



**GATHER 'ROUND THE RADIO
E-NEWSLETTER
M W O T R C NOV. 13, 2016
THE DUSTY ARCHIVES ISSUE**

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.

Chuck and Joanie and I are in the Mud Room with our carrot cake and an excellent blend of East African coffee. We took a walk a while ago, along the creek that runs through the trees behind our tin pot studio here in the Valley. The air is crisp and the creek is sparkling and the leaves are swirling around the rocks.

Chuck is piping in a favorite piece by Ennio Morricone, his soundtrack to an Italian television show from the 1970s: "Gothic Dramas." It's frantic and melodic, and those

chimes (those chimes!) just keep playing in my head! Oh! Do I have to go down that dark corridor?

ON THE AIR

Joanie tells me, "Yes, you do. Get out there!" She has cued us to network feed.

Hello everyone, and welcome to the broadcast. Give me a moment while I mop my brow! Ah, now! We all hope that this new PDF format is working for you. We're going to run some clips from GRTR issues of the past three years. First, in 2013, we recognized the BBC Radio broadcast honoring their publication guide "Radio Times." The illustration atop this issue of GRTR is a cover from an issue, found in the BBC online gallery of covers. I shall read the entry from the GRTR of December 8, 2013:

Radio and the Graphic Arts

Recently BBC Radio 4 broadcast a 30-minute documentary about the BBC program guide called "Radio Times." The BBC was celebrating some 90 years of its presence on newsstands and in listeners' homes. Since its inception it has featured the work of brilliant illustrators. I listened to the show, scribbling notes; then clicked on the "Gallery" link. There were forty or so examples of the covers that graced the publication! The covers are in an exhibition at The Museum of London.

I learned all kinds of famous names: Val Biro; Peter Brookes; Eric Fraser. These were a few of the many young artists whose talents were burgeoning. Some artists were modernist; another had the delicacy of 17th century aristocratic portraiture; yet another made his line so definitive as to seem like a woodcut. The host of the documentary interviewed several of the artists. It seemed that their credo was, "Something wonderful, right away." The art director wanted "the line to lift the page." Deadlines loomed and circulation grew. One artist recalled his first assignment: illustrate a Handel oratorio. Another had the no less daunting task of capturing the "Lord of the Rings." How on earth were they going to accomplish that? They did, admirably, and the publication has a secure and beloved place in the history of British broadcasting.

RESEARCHING AMERICAN BROADCASTING

For a bit more on the research theme from the Dusty Archives, here is an article sent in by John Reiser, Club member, radio engineer and historian. He tells us about an excellent website for radio research. Joanie will step up to read, from the GRTR of March 15, 2015:

The website AmericanRadioHistory.com has many historic broadcast industry publications, many of them scanned and in a searchable mode. Included are the Broadcasting Yearbooks dating back to the 1930's that were published by Broadcasting Magazine. These directories have information on every licensed radio station including addresses, phone numbers, staff names, agencies, etc. The yearbooks also contained the FCC broadcast rules, lists of engineering firms, equipment manufacturers, advertising agencies and other reference material.

COMMERCIAL AND BRIDGE

Joanie has cued us to commercial. The Dayton Dragons front office is sending out only scant information these days; it was a losing season (50 wins 80 losses); but the Battle Cry remains: Wait 'til next year!" Pitchers and catchers report to Spring Training in late February. They will be in the weight room and running wind sprints long before that!

I was very pleased to receive as a gift an authentic Dragons baseball cap. It is beautiful, fearsome black and emblazoned with DRAGONS LAIR across the front. A loyal Club member from the Region of the Dragons (marked on early maps as UNKNOWN, with parched plains and burning rivers) gave me the cap at the September MANC. He was wild-eyed, and only lightly scorched, from his sojourn in Dragons Territory; so we may assume that all is well; nothing that a couple of astute off-season trades could not cure.

Chuck pipes a bridge from "Gothic Dramas." Scary! The curtains flutter at the Sound booth window. Is someone walking along the far side of the creek?

AN ORDERLY TRANSITION

The Club has been notified, and the Year 2017 will see the handing over of the Reins of Editorship of Radio Recall to Martin Grams. Venerable and esteemed editor Jack French assures me that all is well; changes will ensue and shall be revealed. Martin is a prolific writer, researcher, and event planner. We present here an article about Martin's exploits, from the GRTR of December 8, 2013, with reference to the "Radio Recall" of December 2013. Chuck has come down from the booth to read:

The Book Waiting to be Written

I refer here to two essays written recently by Martin Grams, about the rigors of researching material for a book, and the rebuff that a writer may encounter along the way. His November 8, 2013 blog post (<http://martingrams.blogpost.com>) is called "The Theft and Recovery of The Lone Ranger." Martin recounts the theft of materials from a library. Such occurrences are lamentable and make us downright indignant. He weaves into the essay the determination that is a writer's watchword. And, in the current December 2013 "Radio Recall" (p. 6-7) Martin writes about his efforts to write and publish a book about the "Jack Armstrong" radio program. He contacts a manuscript collector who will not help him access materials. The people at General Mills are unresponsive about requests for permission. Martin's hours of research and shelves of materials are languishing. Let's hope for a happy ending! And by the way, Martin writes a very entertaining blog.

JACK FRENCH AND HIS ROAD TRIPS

It is fitting, you will agree, that we should also publish an essay by our long-time friend and source of material for GRTR, Jack French. He is from Wisconsin, but proudly claims, as well, an ancestry in north Florida, a freedom-fighter from the 1820s, who journeyed north ("Radio Recall," April 2014, p. 9.)

In August 2014 Jack traveled to his home country of Wisconsin to speak at the meeting of a Historical Society. Jack sent us his account of his trip. Chuck will read Jack's account, from the GRTR of August 17, 2014: Chuck steps to the microphone:

Next, Jack French has scribbled us a note on a 34-cent penny postcard, telling us that he's headed to the north woods of Wisconsin for a vacation. He'll visit towns he knew from his boyhood, and will be the guest speaker at a gathering in the town of Merrill.

Here's the write-up for the event, at the Merrill History and Culture Center:

Editor, OTR historian and author, Jack French, has accepted an invitation to be the keynote speaker at the Merrill History & Culture Center, 100 E. Third Street, Merrill, Wisconsin 54452. This event will take place on Sunday, August 24, at 7:00 pm. He will cover the history of radio broadcasting in the U.S., discussing its strengths and weaknesses over the years, and play excerpts from network programming of that era. Admission for the public is \$ 5; members of the Merrill History & Culture Center pay \$ 4.

Autographed copies of Jack's book, "Private Eyelashes: Radio's Lady Detectives" will be available for purchase after his speech. This book won the Agatha Award for Best Non-Fiction.

This will be a sentimental return to the north woods of Wisconsin for Jack. He grew up in the nearby city of Rhinelander in the 40s and graduated from high school there in 1954. While he has usually returned to Rhinelander every five years for his high school reunion, this will be his first visit to Merrill in over 50 years.

Contacts: Merrill Historical Society (715-536-5652) or www.merrillhistory.org

NETWORK CUE

Thanks, Chuck, excellent reading, indeed. That's all for this Dusty Archives broadcast.

Send me some material! Love to hear from you!

Here is a favorite musical entry from the GRTR, January 24, 2015:

Joanie is counting us down to network feed. Chuck has cued us up with a duet of Jack White singing with Norah Jones. It's dreamy, with Jack taking the upper range over Norah's lower smoky tones. It's a collaboration they did with a fellow known as Danger Mouse. He's a wide-ranging producer who did this labor-of-love album, "Roma," an impressionistic take on the music of the Italian film Westerns, in particular, Ennio Morricone.

So, we have mournful vocal tones over heavy guitar strumming, with winds and strings liltting over lyrics: "Lonely I feel / Lonely I see / In the depths I feel / Like a bird with a broken wing."

Norah Jones now carries it; Jack is wise enough to sit back and sing. All for now, folks! Happy listening, and keep those cards and letters coming! And thus, we fade with backbeat over the lush-strings of a lonely figure riding across the plains, taking us out: Jack sings: "I get the feeling that it's two against one....."

Soup and sandwiches in the Mud Room? Ah, yes indeed!

Thanks ever,

Mark A.

Carlisle PA