

RADIO RECALL

Dec. 2017, Volume 34, No. 6



THE CALICO DRAGON AND THE CINNAMON BEAR

Circa March and April 1935, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer theatrically released an eight-minute cartoon titled *The Calico Dragon*, as part of their series of animated cartoons known as the Happy Harmonies. With Walt Disney offering a series of musical animated cartoon shorts, Silly Symphonies, and with Warner Brothers producing Merrie Melodies, MGM's first foray into the animation business was Happy Harmonies – each containing a whimsical song.

In *The Calico Dragon*, a little girl falls asleep after reading a fairy tale to her doll, and quickly observes many of her toys coming to life in a land of make believe. The toys act out a fairy tale in which a prince fights a three-headed calico dragon. The cartoon would later be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Short Subject (Cartoon).

So what does this 1935 animated cartoon have to do with *The Cinnamon Bear*? Well, it turns out this cartoon may have been the germ of an idea for the radio program. At least, that is the theory going around these days.

We would like to point out that *The Calico Dragon* being the inspiration for *The Cinnamon Bear* is a merely a “theory” and not a fact.

The Cinnamon Bear premiered on radio 80 years ago in November 1937 as a syndicated feature of Transco (Transcription Company of America). The series creators, Glanville and Elizabeth Heisch, were still around throughout the 1980s and their memories of how they created *The Cinnamon Bear* never included reference to any theatrical cartoon. But if the Heischs saw *The Calico Dragon* in the spring of 1935, it remains probable that the idea of a Crazy Quilt Dragon and two children falling asleep and traveling to a fairytale land, originated with this cartoon.



[HTTP://WWW.MWOTRC.COM/](http://www.mwotrc.com/)



The timing may be right if one wanted to apply reverse hindsight. In order for the radio serial to premiere in November 1937, the 16-inch transcription discs (and 12-inch promotional disc) needed to be advertised in trade columns by September or October. This meant all 26 episodes needed to be recorded in the studio no later than summer of 1937. The radio scripts and music (co-written by Glanville Heisch and Don Honrath) were no doubt written in the winter and spring of 1937. This buys them the entire calendar month of 1936 to plot the series before scripting. No serial of this caliber could possibly be created and produced within a few short weeks. The timing is about right.

In 1941, Transco went out of business and sold all interest in their programming to the Broadcasters Program Syndicate. As a result, *The Cinnamon Bear* was supposedly not broadcast over the airwaves in 1941-42. This was only temporarily and the program soon returned to the air under new ownership. In the 1950s, syndication was taken over by Lou R. Winston, also based in Hollywood.

In 1951, a television pilot was produced using hand puppets and the audio from the radio broadcasts. The program never made a successful transition to a visual medium, remaining solely as a radio property. For decades *The Cinnamon Bear* has become an advent calendar for many families who made it an annual tradition to listen to the episodes daily from Thanksgiving to Christmas. In the 1970s, Lipman's in Portland, Oregon, sponsored the radio program over local radio stations and for a few years had an employee dressed up in a brown bear costume, playing the role for a new generation growing up with the timeless serial.

Listening to the program today, however, you can understand how radio listeners in the 1930s and 1940s envisioned an animated cartoon. Musical instruments supply simulated sound effects, and a musical song is featured in most of the chapters.



Photo: 1970s Lipman Dept. Store display

Youngsters Will Enjoy

**"THE
CINNAMON
BEAR"**

Monday through Friday
4:45 to 5 P.M. on KECA

(780 on your dial)



**Bullock's Department Store,
Los Angeles, 1941**



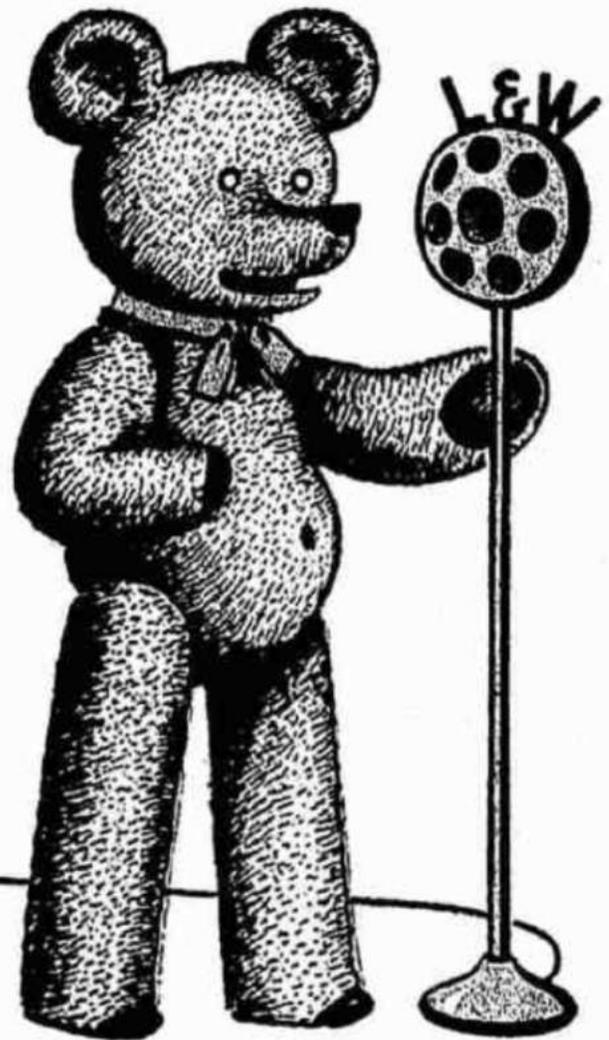
boys and girls!
listen to Lipman's

Cinnamon Bear
(starting today)

KWJJ 5:45 p. m.

Sunday through Friday—1080 on your dial

The Sunday Oregonian, Nov. 25, 1951.



**"Cinnamon Bear"
is on the air**

Paddy O'Cinnamon, whose exciting adventures last year with Judy and Jimmy in getting the Silver Star back from the wicked Crazyquilt Dragon was the talk of the neighborhood gang . . . is back in town.

KALE-6:15 P. M. on Week Days
Sunday,
6:45 P. M.

From *The Oregonian* (newspaper)
Thursday Nov. 24, 1938

THE CINNAMON BEAR CRUISE



The annual Radio Spirits Cruise has become a tradition for many who love old-time radio, with OTR-themed activities, as well as radio re-enactments performed on stage, and radio host Greg Bell as celebrity guest. But did you know that *The Cinnamon Bear* receives similar treatment? Every year on selected days in November and December, in Portland, Oregon, the *Portland Spirit* is transformed into a Cinnamon Bear cruise, complete with Queen Melissa, the Cinnamon Bear, Captain Taffy and the Crazy Quilt Dragon (all pictured above).



<http://www.cinnamonbearcruise.com/>

The price for a Cinnamon Bear cruise is \$34 adults, \$26 children ages 1-12, children under age of one \$10. The fee includes one picture with the Cinnamon Bear for each child and a light snack buffet. (Amusingly, the price does not include a landing fee.) For more information you can visit the website listed below.

And check out their online gift shop where you can buy a stuffed Cinnamon Bear and Crazy Quilt Dragon for a bargain price of \$10 each!

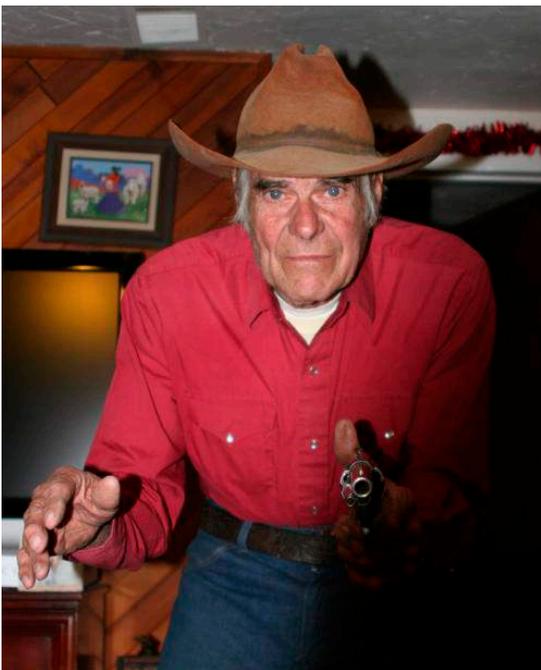
THE DAY FRANK SINATRA WAS A CHRISTMAS GHOST

It was the evening of December 26, 1949. Radio listeners tuned in to CBS to listen to another spooky story on *Inner Sanctum Mystery*. In festive mood the cast and crew presented a well-written, heart-warming Christmas story titled “The Enchanted Ghost,” which dramatized the holiday festivities of a mischievous Christmas ghost named Sir Benjamin. Avoiding bloodshed, murder and black bats, director Himan Brown hired Frank Sinatra to make a guest appearance and play the role of a man tortured by Sir Benjamin. Sadly, a recording of that broadcast exists but in terrible sound... really terrible.

Thankfully, John Roeburt was recycling his old *Inner Sanctum Mystery* radio scripts for use on *Suspense* and on the evening of December 17, 1961, “Yuletide Miracle” was dramatized with Santos Ortega and Rosemary Rice in the cast. A recording of that *Suspense* episode does exist so if you want to hear something novel this holiday season, try to envision the voice of Frank Sinatra – not Santos Ortega – in the role of Sir Benjamin.



DAVE SAUNDERS, A.K.A. RED RYDER



It was Dave Saunders who brought the comic-strip cowboy hero Red Ryder to life in countless public appearances, ranging from Ed Sullivan’s television show to the New Mexico State Fair. Saunders died September 6 at the age of 84, at an Albuquerque rehabilitation center.

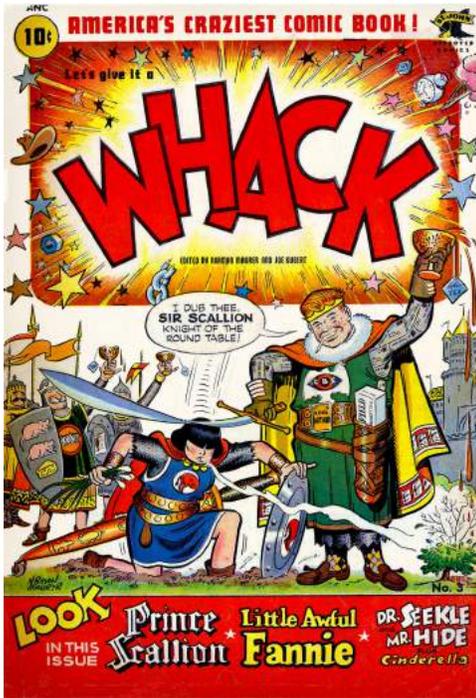
Saunders was born in Indiana in 1933 but moved to Albuquerque with his family when he was still young. A significant turning point in his life happened when he met Fred Harman, creator of “Red Ryder,” a newspaper comic strip about a good-guy Colorado rancher (Ryder) and his young American Indian sidekick, Little Beaver.

Saunders struck a friendship with the comic artist and when Harman started planning an Old West-themed

amusement park for Albuquerque, he asked Saunders to portray Red Ryder. When the park, called Little Beaver Town, opened in the summer of 1961, on a 44-acre site, Saunders became the gun-slinging hero known to millions of radio listeners, theater goers and readers of the newspaper comic strip.

OLD-TIME RADIO IN THE COMICS

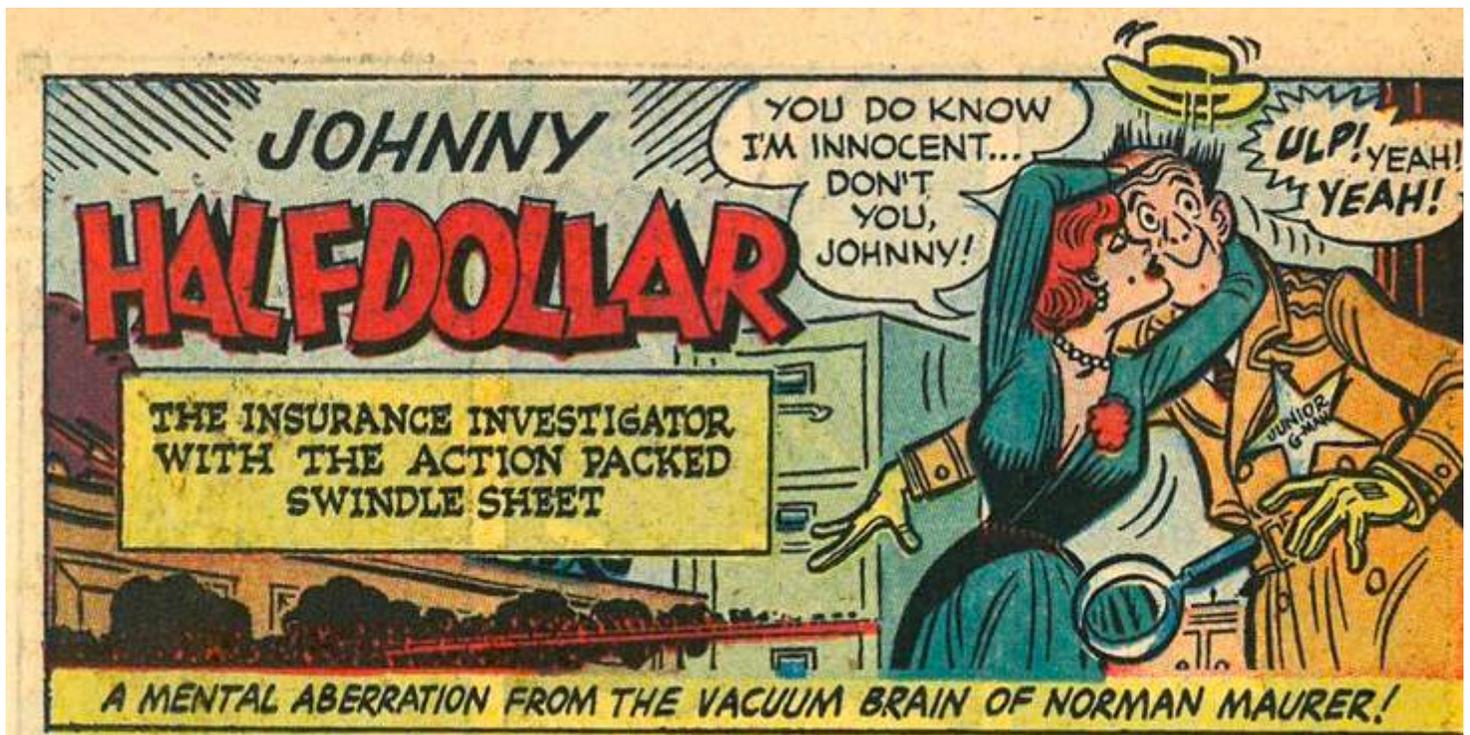
By Steven Thompson



Whack # 3 (May, 1954)

WHACK from St. John was one of the funniest of the score or so of briefly flourishing MAD imitations and certainly features some of the best and funniest artwork. Radio king Arthur Godfrey appears here on the cover and in a *Prince Valiant* lampoon as—naturally—King Arthur.

The real radio-related highlight in this issue, though, is a two-page text story with just a couple illustrations. Both the story and the art are by Norman Maurer, already the son-in-law of Stogie Moe Howard and later the long-time writer and producer of the Three Stooges' cartoons and features. Here, the multi-talented Maurer offers up a dead-on parody of YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR—JOHNNY HALFDOLLAR! Here, the intrepid insurance investigator's "action-packed swindle sheet" takes center stage hilariously in the case of the missing sheep of Little Bo Poop!



RECENT DISCOVERIES

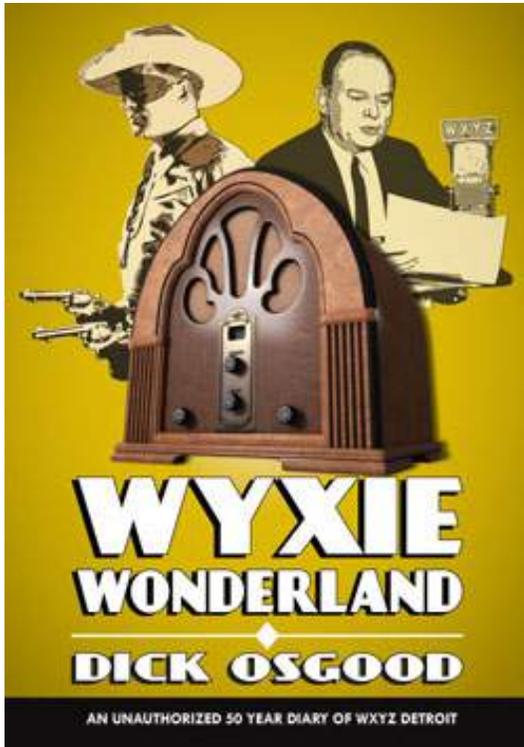
“Lost” episodes of *The Adventures of Superman* have been discovered by collector. Fourteen episodes, to be exact. The majority of the lost recordings are from the war years and this has been a darn shame because listening to Superman battle the Axis of Evil is a rare treat.

For reference here are the episode numbers, broadcast dates, script titles and chapter numbers for the recordings.

- #329 12/3/1943 Military Espionage, pt 11
- #352 1/5/1944 Lois and Jimmy Disappear, pt 2
- #389 2/25/1944 Lighthouse Point, pt 4
- #404 3/17/1944 Mystery of Clifftown, pt 8
- #411 3/28/1944 Mystery of the Golden Pigeon, pt 1
- #429 4/21/1944 Mystery of the Golden Pigeon, pt 19
- #434 4/28/1944 Mystery of Desert Springs and the Birdmen, pt 3
- #459 6/2/1944 Hurdy-Gurdy Man, pt 7
- #484 7/7/1944 The Seagull, North Pacific Adventure, pt 5
- #509 8/11/1944 Society of the Crimson Robe, pt 10
- #518 8/24/1944 The Ghosts of the Air, pt 8
- #521 8/29/1944 The Scorpion, pt 1
- #531 9/12/1944 Dr. Teufel's Atomic Pistol, pt 2
- circa 1944 Dr. Teufel's Atomic Pistol (pt ?)



Jackson Beck (announcer), Joan Alexander (Lois Lane)
and Bud Collyer (Superman/Clark Kent)



Book Cover of Reprint Edition

● Bold Venture Press has reprinted Dick Osgood’s *WYXIE Wonderland: An Unauthorized 50-Year Diary of WXYZ Detroit*. Considered one of the most important reference books ever produced on the history of radio broadcasting, the book has long been out of print and sought after by collectors and historians. The average out-of-print price was \$80. The author, Dick Osgood, was part of the scene, working at the station for thirty-six years as actor, writer, newscaster, master of ceremonies, “special announcer” and briefly as studio manager. Osgood interviewed dozens of individuals who worked at the station and pieced together the history of radio station WXYZ in Detroit. WXYZ was much more than the birthplace of *The Lone Ranger*, *Ned Jordan*, *Secret Agent*, *Bob Barclay*, *American Agent*, *The Green Hornet*, and *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon*. It was the starting point of Soupy Sales, Mike Wallace, John Lund, Betty Hutton, Martha Scott and Danny Thomas.

Richard Harvey, owner of Bold Venture Press, licensed the book rights and scanned many of Dick Osgood’s original photographs to upgraded resolution for the photos that appeared in the prior 1981 edition. If you have been meaning to buy a copy of this great read but could never afford the out-of-print ransom price, the suggested retail value of the upgraded reprint is \$29.95. You can buy your copy direct from the publisher here: <http://www.boldventurepress.com/wxyz.html>

● Wendy Foy, the youngest daughter of Fred Foy, best known as the announcer for radio’s *The Lone Ranger*, has a fantastic website devoted to his radio career at <http://www.fredfoy.com/> She is presently raising money for a museum display at the Wabash County Museum. She arranged for her father’s unpublished book, “A Masked Man, An Indian and Me,” to be available with a limited print run of 250. Each book will be individually numbered and not available for retail to the general public. For a tax-deductible donation of \$110, payable to “Wabash County Museum,” and with the word “donation” in the notation line, you will receive one of these books. You can mail your check or money order to Wendy Foy, Po Box 1313, Wells, Maine 04090. Be sure to include your mailing address so she knows where to ship the book to. Wendy is hoping to hand over 250 checks to the museum curator, payable to the museum, to ensure her father’s legacy.

By Craig Wichman

31-year-old Charles Dickens' "Ghost Story of Christmas," immediately sold out when published in 1843, and would come to be experienced as Stage Play, Musical, Silent Film, and Edison cylinder. The first Radio solo reading of the tale was on December 22, 1922, on WEA New York; and on Christmas Eve 1928, the fledgling Columbia Broadcasting System broadcast a full-cast, two-hour *Carol*. The practice continued annually, and on Christmas Day 1934, the network premiered an actor's run in the role which would last until the present day.

The CBS's newspaper ads trumpeted: "THE WORLD'S GREATEST RADIO PROGRAM." Alexander Woollcott hosted music and comedy from New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, and out of all elements, the *Washington Post* said that, ". . . (the) reason (C.B.S.) has . . . to be excited . . . is that Lionel Barrymore will be heard over the air for the first time ever when he takes the part of the immortal 'nasty man' in Dickens' 'Christmas Carol.'" Barrymore would later admit that he did not remember who conceived the notion of his portraying Scrooge; when Hedda Hopper once asked why he did it, he answered: "*It was the constant urge to dine. I like to eat, and radio pays well!*"

Drew's great-uncle, John and Ethel's brother, was already a Stage and Screen legend when he first put his, "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner" on the air. And he is perhaps best known today as "Mr. Potter" in Frank Capra's film *It's A Wonderful Life*—a casting choice that owed much to this 1934 characterization and what followed.

Because Lionel was a bona-fide hit!

He was signed to an unprecedented Radio contract of five more years as Scrooge. For their 1936 edition, CBS planned to present their *Carol* on *Hollywood Hotel*. This union of actor and character was becoming a tradition, and the star said in the papers:

"I enjoy playing the role ... (because) I believe in ghosts ... They are in reality man's conscience and therefore his best friend. If (a) man refuses to accept them as such, they will force themselves upon him anyway as they did upon Scrooge when he had closed his eyes and heart to the spirit of (the) Christmas season...."

But as these words of Lionel's were being read at fireplaces around the country, the star's wife Irene Fenwick died after a long illness. As he tells it in his book *We Barrymores*:

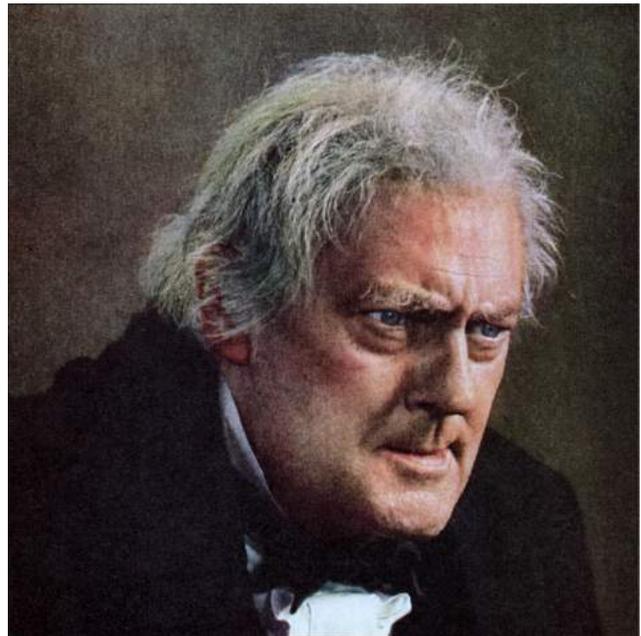


Photo of Barrymore as Scrooge from an advertisement in a 1935 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*.

LIONEL BARRYMORE'S CHRISTMAS CAROLS (CONTINUED)

"I was supposed to go on the radio in 'A Christmas Carol' the next day. With hardly a moment to read through the lines in advance, (my brother) Jack took my place and gave (a) memorable performance ..."

(Listeners report that John mimicked Lionel lovingly and well.)

Campbell's Soup's had been sponsoring the Yuletide event on CBS, and after Halloween 1938's "War Of The Worlds," the company picked up the Mercury series. So that Christmas, "Orson Welles, Producer," would present "Lionel Barrymore, 'Ebenezer Scrooge.'"

That same year MGM, impressed by the radio success of their star, planned a film version of Dickens' classic showcasing him—but the star's recurring hip ailment flared up.

Not wanting to let an uplifting project die as war clouds gathered, Barrymore recommended British character actor Reginald Owen for the role. MGM wanted to promote Owens' film on its NBC show *Maxwell House presents Good News of 1939*, accordingly Barrymore was paid *not* to play the part he was known for, though he did *narrate* the broadcast.

So over at CBS, boy genius Orson Welles took on the role himself. (He apologized during his curtain call for Barrymore's absence, helping to create the fandom legend that Lionel had been too ill to broadcast that year.)

But the next Yuletide, Barrymore *did* join up with Welles and his players, for *The Big One* among radio *Carols!*

The Christmas Eve 1939 production is one of the best-known broadcasts from the Golden Age of Radio, kept alive by countless airings and recordings. At one hour it is one of the longest of Barrymore's performances of the tale, and it is quite simply one of the finest dramatizations of the story ever.

Come 1940, the story became the only one ever presented twice on *The Campbell Playhouse*. (By this time there were even "listening parties," where friends gathered around the radio "fireside" to share the cherished broadcast.) That year fulfilled the actor's contract with CBS, but other Networks were only too happy to pick up a property hot as a bowl of Christmas punch.



Lionel Barrymore as Scrooge with Francis Stevens as "Marley's Ghost" in the 1944 *Life* magazine spread.

LIONEL BARRYMORE'S CHRISTMAS CAROLS (CONTINUED)

So in 1941, it was the National Broadcasting Company's turn. The *Wisconsin State Journal* ranked Barrymore's performance, "(with) King George VI's Christmas message . . . (as) among radio's gifts to its listeners..." (On this *Sealtest Show*, some sources claim that host Rudy Vallee plays Bob, but he in fact narrates.)

For 1942, in addition to another NBC *Carol*, Barrymore moonlighted in a Wartime variation on the theme. *Treasury Star Parade's* "A Modern Scrooge" was hosted by Fredric March (later an early TV Ebenezer himself.)

Following two years in the Vallee, the 1943 - 1947 *Carols* were presented within the framework of Barrymore's own weekly series, *The Mayor of the Town*, where co-star Agnes Moorehead brought her customary sharpness to Mrs. Cratchit.

Lionel was named "Best Actor of 1942-1943" in a poll of radio listeners, based partly on his *Carols*. And S.J. Wolf, in a contemporary *New York Times* profile said that, "To ... many ... Ebenezer Scrooge will live not because they have read of him, but because an actor has carried him through the air into (their) homes..."

1944's *Carol* features music written by Mr. Barrymore, and that Yule's issue of *Life* magazine features a portfolio of fully-staged pictures shot on the MGM lot - a tantalizing look at what a Barrymore Scrooge film might have looked like.

By this time, there was sometimes more than one Barrymore miser per season haunting the airwaves - new Live, and ghostly Rebroadcast. And the publishers of a contemporary reprint of Dickens' novel feature full-color illustrations by Everett Shinn that are clearly a gaunt version of

Dickens' novel feature full-color illustrations by Everett Shinn that are clearly a gaunt version of the actor. In the Introduction, Barrymore wrote that:

"At the moment I assume (Scrooge's) character... I seem to shrink, and an unnatural meanness of disposition comes upon me. (And at the end of it), as I back away from the microphone in the thunderous peal of the rollicking bells, my spirit lifts up out of the weight of pounds, shillings, and pence, flees the cramped, thin body of Scrooge, and leaps to catch up with the joyous spirit of the day."

Dorothy O'Leary of the *New York Times* was present during the 1947 production, and reported of Lionel that, "He is exacting and demanding, although his regular 'Mayor of the Town' rehearsals are consistently casual... For 'A Christmas Carol' he is satisfied with nothing less than perfection...." The *Racine Journal-Times* voiced a sentiment shared by many Americans: "Christmas without Santa Claus, holly wreaths, and beloved Lionel Barrymore taking the part of Scrooge... would be a sorry Yuletide..."

That year, Lionel immortalized his signature role for future generations on 78s from MGM Records.

Also that year, ABC's *Mayor* was on hiatus over the winter. That gave CBS the chance to welcome Barrymore's *Carol* back home in 1948 with a star-studded two-hour spectacular not unlike his debut in 1934. *Wrigley's Christmas Festival* featured stars from Gene Autry to Burns & Allen, to the Mitchell Boys' choir.

LIONEL BARRYMORE'S CHRISTMAS CAROLS (CONTINUED)

And come 1949, Barrymore would complete his “conquest by Christmas spirit” of *all* the major radio networks! The Mutual Broadcasting System presented the *Carol* on *The Capehart Christmas Hour*, and for the next three years, Lionel’s Scrooge stayed on that network. The actor wrote in his autobiography around that time:

“(Our productions have) apparently become a fixture which people expect and accept because after all somebody ought to read the Carol to children at Christmastime ... we have produced it differently from year to year, with various players and with various cuts and additions to the original, but no one has seemed to notice.”

The 1949 script works very well, and Barrymore does a fine job, with supporting players including Joseph Kearns. In that Cold War era, a patriotic speech by our star forms the coda:

“Ya know, it’s always seemed to me that the story of Ebenezer Scrooge held a moral for nations, as well as people . . . for if all the nations of the world will banish greed, cruelty, avarice and selfishness, then truly it’ll be a ‘Happy New Year’ to all the wooworld’ . . . !”

Of the 1951 broadcast, *Variety*’s “Gros.” said that, “Barrymore’s interpretation of Scrooge has become as much a classic as the Dickens’ tale (itself)...” In 1952, it was back yet again to where things had started for Lionel, Scrooge & Co. CBS presented them on the *Hallmark Playhouse* that year. *TV-RADIOLOGIC*’s Tom E. Danson witnessed a rehearsal: “Barrymore’s venom in playing this mean old Dickens character was truly something to behold; he all but devoured his fellow actors! ... (He) told me

after the dress rehearsal (that), “*Scrooge is just an exaggeration of someone we’ve all met - but his toughness was only skin deep, really.*”

The actor became the host of this series, and his 1953 *Carol* there marked nineteen years in the role. Simon “Stuffy” Singer, that year’s Tiny Tim, recalls that, “These shows were done in a big theater ... with ... a large audience... I think that (Lionel) was in a wheelchair ...”

And that *Carol* would be the legendary Scrooge’s final bow.

Lionel Herbert Blythe (his legal birth name) passed away at the age of seventy-six on November 16, 1954. He had been scheduled to do the *Carol* again in December, so as a salute to a truly amazing achievement in radio history, Edward Arnold introduced the transcription of the previous year’s production.

And through the wonder of modern recording technology, that annual tradition has long outlived the actor. The piercing morality tale by young Charles Dickens, which spans past and future to remind us of the eternal consequences of everyday actions, still feeds our souls today. The Spirit of Christmas, and his child *A Christmas Carol*, are still bursting with life nearly a century and a half after Dickens’ passing—as surely as are the Barrymore dramatizations of the tale, now over half that age themselves!

For much more about the hundreds of radio/audio *Christmas Carols* produced over the past century, see the BearManor book *Standing in the Spirit at Your Elbow*, available from the author at QuicksilverRT@aol.com. (Where you can also acquire copies of many of the productions mentioned in this article.)

By **Mark Anderson**

Once again the radio actors of the Metropolitan Washington Old-Time Radio Club proved their worth as pace-setters in nostalgia radio presentations. Their most recent venue was the main ballroom at the Hunt Valley MANC and the hour was prime-time Saturday noon. The show opened and the sizable crowd was first enticed by a quiz show in the style of the network programs of years gone by. The crowd would shout an answer to a question – easy or perplexing - and the prize was a candy bar. An added treat was that at the same time we could watch the players themselves as, with studied precision, they placed their tools of the trade on the stage. The readers were finding their microphone distance; the sound effects table was laden with many a curious item, which would soon be worked by three ambitious and ambidextrous folks. Fred the videographer was at the ready down front with his tripod and pint-size video recorder, ready to swivel; and we saw the sound board, where the young engineer was getting ready to dial up ominous music and frightful tones to move the gruesome story forward.

Director Michael Hayde stepped up to the mic and in his wry, amusing way, told us about the script, called “Chicken Heart,” written for the radio series *Lights Out* by that master playwright of erudite suspense, Arch Oboler. The script had been lost, then recovered, and thankfully typed up afresh, broadcast-ready. Hayde told us that in his research, he had found that a medical pump such as Oboler describes in the script – a pump that would keep an organ vital in a serum - had been invented in real life, and subsequent fine-tuning of that idea in fact opened the possibility of organ transplant to the world of medicine. My own thoughts turned to allegory, revolving around the date of Oboler’s script – 1938 - an era when the world was in peril because an insidious political ideology was sweeping across Europe.

There would be myriad ways in which we the audience would visualize the unfolding drama, and that is indeed the key to the fascination of radio drama.

The admonition of the original *Lights Out* introduction was intoned by Hayde in his slow baritone. In effect, he told us, if you wish to avoid the “excitement and tension of these imaginative plays, “...we urge you, calmly but sincerely, turn your radio off, now.” Nobody moved a muscle. We were in for the ride of our lives.

The production is best seen as a series of tasks and dilemmas. Michael Hayde’s task was to harness the energy of his ensemble towards dramatic effect. He would stride in front of the stage, coordinating cues and sound levels. How could he make sure that four readers on a microphone would all be heard? They managed, and their lines were crisp and distinct. We were enthralled as well by the anticipation we felt when a reader would step up to the mic; or when a sound effects technician would step into place, intent on the script and ready to use a particular item for effect, whether it was a sound as soft as a footstep, or perhaps loud and disturbing to our sensibilities.

The script, which describes an experiment gone wrong, is one dilemma after another. The German doctor in his laboratory does not want visitors; he would rather talk to a reporter about his theory of the Earth’s rotation. Of secondary importance is a long-term project that he has: a thumbnail-size heart which the good doctor keeps beating in a vat of serum. An error of enthusiasm causes the table to be upset (cue the SFX!) and the vat gets broken. The doctor is upset and dismissive. Urgency is now a factor in the pace of the story. Pity the poor lab assistant who nervously tells us about the next dilemma. He cannot open the door to the lab; it is obstructed by a soft but unmoving mass from the inside.

With this nervous declaration the premise of uncontrolled growth is set in motion, and we find out about the world's inability to deal with it. To say that by this time our imaginations are running wild is an understatement; we in the audience were lost in our own horrible visions: Tentacles? Oh no! The doctor, in panic mode, screams the classic line: "Run! Run for your lives!" The actors in a street scene give us their best frenzied phrases; and the sound of a beating heart is pervasive: "LUB-DUB LUB-DUB..." Ye gods! Dilemmas abound with no solution.

You view the "Chick Heart" re-enactment, visit YouTube.com here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vF5R7IHbyM>

He curses the skies and says that the heart could have been killed when it was small. Now, only artillery and bombs will be adequate to exterminate it. And the doctor asks, "What is it like to bomb the ocean?" The world is being consumed, and while my fevered brow had visions of an oily mass of flesh rolling down Broadway, my thoughts turned again to 1938, and the time when people sought to embrace an ideology, and in turn, that insidious ideology of Nazi domination engulfed them.

The entire cast emerged triumphant and the accolades were profuse as the audience mingled with the players and talked about the experience. I was thrilled because each script recreation is further proof of the power of audio, where the triumph is in the imagination. A fellow said, years ago: to enjoy radio drama, you only need a vivid imagination and at least one good ear."



The cast of "Chicken Heart" at the 2017 Mid-Atlantic Nostalgia Convention. (Photo courtesy of Johnny Holmes.)

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MWOTRC was created in 1984 by Jim Burnette (1945-2001), our President Emeritus. Annual dues \$20 to locals and \$15 to others, and seniors. Regular meetings are held at Trinity Episcopal Church, Columbia Pike and Wayne St, Arlington, VA the second Friday evening of every month, except June and December, when meetings are held Saturday noon at a local restaurant TBA.

UP-COMING EVENTS

December 9, 2017 December Holiday Luncheon

Annual holiday party and luncheon is Saturday, December 9, at the Juke Box Diner, 7039 Columbia Pike in Annandale. 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., although persons may begin arriving as early as 11 a.m. for socializing. Luncheon cost is \$20 (cash only, no credit cards) which includes beverage. Attendees are eligible to participate in the door prize drawing. Fred Berney will conduct a radio quiz. Bring an unwrapped radio-related gift (doesn't need to be new) to participate in the gift exchange. The Big Broadcast host Murray Horwitz said he hopes to be there. Cupcakes and baklava are among sweets members are bringing (bringing sweets is optional). Contact Sandra Pitts-Malone at sandi33333@yahoo.com if you plan to attend.

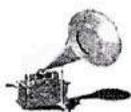
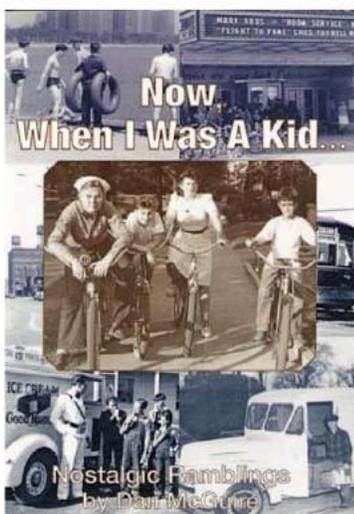
December 9 and 10, 2017 Baltimore Toy and Collectible Show

9 am to 3 pm, \$5 per person admission, Timonium Fairgrounds. Hundreds of tables of merchandise featuring retro collectibles including old-time radio photographs, tin toys, vintage advertisements, old-time radio programs, LP records, action figures, comic books and more. Worth a trip if you are seeking vintage nostalgic toys. Admission is free on the second day but 1/6th of the vendors from Saturday are replaced by antique vendors so the second day is more of an antique show than a toy and collectible show. Multiple members of the MWOTR Club set up as vendors. <http://www.davehartshows.com/>

THE JANUARY CLUB MEET, January 12, 2018, Celebrity Speaker

Monthly club meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall of Trinity Episcopal Church, Columbia Pike and Wayne, Arlington, VA. (Enter on Wayne.) Among the features: The First 15, in which Jack French brings to light an often obscure or unusual bit of old-time radio programming. CDs and books will be available for rental. Goodies and soft drinks will be available; cash contributions welcome to defray cost.

Marvin Kalb, veteran CBS and NBS newsman, and the last newsman hired by the legendary Edward R. Murrow, will be the featured speaker at the monthly club meeting January 12. He'll be drawing on his experiences and his recently-published autobiography *The Year I Was Peter the Great: 1956-Khrushchev, Stalin's Ghost and a Young American in Russia.* If he doesn't bring it up, ask him about his hilarious job interview with Murrow! Books are expected to be available for purchase and autographing. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall of Trinity Episcopal Church, Columbia Pike and Wayne, Arlington, VA. (Enter on Wayne.) Soft drinks and snacks will be available, donation suggested.



BACK WHEN BOOKS

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You know the ones we mean. They don't really need anything. When you ask what they'd like, they say, "Oh, I don't know. Surprise me." This year, do just that. Surprise them with a copy of *Now, When I Was A Kid....*

Dan McGuire's nostalgic ramblings recall the days when kids rode balloon tire bikes, strapped metal roller skates onto their shoes and played outdoors until dark. With all the adventures of "the big city" (Chicago) just a streetcar ride away, Danny and his pals enjoyed the best of two worlds.

Now, When I Was A Kid... is guaranteed to provide AARP-age readers with a delightful nostalgia trip back to their own childhood. So go ahead. Order a copy for each of those problem seniors on your list. They'll say: "It's just what I wanted!"

Softcover, 6 x 9, 302 pgs, dozens of period photos, foreword by OTR historian Chuck Schaden.

To order by mail, send check/money order for \$22.95, plus \$4.50 shipping for 1 book, \$1.00 each for addition copies. Illinois residents, add 8% tax. Include giftee's name and Dan McGuire will sign with a personalized note.

There's 200+ books on OTR and other yesteryear subjects at www.backwhenbooks.com.