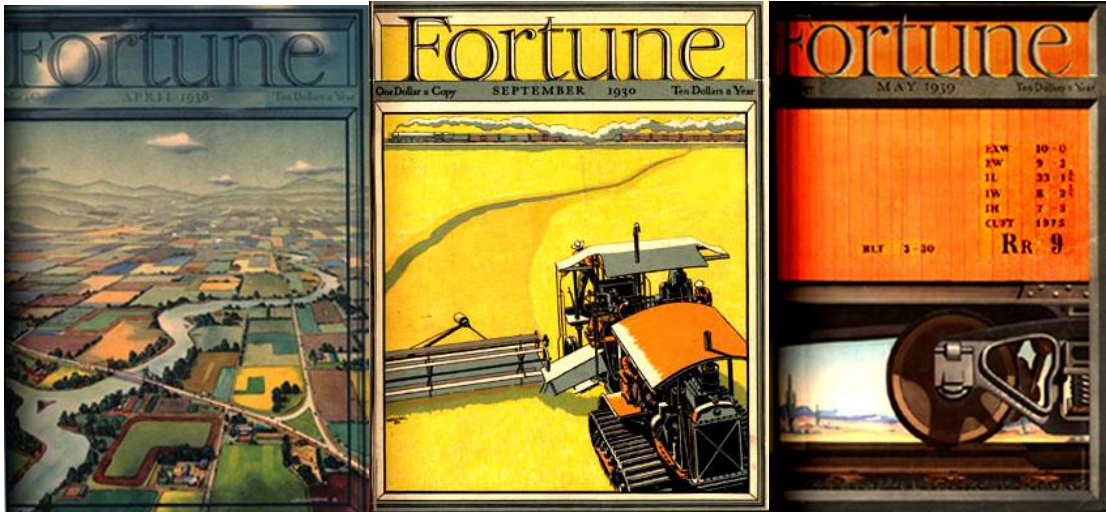


GATHER 'ROUND THE RADIO
 E-NEWSLETTER FOR THE METROPOLITAN
 WASHINGTON OLD-TIME RADIO CLUB
 THE GRTR STUDIO EDITION



THE ROTOGRAVURE ISSUE
 NOVEMBER 19, 2018

THE SET-UP

Hello fine listeners, and welcome once again to the mythical confines of the GRTR Studio, where we broadcast information and inspiration about radio, music, nostalgia, personality, books, and beyond. Terry Gross continues to be our inspiration. Listen to her “Fresh Air” radio show, live or podcast; check your NPR listings for a station where you can tune in.

The storm of pellet snow and icy rain has run its course up the northeast and out to sea, and we’re ready to turn the page and light up the skies. The creek is running fast out back, and here in our little tinpot studio we’ve checked for leaks and swept the standing water off the patio. The boilers are heating up good, and Chuck has fine-tuned the old sound board, coaxing out the squawks and hums, ready for the broadcast. He’s piping in a couple of songs off the album *Rosemary Clooney Jazz Singer*, a compilation where she lends her rich

voice to arrangements that she loves, with big band and jazz combo alike. In the Mud Room Chuck and Joanie and I are having coffee and cornbread and looking over a few old magazines, setting the stage for a nostalgic afternoon. The brilliant and timeless lyric comes to mind, from Irving Berlin: "...you'll find that you're / In the rotogravure..."

We have a guest for the broadcast! It's Walden Hughes, that stalwart producer and guardian of nostalgia, who is in California, waiting for us on a coast-to-coast telephone connect. Joanie eyes the clock and we head down the hall.

ON THE AIR

Chuck is fading on Cole Porter's "It's Bad for Me," Rosemary Clooney and the Benny Goodman Sextet, 1955.

Hello everyone, and welcome once again to the broadcast. We are so lucky to welcome Walden Hughes to the show today. It's a good connection Walden, so we might jump in by asking about the recent SPERDVAC convention.

Walden: Good to hear you, Mark. The convention was great, best ever, some say. Re-creations, presentations, and one interview was accomplished by a phone call from the stage.

GRTR: Fantastic! Was it about a show?

Walden: Yes, the Phil Harris and Alice Faye show. Ann Whitfield played the daughter on the radio show, and she was on the phone.

GRTR: Sounds great, and aside from SPERDVAC, another of your activities is the Yesterday USA internet radio program. John and Larry Gassman and you are the hosts, and you interviewed three authors from our Club, Michael Hayde, Jack French, and John Abbott.

Walden: That was good, it's important for people to realize the amount of research that goes into collecting material and writing books, a lot of original material is out there, and it's not all on the Internet.

GRTR: Writers learn about going to libraries, reading microfilm and reference books, and they do lots of photocopying.

Walden: That's right and remind your listeners that all three interviews are posted on the Club website.

GRTR: For sure, there's a link right on the MWOTRC home page, just click on Yesterday USA. And also Walden, you've done some research and collecting for some pretty well-known people in entertainment circles. Can you tell us about that?

Walden: First, there was Kitty Kallen. She was on Ray Briem's radio talk show around 1990. I would always call in and answer Ray's quiz questions about old-time radio. Then once I asked Kitty about her time on the *Danny Kaye Show* and I mentioned that I had several copies of radio shows she had appeared on. That began my research in finding radio shows, television films and records that Kitty didn't have.

GRTR: Good start. Did you interview her on the air?

Walden: Yes, and that led to interviews with several more well-known folks. And then Kitty introduced me to Nancy Sinatra, and I did lots of research for her and the Sinatra family.

MUSIC BRIDGE AND COMMERCIAL

GRTR: Walden, stay on the line, OK? We have to go to commercial. Chuck pipes in "Together," Rosemary Clooney singing with the Hi-Lo's, led by Frank Comstock's orchestra 1957.

The Dayton Dragons are making local headlines, by sponsoring Walks to support research for breast cancer and for Alzheimer's disease. Recently, at a November the 8th luncheon, the team's front office won an award for community service from the *Dayton Business Journal*. Good work in the off-

season; come the new year we're pretty sure they will renew our sponsorship. All for now, back to the program.

GRTR: Walden, are you on the line?

Walden: Yes, I'm on the line. Did I recognize Rosemary Clooney on your bridge music? What a great singer!

GRTR: Yes, it's a compilation from 2003, part of the Columbia Legacy series, produced by Michael Feinstein. Remastered, the album sounds great. Now Walden perhaps we could talk a bit about your productions around town, outside of Yesterday USA. In the notes you sent me you mentioned Oceanside.

Walden: That's right, it was a great evening at Oceanside Public Library, we did a radio re-creation of "The Maltese Falcon." The Library had won a grant for their reading program, so they got in touch with us. I had plenty of help, too! Larry and John Gassman hosted the event; and the Library supplied a small budget which enabled us to have Tommy Cook and Gloria McMillan in the cast.

GRTR: Tommy Cook, let me think now...

Walden: Time's up! Tommy Cook played Junior on "The Life of Riley," and Gloria McMillan played Harriet on the "Our Miss Brooks" show.

GRTR: Don't worry, I'm taking notes! Can you tell about how you worked with Norman Corwin? People in the Club and all over the world were quite thrilled when a documentary about Corwin's career won an Oscar in 2006. You remember, it was called "A Note of Triumph: The Golden Age of Norman Corwin," produced by Eric Simonson. And you wrote in your notes that you had interviewed Norman Corwin several times on Yesterday USA.

Walden: That's right, it was always nice to talk with him. Corwin's last public appearance was at the Grand Wilshire Hotel in May 2011. The Recorded Sound Archivist group asked if I could get Norman Corwin to attend their event. Norman agreed to participate and selected his script "The Undecided Molecule"

as the radio play to be re-enacted. Michael Kacey, Norman's business manager, and Norman agreed to direct the show together. We talked about casting, and I suggested Janet Waldo who played Corliss Archer on "Meet Corliss Archer." Norman wanted to include Norman Lloyd in the cast. Lloyd was born in 1914 and was part of Orson Welles "Mercury Theater." He appeared in the first production of "The Undecided Molecule" in 1945. The fact that Lloyd was in the 2011 production was remarkable because of the 66-year span. That production also included Dick Van Patten, Tommy Cook, Ivan Cury, Richard Herd, and Marvin Kaplan. Michael Kacey directed the show and Dr. Michael Biel gave a one-hour talk on Norman's career. I introduced the cast.

GRTR: Great story, Walden. We're just about out of time. Joanie keeps an eye on the clock here for network feed, so, a couple of things about your future?

Walden: I'm developing Hughes Productions, which is a multi-platform entertainment concept. I'll continue curating memorabilia collections for various people. I'll keep producing and keeping up with the hobby.

GRTR: Thanks very much for talking with us, Walden, and best of luck with your pursuits. Thanks for tuning in everybody! Keep those cards and letters coming! Soup and sandwiches in the Mud Room? But of course! Mark A.



Hudson House Theater, Los Angeles.