

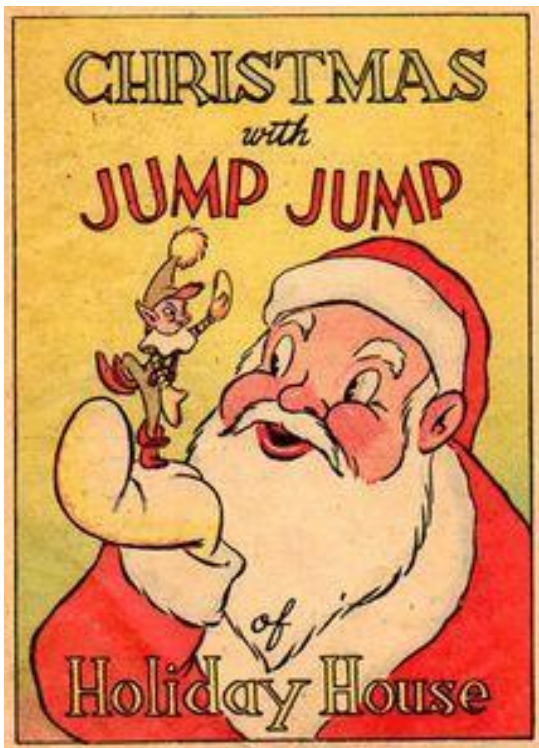
Making a *Jump Jump* to Christmas:

Jump Jump and the Ice Queen Holiday Serial

By Frank Morgan © 2023

As we approach the Christmas holiday, OTR fans everywhere fondly recall *The Cinnamon Bear* in “The Adventure of the Silver Star.” The program was in serial format and designed to be heard six nights a week between Friday, November 26, 1937 and Saturday, December 25, 1937. It featured many performers who were, or were to become, the legends of OTR, including Howard McNear, Joseph Kearns, Lou Merrill, Elliott Lewis, Frank Nelson, Gale Gordon, Elvia Allman, Hanley Stafford, and Verna Felton. The plot was perfect for the juvenile listener. Judy and Jimmy Barton discovered that the silver star for the top of their Christmas tree was missing, and they began a search to find and recover it, assisted in their search by the Cinnamon Bear. Along the way Judy, Jimmy, and Cinnamon Bear encounter many strange characters voiced by the OTR performers previously named and others.

Jump Jump Comic Book



Jump Jump, Radio Archives © 2023

With the success of *The Cinnamon Bear*, in 1938, *Jonathan Thomas and his Christmas on the Moon* came to the airways. Once again, the program was designed for one episode to be played each weekday from Thanksgiving until Christmas. Young Jonathan Thomas is lying in his bed on Christmas Eve with Guz, his teddy bear. Two elves enter Jonathan’s room by sliding down a moonbeam. Guz chases the elves back up the moonbeam and Jonathan follows Guz to bring him home. On reaching the moon, Jonathan is accused of kidnapping Santa. But Santa was actually kidnapped by the Squeebubblians and he must now be rescued to save Christmas. While on the trail of Santa, Jonathan meets a host of memorable characters.

A decade following the success of and tradition of *The Cinnamon Bear*, the next generation juvenile audience was introduced to a new 25-episode holiday serial – *Jump Jump and the Ice Queen*. As with the other holiday adventures, an episode would be broadcast five nights a week from the day after Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve.

The character “Jump Jump” was the creation of the married writing team of Mary McConnell and Harry Hickox. McConnell and Hickox met while they were both performing in a play in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They were married September 22, 1933, in Albuquerque and remained married until the time of her death in 1983.

Jump Jump was designed to tie together 65 programs McConnell and Hickox agreed to produce for syndication to radio stations throughout the United States by New York City’s Harry S. Goodman Productions. Each episode opened and closed with an

organ interlude during which a local advertiser made their pitch. The organ music was provided by Bob Mitchell on his Hammond Organ. Mitchell was well known for his decades of playing organ accompaniment to silent movies. In the episodes towards the end of the *Ice Queen* series, the voices of the Mitchell's Boy Choir were added. The Mitchell Choir was featured in several movies, including the classic Bing Crosby and Gene Kelly *Going My Way*. The choir is credited with performing on the soundtracks of seventy films.

After the local commercial, Jump Jump would go to Holiday House where he is greeted by Mary Holiday, the mistress of Holiday House – where every day is a holiday. Mary would tell Jump Jump a fairytale and read nursery rhymes to him.

The voices of Mary Holiday and all of the other characters of the program, with the exception of Jump Jump, were performed by McConnell and Hickox.

Jump Jump was performed by child actor Johnny McGovern. He legally changed his name in 1958 to John Wilder, a name he had adopted. Wilder appeared in more than 2,500 OTR programs in the 1940's



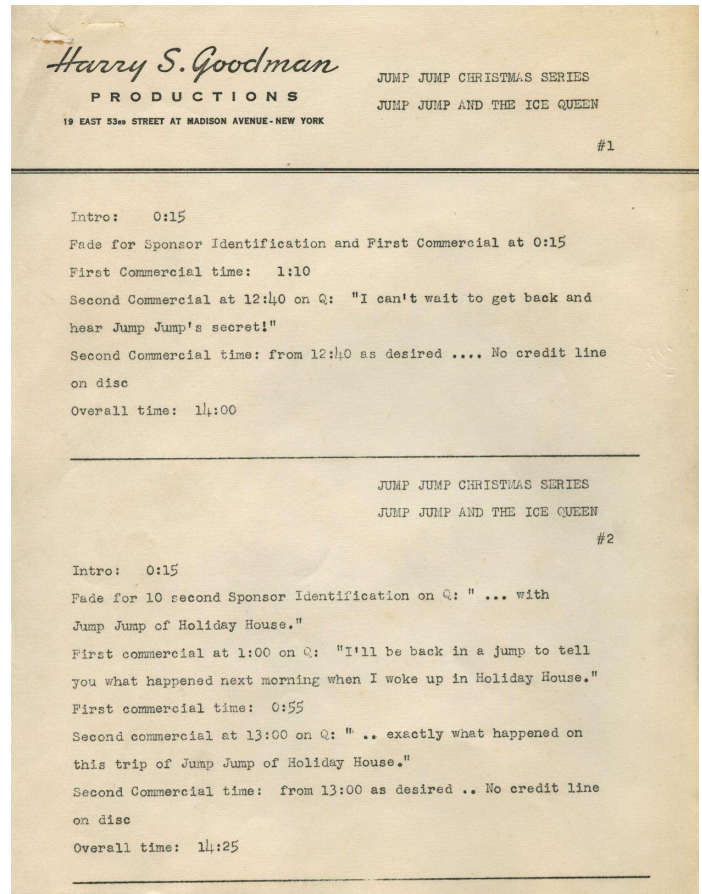
Photo courtesy John Wilder

and 1950's, including a stint as "Little Beaver" on *Red Ryder*. Wilder was also heard on the Jack Benny program as the head of the Beverly Hills Beavers, the youth club of which Jack was Treasurer. Wilder would read Jump Jump's lines at a recorded speed of 33 1/3 rpms. When they were played back at 78 rpms, they gave voice to Jump Jump in much the same manner as David Saville later gave voice to his Chipmunks.

The weekly shows proved to be popular and caught the attention of businessman and promoter, Sampson R. Diamond. Diamond looked beyond the

radio program and sought to give the aural character Jump Jump a physical image that would be marketable to the show's youthful audience.

Jump Jump-Cue Sheet, Radio Archives © 2023



Diamond's first step was to contact McConnell and Hickox' syndicator, Goodman Productions. Diamond proposed 25 fifteen-minute episodes of a children's adventure tied to the Christmas holiday. Hickox and McConnell agreed to the project as both writers and performers. The result of the McConnell and Hickox effort was *Jump Jump and the Ice Queen*. Goodman's company was responsible for selling the show.

Diamond's next step was to follow through with his idea of creating a merchantable image of Jump Jump and the other characters in the program. Once this was accomplished, Diamond contacted the Mattel Toy Company. The California company was a recent entry in the manufacture of children's toys. The toys were handmade at Mattel and presented in cardboard packaging from Artwood Products designed as an image of Holiday House.

The shows were recorded then pressed onto vinyl by the Allied Record Manufacturing Company. Allied had been a pioneer in plastic pressings, but by the time

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of the pressings for the Jump Jump project had switched exclusively to vinyl. Broadcast packages were prepared for distribution by October, 1948. The broadcast package included marketing materials (including samples of the Jump Jump toys) and cue sheets giving the local engineers and announcers the timing information they needed to cue in their local advertising during the organ interludes at the beginning and end of each show.



The story of the Ice Queen required McConnell and Hickox to introduce a new character into the world of Jump Jump - Tim. The role was perfect for the youthful Wilder who doubled as both Tim and Jump Jump. The first episode opens with Tim, who will serve as narrator, introducing himself. He explains that he is living in an orphanage where he and his four-year-old friend, Billy, have been discussing their concerns about Santa. Would Santa favor children living in families with mothers and fathers and children over the children who live in orphanages? As he lies in his bed pondering the question, Tim decides he will follow the North Star to the North Pole to get an answer to the question directly from Santa. Gathering his belongings, Tim sneaks out of the orphanage to begin his journey. After walking for "hours and hours", Tim tires and stops on the side of the forest path to nap. He awakens to tapping on his knees by the three-inch elf he comes to know as Jump Jump. Tim is befriended by Jump Jump who takes him to Holiday House where he meets Mary Holiday, Secretary to Santa. It's here that Tim meets the first of the many characters he will meet on his journey – Achi Paggli. Achi Paggli can change the color of his hair to reflect his mood. In this episode he's "in the pink". However, when Achi hasn't brought a message from Santa, Mary expresses her concern for him as the episode closes.

Unable to contact Santa by telephone in the second episode, Mary makes the decision that everyone will go to the North Pole to see what happened to Santa. Tim meets Sleepy Slim, a lion that spends much of the day sleeping. Enroute, the travel party of Jump Jump,

Tim, Mary, Achi Paggli, and Sleepy Slim meet The Poet who speaks only in rhyme. Mary mentions that Santa is making dolls of Jump Jump, Achi Paggli, and Sleepy Slim. While the local advertising is not included on the available recordings, I can only imagine the station announcer during the closing organ interlude saying: "Hey girls and boys, did you hear what Mary Holiday said about the dolls that Santa is making!?! Well, you can have them too! Just tell mom or dad to take you to your neighborhood Flugelmeyer's toy store and they can be yours!!"



Jump Jump doll, Radio Archives © 2021

Upon their arrival at the North Pole, a disheartened Santa tells everyone that the proud and selfish Ice Queen has declared there will be no Christmas. To assure that, she has stolen Santa's reindeer. Without his reindeer Santa says he can't deliver his gifts. Mary Holiday exclaims that they all must go to rescue the reindeer. Santa explains that the rescue will be difficult as the Ice Queen's palace is surrounded by a Circle of Blue Fire. He explains that blue fire is not hot, but coats one in ice. Santa then displays the dolls he has made of Achi Paggli, Sleepy Slim, and Mary Holiday. In another episode, the characters describe all the variations of the Jump Jump dolls Santa has made. One evening as Jump Jump sleeps, Tim creates a Jennifer doll as a "sister" for him.

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Once they finally begin their journey to the Ice Queen's palace, the reindeer rescue team faces many perils. While passing through an Eskimo village, Jump Jump is carried away on an ice floe - until he is rescued by a whale. They pass through the Christmas Tree Forest – a forest of “Christmas trees past”. Tim finds one that had once been at the orphanage. The forest is one of happy memories. It borders on the Ice Country, home to the Ice Queen's palace. As they make their way through the area Sleepy Slim is captured by the Ice Queen's Ice Dwarves. The dwarves prove to be not too fierce, so gathering up Sleepy Slim they continue on through the Ice Country until they face their next peril, a large crack in the ice they must cross. On the advice of the Christmas fairy, the team recites one of the Poet's poems and creates an ice bridge over the crack.



Jump Jump doll, Radio Archives © 2023

After being confronted by wild animals and an Army of Snowmen, the reindeer rescue team finally reaches the Palace of the Ice Queen. From a distance they can see the Circle of Blue Fire and the ice statues created of the people who tried to approach the palace. The Ice Queen comes out of the palace and addresses them in a laughing, threatening fashion. A plan was developed to trick the Ice Queen. A message is sent to Santa who responds by sending Peter Pelican with a set of dolls that look like the rescue team. They set the dolls up to look as if the rescue team had been frozen by the Circle of Fire hoping the Ice Queen would be fooled and allow them to sneak into the palace. Success! Once in the palace the rescue team finds a tunnel that takes them to Santa's reindeer. But now they must escape from the palace with the reindeer. Mary proposes flying with the reindeer from a balcony of the palace. The Ice Queen discovers the escape attempt and freezes the reindeer's hooves to the floor of the balcony. The rescue team calls upon the Christmas fairy to release the reindeer's hooves. Once released, the reindeer fly off to Santa, but the rescue team is still trapped in the palace tower room.

As the Ice Queen repeats her vow that there will be no Christmas, it is revealed for the first time that the mission of the rescue team was not only to recover

Santa's reindeer, but to turn the heart of the Ice Queen. Mary tells her that Christmas is “Love for one another”, “Peace on Earth” and “Goodwill to men.” This has no effect on the Ice Queen who tells the rescuers that instead of delivering the children's toys, Santa is coming to rescue them. She again says there will be no Christmas. “Christmas is a silly, old-fashioned superstition”. Laughing, one by one the Ice Queen turns Mary, Achi Paggi, Sleepy Slim, and the Poet into ice statues. She unsuccessfully tries to freeze Jump Jump, but he moves too quickly. Tim calls for the help of the Christmas fairy. She comes and de-ices the frozen members of the rescue team. She tells Mary a secret - the Ice Queen is afraid of the faces of children. The Ice Queen is challenged to look at the faces of children. Using her magic screen, the Ice Queen sees the happy faces of the children in a toy store and slowly her heart melts. As this happens all of the ice statues in the Circle of Blue Fire return to life. The Ice Queen admits that she was wrong and agrees to go to Santa's home at the North Pole.

On the trip, Tim falls asleep and is woken by a matron from the orphanage at the side of the forest path. She returns him to the orphanage. When he next awakens, Tim is in his bed at the orphanage. He tells the story of his adventure to Billy. Billy believes Tim was dreaming – until there was a knock at the door and Santa, Mary Holiday, Jump Jump and the other members of the rescue team of Tim's adventure enter to celebrate Christmas. Of course, the gifts Santa gives to the children are the dolls of Jump Jump and the characters. The show ends with Tim saying he hopes that everyone wakes up on Christmas morning to find a Jump Jump doll in their stocking.



Jump Jump doll, Radio Archives © 2023

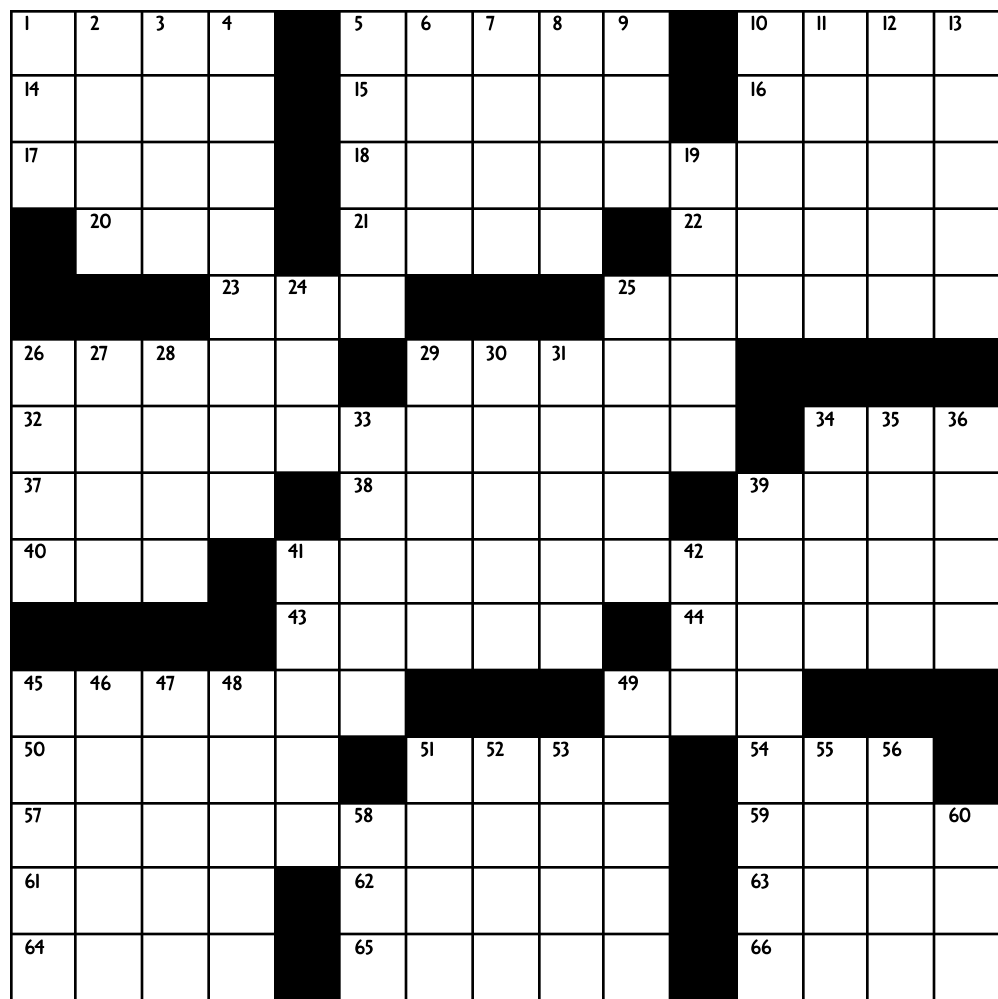
Was *Jump Jump and the Ice Queen* the merchandising bonanza envisioned by Sampson Diamond? There is no information available. The dolls made by Mattel may still be found for sale on the internet. Was the program a success from an entertainment standpoint? Apparently so as it was played for many years after its introduction in 1948. It now stands as a holiday hallmark from the Golden Age of Radio. 📺

Puzzle Me This: A Radio Crossword

By Kelly Gray © 2023

Across:

1. A woman's hairstyle for a formal occasion
5. Racetrack Jack Benny visited:
_____ Anita
10. OTR show that began as a soap opera: "Front _____ Farrell"
14. Mr. _____, Tracer of Lost Persons
15. The Little Mermaid
16. Lies like _____
17. A setting that Vic and Sade referred to: _____ Brain, OR
18. Radio hero created in Detroit, in part by Fran Striker
20. U.S. agency focused on medical research
21. Scandalous Mae West skit:
"_____ and Eve"
22. "Reduce, _____, Recycle"
23. Finish
25. Least industrious
26. Started
29. With 49 across, the hero of a children's radio show from 1942 to 1956.
32. Radio comedian who came up with the name "March of Dimes"
34. Approves
37. Shirley Temple's first husband
38. Synthetic acrylic fiber trademarked by DuPont in 1941
39. A narrow cut
40. A crime writer's pen name: Josephine _____
41. Fred's favorite street
43. Pour juices over meat to keep it moist
44. "_____ It to Beaver"
45. Lux Radio Theater and Dr. Kildare, for example
49. See 29 across.
50. The Mamas and the _____
51. A Scandinavian capital
54. What Archie calls Mr. Andrews
57. Orson Welles Suspense episode



59. Another name for the villains in *Bluebeard* or *Puss in Boots*, as heard on "Let's Pretend"
61. _____ of Man
62. Popeye's girlfriend
63. In March 1937, Speed Gibson and friends were ambushed on this island
64. Fields that are unseeded
65. Describes someone who is competitive, high-achieving, and impatient
66. He played Mowgli in 1942's "The Jungle Book"

Down:

1. In 1949, Frankie Remley claimed to be an expert on this Hawaiian instrument
2. From ancient Greece, a song of praise or triumph
3. He played Ricky on 1950s TV
4. Quiet, please! This show is _____!
5. It is sometimes dressed and sometimes undressed.
6. Yankee inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2022
7. Singer Simone

Down, continued:

8. To be full or swarming (with)
9. Internet slang for “already”
10. A part of game shows such as “What’s My Line?” and “To Tell the Truth”
11. The Bickersons did this a lot.
12. Will they _____ the secret word on “You Bet Your Life”?
13. A long-legged wading bird
19. Love
24. Opposite of SSW
25. Small, graphical representations of programs or files on a computer
26. OTR show starring Frank Lovejoy: Night _____
27. The place farthest away from the center of something

28. Hello in Sydney
29. *When Radio Was* is his
30. A small arm of a sea
31. He played Henry Aldrich
33. Coke, Pepsi, and RC
34. A ceramic cooking pot in the US SW
35. Ukraine’s capital
36. Inflammation on the edge of the eyelid
39. They helped Sergeant Preston
41. To make someone feel ashamed
42. In 1942, *Suspense* visited the Cave of _____ Baba
45. Term for a Ph.D. at some English universities
46. Opposite of lower
47. Appropriately



About an hour south of St. Louis, Missouri, just across the Mississippi River into Illinois, sits a small, yet very proud city. Chester, Illinois is located at the intersection of State Routes 150 and 3 in the southern end of the state. The city is a part of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail system and the Port of Chester along the Mississippi River has been open to visitors and industry since 1829. Beyond these essential Middle-America history points, Chester can boast that it is the hometown of Popeye, the Sailor Man.

Elzie Crisler Segar was born in Chester in 1894.

He grew up in the city, working at the local Thimble Theatre. At age 18, Segar decided to become a cartoonist, and took a correspondence course to learn. He then moved to Chicago where he started his career, publishing his first comic strip in 1916. By 1919, Segar was asked to create a replacement comic strip for the *New York Journal*, so he created one called “Thimble

Theatre”, named for his Chester hometown theater. In “Thimble Theatre” Segar introduced Olive Oyl, Castor Oyl, and Ham Gravy as recurring characters, not introducing Popeye until 1929.

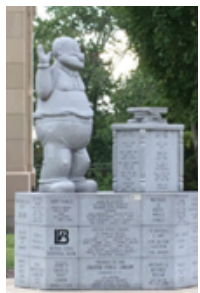


Photo by Sally Stephens



© Roadside America, 2019



The character of Popeye became so popular, so quickly, that fans began writing in and asking for more stories with the rough, tough, strong sailor. By the end of the year, Popeye was a regular on the comic strip, and later, becoming its titular character. The comic led to theatrical cartoon shorts, comic books, television cartoons, three radio programs from 1935-38, and a live-action film in 1980.

Photos by Sally Stephens



In 1977, a bronze Popeye statue was erected in the Segar Memorial Park. Almost 30 years later, the city established a plan to add new statues annually to create a Popeye Character Trail throughout

Chetser. New characters have been added through 2022 during the annual Popeye Picnic or Fall Festival, with 19 different locations featuring over 20 characters! Segar may have died in 1938, yet his legacy lives on in Chester. 🗺️

Know of or been to a radio-related spot? Send a write-up of your travels with pictures to be featured as our next Radio Roadtrip!

It's time to... Gather 'Round the Radio

I'm having coffee and carrot cake at the Poor Cousins Bakery, because our beloved tinpot studio is locked up tighter than a drum. After so many years and so many locations, I have retired as editor and host of Gather 'Round the Radio, the fanciful broadcast and typescript PDF.

Will you miss it, that curious mix of music, interviews with Club members, and my own light writing about my favorite shows? The broadcast format was make-believe for sure, but the material was spot on.

That's where you come in. Someone must step up and continue the GRTR task of finding Club members to write up and send in their own distinctive essays about their interests and approaches to OTR and the wider field of nostalgia.

The format of any future GRTR need not be the make-believe radio broadcast; that evolved slowly a few years ago, about the same time that John Abbott told me about the wonders of that quaint little thing called PDF. If you like, you could put your own stamp on the e-newsletter. Rest assured that new *Radio Recall* editor Sally Stephens will help you out by giving you encouragement, some leads to interesting topics and people, and space in the rejuvenated *RR*, which you are reading now.



A Farm Family Listening to Their Radio, 14 August 1926,
National Archives and Records Administration

A bit of GRTR history is in order. My eternal request has been, "...send me your stuff...", hoping that new Clubbers and long-time members will think hard and send in essays. And over the years, many folks have responded and I have happily broadcast their wealth of material. From way back, to name a few: Cort Vitty, Jim Widner, Sally Stephens, Bert Rude, Denis Roma, Jim Cox, Jack French; and lately, Wendy Wilmer and Frank Morgan.

Topics are the writer's choice. Fred Fett comes to mind because he wrote about his college years when he was the photographer for the campus newspaper. Of great interest, Fred wrote, was covering the big bands when they would make Miami (Ohio) University a regular road trip stop. Bert Rude wrote about his boyhood in Minnesota, where putting up storm windows every fall was as memorable as his discovering the wonders of shortwave radio and collecting QSL cards from stations worldwide. Frank Morgan recently wrote about his prowess at distance running and the way that his interest in OTR was enhanced by following the leads that he got from veteran researchers.

Also, GRTR also featured a new member's memories of his work with the Voice of America and its roles in broadcasting worldwide. His showstopper anecdote was that Telly Savalas hosted a music-talk show on the VOA, called Telly's Coffeehouse. Can't forget this one either: A member wrote about his early work in an electronics shop; and he eventually constructed a transmitter in his house with a range of a few blocks. He had a schedule for broadcasting OTR shows, and cars would park up and down the streets for happy listening indeed!

You can see the breadth of interests of OTR and nostalgia folks. We want to read more. *Radio Recall* can't just fade away; it has a noble and far-reaching readership. And you would miss the GRTR, too! Sally Stephens is determined to keep *RR* going, and a merger with the GRTR appears to be taking shape as well. I shall write the occasional "Letter from the Poor Cousins Bakery", but the main material will hopefully come from members, with Sally as the editorial contact. 📧

Mark Anderson © 2023



Pop Culture Shock

The Best Cigarette For You! By Lauren Kraut ©2023

“I think you were born in the wrong decade.”

I’ve heard variations of that refrain throughout my life; from when I dressed as the Phantom of the Opera for Halloween in 3rd grade to last week when I mentioned to an acquaintance that *Golden Girls* is my all-time favorite show. That said, it was no surprise to my friends and family when they learned I joined an OTR club. I discovered Old Time Radio when I stumbled onto Sirius channel 148: Radio Classics and was immediately taken with Joe Friday’s monotone delivery and Johnny Dollar’s dry wit.

There are times, though, when my true age shows and I’m taken aback by the “old time” part of “old time radio,” whether it is a turn of phrase, an extinct occupation, or just an everyday situation normal for circa 1940, e.g., waiting for a call at a diner pay phone. I welcome you to laugh with (at...?) me as I share some of these moments in what we’re calling the Pop Culture Shock corner.

For this inaugural corner, I have to highlight one of the biggest pop culture shocks: the commercials. With the catchy jingles and the overly excited announcers, I enjoy the early iterations of familiar household items like Alka Seltzer, or the long-gone or rebranded products, like Lux Laundry Flakes. They’re always entertaining to me. The cigarette ads, though, are particularly fascinating, “Chesterfield, best for you...” with the enunciated cadence of “Ches-ter-field.”

Dragnet is my number one seed when it comes to OTR. Young Jack Webb—what a hunk. It’s also a great peddler of, first Fatima and then later Chesterfield, cigarettes. I know it’s all about sponsors and money and it’s a business, but I’m an 80s kid. I’m old enough that I remember the Marlboro Man on TV and Virginia Slims ads in magazines. I was in high school the last time Joe Camel graced billboards. But I’m young enough that the glamour of smoking had mostly lost its sheen; those stars from Hollywood’s Golden Age who made it look sexy had died from smoking-related diseases. I grew up knowing that Smoking was Bad (though somehow my Dad’s pipe smoking didn’t count).



Imagine my incredulity when I first heard a cigarette ad within an episode of *Dragnet*, “9 out of 10 doctors recommend Fatima Cigarettes and note no damage to the throat, nose, and mouth.” Or the nurse with the raspy, deep voice who extolls the virtues of smoking, especially after a long day at work. I didn’t know if I should laugh or cry. No wonder everyone was smoking. After a little digging, my theory was confirmed: the rise in cigarette ads featuring doctors coincided with a rise in public health concerns about smoking. Those white jackets can be so reassuring!

“Smokers by the thousands are now changing to Chesterfield, because they’re learning the facts about Chesterfield. Facts like these: a doctor has been examining Chesterfield smokers for 20 months, almost two full years now. We’ve just received his latest report. And it confirms again: no adverse effects to the nose, throat, and sinuses from smoking Chesterfield. That’s a matter of record. And so is this: Chesterfield is the only cigarette proved highest in quality, low in nicotine. Those are the facts about Chesterfield. More good reasons why Chesterfield

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tastes so good, smoke so much milder. How about it, friends?" I love this: "a" doctor, "it's a matter of record," and, of course, the completely false "no adverse effects to the nose, throat, and sinuses." I know that I have the luxury of 20/20 hindsight here. The public wasn't stupid, they were being duped and that's what makes it so maddening. I promise I'm not lecturing. I'm just aghast. The blatant lies are astounding.



Additionally, cigarettes were promoted by everyday men and women, as well as popular actors, like Paul Douglas, "I've been smoking Chesterfields for 22 years, they're best for me, if you try them, you'll find they're best for you." Do I need to mention what led to his heart attack at the age of 52?

The ads are so confident and intense. "You'll be amazed when you compare Fatima with other long cigarettes. Buy a pack. You'll find Fatimas now cost the same. Like a Fatima. Ah, that's different... Quality even to the appearance of the bright, clean, yellow package. Carefully wrapped and sealed to bring you Fatima's rich fresh extra mild flavor."

And then how cigarettes are random asides within an episode or part of a storyline. One of my favorite episodes is "The Big Present" (1953) featuring the Milk Bottle Kid. The young rascal of the case, Elroy Graham, robs convenience stores of candy and cigarettes to sell to kids (!) at school and prove himself to be the big man on campus. After everything shakes out, he is placed on probation and required to reimburse the businesses. Elroy shows his appreciation to Friday and Smith by offering them a couple packs of Chesterfield's, quipping, "Hope they're the kind you smoke." They accept them saying, "You didn't have to do that." I laughed pretty hard at that: a 14-year-old presents two adults in positions of authority with cigarettes. And, again, they accept. For someone my age, that's such a foreign concept. I noticed in the tv episode that aired a year later, the cigarettes became candy bars, and the detectives didn't accept them citing policy.

There are numerous small instances like this throughout the series that would bring a chuckle: the doctor offering a cigarette to the detectives in the hospital; Ben Romero wanting to leave Friday, who's recovering from a gunshot wound, a carton of cigarettes.

It had been a long time since I saw or heard cigarette ads, and then they had the requisite warnings. Those early radio cigarette ads with their positivity and their claims that couldn't be further from the truth, it blows my 80s mind. Knowing all we do in 2023, though, I'm not immune to the coolness factor they were marketing: Is there a framed ad of Jack Webb touting Chesterfield cigarettes on the wall in my home? Absolutely. 📺

The Lost 1938 *Lone Ranger* Christmas Special

By Martin Grams © 2023

On the evening of December 26, 1938, the radio cast at station WXYZ played roles in not one, but two episodes of *The Lone Ranger*. Although the program premiered in 1933, it was not until February of 1938 that the radio program was recorded on a regular basis. For the holiday offering of 1938, it was decided not to record the episode because the series was then being syndicated across the country and it would have been weird to hear a Christmas episode in April, July or September. So the logical solution was to dramatize two different episodes on that evening. One as a traditional holiday adventure and the other as a normal western.

For the West Coast broadcast and for the transcription, the script was used for the broadcast of September 9, 1937. In that episode, Missouri Mike and his friend Steve Sanders are among the shrewdest outlaws The Lone Ranger and Tonto ever tried to track down. Wanted for murder, robbery and rustling, the only clue to their identity is a tattoo on the right forearm. The Lone Ranger and Tonto ride out to the ranch of Widow Spragg, 15 miles from Parkersville, unaware that the men they are trying to track down are trailing from behind. Hours after the masked man and Indian leave the ranch of Sam Spragg and his mother, the thieves break into the house and commit another robbery. Days later,

finding no sign of Missouri Mike, The Lone Ranger and Tonto leave to hunt the outlaw in the open plains. Outside town, an Indian named White Fox participates in a race with Sam, with prize money for the winner, and then exchanges death blows over money that was stolen by Missouri Mike who never left town. In desperation, The



Image courtesy Martin Grams

Lone Ranger talked with men from Parkersville, and the tribe of White Fox, to outline a plan for locating the outlaws. With Indians as expert trackers and vengeance in their hearts, The Lone Ranger has the advantage and together they hunt under the guide of moonlight. Finding the outlaws' camp, they take Missouri Mike's shirt off to verify the tattoo.



Charles Flanders, 1943, William Randolph Hearst Christmas Greeting Book

For the East Coast and Mutual Broadcast System, a holiday adventure was dramatized. In that episode, poverty was common in the town where Bob Hamill lived, and little could be done about it, while Eric Flint thrived. The latter was rich, owned practically all of the town, and was hated and despised. When he learns a masked man is looking for him, he hires two bodyguards, Butch

and Cooper, but a desperate clerk named Bob Hammill decides to rob him to buy Christmas presents for his son. Bob is going to lose his homestead to Flint, unable to pay the mortgage, so he figured what harm would it be to give his son a holiday to remember?

Catching the outlaws in play for *The Lone Ranger*, Bob draws his gun and forces the men – including Eric Flint – into an old shack, tied and bound. The Lone Ranger, meanwhile, learns from Tonto about Eric Flint. There were a lot of men here in the West who came to escape unhappiness in the East, the masked man rationalizes. Flint was one of them but his faith in his fellow-men was destroyed before he came here, and it did something to him. He lost his sense of values, his sense of fair play. The Lone Ranger breaks in to kidnap Flint, leaving Bob with the two gunmen. Throughout Christmas Eve, The Lone Ranger forced Flint to call on a few of his customers, people he loaned money to, and people who will not be able to pay off their debts. The first person they call on is Dan Dickerman.

RANGER: He's not going to take your house. Those papers he signed with you were illegal. I want you to sign this paper telling just what sort of an agreement he made with you.

JANE: Illegal?

RANGER: Then I want you to come with me to the sheriff's office and lodge a complaint against him. He's on his way to jail.

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FLINT: No, no! Yuh can't put me in jail. Them papers is legal!

RANGER: You be quiet! How about it, Dan?

DAN: But we can't do it now...

RANGER: There's no time like the present. The sooner he gets to jail, the better the community will be. We may have a long ride to the county seat in this kind of weather, and I've got to get him there before the first of the year if I'm going to save your property. All I need is one complaint against him.

DAN: Well, can't you get somebody else?

RANGER: What for? He made an agreement with you, didn't he?

DAN: But... well, I don't know. Look, stranger, it's Christmas Eve. I can't send a man tuh jail on Christmas Eve.

RANGER: Not even Eric Flint?

JANE: He oughta be in jail... if he's dishonest, Dan...

RANGER: It might save your house. Don't you realize that?

DAN: I won't do it. That's all. Taint the spirit of the day. You get somebody else to send him to jail. If it was day after tomorrow or next day, any other day but Christmas...

RANGER: We'll find someone else. Come on, Flint.

The Lone Ranger took Flint to another house, and then another, and each place Flint noted with increasing amazement, that the spirit of Christmas, the thought of peace on earth, and good will, so imbued the men, that not one could be found who would agree to assume the responsibility for jailing a man on Christmas day.

Eric's backstory was not so cheerful. Eric Flint came out to the West 20 years ago, intending to send word to his wife when she could come out and join him after he got a foothold. He sent that word and waited, but she never answered his letter. When next he heard, he read her name in a paper ten years later, saying that she was on the stage. It soured him. He was mad. Mighty mad, to think she wouldn't join him after all the promises he made. But he did not know his letter never reached her.

He did not know she waited years to hear from him. She did not know where to reach him. The Lone Ranger found the letter Eric Flint wrote. It was never delivered.

The Lone Ranger found it with a pack of other mail that had fallen into the hands of Indians when a stagecoach was wrecked. Then The Lone Ranger located her; she finally came out West in an effort to try and find him. She was singing on the stage to get the money for the trip. She hunted for years and finally settled down. The Lone Ranger knew of this and was determined to show Eric Flint that there were things far better than cheating customers out of their land.

As the night wore on, Mary Hammill sat by the window where a small candle gleamed out into the night. She couldn't sleep. She worried, worried about her husband, worried where he went, and remembering the expression of grim determination on his face when he left, was fearful of what might happen before he came back. But when Bob returned, he had a smile on his face. He told his wife all about Eric Flint being taken away and justice served against the vile banker.

The next day, early Christmas morning, Eric Flint arrives at the Hammill homestead to surprise young Donny, Bob and Mary's little boy, with a Christmas tree. Over the night, while everyone was sleeping, Butch and Cooper cut down Christmas trees and followed orders from Flint to deliver them to everyone's house. Mary was shocked to discover the old Scrooge has a change of heart. He plans to visit everyone in town and deliver them a generous Christmas morning. Then he has to leave town. Mary asks for how long.

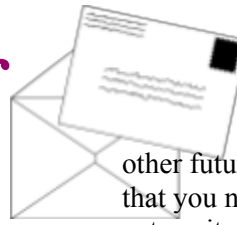
FLINT: How long? Sakes alive, I don't know. I'm goin' to meet my wife. I ain't seen her in 20 years. She's still waitin' for me. I won't be back next month. Mebbe not until spring. Mebbe I won't come back! And who cares? A merry Christmas everybody!

Author's Note:

While the Christmas adventure was never recorded, it should be noted that this script would later be recycled for the episode titled "The Christmas Tree," broadcast on Christmas 25, 1950, with slight revisions. (For the 1938 rendition, the element involving Donny wanting a Christmas tree and the delivery of a huge tree on Christmas morning was borrowed from the broadcast of December 24, 1934.) 📺

A Letter from the Editor

By Sally Stephens © 2023



What a way to say goodbye, 2023 and hello, 2024 - with a new editor of *Radio Recall*!

I am excited to introduce myself. Many of you may recognize my name from club membership for the past fourteen, almost fifteen, years. I've enjoyed club meetings in person and on Zoom, been part of club recreations at meetings and the Library of Congress, and served as club Vice President and Secretary as well. Most recently, I've been bringing our "class" together online during the quiz portion of our online club meetings - ensuring all "students" have their materials, have studied, and are ready for their quiz in whatever category Frank Morgan deems important to our curriculum that month. In short, I've jumped in with both feet once I became a member of the MWOTRC, and have loved every moment of it. Now, I'm taking on a new role to ensure MWOTRC's premier bimonthly journal, *Radio Recall*, does not disappear.

Radio Recall's most recent editor, Bob Cockrum, has carried forth a high level of professionalism and enthusiasm that all previous editors, including Jack French and Martin Grams, Jr., have maintained. He sought articles from acquaintances in the radio world and contributed well-researched pieces of his own from his first issue two years ago. On behalf of myself and the entire membership, I offer an expression of thanks to Bob for his time as editor of *Radio Recall*.

I've learned something new every time I read an issue of *Radio Recall*. I might learn something about a radio program, star, production, or sponsor. I might even discover a show I've never heard of and want to find out more. I might learn that there's an event happening that I won't want to miss out on next time it comes around.

Every issue, my love for radio grows. I'd be loath to remove that joy and education from you and

other future members. I firmly believe in the idea that you never know what might reach someone, so I get excited to share everything. I follow this idea in my daily life when I'm teaching elementary school, and feel it still applies here. Articles, games, columns, letters - anything can reach anyone and a wide variety might spark someone's interest, so why not include it?

With that mentality, I repeat the question, and not so rhetorically. Why not include it? I welcome any and all input - articles, column ideas, letters, and brief write-ins. I'd like this to be a journal full of club member knowledge, interest, and beyond. I've already received exciting input for this issue - holiday-related articles from radio enthusiast Frank Morgan and historian Martin Grams, Jr., a look at elements of radio from different perspectives and lenses from Lauren Kraut, and a radio-related crossword puzzle for all ages by Kelly Gray.

Club member Mark Anderson created and provided a whimsical look at the club and hobby through his digital column, *Gather 'Round the Radio*, sent opposite months of *Radio Recall*. It has been a perfect companion piece, one which I and members look forward to as much as receiving the journal itself. Mark notified the club he would be stepping away from *GRTR*, and I am pleased to include a welcome letter to continue his newsletter as a column here. We all thank Mark for his time spent in the fictional studio, and look forward to reading about who may stop in at the Poor Cousin's Bakery.

Additionally, I've started a "Radio Roadtrip" column which will feature locales related to radio. I'd like to include columns focused on "This Day in Radio", book or radio program reviews, and additional fun and games. Do you have an idea or a suggestion? Send it on over - **why not include it?** 📧

Send your ideas, articles, letters, or other materials to the Editor at editor@mwotrc.com

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MWOTRC was created in 1984 by Jim Burnette (1945-2001). The MWOTRC presents, promotes and performs classic radio drama, comedy and public affairs through speakers and dramatizations. Annual dues are \$20 for persons receiving *Radio Recall* in PDF format and \$25 for those desiring a printed copy. Information about monthly meetings at mwotrc.com.

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