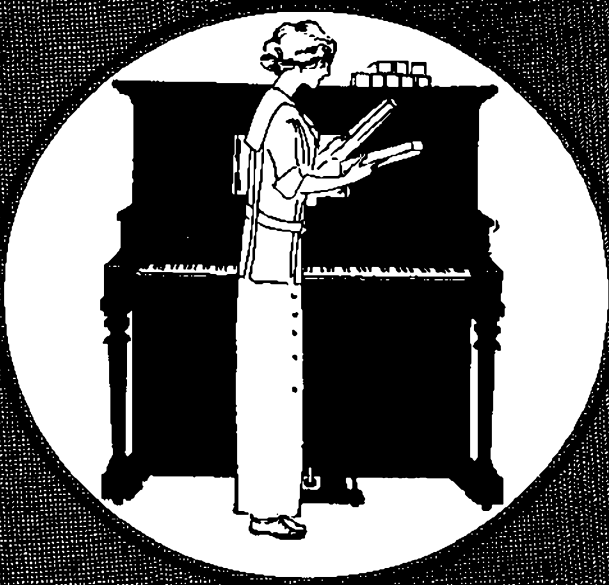


NOSTALGIA DIGEST®





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6910 W. 26th Street, Denver, Illinois

FLAYEL PIANO CLINIC, DENVER, ILLINOIS

Ghosts of Halloween Past

BY DAN MCGUIRE

An incident that occurred when I was eleven years old vividly illustrates why I flunked out as a juvenile delinquent.

It is two days until Halloween. Bob and I are suffering from terminal impatience. Bob says, "I know what. Let's get us some soap and decorate a few windows tonight."

"Yeah, let's," I agree. I dash home, burst through the back door and into the kitchen. My mother stands at her ironing board, a basket of damp laundry on a chair beside her. Still panting, I ask, "Mom, do you have any bars of soap you're about done with?"

My mother completes a stroke, tilts the iron upward and looks at me suspiciously. "What for?" she asks.

Too late, I realize that a would-be vandal does not ask his mother for tools. Stalling, I exaggerate my breathlessness as I rack my immature brain for an answer: "Ummm... me and Bob (puff!) are gonna give (puff!) his dog a bath."

"Um hmm," my mother replies as she resumes her ironing. "Have you cleared that with Bobby's mother?"

I do not get the soap, but I am content to be sent on my way without being trapped by my own dumbness. I tell Bob that I could not find any soap.

Dan McGuire of Bensenville, Illinois, is a free-lance writer. This memoir first appeared here in 1983.

He shrugs and says, "me neither." Weeks later he confesses that his mother caught him snooping around her laundry area and sent him packing. He was lucky not to be confined to his room.

We decide instead to get an early start on our trick-or-treating. After supper, we meet and don our masks — the only part of our costumes we can smuggle past our parents. We do not begin ringing doorbells until we are eight blocks from home — beyond the radius we are likely to cover on *the* night.

This is a precaution against being recognized. Schools discourage students from bothering neighbors ahead of time. Most parents agree with the policy, but a few kids always get started a day or two early. Bob and I haven't done it before; but we know it's best to work in an area where we aren't known, lest word get back to our parents.

Most folks have already stocked up on goodies. The trick is to get them to part with these treats two nights early. Almost as one, they ask, "You boys are a bit early, aren't you?"

We have our answers ready. Bob has to be at his grandmother's birthday party on Halloween. My story earns me a few extra portions. "I'm having my tonsils out tomorrow. I'll be in the hospital."

A few people insist that we come back on the right night. The majority are more lenient, and we make a pretty good haul. We eat some of it as we go. The rest gets hidden in Bob's garage. It won't do

to carry it into our houses tonight.

The next night we hike eight blocks in another direction and repeat the performance. One night early, hardly anyone refuses a treat. We munch discreetly, remembering the queasy stomachs we experienced this morning after last night's outing. Most of the goodies get hidden along with the earlier booty.

The afternoon of Halloween is a special occasion at James Giles Elementary School. We wear our costumes to class. Our principal, Mr. Leigh, visits each classroom and admires our get-ups. He gives us a little lecture about having a good time but not embarrassing our parents or our school tonight.

No one sits in his or her assigned seat. One by one we stand up front and the class tries to guess who we are. Shirley the Showoff identifies most of us right away. Later she admits that she memorized everyone's shoes that morning.

At two o'clock, each classroom lines up and marches out to the school yard. The teachers form us up by grades. Then Mr. Leigh leads us in a parade that circles around the school grounds. Knowing the tradition, neighbors line the sidewalk to cheer all the cowboys, cowgirls, clowns, bums, ghouls, comic book character and what-have-you. Teachers, directing and monitoring, are sometimes overheard joking among themselves. "Floyd is certainly in character today, isn't he?" Floyd is dressed as a devil.

We parade back into the school and return to our classes. Then it's time for dismissal and the mad rush home. We are already in costume. It is only necessary to check in with mothers. "I'm home, Mom. We're going trick-or-treatin' now. Bye." An admonition to be home for supper follows us out the door.

Wayne, Chuck and I form a threesome.

Optimists all, we each carry a shopping bag to be filled with loot. (Every mother had an ample stash of shopping bags. Emblazoned with store advertising, they were liberally dispensed by retail chains such as Wieboldt's, Montgomery Ward's, Woolworth's - now all a memory.)

We covered the blocks nearest home first. Mindful of parental displeasure, we refrain from munching and are home on time for supper. On this night, supper is an inconvenience to be endured. Back on the street, we widen the area of our beggaman activities. We trade information with passing friends about places to be sure to hit because "They're giving out really good stuff."

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, who live a block away, own a ma-and-pa grocery store. They are famous for giving out *nickel candy bars*. We hit them early. Later we trade parts of our costumes in a diabolical ruse to avoid being remembered - *and we go back again!* Although he gives a long quizzical examination, Mr. Johnson drops another candy bar into each of our bags. Our greed is rewarded!

At nine o'clock, reluctantly, we head home. We have exuberantly walked several miles today - half of it up and down stairs. Tomorrow we will drag our feet wearily if our mothers send us four blocks to Elmer's Grocery Store.

After we report to our folks on our night's adventure, a quick bath insures that we will sleep the minute our heads hit their pillows. Tomorrow the booty will be sorted into three piles: our really favorite stuff; the just okay stuff; and the stuff we'll try to trade off, but nobody else will want much of it either.

Months later, Bob and I will remember the stuff we hid in his garage. Some of it may still be edible... if we're really, *really* hungry. ■

Ralph Edwards' Truth or Consequences AREN'T WE DEVILS?



BY JIM COX

Imagine yourself seated in a studio audience anticipating the start of a live radio performance of one of America's most electrifying half-hours. The announcer is just completing his warm-ups, having encouraged hundreds of spectators to ebulliently respond to some anticipated zany antics planned for the night's weekly broadcast.

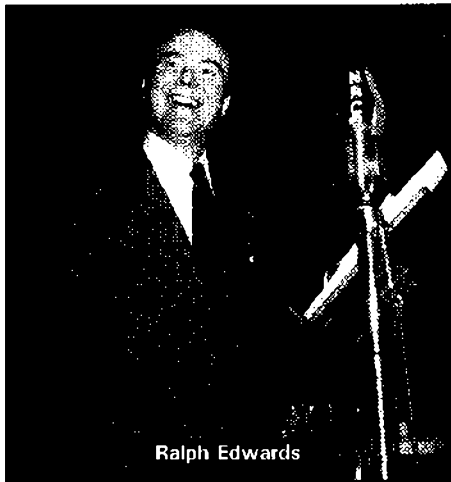
In a final prelude, a couple of gentlemen (most likely servicemen in uniform) are plucked from the studio audience and brought onstage.

Following a brief interview they're invited to compete against each other for a cash prize. Their instructions are to fetch articles of women's clothing from a nearby trunk and put them on over their uniforms. The object of the exercise is to determine who can complete his outfit first.

*Jim Cox of Louisville, Kentucky is the author of the new book *The Great Radio Audience Participation Shows* (McFarland & Company, \$45, 256 pages, photographs, illustrated case binding, 1-800-253-2187). This excerpt is printed with permission.*

The exhibition is precisely timed. Just as one of the contestants begins to wiggle into a girdle — with the studio audience convulsing into gales of laughter approach-

ing near hysteria — the sweep second hand of a big wall clock reaches the top of the half-hour. At precisely that instant an engineer throws a switch and this undisciplined mayhem bursts onto the national airwaves. The show's announcer gleefully informs millions of fans aside their radios nationwide:



Ralph Edwards

PHOTO BY JIM COX

"Hello there! We've been waiting for you! It's time to play Truth . . . or Consequences!" A hasty rendition of "Merrily We Roll Along" in glissando-like form erupts from the studio console, confirmation that — once again — listeners coast to coast have tuned in to the jocularity and bedlam they expect from *Truth or Consequences*. Now, fast forward to the present.

Media consultant Leonard Maltin refers to this show's opening as "the most memorable -- and consistent — audience reaction in the history of radio."

While deprived of both audible and vi-

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sual accounts of what has caused such an explosion in a broadcast studio, the program's legions of fans are, nonetheless, eager to lay aside their cares for a half-hour.

Just what was [it] that had so much of the country glued to its radio sets during the 1940s and — to a lesser extent — the 1950s? One national magazine observed audiences being led to a sphere where “demented situations” derived “lots of fun” while simultaneously appearing as “the essence of normality.”

The mania consisted of stunts such as substituting a trained seal onstage for a man's wife. The blindfolded husband was to be tested on his ability to climb into bed late at night without waking his “wife.” While comforting his bed partner, he snuggled close, soothing “her” skin. During the upheaval, the seal retorted with grunts as the studio audience exploded into raucous pandemonium.

One Halloween Edwards sent an unsuspecting lady on a haunted house venture away from the studio (she was blindfolded, just as he often liked to disperse contestants). If she could correctly guess where she was upon her arrival, she'd earn a hundred dollar bill. After the woman departed from the studio, the sly-as-a-fox Edwards joyously affirmed: “Oh, what's gonna happen to her!” He confessed that the show had worked with the lady's husband without her knowledge. Staffers transformed their home into a scary cavern with recorded ghost screams and hideous monster trappings. Then Edwards quipped, a tinge of madness in his exuberance: “Aren't we devils?” (It was a catchphrase he employed at least once on virtually every show that quickly became part of the national lexicon. With some regularity, for years the query fell from the lips of millions of fans.)

The contestant, still blindfolded near the end of the program, had no idea where she was but allowed that it “smells like a brewery in here!” The studio audience bellowed ecstatically, and for being a good sport, Edwards gave the contestant the hundred dollars anyway.

Born on a ranch in northern Colorado near the little hamlet of Merino on June 13, 1913, as a youngster Edwards milked four cows twice daily. He also made frequent pack trips into the Rockies during boyhood. At age 12, when the Edwardses relocated to California, young Ralph ceded his love of outdoor camping to the Sierra Nevada range. Years later, after becoming a national radio celebrity, he reflected on those days:

Many were the rainy nights when mother and dad and three of us boys racked our brains over guessing games, dressed up for Charades, spun scary stories for Ghosts, but the best nights of all were with a gang around when we sing-songed “Heavy Heavy Hangs Over Thy Head . . . Is it Fine or Superfine? Tell the Truth or pay the consequences.”

In those experiences enacting some variation of an old parlor game commonly known as Forfeit, the competition usually called for holding some familiar object over the head of the player who was designated “it.” “It” couldn't see the object, of course. Given clues, if “it” was unable to identify the article — or sometimes answer a silly question — he or she had to pay the consequences: simplified, of course, like kissing a boy or girl of the opposite gender from a nearby ranch.

Unknown to the Edwardses then was that that little pastime would have a teeming effect upon members of their household for years to come. But lest we get ahead of the story, nearly two decades elapsed before Forfeit was to dazzle Americans coast to coast, catapulting young Ralph into in-



Ralph Edwards

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sleeping quarters in a Manhattan chapel while often accepting meals from Bowery soup kitchens.

Remaining focused, however, he lined up several radio auditions. In a short while he was appearing on network shows like *Renfrew of the Mounted* and *Stoopnagle and Budd*. Not much later, CBS put out the word that it was hiring a staff announcer; and 70 aspirants showed up, Edwards among them. He won the spot and in a brief span found himself a rising interlocutor on as many as 45 shows weekly including: *Against the Storm*, *Coast to Coast on a Bus*, *A Dream Comes True*, *The Gospel Singer*, *The Grumps*, *The Horn and Hardart Children's Hour*, *Life Can Be Beautiful*, *Major Bowes' Original Amateur Hour*, *The Phil Baker Show*, *Town Hall Tonight* and *Vic and Sade*.

stant stardom.

By 1930 the youth was pursuing radio as a vocation, plying his abilities at a nearby Oakland station as a writer, actor and announcer. There he gained acumen that was to sustain him for the rest of his working life. Hoping new skills, he soon became a familiar voice to listeners of that city's station KROW. Simultaneously, he was working at KPRC in San Francisco and pursuing a bachelor's degree at the University of California, Berkeley, a diploma he was awarded in 1935. At Berkeley Edwards was active in the drama department. During his enrollment he appeared in practically every little theater production.

Single, young Edwards was enamored by the prospects of a lifetime investment in network radio. At age 22, in 1935 he decided to cast his lot in New York City. Thumbing his way across the continent with a few greenbacks in his jeans, he soon reached his destination. There he found

One radio biographer noted that Edwards' cordial approach to commercials on the daytime soap operas "all but revolutionized" announcing in that period. The effusive host inserted "conversational punctuation" into advertising copy, almost as if addressing each feminine listener individually. On one show, for instance, he ad-libbed this discourse:

You know, when you listen to Life Can Be Beautiful, you get the feeling that Chi Chi and Papa David and all the others are sort of like old friends. Don't you think that's the way it is? Friends that you look forward to visiting with every day. Now, I never heard of anybody looking forward to dishwashing, but [chortle] just the same. I know a lot of you feel friendly to the soap that helps your hands look nice and gives you speedy suds at the same time. Yes, Ma'am, I mean good old Ivory Flakes. . .

The shows Edwards appeared on provided him with a quite comfortable living

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in that Depression-recovery era. He admitted later that his annual salary by that time exceeded \$50,000. At one point he suggested that his voice introduced more commercial programs than anybody else on the air. Despite such good fortune, however, he was a malcontent. Years later he would muse: "I didn't want to be just an announcer."

Having probed the successes of those who had risen to the forefront of broadcasting careers, he was persuaded that performers who took a hand in developing unique program styles gained status among radio's well-heeled royalty. The best of all possible worlds, Edwards thought, would be to prove himself as an innovative program producer. Such an opportunity might allow him to concentrate on only one or two primary efforts rather than running from show to show throughout the workday.

Edwards believed that the risk of giving up his secure and lucrative commitments would be the right thing to do in exchange for an opportunity to achieve his dream. Through the grapevine he learned in 1939 that one of radio's most respected underwriters, the Procter and Gamble Company — which was paying the bills for several of the shows on which he was then working — was searching for an innovative concept for a nighttime radio series.

Edwards wracked his brain trying to think of a format that had never been tried on the air. Some years later he recalled the exact time and place that inspiration hit him and *Truth or Consequences* was born. He had just arrived at home from the studios late one Thursday afternoon in November 1939. Having thought for weeks of little else beyond dreaming up a new show, suddenly — in the company of his young bride, Barbara, and her parents, who were

in New York on a visit — he remembered the old parlor game his family had played back in Colorado: Forfeit. While the game hadn't been enacted before an audience, Edwards sensed that people watching it in a studio — and millions at home transferring the action in their minds — would love it.

He got on the phone with John MacMillan, the radio kingpin of the Compton Advertising agency, and exuberantly shared his idea. MacMillan questioned: "When can you audition it?" Edwards replied that he could have something together within two or three weeks; MacMillan asked if he could do it by Sunday, three days hence. Edwards gulped, yet readily agreed.

That night he dispatched a buddy (Jack Farnell) from Oakland, who was then in New York, to the public library to search for questions. In the meantime Barbara, her parents and Ralph began thinking up consequences. The following day — in between his radio stints on *Life Can Be Beautiful*, *Against the Storm* and *The Gospel Singer* — he arranged for the studio audience of *The Horn and Hardart Children's Hour* program, which he was then emceeing, to remain an extra 45 minutes after Sunday morning's show. They would provide the live audience he needed for an audition performance.

He engaged Andre Baruch, with whom he had shared an apartment in their bachelor days, and his wife Bea Wain to make a celebrity appearance on the show. On Saturday night he imposed on some University of California chums who were living in the area. Inviting them to supper, he led them to play *Truth or Consequences* after dinner, a kind of "dress rehearsal" for the next day's trial run.

A transcription disc of the audition, which came off without a hitch, was given to Compton executives on Monday. They

responded favorably and shipped it off to Cincinnati for reactions from Procter and Gamble's sensitive ears. A green light wasn't long in arriving. Within four months *Truth or Consequences* hit the airwaves, premiering for Ivory soap on March 23, 1940 for 30 minutes over the Columbia Broadcasting System. It was the start of a broadcasting venture that would entertain American audiences for five decades. And for his efforts, Edwards

the man who had risked career and livelihood for a shot as a program creator, owner, producer, writer and master of ceremonies —

would be certified as radio's youngest entrepreneur.

The exhibition itself was to carry quiz programs to an altogether new plateau. Simple in concept, it decreed that contestants would attempt to answer an inquisition for which they were almost never prepared. There were impractical queries like:

"Why is a hunting license just like a marriage license?"

Answer: "It entitles you to one deer and no more."

(or) "Why would anybody bring a bottle of milk to a poker game?"

Answer: "To feed the kitty."

For a rare answer that was accepted by

the judges, contestants were paid a handsome \$15. But as rapidly as a player missed a question, sound effects technician Bob Prescott pressed a button that created a tone that audiences came to anticipate, soon identified as "Beulah the Buzzer." This reverberation indicated that a wrong response

had been given and a penalty must be paid. The fun really started then.

Numerous contestants admitted that they missed their questions on purpose in order to carry the exposition to its ultimate conclusion. As a rule they wound up as the dupe of some elaborate practical joke that the show's cre-



Truth or Consequences

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ative staff had dreamed up.

On a 1948 outing, for instance, Edwards told Mrs. Earl Peterson of Milwaukee, Wisconsin that a psychic would reveal her future to her that evening. She was sent offstage to retrieve a crystal ball that the clairvoyant was to use. But while she was out of earshot, Edwards quipped: "Oooooooo — what's gonna happen to her!" It was another of his favorite catchphrases that he introduced once or twice on every show. He apprised the studio and radio audiences that, offstage, the contestant was being told that her husband would appear in disguise as the fortune-teller. Each time he correctly answered one

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of her questions, she was to kiss him. With flippancy in his voice, Edwards chortled: "What she doesn't know is . . . we're substituting actor Boris Karloff for her husband!"

Peterson, the husband, had supplied the answers to questions his wife was to ask the medium. Wearing heavy camouflage, Karloff would offer memorized replies to her queries, receiving a kiss for his efforts. The audience expectantly awaited the outcome as Edwards exclaimed with glee: "Aren't we devils?"

The bedevilment transpired and Mrs. Peterson wasn't surprised when the secret responded perfectly to every inquiry. In fact, with each query the studio audience broke into a convulsive, boisterous crescendo. After the final inquisition and smooch, Edwards asked: "Mrs. Peterson, do you think your husband would mind your kissing this total stranger?"

"No," she replied confidently, "I knew it was him all the time. . . . I know those lips." The audience roared.

During a slight dip in the gales of laughter, Edwards announced, "OK, swami, go ahead and remove your beard and turban; she knew it was you all the time." Momentarily, the contestant nearly passed out as she screamed: "It's Boris Karloff!"

The contagious response of the studio audience must have been enough to satisfy the listeners at home who could only visualize the gag. That was the beauty of radio, of course. In the theater of the mind, everyone was free to imagine precisely how a stunt was being played out in a studio far away.

The format for *Truth or Consequences* was usually blocked out a month or so in advance. While Edwards himself thought up many of the stunts, he was abetted by what he labeled as the show's "brain trust."

In addition to its creator, this compelling assemblage included Phil Davis, who joined the ranks after the initial year on the air and who became chief idea developer; Al Paschall, the program's production manager, who came aboard only four weeks after the debut; and a quartet of gag writers—Bill Burch, Ralph's brother Paul, Mort Lewis and Mel Vickland. The brain trust normally met every Tuesday to consider potential consequences.

Beyond all of the zany ideas this bunch proffered over the long run, it unquestionably gained more plaudits for the show via a series of stunts that made utterly good sense. Over several seasons a procession of hidden celebrity identities in conjunction with a few noble charitable causes was introduced. Some of the nation's attention was riveted to the show as the sequences grabbed news headlines. One radio historiographer suggested that, through such efforts, the series "electrified the country."

It all began as a gag on the program of December 29, 1945. Edwards tells about it in his own words:

I had got so fed up with radio programs which asked a contestant some first grade question like what is the capital of the United States and rewarded a correct answer with a gift of a Cadillac, that I decided to run a give-away to end all give-aways. . . . I felt then, and I still do, that a radio show which cannot hold an audience on the basis of its entertainment value should not be on the air.

He penned a limerick that was marinated in clues:

*Hickory dickory dock,
The hands went round the clock
The clock struck ten
Lights out
Goodnight.*

An unidentified reader (prizefighter Jack Dempsey) offered this jingle every Saturday night for several weeks. Various con-



Truth or Consequences

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testants were given an opportunity to identify the man whom Edwards called "Mr. Hush." A small jackpot of merchandise grew every week as participants failed in their efforts to name the luminary. Eventually, the "crackpot jackpot" reached \$13,500, a hefty sum by mid 1940s standards. At that point a Navy lieutenant, Ensign Richard Bartholomew of Fayetteville, Arkansas, guessed the name of Dempsey and claimed the prizes. Radio jackpots often included automobiles, travel vouchers, airplanes, motorboats, house trailers, mink coats and jewelry among their stashes, incidentally. By then *Truth or Consequences* had attracted scores of new listeners who were clamoring for more guessing games. Edwards recalled a personal inner struggle that such heady success brought him.

I couldn't let them down. Nor could I.

in good conscience, go along with a technique which turned radio into an oversized grab bag.

The months between the Dempsey contest and our Mrs. Hush game with Clara Bow were an agony of conferences with lawyers, United States government legal experts, and ultimately - for I had found a 'right reason' for the contests - with officials of the March of Dimes.

The contests continued but for worthy endeavors.

The subsequent "Mrs. Hush" competition featuring silent

screen star Bow focused on the concern of many Americans who could be motivated to assist in the fight to end the crippling disease known as infantile paralysis or poliomyelitis, then sweeping the nation. The March of Dimes was a charitable foundation whose sole mission was to raise donations to conquer the dreaded scourge.

By then the emphasis for these mystery celebrity events had shifted from studio participants to the millions who were hearing the show on radio. Listeners could voluntarily submit donations while attempting to identify "Mrs. Hush." All they had to do was to complete the following statement in 25 words or less: "We should all support the March of Dimes because. . ."

From the mail each week the contest judges drew a select number of "best entries." This qualified their writers to be eligible for a possible telephone call from

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Edwards while on the air the following Saturday night. If no one who was interviewed could name the mystery celebrity during a show, new clues would be given and more prizes added to the jackpot that the eventual winner would receive. The fans at home were given added opportunities to be called. They could send in new statements each week and could add March of Dimes donations with it if they wished.

There was no rush to reach the outcome, of course. Why would there be? The participants were having fun while millions of listeners were holding their breath; the March of Dimes was reaping tangible benefits, eventually topping \$545,000 directly from this appeal; and the show was once again harvesting favorable treatment in the news media coast to coast.

By the time Mrs. William H. McCormick figured out at last that the hidden identity belonged to Bow, which earned McCormick \$17,590 in merchandise, Edwards realized he had a good thing going that couldn't be soon dismissed. "I have no right to discard an idea which can do this especially when it gives half the people of the country a wonderful time besides," he announced. More mystery celebrity contests followed.

Dancer Martha Graham was eventually identified as "Miss Hush" by a listener who claimed over \$21,000 in prizes. Another \$672,000 went to March of Dimes coffers.

What had been originally intended as a satire of the high stakes competitions on radio had actually become broadcasting's biggest giveaway. The stash secured by Mrs. Florence Hubbard for naming Jack Benny as the "Walking Man," a 1947 contest that transfixed the nation's listeners for weeks, was typical. Her booty would gladden the heart of any Internal Revenue Service official while at the same time posing

the query: What's the beneficiary, the American Heart Association, getting out of all of this? (Actually, the AHA amassed more than \$1.5 million from the contest, although anyone toting up the prizes while forgetting they were donated might have had pause to wonder. The widowed Mrs. Hubbard, age 68, a \$30-a-week sales clerk for Chicago's Carson-Pirie-Scott department store, was encumbered with all of the ensuing following her on-air revelation:

Bendix home laundry (including washer, dryer and automatic ironer)

\$1,000 diamond and ruby Bulova watch

4-door Cadillac sedan

Tappan gas kitchen range

16mm motion picture sound projector and screen with a print of the Hal Wallis production "I Walk Alone" and delivery of a Motion Picture of the Month for one year

Two-week vacation for two from any place in the U. S. to Union Pacific's Sun Valley, Idaho, all expenses paid

\$1,000 J. R. Wood and Sons art-carved diamond ring

Electrolux vacuum cleaner and all the attachments

1948 RCA Victor console FM-AM radio and phonograph combination and TV set in a single cabinet

Servel silent gas refrigerator

Art Craft all metal venetian blinds for windows throughout the entire home

Sherwin-Williams agreed to paint the house inside and out, paint included

Complete wardrobe of women's clothes for every season of the year designed by Fayc Foster consisting of street dresses, beach wear and play clothes

Frigidaire home freezer filled with Bird's Eye frozen foods

Luskum Silvair all metal airplane

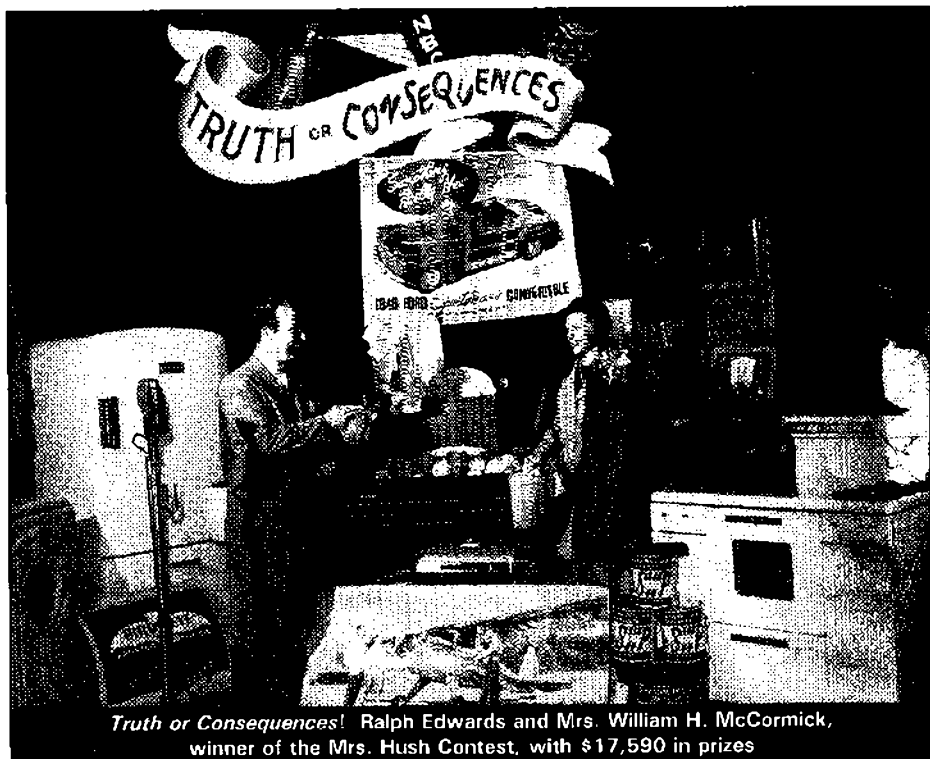
Kitchen and bathroom completely installed with ceramic tile by the Pomona Tile Manufacturing Company

Dining room and two bedrooms filled with Idaho Pine furniture

\$2,400 deluxe 3-room Normel trailer coach equipped with modern kitchen and sleeping quarters for four

Remington Rand noiseless model 7 typewriter

14-foot Alumina Craft boat complete with



Truth or Consequences! Ralph Edwards and Mrs. William H. McCormick, winner of the Mrs. Hush Contest, with \$17,590 in prizes

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- Champion outboard motor*
- \$1,000 full-length Persian lamb coat designed by furrier Max Foyer*
- Two-year supply of Pepperell sheets and pillowcases for every bed in the house*
- Choice of \$500 worth of Westinghouse electric home appliances*
- Story and Clark piano*
- Universal electric blankets for every bed in the house*
- Three Coronada air-cooled summer suits for every man in the immediate family*
- Roger and Company desk console Sew-Gem electric sewing machine*

Even a pauper could have turned into a princess with spoils like these! The generous publicity to the providers was worth far more than the minimal outlay for prizes that they surrendered, while millions revelled in that extensive list as it was read aloud every Saturday night for months.

The winners of such competitions received not only cash and merchandise jack-

pots but turned into luminaries themselves. The aforementioned Mrs. Hubbard acquired 40 marriage proposals from her instant fame and fortune. Still others achieved celebrated status within their own local communities.

When Jack Benny was identified as the "Walking Man," Edwards explained that the comedian hailed originally from Waukegan, Illinois meaning 'walk again' "as named by the Indians." As part of her quick rise to luster, Mrs. Hubbard, who unmasked Benny, was invited to appear on the following Saturday night's broadcast of *Truth or Consequences*. Later, speaking on the air with Edwards from his secret hideaway, Benny allowed to tumultuous studio cackling: "I'd like to get Mrs. Hubbard as a guest on my show the following Sunday night. And if we can't get her, Ralph, would you see if you can get Carson, Pirie or Scott?" → → →

AREN'T WE DEVILS?

The American Heart Association gained national acclaim for the first time in its brief history when it received the proceeds from a trio of *Truth or Consequences* mystery celebrity competitions. In excess of \$2.5 million was raised from endeavors involving the "Walking Man" (comic Benny), "Whispering Woman" (vocalist Jeanette MacDonald) and "Mr. Heartbeat" (poet Edgar A. Guest). A "Mr. and Mrs. Hush" campaign (featuring musicians Moss Hart and Kitty Carlisle) enriched the coffers of the Arthritis Foundation. By late 1948 the Mental Health Drive was the program's recipient of choice during a "Papa and Mama Hush" competition (involving dancers Yolanda and Velez).

Ralph Edwards Productions in Hollywood reported that *Truth or Consequences* radio efforts ultimately tallied \$22 million

for munificent intents.

Interestingly, when the show's audition pilot was done in early 1940 it was recorded on a transcription disc as there was no tape at that time. Even after the advent of tape NBC didn't allow its use for many years. (Among other reasons, there was a prevailing feeling in the industry that a certain amount of spontaneity would dissolve if a show were taped ahead of time.) Instead, *Truth or Consequences* was initially performed in New York and, three hours later, aired a similar live show from New York to the West Coast. The second performance included the same acts as on the earlier broadcast but with different contestants. In 1945 when the program began originating from Hollywood a live show was performed for the East Coast with a live show as before for the West Coast three hours later. Again, the same acts were aired with different contestants.

Not until October 4, 1947 did NBC permit the show to replay the original live show to the West Coast. And it was June 9, 1949 when such programs were allowed to be taped for broadcast, yet then only under extreme circumstances. Even the April 1, 1950 outing from *Truth or Consequences*, New Mexico was done live. Beginning with the 1950-51 radio season the series was at last aired live on tape.

Truth or Consequences made several forays into early television that gave it some fleeting notoriety, too. An initial test on New York's WNBT-TV on July 1, 1941 acknowledged the presence of cameras with gags that offered a visual orientation. One player's consequence, for example, was to



Truth or Consequences
Ralph Edwards with Jack
Benny, the 'Walking Man'

PHOTOFEST

wear a grass skirt and dance the hula.

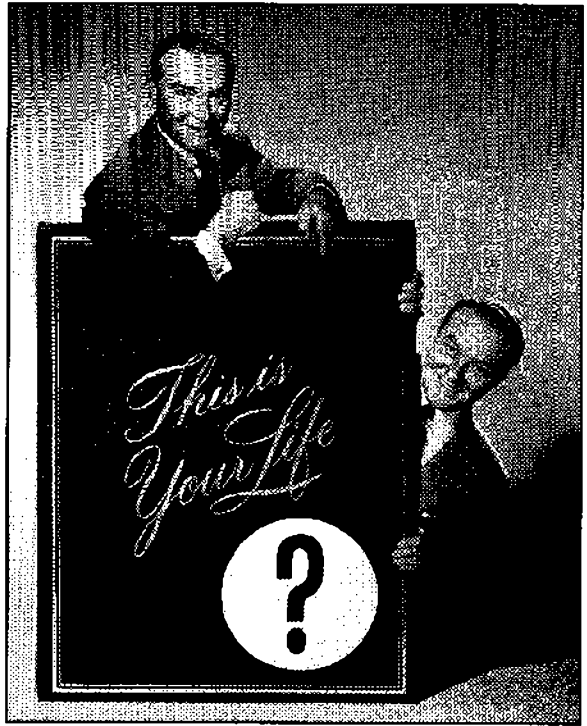
Was this a foretaste of things to come?

Truth or Consequences premiered to a weekly television audience... on September 7, 1950 over CBS. It continued for a single season to June 7, 1951. Two NBC-TV nighttime renditions appeared next, from May 18, 1954 to September 28, 1956, and from December 13, 1957 to June 6, 1958.

A weekday NBC-TV version ran at varied hours from mid-mornings to late afternoons with only a couple of brief interruptions between December 31, 1956 and September 24, 1965.

While Ralph Edwards was the only host of the radio show across its 16 years, by the time the program appeared on NBC-TV in 1954, he was fully ensconced in *This Is Your Life*, a spinoff from the radio series. *Truth or Consequences* owner Edwards hired *Queen for a Day* host Jack Bailey as emcee of the video show. When Bailey subsequently departed, Steve Dunne was given the nod for the 1957-58 nighttime version.

In the meantime, in December 1956 Edwards had been charmed by the appealing voice of a Pasadena, California radio audience participation host, whose name and station call letters he failed to get other than "Bob." He put his telephone operator, Billie Clevinger, on the trail. Working over the weekend, she turned up Bob Barker, then an unknown figure beyond the immediate vicinity. Edwards called him and asked him to drop by "at his convenience." Twenty minutes later Barker turned up and Edwards hired the small time emcee for a five-day-a-week daytime ver-



sion of *Truth or Consequences*, which he had just sold to NBC-TV. That series lasted until 1965. Then the show went live on tape via syndication, from 1965-75, with two additional years in reruns. By that time, Barker was also well entrenched in *The Price is Right*.

But the entrepreneurial spirit of Ralph Edwards wasn't done yet.

This Is Your Life, the first of the "reality" shows, had its origins in an April 27, 1946 *Truth or Consequences* exhibition. A young ex-Marine, Lawrence Trantor of Murray, Utah, who had been wounded at Luzon and was paralyzed below the waist, was brought face-to-face with people who had touched his life in meaningful ways. One by one he was reunited onstage with old friends, family and neighbors. But that was only half the story. Knowing of Edwards' penchant for assisting worthy intents, U. S. General Omar Bradley asked him to do something for returning disabled

AREN'T WE DEVILS?

servicemen, particularly for paraplegics. "Many are without hope," confirmed Bradley, "and are afraid they will be a burden to their family and friends." Edwards decided to devote a segment of *Truth or Consequences* to wounded veterans, with the show featuring Trantor as a result.

Bradley's aim was to help such men return to civilian life and that meant looking to the future. While hospitalized, Trantor had taken up the hobby of watch repair. Aware of that, Edwards made a proposal to him: working with the Bulova Watch Company, Edwards arranged for the show to send Trantor to a Bulova School of Watchmaking. When he completed the course, the show would set him up in a jewelry store in his hometown. It was an offer the vet could hardly refuse.

That chapter struck a favorable response with audience and cast alike. During the Christmas season of 1947 the program saluted another veteran, Hubert Smith, a Greeneville, Tennessee paraplegic, then confined at the Long Beach (California) Naval Hospital. Via a three-way remote, from his hospital bedside the wounded soldier visited scenes of his youth - his high school, a corner drug store, his church and his grandmother's home. He spoke with teachers, his doctor, pastor, a clerk at the Greeneville general store and classmates at the school who sang Christmas carols to him. Culminating this feel-good surprise, the show flew the recruit's mother, father and girlfriend to California to spend the holidays with him.

"This boy's story touched the hearts of America, as it had touched ours - and our country is rich in these stories," Edwards later concluded. "Our country, I have come to believe . . . , is richest of all in its people."

And what of Lawrence Trantor, the vet who was sent to Bulova's school? In 1948,

a couple of years after he initially appeared on *Truth or Consequences*, the wheelchair-bound young man, by then accompanied by a charming redhead, returned to the show after completion of his course in watch repair. Edwards presented him with the keys he had been promised to a store in his hometown, plus an inventory and a check to open a bank account.

As these accounts unfolded, Edwards realized that he had tumbled onto an unused programming concept, resulting in *This Is Your Life*. The show was launched on radio later in 1948.

Hosted by Edwards, *This Is Your Life* was on radio from 1948-50 before moving to TV in 1950. It aired on the small screen in primetime from 1950-51, 1954-56, 1957-58 and in daytime from 1956-59 and late 1959-65. The show was seen in syndication from 1966-75, 1977-78 and 1987-88. It highlighted incidents in the lives of celebrities as well as ordinary citizens. Appearances were secretly and elaborately choreographed in order to realize the ultimate element of surprise when people learned on the air that they were to be featured subjects. Few shows exceeded it in reaching its compelling human-interest levels.

Truth or Consequences, the granddaddy of the stunt shows on radio and television, helped Americans overcome any tendency they might have had to take life seriously. While its early years overlapped one of the most traumatic periods in the nation's history, the series encouraged people to experience the sunny side of life. As it brought listeners to the peak of insanity, this zany, riotous barrel of laughs glued 20 million individuals to their radio sets every Saturday night for 10 years. ■

Tune in TWTD October 6 to hear a pair of consecutive Truth or Consequences programs from 1947.

The Beauty and The Beast

BY WAYNE KLATT

She had beauty, intelligence, poise, a lovely singing voice, and a sense of humor, but Hollywood producers were mainly interested in her scream.

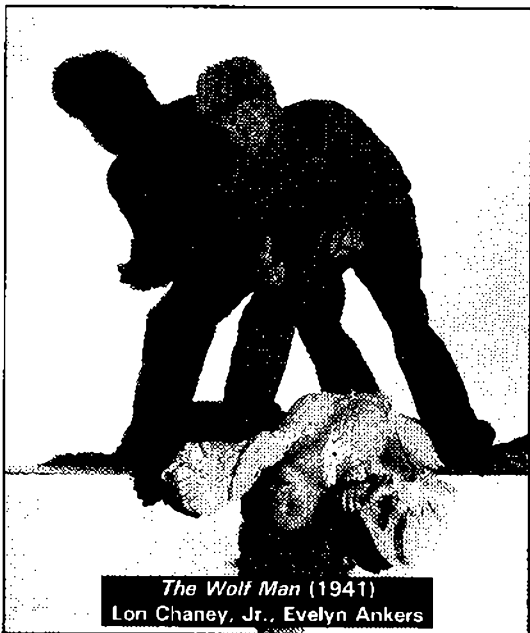
He was oversized, rather homely, awkward, and perhaps Hollywood's saddest monster.

Evelyn Ankers and Lon Chaney, Jr. didn't even like each other, but they were teamed in five horror films because they were so unlike each other that one complemented the other.

Even if you are a fan of Universal horror films of the 1940s, you might not have noticed how convincing Chaney was as someone fighting his own nature — whether as the Wolf Man in five films, the Son of Dracula (Count Alucard — spell it backward), or the monster in *Ghost of Frankenstein* (because no one else was available). He also brought this sadness to his only praised role, as the retarded and well meaning but destructive Lenny in Lewis Milestone's *Of Mice and Men*.

Lon's famous father, called the Man with a Thousand Faces, was a ruffian who loved the challenge of using his makeup box to become any (usually villainous) character a script called for. He beat his son repeatedly with a strap and was sometimes cruel to his attractive wife until she left him. She also changed her name, turning her back not only on her husband but also her young son, whose real name was Creighton.

Wayne Klatt is an editor at the City News Service of the Chicago Tribune and a free-lance writer.



The Wolf Man (1941)
Lon Chaney, Jr., Evelyn Ankers

PICTOFEST

In 1922 when the 16-year-old boy told his father he wanted to be an actor too. Alonso Chaney was so enraged he took his son out of Hollywood High and enrolled him in business school. As the great character actor was dying eight years later, he must have thought that Creighton would some day be the head of a small business. Instead, the young man now felt free to follow his dream and, refusing to adopt his father's first name to cash in on the spate of horror films, he appeared in a Western serial, *The Last Frontier* (1932).

Privately, Creighton spent years trying to track down his mother. The story goes that when he did, she slammed the door on him, and he never got over this face-to-face rejection.

Under his real name, Creighton Chaney appeared in three films before conceding that he would never have a career on his own. And so, at the age of 29, he reluc-

THE BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

tantly took his father's name as Lon Chaney, Jr. Even then it was a struggle because his insecurity kept him from expressing emotions in front of a camera.

Lon decided to use his weaknesses (slow speaking, and being too large) to take over Broderick Crawford's role of Lenny in the stage adaptation of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* when Crawford left to make a movie. Lon won critical respect and was naturally chosen to repeat the role in the 1939 film.

But a character like Lenny comes along only once in an actor's lifetime, and in less than two years he was starring in *Man Made Monster*, an unpretentious modern variation of *Frankenstein*. Gracing the love interest was Evelyn Ankers who was born while her British father was serving as a mining engineer in Chile in 1918.

Evelyn grew up in England and was a singer on her own radio show, with many in the audience never realizing how lovely she was. More as a lark, Evelyn appeared on the stage and some films. She sailed for New York coincidentally on the day Britain declared war on Germany in 1939.

Before long she landed in Hollywood, never expecting to make it big. She had appeared in cut-rate films in her homeland and expected to do the same here.

Since her first Hollywood part was written out of a detective script, she was hired for one of the best Abbott and Costello pictures, *Hold That Ghost* and a scream was born. Evelyn's lung control from singing allowed her to modulate a piercing cry of fright. Until her, nearly all female screams at Universal had been dubbed.

Audiences got to hear her sing in 1943's *Mad Ghoul*. Evelyn (called by the film crews "Ankers Aweigh") also was adept enough to speak - in her mind— like an American. Actually, her Britishness helped the studio cast Evelyn in horror films, since Universal lent weight to its fantastic stories by casting British actors in subsidiary roles, including Claude Rains and Sir Cedric Hardwicke.

In addition, Evelyn was so tasteful that she normally wore her own clothes in films rather than bother with fittings, and she stayed so slender that she performed a mild strip tease in *Bowery to Broadway* with only her friends knowing she was several months pregnant!



The Wolf Man (1941)
Lon Chaney, Jr., Evelyn Ankers

PHOTOFFST

Such was life in the busy, little known world of B-movies. Although Evelyn liked Bela Lugosi, who was a little shy but outgoing, she was cold to Lon Chaney, Jr., who off the set took after the wild ways of his father. Lon and Broderick Crawford would get drunk in their trailer after a week of shooting their separate films "and somehow



Hold That Ghost (1941)

Abbott & Costello, Evelyn Ankers, Joan Davis, Richard Carlson

manage to hang furniture from the ceiling," Evelyn recalled.

Lon also looked forward to getting in brawls. By then Evelyn had met the love of her life, handsome (B-movie) leading man Richard Denning, who was then serving in the Navy. Lon came close to smashing Denning's face for a snide remark about actors who kept making movies instead of enlisting in the war.

With his limited acting range, Lon Chaney's career seemed just about over. But then Nazi-fleeing German immigrant writer Curt Siodmak came up with a script for *The Wolf Man*, which brought some pathos to the werewolf legend.

Other people on the Universal lot played Dracula after Lugosi, and the Frankenstein monster after Boris Karloff, but no one

would think of playing the Wolf Man after Lon did it. He often called the grueling role "my baby." Lon had to sit in a chair for six hours at a stretch for the famous transformation as makeup artist Jack Pierce pasted him with not only yak hair but also bits of seaweed. Should you ever envy the lot of movie ac-

PHOTOFEST

tors, consider his ordeal:

"I came in at two a.m. When I hit that position" (for the camera) "they would take little nails and drive them through my skin at the edge of my fingers, on both hands, so that I wouldn't move them any more." The camera was weighted down so it wouldn't move. The cinematography team would take just five to ten frames, then rush the negative to the laboratory. With Lon still immobile, a makeup man took off some of the monster face and put on a slightly different look. Then someone would come back to Lon from the processing laboratory and say, "Your eyes moved a little bit ... now your shoulder is up." Then it would all be done again, and again.

"I won't even discuss the bathroom!" Lon added.



Make-up artist Jack Pierce prepares Lon Chaney, Jr. for his *Wolf Man* transformation.

PHOTOFEST

THE BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Pierce also applied a fake mole on Lon's face, perhaps to suggest a tear. Evelyn Ankers is said to have screamed for real the first time she saw him ready for the camera.

Even worse came when all that fur was taken off with acetone in what horror film enthusiast Denis Gifford called "a nightly cat-off." But the effort was worth it, because the transformations were as good as the technology of the day could make them; and, once hidden by makeup from head to toe, Lon was free to express himself to the point of seeming like another actor.

If Evelyn seems a little tired in the film, she may be forgiven. By her count, she had appeared in thirty films in four years, and a live bear chased her up a ladder until an electrician stopped it with a flashlight beam. "When it was over," Evelyn said of the production, "I was relieved and happy that the gray hairs didn't show among the blonde."

In all, Lon and Evelyn appeared together in *Man Made Monster*, *The Wolf Man*, *Ghost of Frankenstein*, *Weird Woman*, and *Frozen Ghost*. Lon went on to play Wolf Man Lawrence Talbot in four other films, ending with *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948).

Lon bade farewell to his yak hair, then appeared now and then in a variety of small roles, including *High Noon*, and briefly spoofed himself as Lenny in Bob Hope's *Casanova's Big Night*. As Lawrence Talbot struggled against becoming a wolf, Lon fought his own demons and had alcohol problems. Hollywood's saddest monster drifted back to cheapies such as *Hillbillies in a Haunted House* (1967). When he died in 1973, Lon Chaney, Jr. was virtually forgotten.

After her last teeming with Chancy, Evelyn Ankers continued her specialty of



The Ghost of Frankenstein (1942)
Evelyn Ankers, Lon Chaney, Jr.

screaming and looking beautiful in horror movies, and she had perfunctory roles in several historical films. She and husband Richard Denning, who had played opposite Lucille Ball in the radio series *My Favorite Husband*, settled down with their daughter in Hawaii in 1968 for what was supposed to be a mutual retirement. But taking advantage of television production near their home, Denning played the governor in *Hawaii Five-O* for 12 years.

Evelyn was still living in Hawaii when she died in 1985 at the age of 67. In all, she had made 51 films in 20 years, some with titles begging to be forgotten, including *Captive Woman and the Mad Ghoul*. But it must have been fun while it lasted.

Although Lon Chaney, Jr. was dead, the reason for his silent sadness was not lost in the recycle bin of Hollywood. The story of the rejection of Lon by his mother may have been the inspiration for the 1988 film comedy *Twins* with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito as twins switched at birth, searching for their real mother.

Lon would not have been amused. ■

OLD TIME
RADIO
IN THE
20th
CENTURY

Chuck Schaden's THOSE WERE THE DAYS WDCB • 90.9 FM • SATURDAY 1 - 5 PM ★ Radio and World War II ★

Ten years ago, in December of 1991, we observed the 50th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor -- the date the United States became a full participant in World War II-- by beginning a *four year* old time radio odyssey.

From December 7, 1991 until the end of 1995, we reached into the pages of history and our audio archives to provide a sound picture of the war years --on the home front and around the world-- as broadcast on radio.

We presented newscasts, commentaries, speeches, propaganda and patriotic programs, broadcasts specifically for military audiences and scores of regular state-side entertainment shows... all of which gave us a clear idea of what radio was like during World War II --from Pearl Harbor to V-J Day.

We're proud to say that this series received more positive reaction than anything we've ever broadcast since *Those Were The Days* went on the air in 1970.

It never occurred to us to pay another comprehensive visit to WW II.

But interest in World War II has not diminished. In fact, at the turn of the century, it was getting more attention than ever.

It began, we think, with the release of the film *Saving Private Ryan* in 1998. Then came Tom Brokaw's books "The Greatest Generation" in 1998 and "The Greatest Generation Speaks" in 1999. In 2000 James Bradley wrote "Flags of Our Fathers," about the men who were photographed raising the flag on Iwo Jima. Bob Greene wrote "Duty," about his father, a WW II infantry soldier, and Paul Tibbets, pilot of the *Enola Gay* which dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima in 1945.

This year, 2001, saw the publication of John Dunning's novel "Two O'Clock Eastern War Time," a WW II thriller set at a radio station in New Jersey in 1942, and the big screen blockbuster *Pearl Harbor*. Add to all this countless other books, films, television programs and series, and we find that World War II is still a very important part of this nation's history.

So beginning this year on *Those Were The Days* we're going to take another *four year* look at Radio and World War II, trying, for the most part, *not* to duplicate anything we've done in the past.

We begin in October and November with a five-part series demonstrating radio's coverage of the war *before* Pearl Harbor, "as the storm clouds gathered" in Europe. If you check the *TWTD* listings on pages 20-25 you'll read about radio's coverage of the dramatic events leading to our nation's involvement in the war.

We hope you'll be entertained and enlightened with our *60th Anniversary* look at Radio and World War II.

--Chuck Schaden

October/November 2001 *Nostalgia Digest* -19-

October/November 2001 *Nostalgia Digest* -21-

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Chuck Schaden's

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WDCB • 90.9 FM • SATURDAY 1 - 5 PM

OCTOBER 2001

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6

SUSPENSE (10-3-46) "Three Times Murder" starring Rita Hayworth as a woman under investigation in the death of her husband. Hans Conried co-stars with Wally Maher, Bill Johnstone, Lou Merrill. Roma Wine, CBS. (31 min) *Read the studio biography of Rita Hayworth on page 36.*

HARDY FAMILY (1-31-50) Mickey Rooney stars as Andy Hardy with Lewis Stone and Fay Holden as Judge and Mrs. Hardy in the roles they made famous in the MGM film series. Andy has landed a job as a junior executive with a company in Carvel. Syndicated. (28 min) *Read the article about the Hardy Family on page 32.*

LET GEORGE DO IT (3-14-49) "The Motif is Murder" starring Bob Bailey as George Valentine, private detective, who is asked to determine what a murderer's victims had in common. Frances Robinson is Brooksie, Wally Maher as Lt. Riley, with Ed Begley, Mary Shipp, Herb Butterfield. Standard Oil, MBS. (28 min)

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES (10-18-47) Host Ralph Edwards administers consequences to contestants who don't "tell the truth" by answering his quiz questions correctly. The "Miss Hush" contest for the March of Dimes begins.

Harlow Wilcox announces. First of two consecutive and related broadcasts. Duz, NBC. (29 min) *Read the cover story about Ralph Edwards on page 3.*

HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (5-19-49) "Enchanted Cottage" starring Richard Widmark in the classic love story about beauty being in the eye of the beholder. Cast features Lurene Tuttle and Gerald Mohr. James Hilton hosts. Hallmark Cards, CBS. (28 min)

GUNSMOKE (10-21-56) William Conrad stars as U.S. Marshal Matt Dillon with Parley Baer as Chester Proudfoot, Howard McNear as Doc Adams, Georgia Ellis as Kitty Russell. A mysterious gunman takes a shot at a Dodge City 'reformer.' L&M Cigarettes, CBS. (21 min)

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES (10-25-47) Ralph Edwards puts the contestants through their paces in this top-rated audience participation show, and tells of the new "Miss Hush" contest. Second of two consecutive and related broadcasts. Duz, NBC. (29 min)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13

★ RADIO AND WORLD WAR II
Storm Clouds Gather — Part 1

★ MARCH OF TIME (2-10-38) Westbrook Van Voorhis, the 'Voice of Time' presents dramatizations of actual news events of the week including Admiral William Lahey, Chief of Naval operations, putting the Navy on record for the first time in 22 years as having a potential enemy of the U.S. on the High Seas: "There is a new situation at sea which our nation can no longer ignore. This new situation involves three naval powers: German, Italy and Japan. ... the U.S. must be prepared with a navy second to none." Also stories about Adolf Hitler removing conservative army officials from power; Al Capone at Alcatraz; a Manila golf tournament; a Negro artist not admitted to see his painting on exhibit. Life and Time Magazines, NBC. (29 min)

★ ADOLF HITLER (9-1-39) News coverage

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by short wave of Adolf Hitler's speech announcing the invasion of Poland and asking the Reichstag to vote for a law to annex Danzig to Germany. Hitler: "If our will is strong enough, then nothing can fail!" Field Marshal Herman Goering: "The German people stand behind the Fuehrer... we are determined to bring every sacrifice for the honor of the German people... we shall fight to the bitter end." *This is the official beginning of World War II.* Joint network coverage. (14 min)

★ **NEWS** (9-1-39) Robert Trout reports: "In France the Cabinet has called a general mobilization... In Britain... thousands of youths... are reported to be lining up at recruiting offices... from Warsaw, more and more towns in the Polish corridor are bombed by German war planes... (2 min) On Great Britain's evacuation of mothers, children, cripples and blind: "Three million of those too weak to fight or help are being moved from the so-called target areas of the large cities to sanctuaries in the British countryside... it is... the greatest mass migration in all history." CBS (15 min)

AVALON TIME (9-2-39) Richard "Red" Skelton stars in this comedy-variety series from Chicago with Curt Massey, Edna Stillwell, Jeanette Davis. Red looks at news highlights of the week; offers a 'Slice of Life' sketch about a couple taking a moonlight drive; and tries to make a prospective bridegroom jealous. Avalon Cigarettes, NBC. (30 min)

★ **NEWS** (9-3-39) CBS correspondents Robert Trout, Edward R. Murrow and Bill Henry recap the events of the day that England declared war on Germany. Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain: "I have to tell you that we are now at war with Germany." Henry: "London is at war and London has had its first air raid signal." Murrow: "It wasn't a pleasant sound. We moved quietly and in orderly fashion down underground... an unidentified plane had been seen approaching the coast." CBS. (15 min)

★ **PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT** (9-3-39) From the White House in Washington, D. C., Franklin D. Roosevelt speaks to the American people about the outbreak of war in Europe: "The peace of all countries everywhere is in danger... though we may desire detachment, we are forced to realize that every word that comes through the air, every ship that sails the sea, every battle that is fought does affect the American future... We seek to keep war from coming to the Americas... This na-

tion will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain a neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts." All networks. (12 min)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (9-5-39) Jim and Marian Jordan star in the first show of the 1939-40 season. The McGees return from their summer vacation with lots of out-of-focus photos and lots of fish, so they invite all their friends for a fish dinner. Cast includes Bill Thompson as the Old Timer, Horatio K. Boomer and Nick Depopoulous; Isabel Randolph as Mrs. Uppington; Harold Peary as a poll taker; singer Donald Novis; announcer Harlow Wilcox; Billy Mills and the orchestra. Jim Jordan makes a timely comment about the world situation at the end of the show. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (29 min)

★ **NEWS** (9-6-39) Robert Trout reports: "... seventy enemy bombers yesterday raided Warsaw, dropping explosive incendiary bombs, chiefly in the suburbs and causing some casualties. Anti-aircraft fire downed eight enemy planes... the French general staff announced that its armies were progressing beyond the frontier into Germany." (4 min) "British troops are arriving in France to fight with the French against Germany... President Roosevelt issued an executive order placing the Panama Canal under full military control... to provide for the security of the Canal." (4 min) CBS.

★ **COL. CHARLES A. LINDBERGH** (9-15-39) The American hero's first radio address in eight years is an anti-war message: "I speak tonight to those people in the United States of America who feel that the destiny of this country does not call for our involvement in European wars... We must keep foreign propaganda from pushing our country blindly into another war... We should never enter a war unless it is absolutely essential to the future welfare of our nation." CBS. (12 min)

★ **EDWARD R. MURROW** (9-17-39) In London Murrow describes Britain's home front since the war began: "We've been witnessing in Britain during the last few weeks a social revolution, the end of which no one can foretell. The people who went out of these cities on those first evacuation trains were the advance guard of a reversal of a system and a trend that's been continuous since the industrial revolution. Win, lose or draw, the Britain that comes out of this war will not be the Britain that entered it." CBS. (10 min)

★ INDICATES A WORLD WAR II BROADCAST OF SPECIAL INTEREST



Chuck Schaden's

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WDCB • 90.9 FM • SATURDAY 1 - 5 PM

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2001

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20
★ **RADIO AND WORLD WAR II**
Storm Clouds Gather — Part 2

★ **H. V. KALTENBORN** (9-21-39) The distinguished news analyst reviews the European situation as Germany threatens Rumania and discusses the address of FDR in which the U. S. president repeated his pledge to keep the country out of war. CBS. (14 min)

SCREEN GUILD THEATRE (10-1-39) "Imperfect Lady" starring Clark Gable, Ginger Rogers, Spencer Charteris, and Margaret Lindsay in a comedy about Hollywood movie production. After producing a flop, a group tries to put together another picture. Roger Prior hosts. Oscar Bradley and the orchestra. Gulf Oil Co., CBS. (30 min)

LUX RADIO THEATRE (11-20-39) "Good-bye Mr. Chips" starring Laurence Olivier and Edna Best in a radio version of the 1939 film. A shy schoolmaster devotes his life to his students, coming out of his shell only when he meets a woman he considers "much too good" for him. Cecil B. DeMille hosts; Melville Ruick announces. Lux Soap, CBS. (22 min & 13 min & 21 min)

★ **NEWS** (12-7-39) NBC correspondent James Bowen, by short wave from Montevideo, Uruguay, reports on the scuttling of the German battleship Graf Spee, ordered destroyed by Hitler following a fierce sea battle with British cruisers. "The Graf Spee... has blown itself up... The ship is five miles out... all we can see... from the shore here is a lot of smoke and flames... launches leaving the ship... She's still afloat... pieces of her have gone up." NBC. (14 min)

THE SHADOW (1-7-40) "Murder in the Death House" starring Bill Johnstone as Lamont Cranston with Marjorie Anderson as the lovely Margo Lane. A killer about to be executed boasts that he cannot be put to death. (24 min)

★ **STATE OF THE UNION** (1-30-40) NBC cor-

respondent Carlton Smith, speaking from the floor of the House of Representatives, describes the scene as President Franklin D. Roosevelt presents his annual State of the Union address to a Joint Session of Congress (two months after a Special Session of Congress enacted the Neutrality Act). FDR: "As Congress reassembles, the impact of wars abroad makes it natural, I think, to approach the state of the union through a discussion of foreign affairs...." NBC, all networks. (41 min)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27 ANNUAL HALLOWEEN SHOW

HALLOWEEN MONSTER RALLY (1960s) From American Forces Network, it's the annual special: "All the monsters and their ghoul friends have gathered in Transylvania West." Creatively produced and edited using vintage radio shows, recordings and sound effects, this was broadcast for military audiences on Halloween. Segments include "Frankenstein" from *Suspense* (6-7-55) with Stacy Harris and Herb Butterfield; a narrative about a man who tries to kill a black cat; another about a man who has taken a life; and the story of "The Red Death." Musical selections include "Come with Me to Transylvania," "I Love You, Frankenstein," "I Want to Bite Your Hand," "Polyunsaturated Blood," "She's Mostly Ghostly," and "The Day My Heart Stood Still." Plus Boris Karloff with two "Tales of the Frightened," and vignettes by Jonathan Winters and Alice Ghostly. Also: "The Dark," Arch Oboler's classic story of bodies being turned inside-out. Four segments (30 min & 22 min & 30 min & 30 min) presented throughout today's *TWTD* program.

LIGHTS OUT (6-8-43) "The House is Haunted" by Arch Oboler. Strange things happen when



a man, a woman and a small boy arrive in their new home. *Ironized Yeast*, CBS. (29 min)
INNER SANCTUM (5-24-45) "Musical Score" starring Berry Kroeger. A ship hits a stray mine and sinks. Five people escape on a life raft and for 17 days one of the survivors constantly hums a musical score to his injured wife. He is murdered, but the song continues. *Lipton Tea and Soup*, CBS. (29 min)

HERMIT'S CAVE (1930s) The Hermit offers "ghost stories, weird stories, and murder, too." In "Castle by the Sea" a vacationing couple take refuge from the rain in an old castle inhabited by an old woman servant and ghosts. *WJR*, Detroit. (23 min)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3

★ RADIO AND WORLD WAR II

Storm Clouds Gather — Part 3

SCREEN GUILD THEATRE (2-18-40) "Next Time We Live" starring James Cagney, Olivia deHavilland and Jeffrey Lynn. A career girl and a newspaper reporter fall in love. Roger Prior hosts; Oscar Bradley and the orchestra. *Gulf Oil*, CBS. (28 min)

★ **PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** (3-5-40) "Salute to Americans" is the final show in a six-month patriotic series. Burgess Meredith is emcee with actors Walter Huston and Franchot Tone, comedienne Sheila Barrett, singer Woody Guthrie, and the Lynn Murray Singers. A musical salute to America's First Five families - people named Smith, Brown, Cohen, Johnson, and Jones. Plus a light-hearted "salute" to Jesse James by Norman Corwin. *Sustaining*, CBS. (27 min)

★ **EDWARD R. MURROW** (3-10-40) Reporting from London by short wave: "This is London. Relations between the United States and Britain are likely to get worse rather than better during the next six months... Englishmen realize that the (U.S.) presidential election is getting under way. They appreciate that the sentiment of the United States is overwhelmingly against participation in the war and that all presidential candidates will be at pains to convince the American people that their policies will not lead the country into war." CBS. (7 min)

★ **THE WORLD TODAY** (4-8-40) CBS correspondents world wide report on the news by short wave. William L. Shirer in Berlin: "The Germans tonight are calling the British 'desperadoes.'" Ed Murrow in London: "Not for a

long time has London had a day like today... gas masks... began to appear again this afternoon." *Sinclair Dealers*, CBS. (15 min)

★ **BEAT THE BAND** (6-16-40) Garry Moore presents "that new, novel radio game" with listeners trying to stump the band. Featured are Ted Weems and his Music, singers Perry Como and Marvel (Marilyn) Maxwell, whistler Elmo Tanner. Broadcast from Chicago, the show is followed by a war bulletin, and precedes *The Jack Benny Program* on the network. *Kix Cereal*, NBC. (28 min)

★ **EDWARD R. MURROW** (4-22-40) "This is London... The British believe that their officers and men will have a decided advantage over the Germans... Bombing conditions have been ideal during the past few nights - plenty of moon and just enough cloud, permitting Britain's bombers to plaster German airdromes with high explosives.. The Germans... were over the east coast of Britain again tonight.. Anti-aircraft guns were in action and British fighters went up. CBS. (4 min)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (6-16-40) It's the last show of the 1939-40 season and Jack is concerned that his summer replacement, *The Aldrich Family*, might be trying to replace him permanently. Guest Ezra Stone (Henry Aldrich) joins regulars Mary Livingstone, Dennis Day, Phil Harris and Don Wilson with Elliott Lewis and Verna Felton. This program follows *Beat the Band* on the network. *Jell-O*, NBC. (30 min)

★ **THE WORLD TODAY** (5-22-40) News from CBS correspondents Russell Hill in Berlin; Thomas Granden in Paris; and Edward R. Murrow in London: "Prime Minister Clement Atlee today quietly informed the British House of Commons that the government was taking over complete control of all persons and property - not just some persons and some personal property - but everything... all of it including the land. Men will work where and when and for such pay as the Minister of Labor may direct. Factories may be taken over... industries will be carried on for the community and not for private profit... the government could take your car, your house, your factory, your bank account... it could tell you what kind of work to do and how much you will be paid for it..." CBS. (15 min)

GANGBUSTERS (11-1-40) "Case of the Ape Bandit." Dwight Beard, a college athlete, turns killer. Col. H. Norman Schwartzkopf narrates, by proxy. Charles Stark announces. *Sloan's Liniment*, NBC. (29 min)

★ INDICATES A WORLD WAR II BROADCAST OF SPECIAL INTEREST



Chuck Schaden's

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

WDCB • 90.9 FM • SATURDAY 1 - 5 PM

NOVEMBER 2001

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10
★ RADIO AND WORLD WAR II
Storm Clouds Gather — Part 4

★ **THE WORLD TODAY (7-1-40)** Larry Elliott with reports from Edwin Hartridge in Berlin; Edward R. Murrow in London; Albert Warner in Washington. "Today in Europe, Germany has ordered the withdrawal of foreign diplomats from Norway, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg... In the West, despite the lull in warfare, there were more German air raids on Britain and more British raids on Germany." CBS. (15 min)

FORECAST (7-29-40) "Duffy's Tavern" is given a showcase on the air for the first time on this series offering listeners a chance to hear a program that may possibly appear on the network's schedule sometime in the future. Ed Gardner stars as Archie, the manager, who is trying to find an Irish tenor to please Duffy. Cast features F. Chase Taylor as Col. Stoopnagle, singer Gertrude Niesen, harmonica virtuoso Larry Adler, and John Kirby and the orchestra. Sustaining, CBS. (31 min)

★ **SELECTIVE SERVICE LOTTERY (10-29-40)** Reporter Bob Trout with coverage of the lottery drawing to begin the draft — the conscription of men into the military. President Roosevelt opens the ceremonies: "Members of your government are gathered here in this Federal building in Washington to witness the drawing of numbers as provided for in the Selective Act of 1940. This is a most solemn ceremony... We are mustering all our resources — manhood, industry and wealth — to make our nation strong in defense, for recent history proves all too clearly, I am sorry to say, that only the strong may continue to live in freedom and peace." Secretary of War Henry L. Stinson draws the first number, 158. CBS. (45 min)

FIRST NIGHTER (10-25-40) "Three Who Faced Death" starring Barbara Luddy and Les Trem-

ayne. An amnesia victim is followed home by a criminal who insists that he is her husband. Campana products, NBC. (27 min)

★ **MILWAUKEE'S FIRST DRAFTEE (10-29-40)** Mary Ann LaMay interviews the Selective Service lottery winner from the city's First Ward, Tony Cicerelli, and speaks with representatives of the local draft board. WISN, Milwaukee. (10 min)

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY (3-18-41)** Jim and Marian Jordan star. Fibber receives his draft notice to report to the Army. Cast includes Harold Peary as Gildersleeve, Isabel Randolph as Mrs. Uppington, Bill Thompson as Mr. Old Timer, and Gale Gordon, Harlow Wilcox, Frank Nelson, the King's Men, Billy Mills and the orchestra. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (30 min)

★ **FDR'S RETURN TO WASHINGTON (11-7-40)** Newsmen Hugh Conover, Reginald Allen and Arthur Godfrey cover the arrival of President Roosevelt's return to Washington (from Hyde Park) after his election as "the first third term president in the history of the United States." WJSV, CBS. (20 min)

★ **EDWARD R. MURROW (12-31-40)** At the end of the year, Murrow summarizes British war efforts in 1940: "This is London... the first year of the Famished Forties is ending. All Europe is on short rations. It was Hitler's year. The record of the last twelve months stretches endlessly back over blasted hopes, futile ambitions, false confidence, small men and the wreckage of proud and pleasant nations." CBS. (8 min)

★ **ELMER DAVIS (12-31-40)** Reporting on the attitude of Americans towards the European war in 1940: "A great majority of Americans have recognized in the past few months that the Europe we used to know is gone, that however this war comes out, that Europe can never be rebuilt, that it will be something different no matter who wins the war..." CBS. (3 min)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17 ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SHOW

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA (11-24-47) "Us Pilgrims" stars George Tobias with Mercedes McCambridge in a story of an immigrant's idea of a first Thanksgiving. DuPont, NBC. (30 min)

★ **GREAT GILDERSLEEVE** (11-16-41) Harold Peary stars as Throckmorton P. Gildersleeve. Gildy and his family decide to invite some servicemen to share Thanksgiving dinner. Kraft Foods, NBC. (30 min)

GOOD NEWS OF 1940 (11-23-39) Edward Arnold is host of this Thanksgiving Day broadcast starring Fanny Brice and Hanley Stafford as Baby Snooks and Daddy, Connie Boswell and guests Walter Huston and Raymond Walburn. Maxwell House Coffee, NBC. (25 min & 30 min)

JACK BENNY PROGRAM (11-16-41) There's lots of talk about Thanksgiving and a duck dinner at Jack's house. The Benny Athletic Actors present their annual Thanksgiving play, "He Fumbled the Ball," a drama of the gridiron. Jell-O, NBC. (29 min)

MR. PRESIDENT (1949) Edward Arnold stars as the President of the United States who is asked to declare a day of national thanksgiving. The identity of the nation's chief executive is not revealed until the end of the drama. Sustaining, ABC. (30 min)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24 ★ RADIO AND WORLD WAR II Storm Clouds Gather — Part 5

★ **WORLD NEWS TODAY** (4-14-41) CBS correspondents offer news on all fronts: Larry Lesueur in London; Harry Flannery in Berlin; Lee White in Belgrade; Albert Warner in Washington. "The Italian government has given up all hope of a peaceful settlement of the Yugoslavia situation." CBS. (15 min)

★ **JERGENS JOURNAL** (5-18-41) Walter Winchell, the "one man newspaper of the air" with European war headlines, stateside news, personal opinions, and lots of anti-Nazi propaganda. Jergens Lotion, NBC. (15 min) *Read the article about Walter Winchell on page 27.*

★ **FIBBER MC GEE AND MOLLY** (5-6-41) Jim and Marian Jordan star as the McGees of Wistful Vista. Molly urges Fibber to start a collection drive for the boys in the service who could

use games and books. Johnson's Wax, NBC. (29 min)

★ **COLUMBIA COVERS THE WAR** (6-1-41) News analyst Elmer Davis offers a behind-the-scenes look at the CBS newsroom and facilities as he describes the network's coverage of the European war. "After a year and a half, when many countries have fallen under foreign domination, it's naturally harder than it was in the beginning to get the news, or, perhaps... to get at the truth." CBS. (14 min)

★ **UNITED PRESS ON THE AIR** (6-7-41) Commentator Russ Hughes presents a dramatization of current news by representatives of the news service on the world's war fronts, showing how the United Press news gathering efforts work. Covered: the Siege of Tobruk and the Bombardment of Tripoli. UPI Stations. (13 min)

★ **COLUMBIA WORKSHOP** (7-6-41) "Between Americans," an informal program for informal people written and directed by Norman Corwin. "As Americans start thinking more about their country these days... as they wonder where we are headed..." Corwin wonders what this country means to Americans. Ray Collins narrates. Sustaining, CBS. (29 min)

TAILSPIN TOMMY (9-5-41) "Tungsten Mine Theft" is the first show in the series about Tommy Tompkins, daring hero of the skies and his flying friends Skeeter and Betty Lou. Adapted from the comic strip characters created by Hal Forrest. Sustaining, CBS. (28 min)

WORLD SERIES PREVIEW (9-23-41) On the eve of the first game of the 1941 World Series at Yankee Stadium, WOR reporters offer a preview of the contest between the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Yankees plus a birds-eye view of New York. WOR. (14 min)

★ **THE WORLD TODAY** (12-6-41) Reports from John Daly in New York, Bob Trout in London, Ford Wilkins in Manila, Albert Warner in Washington. "In less than 15 minutes Great Britain will officially be at war with Rumania, Hungary and Finland... regarded as German puppets. (In Manila) preparations for war in this area have reached a new high level. In Singapore, where the British Eastern Fleet is based, we hear that Royal Navy personnel have been recalled to ships... In Australia... all military leaves have been cancelled. (In the U.S.) White House and State Department waited for the reply which Japan is yet to make to Mr. Hull's note setting forth basic principle for a Far Eastern settlement." CBS. (15 min)

★ INDICATES A WORLD WAR II BROADCAST OF SPECIAL INTEREST

"When Radio Was" -- WBBM-AM 780

Monday thru Friday Midnight to 1 a.m. Host Stan Freberg

October, 2001 Schedule

MON/10-1 Dagnet (11-2-50) *The Big Church*; Vic & Sade (7-4-46) *Women's Auxiliary* Pt 1
 TUES/10-2 Vic & Sade Pt 2; Black Museum (1952) *Champagne Glass* Orson Welles
 WED/10-3 Have Gun, Will Travel (12-7-58) *Ella West*; Life With Luigi (6-26-49) *Life Insurance* Pt 1
 THU/10-4 Life With Luigi Pt 2; Richard Diamond, Pvt Detective (4-5-50) *Ivory Suite* Dick Powell
 FRI/10-5 Shadow (2-28-43) *Touch of Death*; Strange Dr. Weird (11-28-44) *Murder Comes Home*

MON/10-8 Casey, Crime Photographer (9-5-46) *Handkerchief*; Fibber McGee (4-7-42) Pt 1
 TUES/10-9 Fibber McGee *Scrap Drive* Pt 2; Six Shooter (9-27-53) *The Coward* James Stewart
 WED/10-10 Lone Ranger (1-26-49) *Choctaw Pass*; Phil Harris-Alice Faye (1-9-49) *Lost Ring* Pt 1
 THU/10-11 Phil Harris-Alice Faye Pt 2; Mercury Theatre (6-7-46) *Around the World in 80 Days*
 FRI/10-12 Suspense (10-19-44) *Eve* Nancy Kelly; Vic & Sade (10-31-41) *Broken Alarm Clocks*

MON/10-15 Broadway is My Beat (11-5-49) *Mei Ling*; Jack Benny (10-31-48) *Trick or Treat* Pt 1
 TUES/10-16 Jack Benny Pt 2; Boston Blackie (9-17-46) *Rental Racket* Dick Kollmar
 WED/10-17 Nick Carter (10-18-43) *State Prison Evidence*; Burns & Allen (5-25-43) Pt 1
 THU/10-18 Burns & Allen *School Board* Pt 2; Mysterious Traveler (2-16-44) *Accusing Corpse*
 FRI/10-19 Shadow (10-3-43) *Crystal Globe*; Bill Stern Sports Newsreel (11-1-43) Lou Little, guest

MON/10-22 Murder at Midnight (8-18-47) *Black Swan*; Our Miss Brooks (7-31-49) Pt 1
 TUE/10-23 Our Miss Brooks Pt 2; Creeps By Night (1944) *Strange Burial of Alexander Jordan*
 WED/10-24 The Whistler (10-16-44) *Tale the Dead Man Told*; Great Gildersleeve (10-31-51) Pt 1
 THU/10-25 Great Gildersleeve *Halloween* Pt 2; Escape (10-29-47) *Pollack the Porrah Man*
 FRI/10-26 Suspense (10-26-44) *Nightman*; Strange Dr. Weird (12-12-44) *Man Who Talked to Death*

MON/10-29 Hermit's Cave (1942) *House with a Past*; Ozzie & Harriet (10-31-48) *Haunted House* Pt 1
 TUE/10-30 Ozzie & Harriet Pt 2; Lights Out (12-15-42) *Knock at the Door* Arch Oboler
 WED/10-31 Inner Sanctum (11-12-45) *Wailing Wall*; My Favorite Husband (10-28-49) Pt 1

November, 2001 Schedule

THU/11-1 My Favorite Husband *Halloween Surprise* Pt 2; Tales of Texas Rangers (3-2-52) *Ice Man*
 FRI/11-2 Shadow (3-12-44) *Death to the Shadow*; Johnny Dollar (4-30-56) *Callicles Matter* Pt 1/5

MON/11-5 Philip Marlowe (1-22-49) *Orange Dog of Foe*; My Friend Irma (1-19-48) *Book Croak* Pt 1
 TUE/11-6 My Friend Irma Pt 2; Dimension X (5-13-50) *Admiral* Santos Ortega, Jack Grimes
 WED/11-7 Lone Ranger (1-28-49) *Ned Franklin's Grandad*; Red Skelton (1-22-46) *Celebrations* Pt 1
 THU/11-8 Red Skelton Pt 2; Gangbusters (1940s) *New York Narcotics King*
 FRI/11-9 Suspense (11-9-44) *You Were Wonderful* Lena Horne; Johnny Dollar (5-1-56) Pt 2/5

MON/11-12 Escape (11-12-47) *Young Man with Cream Tarts*; Life of Riley (6-4-44) *Fish Story* Pt 1
 TUE/11-13 Life of Riley Pt 2; Dangerous Assignment (7-16-49) *Sunken Ships* Brian Donlevy
 WED/11-14 Gunsmoke (10-3-52) *Cain*; Burns & Allen (6-1-43) *Traffic Court* Pt 1
 THU/11-15 Burns & Allen Pt 2; Philo Vance (5-31-49) *Red Duck Murder Case* Jackson Beck
 FRI/11-16 Shadow (5-26-46) *They Kill with a Silver Hatchet*; Johnny Dollar (5-2-56) Pt 3/5

MON/11-19 Green Hornet (8-6-41) *Paroles for Sale*; Aldrich Family (1952) *Thanksgiving* Pt 1
 TUE/11-20 Aldrich Family Pt 2; Cisco Kid (1950s) *Gunman for Hire* Jack Mather
 WED/11-21 Broadway is My Beat (11-26-49) *Mary Gilbert*; Abbott & Costello (11-25-43) Pt 1
 THU/11-22 Abbott & Costello *Thanksgiving* Pt 2; This is Your FBI (2-23-51) *Canvas Backed Frameup*
 FRI/11-23 Suspense (11-16-44) *Dead of Night* Robert Cummings; Johnny Dollar (5-3-56) Pt 4/5

MON/11-26 Dagnet (11-16-50) *The Big Parrot*; Jack Benny (11-7-48) *Hears an Echo* Pt 1
 TUE/11-27 Jack Benny Pt 2; CBS Radio Workshop (5-11-56) *The Enormous Radio* William Conrad
 WED/11-28 Lights Out (12-8-42) *Scoop*; Duffy's Tavern (12-14-43) Guest Dinah Shore Pt 1
 THU/11-29 Duffy's Tavern Pt 2; Rocky Jordan (11-21-48) *Man in the Morgue* Jack Moyles
 FRI/11-30 Shadow (6-2-46) *Death in a Minor Key*; Johnny Dollar (5-4-56) *Callicles Matter* Pt 5/5



PHOTOFEST

WALTER WINCHELL

BY RICHARD W. O'DONNELL

Either you loved him or you hated him. There was no in between. Or so it seemed.

Walter Winchell was one of the most controversial characters ever to appear on radio. His fifteen minute news shows were part gossip, a fair share of exclusive breaking news, and loaded with opinions. *His* opinions, of course. Winchell was never reluctant to take a stand when he felt one was in order.

Officially, when it started its long run on NBC, and later ABC, the program was called *The Jergens Journal* in honor of its sponsor, Jergens Lotion. But to the public, it was Winchell's show. And the beauty lotion was lucky to be along for the ride.

The Sunday newscast opened with the

Richard W. O'Donnell is a free-lance writer from Port Richey, Florida.

clatter of telegraph keys, gradually silenced by Winchell's rapid fire: "Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. North and South America and all the ships at sea. Let's go to press!" Right off the bat, Walter would start with his first "Flash!" followed by a few others. Then he would add his own wrinkle to other top takes of the day.

Except for a couple of commercials, Walter was non-stop all the way. It was claimed he could toss off more than 200 words a minute. Obviously. He needed a steady stream of hot copy to fill the fifteen minutes. His cupboard was always well stocked.

He picked his friends and enemies carefully. He hated Hitler long before it became fashionable. He also had unkind words for Mussolini, the Japanese war lords, and other international villains who came along later. He loved Roosevelt and

WALTER WINCHELL

Truman, Ike and MacArthur, to name a few, and even supported Senator Joseph McCarthy when he had gone out of style. He hated "the Commies."

Press agents loaded him down with a stockpile about show business stars, so he had constant copy available to supply his radio show and his daily newspaper column in the Hearst chain across the nation.

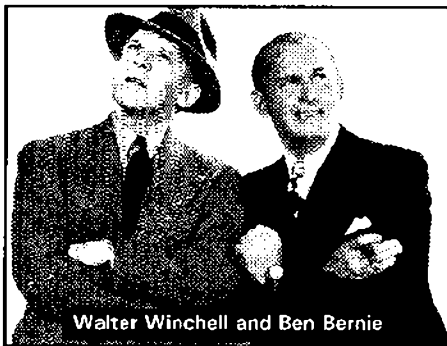
He also promoted worthy causes, helped newcomers get a break, and an unkind mention from him could break a play or, if he was supportive, make a hit out of a potential flop. Winchell, to say the least, was powerful.

A New Yorker by birth, he went into show business while a teenager, didn't really amount to much, and helped to bury vaudeville. Along the way, he started writing a column for theatrical publications. These columns quickly picked up readers and soon he was a fixture in the old New York Mirror. That was in the twenties and in no time at all he was one of the best known columnists in America.

Next came his radio show and it was in a class by itself. Winchell didn't hesitate to blast away at the high and the mighty if he felt it was necessary, yet he was a friend to those who needed a helping hand.

They say he had no legmen and that is probably true. But he did have a ghost writer who turned out his columns in a hurry when his schedule was jammed.

He was on the air for 24 years and in the same time spot for most of that time. Jergens Lotion quit as his sponsor in 1942, primarily because there was concern some of his remarks might lead to lawsuits or offend potential customers. There was no trouble finding other sponsors and Winchell's top ten show had a string of them until 1955 when TV took charge and radio was losing its' punch. Ironically, if



Walter Winchell and Ben Bernie

he was around today, he probably would be a fixture on one of the talk radio stations. He had opinions and he stated them and never ducked when the other side took a swing at him.

For years he had a friendly, well-publicized "feud" with orchestra leader Ben Bernie. He also appeared in some movies, but never took that part of the Hollywood scene seriously.

After he left radio, he turned to television and hosted a drama series called *The Walter Winchell Files*. Then, from 1959 to 1964, he was the narrator of ABC's great crime series *The Untouchables*. In the fifties newspapers started to change and evening editions, for the most part, began to fade away. And the gossip columnists who appeared in them regularly were no longer published. Winchell was among them. His reign was over. They say towards the end he used to drop by his old office, which was then at the New York Daily News, and swap tales about the good old days. He had memories, plenty of them, and young staffers delighted in hearing his stories about a time when journalism was an entirely different game.

Walter Winchell died in 1972. Like him or hate him, it must be admitted he had a tremendous impact on radio and printed news. In his own way, he was a giant in both businesses. ■

NOTE-- Tune in TWTD Nov. 24 to hear Walter Winchell's Jurgens Journal.

Chicago's Own Gloria Van

BY MICHAEL HAGGERTY

Eighteen-year-old Gloria Van was singing with the Jerry Shelton Band in the Glass Hat Room of Chicago's Congress Hotel in 1938 and the search was on for a musical partner for her. Shelton, who was to establish himself with Shep Fields of "Rippling Rhythm" fame, was looking to duplicate Kay Kyser's duo of Harry Babbitt and Ginny Sims.

A handsome young man by the name of Lynn Allison was given a tryout for the male half of the combination. He sang well, played a solid tenor sax and got the job. He then went about trying to capture Gloria's heart as well.

She had her very first glass of beer and a few laughs with him early in their relationship, but love was definitely not in bloom. "I didn't like him that much at first," she says. "He was a very nice-looking man and everything. There was no problem there. But I just didn't have eyes for him at all."

Tony Cabot was putting together a band for Johnny "Scat" Davis (who had popularized the song "Hooray for Hollywood"). Cabot, who himself became a member of that band, visited the Glass Hat in his talent-scouting quest. Gloria Van soon became the girl singer for the new Davis band.

As time went on Lynn Allison, who had a previous association with Davis, also joined the new band and this time romance blossomed between him and Gloria. They were married in 1943. Subsequently, Allison went into the armed forces and was assigned to the Glenn Miller Army Air Force band, unquestionably the most fa-



Gloria Van

mous military band of World War II.

Whenever Lynn's musical career would involve his moving from his and Gloria's Chicago base, she would quit whatever singing job she had and make the move with him. That's why her lengthy career has also included the bands of Gene Krupa, Hal McIntyre, Wayne King and Ted Fio Rito.

The Miller band was stationed at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. Singer Johnny Desmond and five Miller instrumentalists (including Allison) were fooling around with different harmonies one day in the mess hall and Miller happened upon them.

He liked the way the voices of the five men blended. "It's time to put your instru-

Michael Haggerty teaches psychology at Chicago's north suburban Oakton College.

CHICAGO'S OWN GLORIA VAN

ments back into your cases, boys," then Captain Miller announced. "You are my new vocal group."

Lynn was appointed lead singer of the aggregation, which was to go on to renown as the Crew Chiefs.

Lynn and Johnny Desmond had become good friends and as Gloria made her way to New Haven to join her husband, she felt cheered by the fact that Desmond had secured quarters for the couple in a building known as the Ambassador Arms. Gloria, a product of the Avenue N neighborhood on Chicago's Southeast Side, had long been familiar with the grandeur of the Ambassador Hotel in her hometown and she was looking forward to her new home.

"So I get there," she recounts, "and the Ambassador Arms is this horrible boarding house. It's nothing like the Ambassador in Chicago, believe me."

Desmond and his wife Ruthie lived downstairs from the Allisons. Gloria had a splendid reputation as a cook but all she had in New Haven was a hot plate. "One time I made a seven-course dinner with that hot plate and we invited the boys in the Miller band," she says. "But when the people who ran the building found out that I was making spaghetti and sauce and all that other stuff, they threw us out."

The Singing Sergeant then lined up another spot for them and Gloria pronounced this one "another terrible place."

Lynn and Gloria finally wound up in an old house. "We were on the main floor and the two old ladies who owned the house were in the basement," she recalls. "It was like something out of 'Arsenic and Old Lace'."

Gloria went to work at Molines, a New Haven dress shop, and when Miller's AAF band would take its daily musical swing through downtown, her boss would ex-

claim, "Gloria, they're coming down the promenade."

She would stand in the big shop window that faced the promenade and join with the multitudes lined along both sides of the street. Her heart raced as the band played such soon-to-be classics as "St. Louis Blues March" and "Blues in the Night March."

The music business was something Gloria wanted to keep her hand in, so Lynn regularly drove her into nearby New York City to the Brill building, the home of Tin Pan Alley.

One afternoon she was vocalizing with a piano player when Gloria was asked, "Can you come back later? I have to play now for an up-and-coming star."

She was a bit miffed "and in peeks this guy with a big nose," she recalls.

"I am so sorry," he apologized. "Let me introduce myself. My name is Dean Martin and one day I will do some big stuff."

"I thought, 'Oh yeah? Who are you?'" I said, 'I'm Gloria Van.' Here I thought I was something," she laughs, "and he chased me right out."

The Glenn Miller Band was, as planned, sent to England but Gloria's heart was broken nonetheless. "Lynn and I were so much in love," she explains.

She and Lynn's sister, Fran Allison (yes, *that* Fran Allison), had grown close and when Gloria returned to Chicago she and Fran decided to get an apartment together, since Fran's husband Archie was also overseas in the war. The apartment was located downtown, near the site of Mr. Kelly's nightclub.

"I thought that she was such a nice gal," Gloria says. "Frannie was so funny. She was also very giving. Everybody loved Fran."

On the foggy afternoon of December 15, 1944 Lynn was in the car that took Major Glenn Miller to the airport. Lynn was the last person to talk with Miller before the



bandleader boarded the plane for that fateful flight over the English Channel.

"I was appearing that evening at the 5100 Club," remembers Gloria. "Fran called me at the club and said that Glenn Miller's plane had crashed, but she assured me that Lynn had not been on that plane.

"Fran, don't put me on now," beseeched a sobbing Gloria, who never really trusted that her husband was safe until she received a letter from Lynn confirming that he had never been in danger.

After the war Fran and Archie lived in a coach house on North State Parkway, down the street from fellow Breakfast Clubber and former Miller band singer Johnny Desmond.

Fran was on her way to hitting her zenith as Aunt Fanny on Don McNeill's popular morning radio program. Lynn and Gloria gave Fran a substantial amount of money towards the purchase of that coach house.

Fran, of course, went on to even more success on television as part of *Kukla, Fran and Ollie*.

Fran and Archie, Gloria and Lynn, and Harry Stewart (known professionally as

Yogi Yorgesson) and his wife Gretchen (a former Goldwyn Girl), palled around town a lot in those days and enjoyed playing practical jokes on each other. Life was good again.

Gloria went on singing and spent a number of years in Chicago on staff for ABC, NBC (where she often worked with Art Van Damme) and CBS, where she was part of Gloria and the Vanguards. Her group was also known as Cinderella and Her Fellas on the Columbia network.

One noon she and Lynn were walking out of the Wrigley building and started south down Michigan Avenue. "And here's this fella coming north from Wacker Drive over the Michigan Avenue Bridge," she says. "He is grinning, smiling like mad at me, and I'm wondering who the heck this guy is.

"Lynn tells me that he thinks it's Dean Martin as Dean shouts over to me, 'Gloria Van!' And I tell Lynn that now I like this guy. Now he is my friend. He had actually remembered me."

Gloria Van and the Vanguards did a stint at the Oriental Theatre in the early 1950s.

In the late 1950s Fran made a special trip from Chicago to New York City for the sole purpose of introducing her sister-in-law on the *Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*. "Frannie was always very good to me," Gloria says.

Upon her death in 1989, Fran remembered the earlier kindness of Lynn and Gloria by leaving the bulk of her estate to them.

Lynn died in 1993, the year of his and Gloria's 50th wedding anniversary.

Today Gloria remains upbeat and cheerful in her semi-retirement in Chicago's northwest suburban Elk Grove Village. She plays more than 50 concerts a year and still has a following.

Her many fans agree that Gloria Van sounds as good as ever. ■

Andy Hardy: A Family Affair

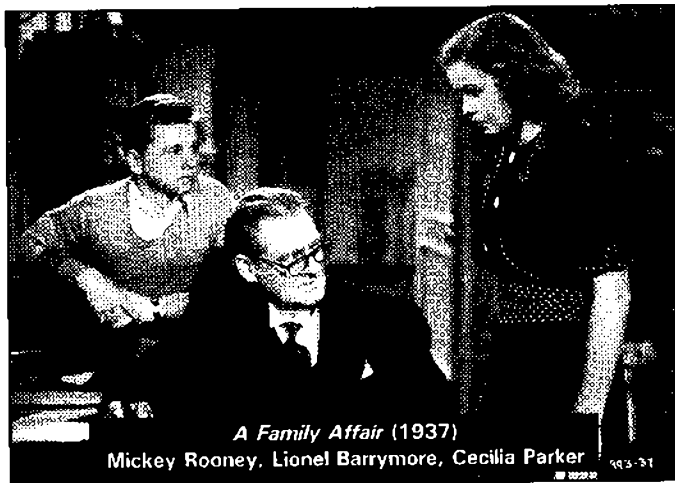
BY RANDALL G. MIELKE

In the late 1930s and early 1940s hardly a year went by without the movie-going public being able to see a young Mickey Rooney on the screen in the Andy Hardy series. Whether it was *Andy Hardy Gets Spring Fever* or *Love Finds Andy Hardy*, Andy Hardy (and Mickey Rooney) could be found almost everywhere.

The series, which was Metro Goldwyn Mayer's biggest money earner of all time, began in 1937, but did not start out as a series. The first film, *A Family Affair*, was, instead a B picture -- the second film on a double bill.

In those days a B picture could turn a sizeable profit. A Clark Gable movie at that time might cost \$1 million to make, but a B picture would cost about \$200,000. The B movie, however, could end up producing more profit than a Gable blockbuster. That was the case with the Andy Hardy films.

In *A Family Affair*, Lionel Barrymore plays Andy's father, Judge Hardy, and Spring Byington is Andy's mother. Cecilia Parker plays his sister and Sara Hayden is Aunt Millie. Margaret Marquis portrayed Andy's love interest Polly Benedict. At first, a young actor named Frankie Thomas was going to play Andy Hardy. However, Thomas seemed to be growing too fast and, by the time production began, he was too tall to play the part. Mickey



A Family Affair (1937)
Mickey Rooney, Lionel Barrymore, Cecilia Parker

PHOTOFEST

Rooney, at 16 years old, with his height seemingly on hold, took on the Andy Hardy role.

In the film, the Judge faces election woes when he signs an order halting a Carvel (Idaho) aqueduct which would be a boon to the county. Although reviews for this Andy Hardy film were mixed, the public loved it. Reportedly, some fans even refused to leave the theater after the lights went up, insisting on seeing the feature a second time. The public wanted more of "the Rooney kid."

Surprisingly, the studio was not sure if they should make another Andy Hardy film. Today it is hard to think that a studio would not jump at the chance of making a sequel, but back in the late 1930s, sequels were a rarity, especially for B pictures. So MGM executives decided to make another Hardy film with the theory that "if it flops,

Randall G. Mielke of Aurora, Illinois is an author and free-lance writer.

we will be well rid of the headache. If it clicks, then we'll know it is a trend and the public will want more of the Hardy family."

Except for Rooney, most of the other cast members were not available when the decision was made to do a second Hardy film. Barrymore was refusing to play Judge Hardy again because

he did not want to be stuck in a B picture series and he couldn't get the salary he demanded.

So, Louis B. Mayer, head of the studio, replaced Barrymore with his close friend Lewis Stone. The other pivotal parts, Mrs. Hardy and Polly Benedict, were recast with Fay Holden and Ann Rutherford, respectively.

The second film was *You're Only Young Once* (1937) in which the Hardys go swordfishing off Catalina during the Judge's vacation, but return home so the judge can help ease the financial woes of a publisher friend. The public response to *You're Only Young Once* was even more enthusiastic than the first film and the third opus, *Judge Hardy's Children* (1938) was immediately put into production.

The formula of the Andy Hardy series was fairly simple. Polly Benedict was Andy's steady girl, but often a new face with a smashing figure would turn up in Carvel and Andy would fall for her. She, usually being older and more sophisticated, would then fall for an older guy, and in the end a remorseful Andy would return to Polly, who, of course, would forgive him. There was always at least one man-to-man talk between Andy and Judge Hardy,



Andy Hardy's Private Secretary (1940)
Ann Rutherford, Mickey Rooney, Kathryn Grayson

PHOTOFEST

whose sage advice would set Andy straight about his life and loves.

Gradually, MGM realized that Mickey Rooney was the star of the series. The fourth Hardy picture, *Love Finds Andy Hardy* (1938) also was a money-maker. It was pretty clear that the name "Andy Hardy" would be in the title in some form in each of the pictures that followed. There were 17 Andy Hardy pictures in all.

Theories on the phenomenal success of the Hardy pictures take two general paths. There is one school of thought which believes that the American public was fed up with message pictures like *The Grapes of Wrath* and was looking for pure escapism to take its mind off its own troubles. But there is another school that leans toward a simpler explanation: audiences were identifying with the lifestyle and problems of a typical American family, who lived in a typical American two-story clapboard house, in a typical American town known as Carvel, Idaho.

But consistency also helped the Hardy family appeal. Movie fans liked to see familiar faces each time they visited the theatre and the Andy Hardy series provided that familiarity. Of the 17 Andy Hardy films, Rooney appeared in all of them. The

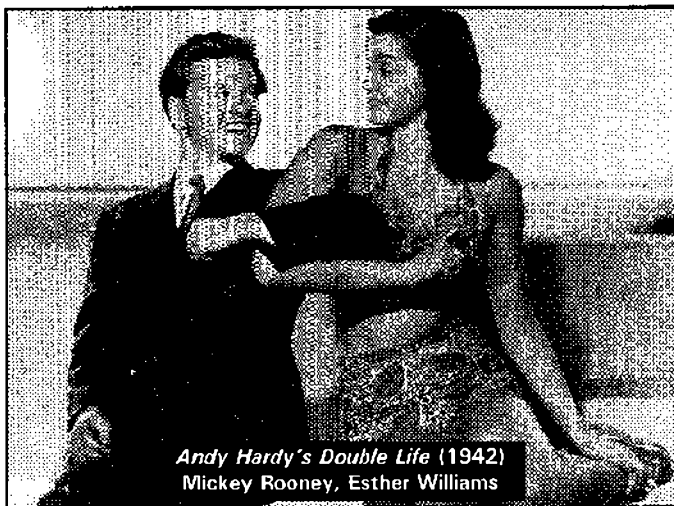
ANDY HARDY: A FAMILY AFFAIR

supporting cast members of Ann Rutherford, Cecilia Parker, Fay Holden, Sara Hayden, and Lewis Stone appeared in anywhere from 12 to 15 of the 17 films.

The Andy Hardy series also introduced other female stars to film audiences. *Andy Hardy's Private Secretary* (1940) featured Kathryn Grayson in her film debut and

Andy Hardy's Double Life (1942) presented Esther Williams in her first screen role. *Courtship of Andy Hardy* (1942) helped launch the career of Donna Reed. In *Love Finds Andy Hardy* (1938) Lana Turner had a small part in the film. The same film also featured Judy Garland. Although Rooney and Garland would be united in several musicals over the years, this was their first film together.

But eventually the series became a little too predictable. The 15th film in the series, *Andy Hardy's Blonde Trouble* (1944),



Andy Hardy's Double Life (1942)
Mickey Rooney, Esther Williams

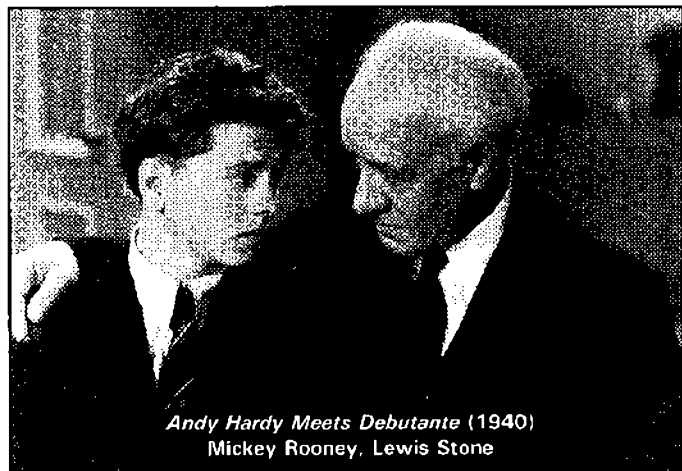
PHOTOFEST

had difficulty at the box office, even though it came close to being as profitable as the prewar Andy Hardys. In it, Rooney is allowed to age enough to become a university student, but in the words of one critic, his "sex life remained at the gee-whiz-she-kissed-me stage."

So the initial part of the series ended in 1946 with *Love Laughs at Andy Hardy* in which Andy returns from the Army to resume his schooling and get his law degree. But 12 years later, in an attempt to revive the series, Rooney produced the film *Andy*

Hardy Comes Home (1958), in which Andy returns to Carvel as a grown-up with a family of his own.

Initially the script for *Andy Hardy Comes Home* called for Rooney to play Andy Hardy as a young judge, married to his high school sweetheart, Polly Benedict. Ann Ruth-



Andy Hardy Meets Debutante (1940)
Mickey Rooney, Lewis Stone

PHOTOFEST

erford was supposed to play Polly, but she turned it down. It was also Rutherford who reportedly suggested to Rooney to change the plot of the film.

"In the first place," said Rutherford at the time, "very few people grow up to marry their childhood sweethearts. And in the second place, Andy Hardy should not become Judge Hardy. Andy Hardy would not grow up to be a judge. Andy Hardy would grow up to be Bob Hope or Red Skelton or a great radio performer."

As producer of the film, Rooney must have taken Rutherford's advice. In the end, Andy Hardy came back as an attorney for an aircraft corporation seeking to purchase a parcel of land in Carvel. His wife was a girl named Jane, whom he met at work. Mickey Rooney's son, Teddy, played Andy Hardy Jr. and Rooney was careful to preserve the "heart-to-heart" talk that audiences were so fond of in early Hardy films.

Andy Hardy Comes Home tried to capture some of the magic of the past by having the aging Andy daydream off and on about his youth. In these sequences there were inserts from the early Hardy films showing the young Andy with his old high school flames like Judy Garland, Lana Turner and Esther Williams. But sentimentality was not enough to carry the film. *Andy Hardy Comes Home* was neither a critical nor financial success, and wound up in most theatres on the lower half of a double bill. Moviegoers had outgrown Andy Hardy.

But, for a very long time the exploits of the Hardy family were a comfort and a treat for movie audiences everywhere. The Andy Hardy series of films, with the feelings of warmth and congenial family life, captured the essence of a simpler time. ■

NOTE— Tune in TWTID October 6 to hear an episode of the Hardy Family radio series.



Hardy Family Films

1937

A Family Affair

You're Only Young Once

1938

Judge Hardy's Children

Love Finds Andy Hardy

Out West with the Hardys

Andy Hardy's Dilemma

1939

The Hardys Ride High

Andy Hardy Gets Spring Fever

Judge Hardy and Son

1940

Andy Hardy Meets Debutante

Andy Hardy's Private Secretary

1941

Life Begins for Andy Hardy

1942

Courtship of Andy Hardy

Andy Hardy's Double Life

1944

Andy Hardy's Blonde Trouble

1946

Love Laughs at Andy Hardy

1958

Andy Hardy Comes Home

Margarita Carmen Cansino — better known as Rita Hayworth — has made her entire family very happy. The young lady has won her spurs, as the phrase goes, in both fields of endeavor that her parents plotted for her.

Rita's mother had always wanted her to be an actress, and do honor to some of her Shakespearean actor forebears, including one Joseph Haworth, who trouped with the great Edwin Booth.

Rita's father, however, wanted his girl to be a dancer, a vocation at which the Cansinos have been celebrated for generations.

Rita has scored both as actress and dancer, so everybody is satisfied.

Rita Hayworth is a half-Latin from Manhattan. Her father was born in Seville, Spain; her mother in Washington, D.C. Rita has two brothers, Eduardo, Jr., and Vernon, both of whom served in the army in World War II.

Rita went to grade and high schools in New York City, her best subjects being English and basketball. And all the time, for her father, she studied dancing. And all the time, for her mother, she studied diction and stage deportment.

She started dancing with her father at the age of four, and made her professional debut with him at six. She was quickly retired, however, because the parental Cansino dancing act was so agile that it was feared Rita might get in the way some time and get hurt.

This is the official Columbia Pictures biography for Rita Hayworth, issued by Lou Smith, Director of Publicity, on December 2, 1948. Rita Hayworth died in 1987 at age 66.

Along about when Rita was 14 — and could pass for older — she joined the Cansino dancing act in earnest, and two years later she was dancing with her father in film theatre stage presentations. This led to a four-week engagement for father and daughter at the swank Agua Caliente Casino.

Four weeks stretched out to slightly more than two years, in the course of which Rita became the toast of all tourists who ventured over the line from San Diego, and during which she commuted to Hollywood briefly to do a dancing turn in the picture *Dante's Inferno*. The picture failed of its expectations, but not Rita. The studio, Fox, saw in Scnorita Cansino what looked to be a good bet for larger roles. She was lined up for the lead in *Romona*, but a switch in executives cost Rita the part, which was played eventually by Loretta Young. This all but broke Rita's heart. She was cast in leads of a succession of B pictures, instead, and did them very creditably.

Her real screen debut was with Warner Baxter in *Under the Pampas Moon*, and her first part of consequence was with Warner Oland in *Charlie Chan in Egypt*.

Not long afterward, she changed her studio affiliation to Columbia, and decided to shuck her dancing with her Spanish name, as supposedly detrimental to her career. So she gave away her dancing costumes and adopted her mother's family name, plus a "y," suitably placed, to become Rita Hayworth, actress.

It might be noted, however, that she still possesses and treasures the castanets with which she first clicked her way to fame. Along with a silver cigarette box the Hollywood news photographers gave her some years later, as the "most photogenerous"



actress of the year, the castanets are among her most valued mementos.

Rita, despite the dancing tradition of the Cansino family, won her screen spurs in straight roles such as that of Dona Sol in *Blood and Sand*, as the menace in *Only Angels Have Wings*, and as the glamorous feminine lead in *The Strawberry Blonde*.

When she was well established as a dramatic actress, Rita again donned her dancing shoes and joined forces with the nimble Fred Astaire for the musicals *You'll Never Get Rich* and *You Were Never Lovelier*.

As the star of musical films, Rita became one of the top favorites of motion pictures. In Columbia's famous *Cover Girl*, she received overwhelming acclaim, and she repeated her success in *Tonight and Every Night*.

Following these musical triumphs, Rita had a desire to return to dramatic parts. She was starred in *Gilda*, the story of a glamorous siren, in which Glenn Ford appears as her leading man. Rita rated raves for her histrionic work, and both press and public were enthusiastic about her performance.

Following *Gilda*, Rita again turned musical in *Down to Earth*, a Technicolor fantasy in which she played Terpsichore, goddess of song and dance. And then she once more switched to a dramatic role in *The Lady from Shanghai*, in which she starred with her husband, Orson Welles.

After this Rita combined an intensely dramatic role with vivid gypsy music and dancing when she played the title role in *The Loves of Carmen*. Technicolor picturization of the Prosper Merimee novel (not a film version of the Bizet opera).

It was just this role which Rita always has felt herself destined to play. A Spanish dancer since infancy, Rita points out that her paternal grandmother after whom she was named Carmen, actually was a worker in a Seville cigarette factory. Thus, claims Rita, the role belongs to her by right of inheritance as well as ability.

Rita and Orson Welles were married September 7, 1943 — a second marriage for each. They separated and reconciled, but to no avail, and on December 1, 1948, Rita was granted a final decree of divorce in Los Angeles. She had previously been given custody of their daughter, Rebecca, who was born December 17, 1944.

Today Rita has achieved the pinnacle of Hollywood stardom, and acquired a phenomenal fan following. When some of her devoted GI fans — of whom she has literally millions — pasted her photograph upon the first atom bomb tested at Bikini, Rita's picture hit the front pages of newspapers all over the world. And as proof of her following among service men during the latter months of the war, Rita was voted the GI's favorite glamour girl in a world-wide poll of American soldiers, sailors and marines. At New Year's, 1948, the Army newspaper Stars and Stripes, chose Rita as its dream girl of 1947. ■

NOTE Tune in TWTD October 6 to hear Rita Hayworth on radio.



OUR READERS/LISTENERS WRITE

WE GET MAIL

ELMHURST, IL-- We have listened to your radio program for many years. We especially enjoy your low key approach in this fast-paced world. The magazine is particularly informative and enjoyable. Thanks so much. --**BETTY DE WITT**

GLENWOOD, IL-- I love your show and have been a long-time listener, ever since I got married in 1986 and discovered you purely accidentally (my good fortune). You have been my Saturday companion. I also love that you have Ken Alexander on now every week as a regular on your show. He's a great guy, quite knowledgeable and a wonderful asset. I had the great pleasure of meeting him at the studio some months ago when I attended while you were on vacation. I was also a long-time listener of WNIB and am so relieved to hear his wonderfully familiar voice.

--**CHRIS BEAUCHAMP**

E-MAIL-- I was glad to hear that you are thinking of doing the four years of WW II shows again. I cannot tell you enough how much I enjoyed it when you did it in the 1990s. I have been listening for at least twenty years. --**BRIAN BUTLER**

(**ED. NOTE--** Thank you. We're not going to repeat the WWII series, but rather add to it. See comments on page 19.)

OAK FOREST, IL-- The article on Bozo's Circus (Aug-Sept, 2001) was great. I have one of the Cuddly Duddly dogs from when I was a child. It's a shame that shows like

that are no longer on. --**RICHARD PENN**

VERNON HILLS, IL-- I have been a subscriber ever since you began the "Nostalgia Newsletter" many years ago. Of all the issues, the latest (Aug-Sept, 2001) was the best. I read it from start to finish in one setting. It gave me more happy memories than any other. Specifically:

Ken Alexander's "The Old Trains." I remember as a child my father taking me to watch the trains go by and to wave to the conductor in the caboose. The price of soot or a cinder in the eye was a small price to pay for the adventure. I wrote Ken a year or so ago telling him how much my father enjoyed my reading Ken's articles to him when he was in his 90s and lost his sight. That current article brought back fond memories of making my dad so happy in his last years.

In the '50s I listened to Art Hellyer on WIND when his show was sponsored by Downtown Nash. I remember Eddie Hubbard and, on one occasion, put a call in to him and had a good conversation.

I also remember having to drink all the Ovaltine so I could get the label so I could order my Captain Midnight Secret Squadron Mystic Sun-God ring. I sure had a lot of fun for 15 cents (?) even though I didn't care for the Ovaltine!

And Charlie Chan. I think I've seen all the movies and I thoroughly enjoyed Randall Mielke's "The Men Who Played Charlie Chan." He limited his article to the movies, but I remember listening to Charlie Chan on

BOZO'S CIRCUS FOLLOW-UP

George Pappas, webmaster of WGN-TV's *Bozo's Timeline*, was kind enough to set us right on some details in the *Bozo* article in the August-September *Nostalgia Digest*. Although Larry Harmon claimed to have helped the aging Stan Laurel with some comic routines, Pappas said he never did. In addition, there were 13 pieces in the *Bozo's Circus* band, not 16. The article should have said Bob Bell was 38 when he started as Bozo, rather than 32. The expanded version of the show was called *The Bozo Super Sunday Show*, not "Bozo's Super Sunday Circus." Our apologies for errors in the names of Alan Livingston, Marshall Brodien, Don Sandburg and Robin Eurich. And although WGN general manager John Vitanovec called Bozo "the longest running, locally produced children's show," Pappas gives that distinction to *Chief Halftown* in Philadelphia. For more information, visit www.wgntv.com/station/bozotime/

--**WAYNE KLATT**

radio, played by Santos Ortega. I'd appreciate knowing if my memory is correct.

By now you know that the recent issue meant a great deal to me. --**DAVE HANSON**
(ED. NOTE-- We're glad you enjoyed that issue so much. On radio, Charlie Chan was played, at various times, by Walter Connolly (1932-38), Ed Begley (1944-47) and Santos Ortega (1948).)

BARRINGTON, IL-- Ken Alexander, in his article about the old trains, was right on target in stating that today's diesel-electric locomotives can't properly be called "choo-choos" because they don't make the onomatopoeic exhaust sounds associated with steam engines. But he is incorrect in saying that all steam locomotives were black. For example, the Southern Pacific "Daylight" locomotives were painted red, orange, and silver to match their passenger cars. Likewise, the B&O had their "Royal Blue" crack streamliners that matched in color from front to back. And the Milwaukee Road's "Hiawathas" had a stainless-steel livery trimmed in red and orange. There were probably others as well.

--**JACK MATHIS**

(ED. NOTE-- Ken says his memory --like his dreams-- is in black and white.)

KENOSHA, WISCONSIN-- Thanks for all your years of great radio. I was born in 1937 so grew up listening to a lot of the fine programs and people you play on the air and write about in *Nostalgia Digest*. Living in Kenosha I can no longer get your show. However, I do enjoy the *Digest* and am sending in my renewal. Keep up the good work and thanks to your new station.

--**CHUCK KENNEDY**

ROCKFORD, IL-- In Rockford I could not get WNIB and now cannot get WDCB either, But I wish I could. However, I LOVE *Nostalgia Digest* and have subscribed for many years. I'd hate to do without it. I love the articles and memories that go back many years. If I happen to be near Chicago on Saturdays, I can pick up WDCB, but not at Rockford. I get WBBM loud and clear weekday nights.

--**RUTH LUNDQUIST**

LAKE GENEVA, WISCONSIN-- An important part of my life was changed on February 10, 2001. I had been a steady listener to *TWTD* every Saturday afternoon for 10 years. I

was ice fishing on Lake Geneva that day, listening to WNIB. I have not heard the program since the change to WDCB. I have become resigned to not being able to receive the WDCB signal and often suffer severe withdrawal pains. I have been a long-time subscriber to *Nostalgia Digest* and have each copy I ever received and have encouraged several friends in the area to subscribe. I will continue to be thrilled when it arrives in the mail. --**VERN STEPHAN**

WEST CHICAGO, IL-- Congratulations on finding a new home for *TWTD* out here in DuPage County. I couldn't imagine what my Saturday afternoons would have been without your great program. I've been a "charter" listener since I saw the [1970] article in the now-defunct Chicago Daily News when you first went on the air. Thanks for all these years of quality programming. --**MOLLY TAYLOR**

CHICAGO-- I am thankful that *TWTD* continues on WDCB and also thankful to listener Martin J. Dzak for passing on the info on how to pick up WDCB with the Radio Shack antenna he recommended (April May, 2001 issue). One of my summer projects is to install the antenna, since all of my home radios failed the WDCB "test." I live in the Lincoln/Ashland area of Chicago. Ironically I bought a new car last month and one of the pleasant surprises was that I can now receive WDCB with no problems. Until I finish the in-house antenna project, I will be spending Saturday afternoons in the car. --**LEE KARRAS**

NAPERVILLE, IL-- Thank you very much for the nice tribute to my father, Russ Rennaker, in your June/July issue. He did enjoy his early years in radio and liked to write and share those memories. Thank you for printing so many of those stories. My whole family is estatic that we can continue to enjoy *TWTD* on WDCB. I intend to send my contribution to them in appreciation for adding you to their broadcast schedule. When my 15-year-old grandson visits from California in the summer, he enjoys listening to *TWTD* also. Since my children around here also listen on Saturday afternoon, you had four generations of listeners when my father was still living. Saturdays would not be complete without *TWTD*. --**BARBARA R. HOCH**



MORE MAIL

NORTHBROOK, IL-- Oops! In the August/September issue, in the page 19 article by Donald Berhent, he says, "Living in the... village...15 miles east of Cleveland in Ohio..." Then later, "...my family ...headed 120 miles west to ...Marblehead, Pennsylvania..." Going from Ohio to Pennsylvania, shouldn't that word have been "east"?

--PHIL SCHWIMMER

(ED. NOTE-- You would think so, but, as Mr. Berhent informed us after publication, it should have read "Marblehead Peninsula" which is in Ohio. It was our error, not the writer's. We're gonna have to get a new proofreader one of these days. Sorry.)

CHICAGO-- As a faithful listener and subscriber, it is my duty to inform you that the program *Hollywood Theatre of the Ear*, aired on *TWTD* June 30, would have killed radio as we know it. This was the lowest quality program I have ever heard on your show. The sound effects (none noticed) left you wondering where they were, the music was a badly played synthesizer, and the actors were not much better than junior high school. Only the announcer, Jackson Beck, showed talent. Please keep to the "old" radio shows. That is what radio is supposed to be. On a good note, I enjoy Ken Alexander's basement "information." It really adds to the atmosphere of the program. Keep up the good work.

--ROD FONTAINE

(ED. NOTE-- We wanted to present an example of the kind of dramatic radio that was being produced these days. Others have said, but did not write, that they enjoyed the example of "new-time" radio we broadcast on that day.)

GLEN ELLYN, IL-- My wife and I celebrated our 35th Wedding Anniversary recently. I wanted to go somewhere really special for this day so, finally, after hearing about it on your show for about 300 times, we made reservations at Don Roth's Blackhawk in Wheeling. Eating there was a wonderful experience! Karen had rack of lamb while I went for the Boston Scrod, and of course, they were delicious! The spinning salad

bowl offered me the finest salad I have ever eaten, and I'm usually lukewarm about salads of any kind. When we mentioned our 35th, we received a free dessert and a complimentary cassette of music from the Blackhawk of old. So thanks so much, Chuck, for putting the message out so often. We did tell them we were there because we heard of the place on your show. --GEORGE LITTLEFIELD

WESTCHESTER, IL-- I teach journalism and advise student publications at University of Chicago High School on the South Side. We devote Saturdays alternately to working on the school newspaper and yearbook and over the decades my students have become accustomed to *Those Were The Days* accompanying their weekend work.

They've learned a lot of radio history in the process and also learned that great humor and music prove timeless. As a kid growing up in St. Louis, I was on a children's show on KXLW radio out of suburban Clayton. A planned career in radio turned into a career in newspapering and then teaching, but my love of radio remained. It goes way back to coming in from playtime Saturdays to hear *Let's Pretend* and having permission to stay up late various nights to hear favorite shows such as *My Friend Irma*. I still remember the line from that show that kept me, the kid, laughing literally for days: "Irma, the day they handed the brains out you must have been absent." --WAYNE BRASLER

NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

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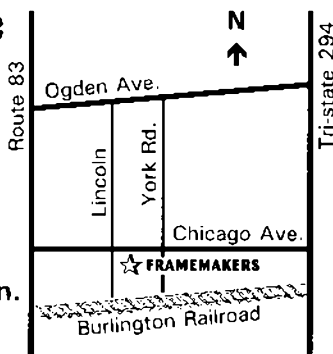
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← **WALTER WINCHELL**

was one of radio's most controversial characters. Read Richard W. O'Donnell's article on page 27.

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