(ED. NOTE — Frances Gifford will appear on a Lux Radio Theatre version of the film "Music For Millions" on Those Were The Days, Saturday, July 30, 1994. See listing on page 28.*

# LETTERS...WE GET LETTERS

**GURNEE, IL**—Keep 'em coming! This is our first renewal and we can't wait for future issues. Although my husband and I aren't old enough to remember the original broadcasts, we enjoy your broadcasts now and your magazine. So do my parents, since we pass *Nostalgia Digest* along to them.  
—ANNE MONROE

**CHICAGO**—Just thought I'd drop you a line to let you know how much I enjoy your radio shows. However, being not quite so old as your other listeners (I'm 27), I more enjoy the later radio shows which have all but disappeared from the airwaves. My absolute favorite was the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre which I listened to faithfully until its last broadcast on December 31, 1982. A few years ago I was thrilled to discover that you were rebroadcasting the Mystery Theatre episodes. But in recent years I have not heard any of them and I assume you cancelled them for some reason. I would like to appeal to you to consider bringing back these shows. I guarantee it would be greatly appreciated. I'm an alumnus of Steinmetz High School (June, 1984) and I heard you are too. Is this true?  
—FRANCIS W. HARSEY, JR.

**(ED. NOTE)**—Rebroadcasts of the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre have been withdrawn from circulation by Himan Brown, creator of the series who claims that he has been unable to find sufficient broadcast outlets and financial support for the programs. Too bad, because we would certainly like to have them on the air again. And, yes, we're from the Steinmetz High School Class of June, 1952. By the way, this year marks the 60th anniversary of Steinmetz High. Keep bright the Silver and the Green!

**BURKBURNETT, TEXAS**—As we're approaching the stormy time of the year, unfortunately I'll be able to hear WBBM less and less and I live for winters!  
—MARY BILLOQUIST

**CHICAGO**—Many thanks for the many hours of listening pleasure you have provided my grandfather and me through *Old Time Radio Classics*. I especially enjoyed the recent series you presented entitled "The Thing That Cries in the Night" from the show *I Love A Mystery*. I tape your broadcasts and give them to my grandfather in Marietta, Georgia. My mother remembers Let's Pretend from her early school days. My occupation as a flight attendant takes me to all corners of the world. I often take the tapes of your show along with me to listen to on my Walkman when I tire of broadcasts in languages other than English. So you might say your show is heard all over the world!  
—VICKI LEE KORACH

**(ED. NOTE)**—You'll be happy to learn that we'll present the next *I Love A Mystery* story, "Bury Your Dead, Arizona," a 15 part adventure, on *Old Time Radio Classics* beginning July 11.)

**MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN**—Thank you for the Breakfast Club programs and the fine tribute to Don McNeill last year. The Breakfast Club was one of my favorite summer memories as I grew up on a poultry farm near Eugene, Oregon in the 1950s. I have enclosed my check for two more years of the *Nostalgia Digest*. I wish to say thank you to you, Ken Alexander and the others who share their love of radio to bring us all so much enjoyment.  
—PHILLIP G. GOLDBECK

**CHICAGO**—Since moving to Chicago a year ago, I have become a fan of *Those Were The Days*. Listening to it is a family event and I have even taken my eight year old daughter to some programs at the Cultural Center. Now, to my dismay, I have learned about your special broadcasts slated during June to commemorate D-Day. We will be away then and will miss them. Is there any way we can purchase tapes?  
—HALLIE BLACK

**(ED. NOTE)**—You can obtain an audio transcript of any of our *TWTD* broadcasts—including the D-Day broadcasts—for \$25 each from Hall Closet Transcripts, Box 421, Morton Grove, Illinois, 60053. You'll get the complete 4-hour broadcast on two, C-120 audio cassette tapes.)

**ZION, IL**—Belated congrats on your induction into the Radio Hall of Fame. My wife and I got down to see the "old library" a while back; need to spend more time there. I was sure happy to hear Betty Jarosch's voice (when you did that "remote" from Jarosch Bakery in Elk Grove Village). I met them in the fall of 1955 representing my June class from Steinmetz as a Governor in the Alumni Association. We sang together in the Alumni Chorus, then later in the Irving Park YMCA Chorus. It was all due to Wally Wolodkin and of course Chuck and Lu Roehl always overseeing all of us!  
—AL TEEPLE

**KIEL, WISCONSIN**—Congratulations on being inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame. I enjoy listening to your program as I drive an eighteen wheeler around the Midwest. My parents and I enjoy reading the *Nostalgia Digest*.  
—RANDALL N. RAUTMANN

**CHICAGO**—May I be one of the many thousands of people to congratulate you on being



1994 RADIO HALL OF FAME NOMINEE LES TREMAYNE (right) is shown with Chuck Schaden during a *TWTD* broadcast. Mr. Tremayne has made several visits to Chicago to meet with his many fans in the Midwest.

inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame. Like many others I spread my knowledge of classic radio to others. I must say I myself tape the shows and listen to them over and over again. Radio itself has a big advantage over TV. It makes us wonder and imagine. It is there for us to hold and it is a memory we shall never forget. Though I am 15 and many people in my age group listen to music, you have me hooked on the great radio programs. You are indeed a pioneer in carrying across to us your fans the message not to forget these great programs. I hope that one day I may be like you to keep the memories of radio alive. You are indeed a hero to me and many others who don't touch the dial when you are on.  
—LEVAR M. EVANS

**EVANSTON, IL**—We are so pleased by your induction into the Radio Hall of Fame. The "members" made the most worthy "choice" of all. All the great things that are now happening are due to your efforts to bring back all the great programs. If you hadn't made those efforts at WNMP and had not continued those efforts, your radio broadcasts, the MGM Shop, the Museum of Broadcast Communications and its events that bring pleasure to so many people would have never existed. We sure miss your 8 to 10pm Saturday and Sunday shows. You and the shows are much more interesting than what is currently on the "vast wasteland" at that time of the night. However we are still faithful listeners at Midnight (a fringe benefit of being retired).  
—LLOYD & INA IDLEMAN

**MUNSTER, INDIANA**—What is the possibility of having Les Tremayne inducted into the Radio

Hall of Fame next year in the Pioneer category? As you know he is one of the last significant figures from that last great age of radio and his health has not been all that good. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to make this induction possible.  
—RICHARD VAN ORMAN

**(ED. NOTE)**—There's a good chance that actor Les Tremayne will be inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame this year. He is a 1994 Nominee in the Pioneer category. If you are a member of the Radio Hall of Fame, you may have already received your ballot. Then all you have to do is vote for Mr. Tremayne. If you're not a member, now's the time to join. You may still have time to get a ballot for this year's voting. Call (312) 629-6014 for membership details.)

**FRANKLIN, WISCONSIN**—I am a new listener and fully expect to be a long time listener. I have a collection of approximately 300 tapes of old time radio shows. The first show I listened to on WBBM was Ronald Colman in "If I Were King." There are many people like myself who remember the old shows (barely, as I am a babe at 46), but there are also others like my 14 year old nephew who thinks these shows are really "cool."  
—MERRY K. ANDERSON

**SANDWICH, IL**—I recently joined the Antique Radio Club of Illinois. At one of the swap meets last November, someone stood up and put a plug in for the Museum of Broadcast Communications, so I put it on the list of things to do. My daughter had a day off so we took a train down to the city to tour the Museum. I picked up a copy of *Nostalgia Digest* and haven't put it

## WE GET LETTERS

down all weekend. Very well done, thank you. Please sign me up for a year's subscription.

—DENNIS L. GRAHAM

**IED. NOTE**—This year's Antique Radio Club of Illinois Radio Fest swap meet will be held on August 3-6 at the Holiday Inn in Elgin, Illinois. For more information about this major collectors' event or membership in the club, call Dr. Barry Janov in Des Plaines, Illinois at (708) 827-9100.)

**CHICAGO**—"Speaking of Radio, The Jack Benny Program" — what a fantastic documentary this is. The interviews, the clips, the editing, your voice overs WOW! There are no two ways about it, this is the best documentary of any kind I have ever heard, and I know I am not alone in this feeling.  
—JOHNNY B. PITTS

**GLEN ELLYN, IL**—Over the last 25 years, the Chicago area Bacon Grabbers Tent of the Sons of the Desert —the International Laurel and Hardy Fan Club— has had just about every kind of entertainment imaginable at its annual Anniversary Banquet, up to and including a belly dancer! But we never laughed harder or had a better time than this year when the *Those Were The Days Radio Players (South)* entertained us with their version of Easy Aces and a nostalgic walk down Allen's Alley. In attendance were everyone from children to senior citizens, and believe me, everyone enjoyed the program. I would like to thank the *TWTD Radio Players* for working so hard and so successfully at our 1994 annual anniversary banquet. The entertainment was a great success.  
—GEORGE LITTLEFIELD

**PARK RIDGE, IL**—The more we get into the old time radio recreations (we're part of the Northwest Suburban group of the *TWTD Radio Players*) the more we are enjoying ourselves. The friends we have met have added greatly to our lives. It is so difficult to determine why so much pleasure can be derived from such a hobby. The nostalgia is only a part of the reason. The programs do bring us back to a much simpler and easy going time of life. However, more enjoyment is achieved at listening to the programs in today's time frame. Listening to tapes and the radio is like having an instant replay to the past. You can repeat your listening pleasure over and over again. Fred Allen commented, "A radio program is not unlike a man. It is conceived. It is born. It lives through the experience that fate allots it. Finally the program dies and, like man, is forgotten except for a few

people who depended on it for sustenance or others whose lives had been made brighter because the program had existed." This summarizes the differences between old and new radio. It also points to the beacon which shines that all of us radio enthusiasts are drawn to. Thanks for the opportunity to participate. We are proud to do our small part in bringing old time radio to others and to give still others the thrill of experiencing old time radio broadcasting.

—WALLY & ROSEMARY CWIK

**BUFFALO, NEW YORK**—I've been listening to the old radio shows since early February, 1994. If I don't fall asleep I get it at 1 a.m. EST. One night in February I was tuning around and found WBBM. I've been listening ever since.

—SAM CAPECE

**CALUMET CITY, IL**—I am deeply disappointed that WBBM has moved your weekend shows to 12 Midnight. I will certainly listen if I can stay awake that long!

—JUDITH ROSSI

**DE KALB, IL**—After reading your new WBBM schedule, I think you should consider changing your name to Captain Midnight!

—PHIL VANDREY

**HAMMOND, INDIANA**—Feel as though I've lost a very dear friend as a result of the changed format (1 hour) and time slot (12 Midnight) for Saturdays and Sundays on WBBM! Always scheduled my schedule around those two hours on Saturdays and Sundays. I'm upset and very saddened by the change. I miss those "prime times" but remain grateful for at least the slots left. Bah, Humbug to WBBM, but kudos to you!

—MARGE SPISAK

**KITTANNING, PENNSYLVANIA**—After enjoying your old time radio show for about a year now, I felt it was time to write and tell you. I was in broadcasting myself for 24 years, working for WPIT in Pittsburgh until it was sold in January of last year. Then after losing my job, I developed some back problems. I couldn't do much at all during the summer except lie in bed. Late at night, I would listen to the radio, and I accidentally stumbled across your program. I have been a regular listener ever since. I was born in 1945, and just got to listen to the end of the great radio days. Keep up the good work keeping the glory days of radio alive. I will continue to listen. WBBM comes in good late at night, although sometimes the signal does fade out at a critical point in a story, and it is frustrating.

—JOHN H. SHANNON

**TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA**—I am 64 years old and grew up on all the old radio programs. The first show I heard when I was a kid in the 40s was The Lone Ranger. We had no TV so the

radio was our only pleasure. Even now, in 1994, I have a TV, but your station comes in each night, clear, at Midnight.

—JOHN COLLINS

**NORTHBROOK, IL**—As one of the lucky people in the audience for the Jack Benny Birthday Party, I want to thank you and the participants for a wonderful afternoon! I was really impressed by the wonderful script and the fine job done by the actors and actresses who contributed their time and talent. A special accolade to Ken Alexander for his wonderful writing and performance as the long-suffering Professor LeBlanc, and to John Sebert who was truly uncanny in his impersonation of Jack Benny. Of course you are the magnet who attracts all the interest and enthusiasm for old time radio! February would truly be a dreary month were it not for all the Jack Benny shows you broadcast.

—ANN CALLAWAY

**CHICAGO**—I want to give a LOUD praise to all the participants in the Jack Benny Birthday Gala! What fun! What laughter! What surprises!! Ken Alexander displayed incredible skills in this script. Everything you could have wished for was in it! Please pass along my gratitude to him. I was not "around yet" for the radio version of Jack Benny but having a program like yours on the air is making it alive NOW. I brought a friend with me to the birthday party and she said she well remembers sitting down to dinner at 6 p.m. on Sunday evening and listening to the program. She said she was so pleased at the young people who came to the party. So was I! It was great to see families enjoying the same presentation with no concern about what would be said or done. They KNEW it was real family entertainment. Thank you.

—BEVERLY ISRAEL

**CHICAGO**—Just want to let you know how much I enjoyed Jack Benny's 100th birthday celebration. I especially enjoyed the "radio show." Ken Alexander must be commended for writing such a wonderful script. He was able to write in the style of Jack Benny's writers, while at the same time was able to slip in some real "Chicago jokes." Very clever! I've never been witness to the performance of a radio show, and I think I got a real good idea of how fun it must have been to work on such a show. I wonder if Joan Benny felt just a bit strange standing next to a person who sounded so much like her dad.

—PATRICIA A. MURRAY

**WESTMONT, IL**—A very interesting article on the Barn Dance group in the April-May issue. I was in the audience one time when they began in the Hotel Sherman, again in the Prairie Farmer Studios, plus several times at the Eighth Street Theatre. Mr. Wylie's article was quite well written, except for the name of the area in Kentucky, called Renfro Valley. Somebody made an E out of the F in the copy. I was really

surprised to read that Johnny Frigo was a part of the Barn Dance group in its later years. We had forgotten so many of those names. Thanks for the memories.

—FRANK & ROSE MICHELS

**CHICAGO**—May I share a few comments about the *Nostalgia Digest*. I find them enjoyable, interesting, informative and wonderfully nostalgic. From your letters section, I often wonder about seldom-mentioned, indeed forgotten radio programs. I remember two such programs. One involved a story-teller by the name of Malcolm Clair. If memory serves me, he told stories to children on weekday afternoon radio. He also published a book of those stories. I do wish I had kept that book. Another program that I remember was called, I think, Lightning Jim Whipple. He had a Swedish side-kick who used to say in the program introduction, "Jumping Jimmy, Thunder and lightning." Thunder referred to Whipple's horse. I believe Whipple was a western marshal in the series. Many thanks not only for the *Digest*, but for all you do to entertain the nostalgic buff in all of your listeners.

—DON R. MARTIN

**PEORIA, ARIZONA**—I am enclosing my renewal form for another year of the *Nostalgia Digest*. We moved to Arizona a year and a half ago and one of the things I miss most about leaving Illinois was listening to your enjoyable old time radio broadcasts. Every Saturday, my ears were glued to my radio as I relived the years of my childhood. You brought many hours of enjoyment through the twenty plus years that I listened to your broadcasts. I only wish that your signal could find its way to Arizona, but I know that is impossible. However, my daughter bought some tapes from the Metro Golden Memories Shop and gave them to me this past Christmas. What a treat! Keep on bringing hours of enjoyment to all those lucky residents of the Chicagoland area.

—RICHARD E. BENZ

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Museum of Broadcast Communications

## museum pieces

Reported by Margaret Warren

A SUMMER of down-home country music is about to take center stage at the Museum. From early July to the end of September, there will be five special programs under the banner: "Country Music: On the Air." Panels are scheduled on the Thursdays of July 7, July 28, August 18, September 8 and September 29. All will be early evening sessions.

For starters, you'll no doubt leave the opening program on July 7 humming "Tennessee Waltz" because **Pee Wee King**, its composer and longtime country singer, will be part of that panel along with **John Aylesworth** who created "Hee Haw." And also on the July 7 panel — TNN superstar **Ralph Emery**. Later seminars will spotlight more stars and shows of The Nashville Network and on August 18, it's the "Grand Ole Opry." **Porter Wagoner** will be on hand to help trace that program's roots in early radio to the present day. Stay tuned for details. The sessions are free to Museum members, but for non-members, there will be a charge. A very good reason to become a Museum member. A year's membership is a mere \$30. Phone Katy at (312) 629-6014 for details.

**IT'S NOT ALL** just fun and games at the Museum of Broadcast Communications. With help from a Polk Bros. Foundation grant, the Museum has launched a new educational program targeting senior students at 15

Chicago high schools. The project will provide the students with a history of Chicago's role in broadcasting along with some solid advice for those considering communications and journalism as a career. The opening session brought together 300 students before a top-notch panel that included Channel 5's **Art Norman** and Channel 7's **Russ Ewing**.

**BACK ON MARCH 9**, the Museum marked, to the day, the 40th anniversary of Edward R. Murrow's historic "See It Now" broadcast focusing on the controversial then U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin.

The sell-out audience watched a repeat of the original broadcast followed by recollections provided by the program's producer, **Fred Friendly** and its field reporter, **Joseph Wershba**. Opening remarks were provided by former FCC chairman, **Newton Minnow** and Channel 2's **Bill Kurtis** moderated the discussion.

**TAKE TIME** this summer to stop by the Museum. There is an archives full of wonderful radio and television programs. Look up your favorite and enjoy it in the A.C. Nielsen Jr. Research Center Fibber and Molly's exhibit is waiting for you complete with a surprise closet door. And believe it or not, you *can* get into Jack Benny's vault. Only at the Museum of Broadcast Communications. Stop in and enjoy. The admission is free.

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## ← **JACK BENNY'S BIRTHDAY CAKE**

Jarosch Bakery of Elk Grove Village provided the delicious treat for over 500 who attended the celebration in honor of the 61st Anniversary of Jack Benny's 39th birthday at the Museum of Broadcast Communications. The cast picture and other candid photos on pages 20 and 21.

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THE BIG BANDS  
AND ALL THAT JAZZ**  
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