

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



THE ANY DREAM WILL DO ISSUE
JANUARY 13, 2022

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 snowstorm has made its way north and is swirling its way across Maine and New Brunswick. The cold snap lingers along the Catoctin Ridge, dancing around bright sun and billowing clouds. Our Studio team is safe and warm in their homes, reviewing their scripts. Fred has coaxed the old sound board past its squawks and hums, and he’s piping in the lovely “Any Dream Will Do,” from *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*:

I awoke from sleep, drew back the curtain,
To see for certain what I thought I knew.
And in the east, the dawn was breaking
And the world was waking.
Any dream will do.

Goodness, but that Andrew Lloyd Webber knows how to lift our spirits!

ON THE AIR

I've got my coffee, and I'm looking through the dusty courier pouch, as we begin our 18th year of sending out the GRTR. I've chosen essays from the Archives; and in the here-and-now, folks have expressed love and support for Club members with prayers and tributes.

Mark Bush is in the hospital, recovering from surgery. Good wishes and prayers from folks near and far are winging their way along the Potomac to alight on the windowsill of Mark's room. He has derived amusement as well from phone calls; and he is following doctor's orders to rest up and take his medicine. Mark and his wife Marsha have been stalwart members of the Club for years, lending their sound-effects expertise in countless script recreations in several venues. Local members are taking care of the Club's print library; and Mark may rest assured that the SFX table, which he and Marsha would meticulously set up at a venue, then store away, will be ready for him upon his return.

CHUCK LANGDON, AUDIO PIONEER, DIED ON DECEMBER 17, 2021

The sad news has reached us that Club member Chuck Langdon passed away after a lengthy illness. Chuck served the Club for so many years and in so many ways. He was Club president for a time and represented the Club at the Community Access studio, acquiring the space for Club audio productions.

In his quiet way he encouraged everyone to participate at meetings. Each year he would make an SFX tape with blank space between the clips for timing, so that people could write dialogue to fit. It worked like a charm; those meetings were boisterous and surprising, with everyone right on cue.

With Lee Shephard and RadioVisions Chuck produced audio plays, for example the sci-fi story "Program Completed;" Dave Aime's "Calico County" westerns, and Edgar Farr Russell's "Kiss from a Little Old Lady."

Chuck put audio drama in the realm of the community. He would orchestrate the SFX work of the Bushes and their crew with the microphones and scripts and costumes of the players, to delighted audiences in venues such as the Lisner Auditorium at GWU in D.C., and the National Archives auditorium in Culpeper Virginia.

People who worked with Chuck and those who knew his gentle nature have sent letters of tribute here to the Studio:

- Chuck was so wonderful and trusting of everyone's ability in the recording studio.
- It is a sad loss. He will be missed.
- I enjoyed working with Chuck making those Calico County westerns. Chuck was always willing to listen to the cast's suggestions. Have only good memories of working with Chuck.
- Chuck was the organizer, the driving force behind our attempts to revive old time radio drama. He was the guy who brought together all of the pieces – the writers, actors and sound effects people – and produced a series of programs of which we all could be proud. In addition to his organizational abilities, he was a good man. Friendly, willing to listen to others, and always interesting to talk to. He will be missed.

Here are photographs of Chuck and his beloved wife, Joanie, along with Master-of-Ceremonies Maury Cagle, circa 2007, for the Club's Quiz Show, featuring Edgar Russell as the Quiz Master, and the panel of Jack French (as a private eye), Michael Hayde (the Grand Old Opry), and Mark Bush (the Lone Ranger), sponsored by Studebaker.





MUSIC BRIDGE AND COMMERCIAL

Fred is piping in another Lloyd Webber tune: “All I Ask of You,” (*Phantom of the Opera*); here in a stunning rendition by Sarah Brightman and Cliff Richard.

Important Note:

The Club is once again collecting dues. Yes, Dues are Due!

Please comply by going to the MWOTRC website:

[MWOTRC Home Page http://www.mwotrc.com](http://www.mwotrc.com)

There you will be able to choose your method of payment and the amount.

FROM THE DUSTY ARCHIVES

The December 2013 issue of the GRTR began the continuing series of personal profiles of Club members’ interests and love of radio. That month was also one of the first broadcasts of the GRTR Studio: Here’s an excerpt, which will be read by Bert Rude from his home down the valley. To the microphone please, Bert!

BERT:

Thanks, Mark. From the GRTR, December 2013:

Station GRTR Presents a New Series: Your Moment at the Microphone This will be an occasional series of Club member profiles.

Here is an essay written by Cort Vitty, who lives in Maryland. He writes that he is a “recovering business owner” whose company merged with another a few years ago. “I’m now inching towards retirement,” he tells me. Cort is a very good writer. He has written reviews and articles for our own Radio Recall, and he recently wrote an excellent article about the New York Yankee teams of the mid-20th century, for the esteemed journal of the Society for American Baseball Research. Here is Cort’s essay for the Club:

“Growing up in suburban New Jersey, my grandparents lived with us for as long as I could remember. I'd routinely come home from school, only to find my grandmother staring at the radio. She was so engrossed in "her stories," as she referred to the soap operas she enjoyed, that she wouldn't even realize I'd arrived. Television was looming and soon her allegiance would switch to the (then) upstart new medium.

At the time, I preferred listening to baseball games on radio; a habit that even got me into hot water with the nuns at school. I'd sneak my transistor into class and listen to afternoon games, by running the ear plug under my shirt. To my delight, Sister Mary Richard, principal at St. Catherine of Siena School in Cedar Grove, New Jersey was a baseball fan herself. She even opted to broadcast the 1960 World Series over the school's PA system. As a class, we actually listened as Bill Mazerowski's climactic home run beat our (we thought invincible) New York Yankees, on October 13, 1960.

As my teen years approached, I tuned to the top 40 AM stations, which proliferated the airwaves. Grandma would scold me for "listening to that noise," then nostalgically wax poetic about "the golden age" and what had been lost. She'd talk about popular shows and personalities, while I'd ask questions about her favorites. The next thing you know, I started getting radio books as gifts for Christmas; many have survived through the years and remain in my collection. Fellow aficionados will relate to just how intoxicating the hobby can be and how it can be enjoyed on so many levels. In my (personal opinion only) the phenomenon that was radio at its height was unmatched in how it affected a generation of people. It brought to listeners an almost unlimited choice of music, comedy or drama into homes that just a few years earlier were silent, except for the occasional Victrola or player-piano. And most remarkable of all: it was free except for the cost of the console or the time it took to construct the crystal set.

Now, two generations removed and thanks to the internet, a massive amount of material from the golden era is accessible to all of us -- and more comes on-line every day. It's thrilling once again to sing along with the artist, laugh at the old routines or be spellbound by the drama that kept our grandparents riveted.

Thanks very much, signed, Cort.

MUSIC BRIDGE AND NETWORK FEED

Nicely done, Bert, thanks. And Beverly is tapping her pencil on the clipboard as she eyes the clock towards network feed. Fred is piping in another Lloyd Webber show tune. The 2-disc set is called *Unmasked: The Platinum Collection*, Decca, 2018. Gregory Porter sings "Light at the End of the Tunnel," from *Starlight Express*.

Thanks to the Studio crew all along the Catoctin Range; and thanks so much to everyone for tuning in. Stay safe and warm and keep those cards and letters coming! Soup and sandwiches in the Mud Room? We'll manage!

Thanks ever, Mark Anderson