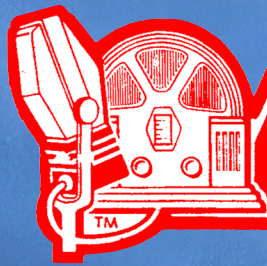


ALL LONE RANGER ISSUE WITH COMMENTARIES BY EVERETTE HUMPHREY • DAVE PARKER & GARY COVILLE

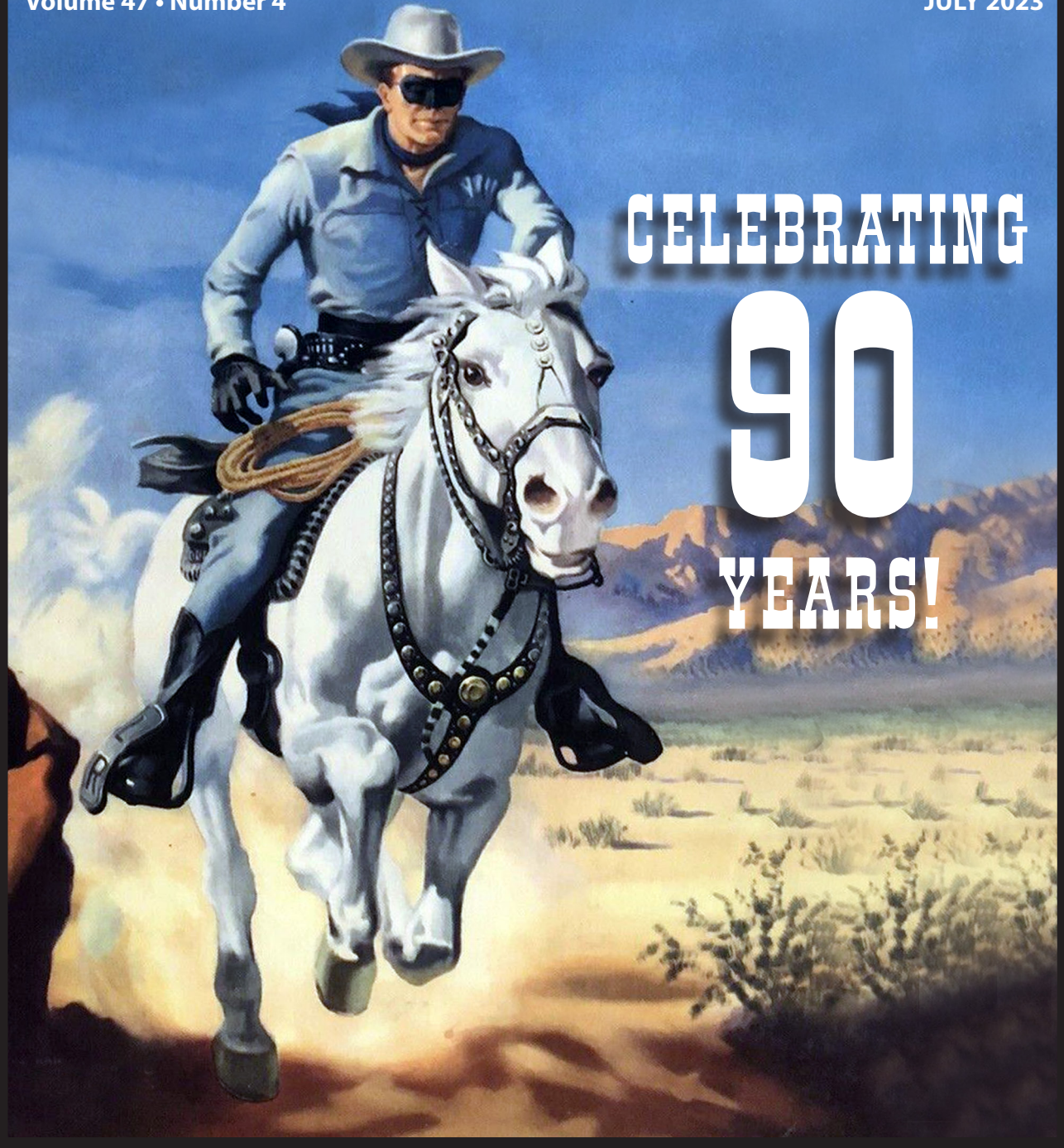


sperdvac

RADIOGRAM

Volume 47 • Number 4

JULY 2023



CELEBRATING
90
YEARS!



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from the president

GREETINGS SPERDVAC MEMBERS!

SUMMER IS UPON US, and I hope this message finds you in good spirits and enjoying the warmth and sunshine. It is a pleasure to connect with all of you once again and share some exciting updates from our organization.

By now, I trust that each one of you has received our membership survey. For those who have already responded, I extend my gratitude for your valuable input. And to those who haven't had a chance yet, I encourage you to look at your email box. Our dedicated social media Director, Sean Dougherty, has sent out a survey link. Your opinions are crucial in guiding the future direction of our beloved SPERDVAC.

I am delighted to announce that we recently received a remarkably generous donation of MP3 files from Terry Shingara. He sent us a sizable amount of Lone Ranger programs. Our diligent audio library director, Zach Eastman, is tirelessly working to add these programs to our website, making them readily accessible to all our members. Terry, we are immensely grateful for such a considerate and valued contribution to our organization.

In other news, I would like to introduce Scott Mahan, who has graciously volunteered to take on the role of acting board secretary. Scott has been a devoted SPERDVAC member for many years, and his profound passion for old-time radio programming, coupled with his technical background, makes him a valuable addition to our team. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Scott as he assumes this important responsibility.

Additionally, Corey Harker, our esteemed director of disc restoration, would like to hear from any of our members who are skilled at audio disc restoration. If this sounds like you, please email info@spervac.com, subject Line Audio Disc Restoration. Corey's dedication to preserving and enhancing our audio collection is truly commendable, and I urge you to assist him in any way possible to further our mission of safeguarding these cherished pieces of radio history.

Recently I was asked what happened to the old CD library. So, I want to shed some light on the matter. The decision to retire the CD library was influenced by several factors. First, there was declining usage, with months passing without a single request. Secondly, the process of creating new CDs, mailing them out to members, managing escalating mailing costs, tracking the discs, following up with members, and cataloging each disc proved to

be extremely labor-intensive. Moreover, technological advancements (the internet) have provided us with a faster and more efficient method of delivering content and eliminating the burdensome labor involved. Lastly, by making program downloads a benefit of membership, we have removed the additional cost associated with CD library rentals, ensuring that all of our members can enjoy these files included in the annual membership fee. So instead of waiting for days or weeks to receive desired programs, audio files are available on demand all over the world.

Since my last message, I must sadly inform you that the renowned author John Dunning, the remarkable man who penned the definitive work on the *Tune in Yesterday: The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio, 1925-1976* (1976) and *On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* (1998) passed away. Numerous online articles have been written in tribute to him, honoring his immense contributions. I wish to express our collective condolences to his friends and family. Above all, I want to emphasize our collective appreciation for John Dunning, a true giant in this industry, whose legacy will forever resonate within the world of old-time radio.

As we embrace the warmth and joys of summer, let us cherish the camaraderie and shared passion that binds us together as members of SPERDVAC. Your involvement and dedication are what make our organization thrive, and I am grateful for every one of you.

Wishing you a delightful summer filled with laughter, good company, and, of course, the timeless magic of the golden days of radio.

Until Next time, stay safe and stay tuned.📻

Timothy Knofler



The Lone Ranger

OFF in a cloud of dust and a hearty “Hi-Yo Silver, Away-y-y-!” ABC’s Lone Ranger rides into another thrilling adventure of the Wild West, with over twelve million children listening breathlessly to his daring feats. From the imagination of George W. Trendle came the idol of youngsters across the nation—the masked champion of justice who uses his silver bullets to right the wrongs of outlaws, but never to take a human life.

In leafing through the annals of the Old West, we find that at one time during his career, the Lone Ranger was not alone, but a member of the Texas Rangers. There were five others in his particular group. One evening the six Rangers were preparing to camp on the canyon floor for the night when, seemingly out of nowhere, outlaw bullets found their mark. Five of the Rangers were killed in cold blood and the sixth left behind, presumably dead. However, the sixth Ranger was found by an Indian, who was later to become known as Tonto, and nursed back to health.

Tonto buried the five dead Rangers, but made six mounds of earth to give the impression that all had died. In order to conceal his identity, the Lone Ranger donned a black mask and began his campaign of reprisal. He was determined to find the assassins and bring them to justice. The territory he covered extended throughout Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, up into the Dakotas and even as far as California. At the completion of this mission he continued to champion justice in the wilds of the West, for he had become the symbol of law and order. This hard-fighting, straight-shooting avenger remained behind his mask and left his real identity buried with his five dead comrades.

Before the Lone Ranger found him, the great white stallion, Silver, was king of a herd of wild horses. Having conquered all opposition, Silver left the protection of the valley to seek greener pastures. It was during this quest that he encountered a bison for the first time. The gallant young horse put up a heroic fight against the buffalo, but he would have been gored to death had it not been for the timely arrival of the Lone Ranger who shot the ferocious animal and saved the great horse. From that time on, the Lone Ranger and Silver, with Tonto’s help, have faced and outwitted death in the West together.

From the radio scrapbook is a synopsis of the Lone Ranger’s origin that led to his fight for law and order in the early western United States.

Radio-TV Mirror • February 1952

THE EDITOR HAS HIS SAY

The Lone Ranger at 90

THIS ISSUE we celebrate radio’s leading western hero on his 90th anniversary. The masked rider of the plains and his faithful Indian companion turned 90-years-old last January, and they continue to ride the range of our memories as well as our electronic gadgets. Thanks to technology we can hear the Lone Ranger’s adventures, often as they were heard by our parents and grandparents and great-grandparents complete with commercials intact.

In addition, we can see and hear the masked man’s adventures as depicted in television. Unfortunately, unlike the radio programs, these television films are seen in truncated form. The current owners of the Lone Ranger have gutted the Lone Ranger’s exploits to the point of destruction. The unkindest cut of all is the loss of the introductory annotation, spoken by Gerald Mohr and alternately Fred Foy, that states what we Lone Ranger fanatics can recite by heart: “With his faithful Indian companion, Tonto, the daring and resourceful masked rider of the plains led the fight for law and order in the early west. Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear. The Lone Ranger rides again.” But thanks to film pirates, we can still find the uncut introductions and even full network broadcasts complete with General Mills commercials hidden on the internet.

We’re not done, though. We can also see the Lone Ranger in action in two color feature films, *The Lone Ranger* (1956) and *The Lone Ranger and the Lost City of Gold* (1958). Both films, the former produced by Jack Wrather for Warner Brothers on a substantial budget and the latter produced by Wrather’s television company on a restraint budget for United Artists, present the masked man and Tonto just as they were presented on radio and television. By this we mean the Lone Ranger and Tonto are in no way real people but dream-figures, or ideal representations of the kind of people we all should be, or, for us youngsters, the kind of adults we should be. In this regard, the Lone Ranger and Tonto, themselves representative of ideal friendship, are presented as being symbols of transformation who bring redemption to those they encounter. Both films, for instance, have strong messages about social justice and racial tolerance.

I say all of these to distinguish those films from two later films, one produced by Wrather, who should have known better, and the other by Disney, which favors deconstruction

and revisionism, which turn the myth upside down, especially the Disney version. Suffice it to say, neither film did a thing to enrich or even appreciate the legend of the Lone Ranger.

Now, I have to confess that I did not meet the masked man through radio. No, I have to admit that I met the Lone Ranger through television. Sacrilege, I know, coming from the editor of a newsletter dedicated to radio drama. Honestly, I had no idea that

the Lone Ranger was on radio despite having the evidence in front of me, namely Lone Ranger phonograph albums that told the origin of the Lone Ranger. It was only in my teen years that I acknowledged that the LP was an edited radio show, and that the Lone Ranger had a long history on the airwaves. As such I began collecting episodes on reel-to-reel tapes; I even tried my hand unsuccessfully at producing my own Lone Ranger radio drama, which was the subject of a previous column.

After all these years, though, I find there is very little that distinguishes the radio Lone Ranger from the television Lone Ranger. Neatly, TV’s Lone Ranger is radio with pictures, and as was so often the case with programs transitioning to television the Lone Ranger TV episodes were based on radio scripts right down to long passages of narration.

I wish I still had my Lone Ranger merchandise from childhood. Why? Just so I could touch something of the character that meant so much to me as a child, and whose values I still try to uphold as anathema as they are to today’s standards.

There isn’t a sentient being today who cannot say that he or she has not heard the name, The Lone Ranger, or the phrase, “Hi-Yo, Silver.” And more people identify that musical passage as the Lone Ranger than the finale to the William Tell overture. Speaking of Silver, I once heard a radio station’s man-on-the-street interview in which the interlocutor asked numerous passing strangers, “If I told you that I ride a big white horse named Silver who am I?” One hundred percent of those passing strangers, including a man with a heavy middle eastern accent, replied, “The Lone Ranger.”

So you see the Lone Ranger and Tonto are ubiquitous. We have found them in all media and in all forms of popular culture for 90 years, and though their appearances are few in our modern day we might say that their spirits are omnipresent if repressed by this crazy, mixed-up age we now live in.

Hi-Yo Silver, Away . . . forever! 🐾





HI-YO SILVER!

THE MAKING OF A TRULY AMERICAN ICON

by Everette Humphrey

REAL ICONS do not start out with great fanfare or promotion. They must develop over time and use. So it was with the Lone Ranger. When George W. Trendle, owner of radio station WXYZ in Detroit, approached his staff with the idea of developing a western drama that would appeal to both kids and adults, an American icon was not even on his radar. His idea was to have a program that would not only have universal appeal but also have moral standards that parents could let their youngsters listen to freely while enjoying it themselves. If this could be done he felt it would attract the sponsors he would need to help support his fledgling radio network. He knew the larger his audience the greater his chance of making the show produce a payday. Money was behind everything that Trendle did and the Lone Ranger was no different in his mind.

In his instructions to Fran Striker, the script writer, he outlined several things the show must have. Among them, the lead character would always use correct English, never swear, smoke or drink and be of sterling character. He ordered every script proofread for these standards before approving it to ensure that all of his requirements were met. These qualities led to a wide acceptance by parents of the day. With this acceptance, the Lone Ranger was off to a great start right from the beginning. Though no one realized it at the time, a real American icon was on the way very early after the show's inception. The fact that over 10,000 showed up at the first public appearance of the Lone Ranger told Trendle all he needed to know about his new show. That appearance laid a great foundation for what was to follow over the years. Each public appearance over the years only added to the mystique of the character.

There are several things that should be met for anything to become a real icon. First, it must have a wide appeal and have meaning to those who hear or come in contact with it. It must have a wide range of uses and applications outside of its original purpose. The Lone Ranger fills all of these requirements very easily.

During the North Africa campaign in World War II, General Eisenhower was looking for a code phrase that the troops could use to identify themselves to each other in the dark. He chose a phrase that he knew every American lad would recognize. He chose "Hi Yo Silver." It turned out to be perfect. These young men had grown up with



the phrase. It was as well-known to them as their own names.

There are other instances that contribute to the Lone Ranger's stature as a true American icon. For instance, who can hear the opening strains of the finale to the William Tell Overture and not immediately think of the Lone Ranger? When we want to indicate something is particularly useful and valuable, it is often referred to as a "silver bullet." The term is often used when referring to new medication. The term used by some to refer to a special friend is often "kemosabe." When someone takes on a particular task alone that may be better handled by several, we often refer to them as being a "Lone Ranger." How often have you heard someone say, "Now don't be a Lone Ranger" to refer to someone who may attempt a particularly hard task? The small black mask worn by many at Halloween celebrations is almost universally referred to as a "Lone Ranger mask." If the number of applications a particular thing is used for is any indication of whether or not something is an icon, *The Lone Ranger* must be considered a real American icon.

Over the past 90 years the Lone Ranger has become one of the greatest icons in American history. A true test of its iconic nature can be seen in the fact that the Lone Ranger is now not only an American icon, but one with standing all over the world. Many countries have their own Lone Ranger fan clubs. Striker's novels have been translated into several languages and Lone Ranger comics are popular in several countries.

Trendle's desire that the character appeal to all ages has been a complete success. Even

today the league of fans encompasses a wide range of ages. The fan club on the internet has many followers that cover the age range from preteen to those of us in our eighties. I think even Trendle would be amazed at his success in putting this icon so deeply into the America psyche. If the fact that the character is as popular today as it has ever been not proof of its standing as a true American after 90-years, nothing will.

I present the following as further proof of it's standing as a true American icon. In late 2020 when the City of Hope hospital was looking for celebrity items to add to their fund-raising auction, they turned to Dawn Moore for an item connected to her father, Clayton, who had played the part on television for several years. They realized that after 87-years the Lone Ranger still had a strong appeal. Dawn was willing to part with one of the silver bullets from her father's gun belt. She hesitated, not knowing who would get it or what use would be made of it, but agreed to do so as the charity was a great one. Her decision turned out to be a wise one. The bullet brought a winning bid of \$1500 for the hospital.

I was the winner and as such received an email from Dawn the next day. After congratulating me she asked me what use I would make of the bullet. I informed her that the bullet would be headed to the Lone Ranger display in the museum in Mt. Carmel, IL. I told her that the bullet belonged to the fans and not just one person. This pleased her. I told her that I would be taking it to the museum myself and have a special display plaque made for it. The wording on the plaque would be the ones she had posted on the auction site. This pleased her. The next day I received another email from her with an idea she had. She suggested an Olympic Torch type of journey for its trip, one in which she would have herself photographed packing the bullet and delivering it to Fed Ex for shipment. I would photograph Fed Ex delivering it to me and photograph each person that came in contact with it from the time I received it until it reached the museum. Neither of us had any idea of how it would turn out (for a complete record of the journey see "A Silver Odyssey" in *Radiogram*, September 2021).

By the time I reached the museum 81 fans had been photographed with the bullet. If this does not solidify the Lone Ranger as a real American icon nothing will. Yep, now 90 and still going as strong as ever.

"Hi-Yo, Silver!"



The Lone Ranger Takes the Trail to Television

by Gary Coville

THE YEAR 1954 would prove something of a watershed in the ongoing tug of war between radio and television for audience loyalties. In fact, an entire book was once written about that year from television's perspective, R. D. Heldenfels's *Television's Greatest Year: 1954* (Continuum: NY, 1994). For all the author's well-documented reasons for singling out 1954 as television's greatest year, there were corresponding reasons why 1954 marked a further decline in radio's fortunes. Two reasons stand out.

First, 1954 was the year *The Lone Ranger* ceased airing original radio broadcasts. Henceforth, this American icon would be limited to rebroadcasts on radio. Starting back in 1949, the show had been running a double life on radio and television. Over time the masked man had evolved into a coveted American symbol. Now, in 1954, television had won the skirmish.

The second reason is more personal. The year 1954 was the year my family welcomed television into our home for the first time. Built by General Electric, it arrived in the form of a hulking mahogany cabinet enclosed by doors that were required by my mother to be closed whenever the set was not in use. Its delivery marked a ceremonial transition of loyalties that was taking place in millions of homes across the nation. The large combination radio-phonograph that had occupied the sweet spot in our living room for as long as my five-year-old mind could remember was moved to a far corner of the room and our new television set took over pride of place. I had already mapped out in my young mind many of the programs I was going to watch. Prominent on that list was *The Lone Ranger*.

I soon came to realize that the masked man didn't sound quite the same on television as he had on

radio. My most lingering memory of the Lone Ranger on radio came at my grandparents' house just a block away. My grandfather was rather deaf and tended to play his radio quite loud. Just as I walked through my grandparents' front door one evening the Ranger's familiar call of "Hi-Yo Silver" was exploding in the room and the William Tell Overture was rattling the windows. My mother and grandmother tried to visit over the din. I helped myself to some hot freshly buttered popcorn and settled down to listen. But to my ears the Lone Ranger didn't sound quite like himself. What was going on here? Curiously, I didn't detect any dissimilarities between the radio and television versions of the masked man's friend and companion, Tonto.

Over time, of course, I came to the startling realization that there were two Lone Rangers, Brace Beemer on radio and Clayton Moore on television. I never have come to accept the earlier pretenders to the masked man before Beemer on radio or the TV interloper, John Hart. However, that five year skirmish between 1949 and 1954 is fascinating as part of the fierce contention between radio and television during that era. There were similar rivalries: William Conrad vs. James Arness as Matt Dillon on radio and television, respectively. John Dehner and Richard Boone squared off as Paladin, although Boone had started his television role ahead of Dehner's radio version.

In hindsight it seems inevitable that television would win the war; nonetheless, the rivalry between the two Lone Rangers was an absorbing one. In 1949, according to Harrison Summers' *Thirty-Year History of Programs Carried on National Radio Networks in the United States 1926-1956* (Arno Press: NY, 1971) *The Lone Ranger* was earning a respectable 11.6 rating but by 1954 its rating had fallen to 2.9 in line with the overall decline in radio's numbers.

The television version had its issues at

the beginning. The video format debuted in September 1949 and the following month (October 13, 1949) the newspaper critic Larry Wolters penned a dismissive review of the video entry comparing it unfavorably to *Hopalong Cassidy* and declaring to his mind “there already is too much sagebrush and frontier film on the video channels.” Nonetheless, the battle between the two Lone Rangers was joined.

The names of Brace Beemer and Clayton Moore were clearly known to those in the business and to anyone paying attention to such credits, but not deliberately publicized to general audiences. That was especially the case on radio. It was felt that the emphasis should always be on the character of the Lone Ranger, never the actor playing the role. The fact that the Lone Ranger wore a mask to protect his identity also allowed for substitutes to stand in for public appearances whenever necessary. Beemer had been making personal appearances as the Lone Ranger for years before he inherited the role from Earle Graser in 1941 upon the latter’s death in an automobile accident. Then Beemer legitimately became the Lone Ranger both behind the microphone and in appearances before the public.

In 1949, when Clayton Moore assumed the television role of the Lone Ranger, it was still Beemer making public appearances as the Lone Ranger. He would continue doing so until the mid-1950s. Indeed, Ted Rogers, who had once supervised *The Lone Ranger* television effort for the advertising company, Dancer, Fitzgerald and Sample, would confirm this in an interview for Jeff Kiseloff’s book, *The Box: An Oral History of Television, 1920-1961* (Viking: NY, 1995). From Rogers’ comments it seems Beemer was never able to handle all the public appearances by himself. Stand-ins besides Beemer were also hired, handed a mask and told to greet the public as the Lone Ranger. Rogers recalled Beemer, making public appearances as the television Lone Ranger although Beemer never appeared on the television screen. “Producer, George Trendle, interused these guys, so all he ever had to pay somebody for these appearances was scale,” Rogers said. “If the guy wanted another ten dollars a month, Trendle would say bye-bye and get another guy.”

In August 1954, Jack Wrather formally purchased all rights to *The Lone Ranger*. The radio cast and crew had been informed in July that changes were coming. Beginning in September only transcribed re-broadcasts would air.

With Wrather now producing the television series, Clayton Moore was finally about to replace Beemer as the public face of the Lone Ranger. In an interview with Bettelou Peterson of the *Detroit-Free Press* (January 30, 1955) Moore expressed his enthusiasm for the role. When George Trendle was seeking an actor for the television Lone Ranger, Moore fought for the role. “I wanted the part,” Moore said. “I’ve been a Lone Ranger fan for years. It was the greatest thrill of my life when I was chosen.” Moore announced that he would soon start making personal appearances, taking over from Brace Beemer. “I’m anxious to get started,” he said. “I want to get out and meet the youngsters . . . I feel all the children who love the Lone Ranger are really my own children.”

Of course, the switch of public personalities, Moore for Beemer, would cause confusion for many adults raised on radio rather than TV. Jack Bell, a columnist for the *Miami Herald*, was indicative of such confusion. In his column of January 13, 1956, Bell announced that Brace Beemer would soon be visiting Miami to promote his first full-length feature film as the Lone Ranger. On January 18, Bell sheepishly confessed he had been confused and it was Clayton Moore who would be appearing to promote *The Lone Ranger* film. Beemer, the columnist explained, was the original radio Lone Ranger and was still being heard on radio and had not long before appeared as the Ranger at a local area children’s hospital circus. On January 25, Bell made yet another correction. A reader notified Bell that the original Ranger was her cousin, Earle Graser, whom Beemer replaced upon Graser’s untimely death.

Now after 90 years, there have been several different incarnations of the Lone Ranger. For someone who made the transition from radio to television in the early 1950s, the Lone Ranger has steadfastly represented an ideal and outlook on life best exemplified by both Brace Beemer and Clayton Moore. Anyone else playing the part remains merely an asterisk.❗



THE LONE RA



RANGER: A CHRONOLOGY

by Patrick Lucanio

and Gary Coville

A S NOTED IN PREVIOUS ISSUES we love all things Lone Ranger, and so what follows is a time line of the major events in the 90 years of the Lone Ranger's development as he has been depicted in just about everything—radio, television, movies, comic books, etc. The only thing excluded are the thousands of pieces of merchandising the masked man and Tonto have inspired. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, and we're sure we've overlooked something. Moreover, like all investigations we found controversy. Of particular frustration was pinpointing the first actor to portray the Lone Ranger. This has been an issue for years with the phantom-like Jack Deeds going back and forth between being the first to portray the masked man to being a one-shot replacement. Further, no one seems to know who this fellow Deeds was other than a vaudevillian. Surprisingly, newspaper advertisements in the late 1930s for Mr. Deeds' appearances at vaudeville theatres declare the singer as the "original Lone Ranger of the air," perhaps puffing his first performances or his one-shot performance. Whatever the case, here's a *Hi-Yo Silver* to all Lone Ranger enthusiasts.

1905

•John H. Kunsy (later King) opens the second movie theatre in the nation.

1918

•Attorney George W. Trendle, specializing in movie contracts and leases, becomes quarter partner in Kunsy Theatres, a chain of vaudeville houses and movie theatres.

1929

•Trendle and King sell their theatre chain to Paramount for \$6,000,000 and then purchase Detroit radio station WXYZ, an affiliate of the Columbia Broadcasting System. Trendle toys with the idea of originating locally sponsored program, but CBS heartily objects.

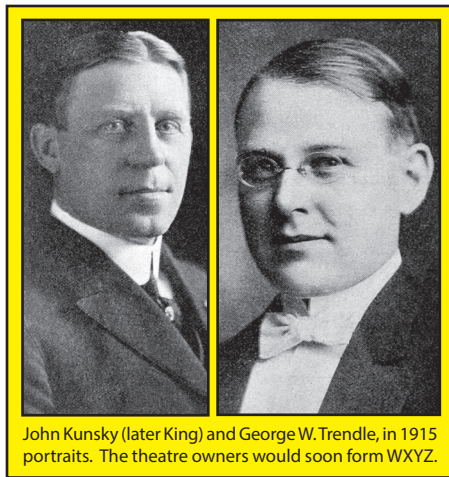
1932

•June. Trendle severs ties with CBS and embarks on creating his own statewide independent network.

•December. Trendle decides on a children's western series to anchor his proposed network. Pulp novelist and freelance scriptwriter Fran Striker (left), who had done a radio series called *Warner Lester, Manhunter*, is selected as story editor and chief writer for *The Lone Ranger* series. As is true with so many oral histories, a number of individuals claim to have been the originator of the title and concept of *The Lone Ranger* series.



For an interesting oral history of this series,



John Kunsy (later King) and George W. Trendle, in 1915 portraits. The theatre owners would soon form WXYZ.

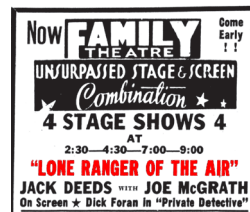
see David Rothel's *Who was That Masked Man?*, the first book length volume dealing exclusively with *The Lone Ranger*.

1933

•January 30. The first episode of *The Lone Ranger* is broadcast. For economic reasons (in the public domain and hence no royalties), Rossini's *William Tell* overture is chosen over von Suppé's *Light Cavalry* overture as the theme music; various other selections by von Suppé and Liszt, moreover, are used for background music. The first actor to portray *The Lone Ranger* is a matter of confusion. Some sources say Jack Deeds was the first to portray the masked man, and following six dreadful performances, was replaced by George Stenius who would eventually become

a film director as George Seaton (*Miracle on 34th Street* [1947], *The Country Girl* [1954], *Airport* [1970], etc.); other sources, however, including Seaton himself claim that Seaton originated the role. Terry Salomonson and Martin Grams, Jr., in their comprehensive book, *The Lone Ranger: The Early Years, 1933 – 1937*, assert that George Stenius originated the role with a Jack Deeds making a single appearance five months later, May 11, 1933, to be replaced two days later by director James Jewell for a single performance. Thereafter, Earle Graser assumed the role until April 7, 1941. Whatever the case, numerous advertisements for Jack Deeds appearances on vaudeville stages in the 1940s claim that he was the "Original Lone Ranger of the Air," perhaps puffing his single performance. Seaton himself, in an interview with the *Detroit Free Press* (March 29, 1970) altered his claim, saying that, "Until just recently I thought I was the original Lone Ranger, but I've discovered that for a few performances before I got there a man named Deeds had played it." The role of Tonto, who did not make an appearance until the 10th episode, was portrayed by Shakespearean actor John Todd, who would remain with the radio series throughout its 21-year run.

•Trendle signs H. Allen Campbell, an



advertising representative of the Hearst organization, to promote the series. Campbell succeeds in selling the series to WOR in New York and WGN in Chicago, and along with WXYZ, the three stations form the beginnings of the Mutual Broadcasting System.

•April. Seaton resigns and is replaced by WXYZ studio operations manager and announcer, Brace Beemer, but Beemer quits after a few months to open an advertising agency.



•The Lone Ranger finally finds a permanent voice (until fate intervenes) in Earle W. Graser (left).

•Tuesday, May 16. The Lone Ranger announces that he will give a free popgun to the first 300 children who write in; by Saturday, the Lone Ranger begs his audience to stop writing; after final tally the premium draws 24,905 responses.

•The Lone Ranger makes a personal appearance at Belle Isle in Detroit; 70,000 school children show and stage a near riot in their enthusiasm at meeting the masked man.

•November 27. Silvercup Bread (the name was pure coincidence) becomes the first commercial sponsor; prior to Silvercup the program was self-sustaining.

1935

•The Lone Ranger Inc. is established to protect WXYZ and the Mutual Broadcasting System from any litigation.

•The Lone Ranger novel is published by Grosset and Dunlap. The book is written by Gaylord Dubois with later editions credited to Fran Striker.

•The Lone Ranger and his Horse Silver, a Big Little Book for children, is published by Whitman Publishing. There is no author credited; reportedly the narrative is adapted from a Lone Ranger radio script.

•October. Silvercup Bread sponsors The Lone Ranger Safety Club; children sign cards pledging to follow safety rules; kids are requested to return pledges and receive a membership card and private code; kids are also asked to sign up friends and receive Lone Ranger badge.

•December. 475,574 badges are distributed.

1936

•January. A total of 2 million badges distributed.

•The Lone Ranger: The Masked Rider, a Pathégram animated short, is made available to home movie enthusiasts. Very little is known about this cartoon but titles read, "Produced by Roy Meredith."

•The Lone Ranger and the Vanishing Herd, the second Big Little Book, is published by Whitman. The author is Buck Wilson, a

pseudonym for Gaylord Dubois.

1937

•The Lone Ranger and the Secret Killer, a Big Little Book, written by Buck Wilson is published.

•The Lone Ranger pulp magazine is first published in April with stories by Fran Striker. The pulp ceases publication in November.

1938

•The Lone Ranger and the Mystery Ranch, the second novel, is published. The book is written by Fran Striker, who will write the remaining 15 books.

•The Lone Ranger and the Lost Valley, a Dell Fast Action book, competitor to Big Little Books, is published by comic book publisher Dell. No author is credited.

•September 10. The Lone Ranger comic strip, written by Striker, begins its run through King Features Syndicate. Illustrated by Ed Kressy through 1939 and then Charles Flanders, who would remain with the strip until it ends in December 1971.

•Republic Pictures releases a 15-episode serial, The Lone Ranger. The story bears little resemblance to the radio series. Five Texas Rangers fight an outlaw gang; the Rangers are aided by a sixth Ranger who appears out of nowhere to help them out of dire, cliff-hanging circumstances. As the serial progresses each lawman is killed until there is one left, the Lone Ranger. Lee Powell (right) portrayed the title character and Chief Thundercloud portrayed Tonto.

•The Lone Ranger and the Menace of Murder Valley, a Big Little Book, written by Buck Wilson, is published.

1939

•January. "The Lone Stranger and Porky," a cartoon parody featuring Porky Pig seeking help from a "masked marvel" is produced by Looney Tunes and released by Warner Brothers. Billy Bletcher narrated and shouted the familiar, "Hi-Yo, Silver!"

•The Lone Ranger and the Gold Robbery is published.

•Republic Pictures releases a second 15-episode serial, The Lone Ranger Rides Again. This time the Lone Ranger resembles Johnston McCully's Zorro. A Texas Ranger dons a mask when the story calls for the hero to strike out against an evil crime syndicate. Robert Livingston (who had earlier portrayed Zorro and would later portray another masked rider named The Lone Rider in a se-

ries of low-budget westerns produced by PRC Pictures in the 1940s) portrayed the Lone Ranger and Chief Thundercloud reprised his role of Tonto.

•King Features Syndicate now reports that the comic strip is appearing in over 100 dailies.

•Reportedly the first Lone Ranger comic book is published by an ice cream company as a mail-in premium. The story and art are said to be based on the Big Little Book, The Lone Ranger and His Horse, Silver. Interestingly, cover art shows the Lone Ranger in a blue outfit instead of the red shirt depicted in most other images.

•The Lone Ranger and the Outlaw Stronghold is published.

•Income for the Lone Ranger Inc. from the radio program, film serials, cartoon strip, novels, comic books and novelties totals over half-million dollars.

•The Lone Ranger and the Red Renegades, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

•The Lone Ranger and Dead Men's Mine, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

•The Lone Ranger and the Black Shirt Highwayman, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

•June. Trendle's Lone Ranger Inc. files suit against O. C. Cox doing business as Barnett Brothers Circus and actor Lee Powell

for copyright violation. Powell, who had played Allan King in the first Republic serial, appeared as the Lone Ranger for Barnett Brothers Circus, billing himself as "the original Lone Ranger."

1940

•The Lone Ranger and Tonto is published.

•Movie and Radio Guide magazine recognizes the Lone Ranger as "Radio's best children's program."

•April. Republic Pictures releases Hi-Yo Silver, a feature edited from episodes of the company's 1938 serial.

•April 8. Earle W. Graser is killed in an automobile accident. Brace Beemer returns to the series as the Lone Ranger at \$150 per week. Fred Foy, the announcer most associated with Lone Ranger, joins the program and will continue through the television years.

•The Lone Ranger and the Haunted Gulch is published.

•General Mills becomes the Lone Ranger's sponsor, a relationship that continued through the television years.



•*The Lone Ranger Traps the Smugglers* is published.

1941

•*The Lone Ranger Follows Through*, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

•July 1. Trendle loses his suit against Cox and his business, now called Wallace Brothers Circus, and Lee Powell; Trendle through his lawyer Raymond Meurer angrily appeals.

1942

•January 5. The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upholds Trendle's suit against O. C. Cox now doing business as Wallace Brothers Circus and Powell Shows, and against actor Lee Powell, in a reportedly scathing decision, the three judges unanimously granted owners of radio dramatic property the fullest protection against unfair competition of "filching" of scripts, personalities or characters.

•May. *The Lone Ranger* moves from the Mutual network to the Blue network (later to be ABC but now part of the NBC group).

•*The Lone Ranger and the Great Western Span*, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

1943

•*The Lone Ranger Rides Again* is published.

•*The Lone Ranger and the Secret Weapon*, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

1944

•*The Lone Ranger on the Barbary Coast*, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

•Lee Powell, who had played the Lone Ranger in the first Republic serial and toured with a circus portraying the "Original Talking Picture Lone Ranger," was reported as killed in action in the south Pacific. Later investigations, however, revealed that he had died of acute alcohol poisoning following a raucous victory celebration.

1945

•Dell Comics and other comic book publishers compile newspaper strips and issue them in comic book form.

1946

•*The Lone Ranger Rides North* is published.

•*The Lone Ranger and the Silver Bullets*, a Big Little Book, written by Fran Striker, is published.

1948

•January 7. Brace Beemer as the Lone Ranger appears on *Philco Radio Time* with Bing Crosby.

•*The Lone Ranger and the Silver Bullet* is published.

•Frontier Town Celebration in Cheyenne, WY marks the Lone Ranger's 15th year on radio.

•Dell Comics begins pub-

lication of the Lone Ranger comic book with original stories. By issue #38 the Lone Ranger's red shirt is now the familiar blue outfit so associated with the Lone Ranger.

1949

•September 15. *The Lone Ranger* premieres on the ABC television network. The program, sponsored by General Mills, is produced by Jack Chertok through his Apex Film Corporation. Production costs average \$12,500 per episode. Clayton Moore, featured in several Republic serials in the 1940s, is selected by Trendle to portray the Lone Ranger. Jay Silverheels, a full-blooded Mohawk Indian, is selected to portray Tonto. The first three episodes form a cliff-hanging serial and recount the origin of the Lone Ranger. From episode four, "The Legion of Old-Timers," each episode was complete in itself.

•*The Lone Ranger on Powder Horn Trail* is published.

1950

•Clayton Moore (right) is replaced by John Hart in the television series. Reasons for the change are unclear and controversial. For years it had been stated that Moore, receiving \$500 per episode, demanded more money. Trendle, ever frugal, balked at the request and sent Moore packing, claiming that anybody could be behind the mask. Moore, in his autobiography, however, disputes the claim that he asked for more money. He believes Trendle was alarmed by the amount of fan mail Moore was getting. Trendle, Moore argued, owned the Lone Ranger and wanted to be associated with the character. Moore cites the size of the mask as evidence. He notes that the more mail Moore got the larger the mask got. It is true; the mask grew from a masquer's eye covering to a large cover that drapes across the forehead and around the nose. Hart will make an additional 26 episodes and appears as a wooden, boring masked man. Hart said that, against his own judgment, he was instructed by Trendle to show little emotion, to be as stoic and rigid as he could. Hart demonstrated his range in the later series, *Hawkeye and the Last of the Mohicans*, so he was probably correct that his poor showing of the Lone Ranger was due to Trendle's direction.

•*The Lone Ranger in Wild Horse Canyon* is published.

•*The Lone Ranger and the Secret of Sombra Cavern*, a Big Little Book, author uncredited, is published.

1951

•*The Lone Ranger West of Maverick Pass* is published.

•*The Lone Ranger and the War Horse*, Whitman's children hard-cover, written by Fran Striker, is published.



•October 7. *What's My Line?* Clayton Moore in mask as the Lone Ranger is the mystery guest on this episode of the classic CBS game show.

•Decca Records releases *The Adventures of the Lone Ranger*, a long-playing phonograph album adapted from the radio broadcasts.

1952

•*The Lone Ranger at Gunsight Mesa* is published.

•John Hart and Jay Silverheels film 26 episodes.

1954

•*The Lone Ranger* resumes broadcasting with new episodes featuring John Hart. The public response to the new masked man is negative. Moore and Trendle come to terms, and Clayton Moore is firmly established as the visual media's Lone Ranger. The response to Hart's performance is so adverse that the episodes would remain unseen until the era of home video.

•August 3. Trendle sells the complete rights to the characters, commercial tie-ins, radio programs, and television episodes to oil industrialist Jack Wrather for \$3 million.

•September 3. *The Lone Ranger* leaves live radio after 3,379 episodes. Brace Beemer now becomes Sergeant Preston of the Northwest Mounted Police in Trendle's production of *Challenge of the Yukon* (later *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon*). Fred Foy becomes the announcer, and John Todd becomes Preston's superior,



Inspector Conrad.

1955

• *The Lone Ranger and Trouble on the Santa Fe* is published.

• *A Descriptive Analysis of the Lone Ranger as a Form of Popular Art* by David Parker, a Northwestern University dissertation, is published and becomes the first scholarly analysis of the Lone Ranger phenomenon.

• The Wrather Corporation produces 39 new episodes all in color for release over the next two years. The episodes are broadcast in black and white and interspersed with reruns of the original b/w episodes. The color episodes would not be broadcast in color until the early 1960s when color television emerged.

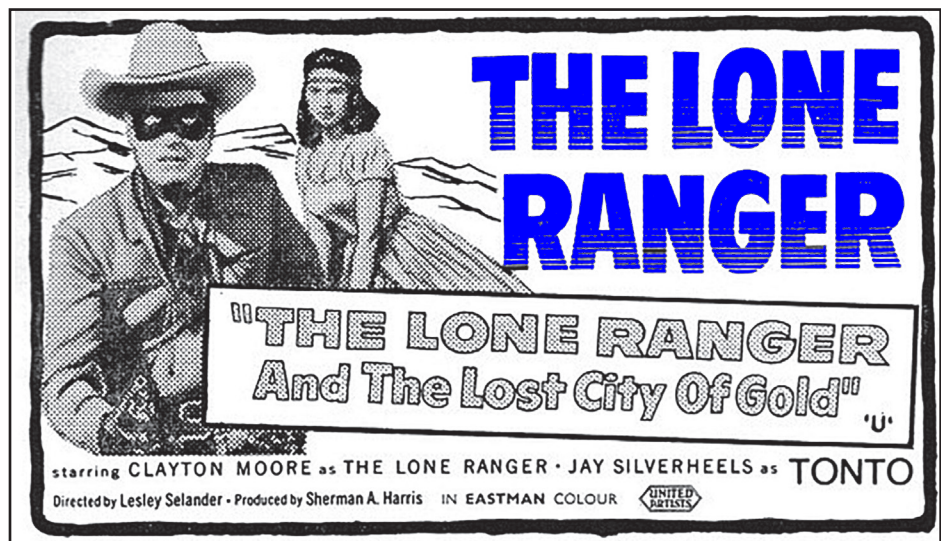
• Saturday, February 12. *The Lone Ranger Story*, a feature compilation of the first three episodes, is broadcast as a 60-minute special on CBS in celebration of the Lone Ranger's 22nd anniversary. ABC rebroadcasts the special the following day, Sunday, February 13.

• *The Lone Ranger and the Ghost Horse*, children's book, written by Alice Sankey, is published by Whitman.

• December 6. *The Red Skelton Show*. Many sources specify that Clayton Moore as the Lone Ranger appeared with Sheriff Dead-eye in this 1955 Christmas show. However, just as many sources specify that Bill Williams as Kit Carson was Red's guest. An item in the *Kennebec Journal* in Augusta, ME notes that Bill Williams as Kit Carson was, indeed, Red's guest, adding that, "The Lone Ranger was originally skedded for this show about a boy seeking appearance of cowboy star for Christmas."

1956

• February. Warner Brothers releases *The Lone Ranger*, a Wrather production in color directed by Stuart Heisler. Bonita Granville (Mrs. Jack Wrather), Lyle Bettger, Robert J. Wilke, Perry Lopez and Beverly Washburn



co-star with Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels in a big-budget western adventure that was both a commercial and critical success. The narrative follows a corrupt rancher who exploits racial prejudice so he can gain possession of Spirit Mountain and its gold.

• *The Lone Ranger*, Little Golden Book, written by Steffi Fletcher, is published by Simon and Schuster.

1957

• *The Lone Ranger on the Red Butte Trail*, the final novel, is published.

• *The Lone Ranger and Tonto*, a Little Golden Book, written by Charles Spain Verral, is published.

• July 14. John Todd, radio's Tonto, dies of natural causes at the age of 80.

• *The Lone Ranger: Desert Storm*, children's book, written by Revena, is published by Whitman.

1958

• June. United Artists releases *The Lone Ranger and the Lost City of Gold* (British

ad block above), a lower budget Wrather production in color and filmed by Wrather's television crew. Lesley Selander, a veteran of B-westerns and the television series, directed Clayton Moore, Jay Silverheels, Noreen Nash and Douglas Kennedy in the second and last film effort of consequence. The narrative follows the quest for a lost city of gold by outlaws woven around an Indian doctor who passes for white and his struggles with a bigoted sheriff. In addition, the origin of the Lone Ranger is presented in a song by Lenny Adelson and Les Baxter called "Hi-Yo Silver" at the beginning of the film; a 45 rpm single sung by Bob Carroll is released to coincide with the release of the feature. The film is moderately successful and is relegated to second feature status and kiddie matinee fare.

• The Lone Ranger celebrates his 25th anniversary by rebroadcasting the 1949 origin episodes in a 60-minute special. The broadcast sets up many commercial tie-ins with General Mills.

• The US Treasury Department inaugurates The Lone Ranger Peace Patrol program to boost sales of savings stamps at school (your editor was a proud, card-carrying member).

• *The Lone Ranger and the Talking Pony*, a Little Golden Book, written by Emily Broun, is published.

1959

• Production stops on new episodes. Re-runs are broadcast on both ABC and NBC Saturday mornings.

• May 10. *Lassie*: "Peace Patrol." Clayton Moore as the Lone Ranger with Silver makes an appearance on TV's *Lassie*, also a Wrather production, to aid in promoting the government's Peace Patrol program.

1961

• September 23. The Lone Ranger leaves network television, but the series remains in syndication through Wrather's TeleSynd Corporation.

•*The Return of the Lone Ranger*, a supposed television pilot for a proposed series produced by Jack Wrather. With production halted on episodes of the original, Wrather reportedly filmed this 30-minute episode with one Tex Hill. Very little is known about this film with a few Lone Ranger specialists claiming that it does not exist.

1962

•September 4. Fran Striker is killed in an automobile accident.

•Dell ceases publication of *The Lone Ranger* comic book.

1964

•Gold Key Comics, successor to Dell Comics, resumes publication of *The Lone Ranger* comic book.

•January 20. Brace Beemer appears on the CBS game show *I've Got a Secret* as part of a special tribute to radio.



1965

•March 1. Brace Beemer dies of natural causes at the age of 62.

•March 7. Alumni of the radio series gather for a memorial program for Brace

Beemer. The program, produced and hosted by J. P. McCarthy, a Detroit radio personality, is broadcast from WJR in Detroit.

1966

•Original radio broadcasts primarily through Charles Michelson Inc. are reissued and played extensively throughout the country in a rediscovery of radio drama.

•Silver's Pride, Brace Beemer's favorite Silver, dies at Paint Creek acres, the Beemer farm, at the age of 27.

•September. The Lone Ranger returns to network television (CBS) in the form of a Saturday morning cartoon show produced by Herb Klynn and Jules Engel for Format Films with animation created by England's Halas and Batchelor company. Seemingly inspired by the success of CBS's oddball western, *The Wild, Wild West*, the narratives involved science fiction and supernatural events with mad scientists creating steampunk-type machines to conquer the world. Veteran radio actor Michael Rye, also known as Rye Billsbury, was the voice of the Lone Ranger with fellow radio actor Shep Menken as Tonto. Marvin Miller served as narrator with an introduction that was taken nearly verbatim from *The Lone Ranger* feature of 1956. A recurring villain was an evil dwarf called Terrible Tiny Tom, voiced by another radio veteran, Dick Beals. Reportedly, additional voices were supplied by additional radio veterans Hans Conried, Agnes Moorehead and Paul Winchell. Overall, a unique and clever series, far better than animated series that followed.

1968

•The Lone Ranger Pizza Rolls television

commercial is created by Stan Freberg, a clever spoof of the "Show Us Your Lark" cigarette commercial which also featured the William Tell overture. As actor Barney Phillips from the cigarette commercial questions the Pizza Roll makers about the music they are using, Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels as the Lone Ranger and Tonto question Phillips about his use of the music. "Have a pizza roll, Kemosabe?"

•*The Lone Ranger Outwits Crazy Cougar*, a Big Little Book hardcover, written by George Elrick, is published; a softcover edition is reprinted in 1980.

1969

•CBS cancels *The Lone Ranger* cartoon program.

1971

•Newspaper comic strip is discontinued.

1972

•May 1. George W. Trendle dies of a heart attack at the age of 87.

1976

•A. S. Barnes publishes David Rothel's *Who Was That Masked Man? The Story of the Lone Ranger*, the first book to examine the history of the Lone Ranger.

1977

•Gold Key ceases publication of *The Lone Ranger* comic book.

1978

•The Wrather Corporation plans to produce a multi-million-dollar motion picture in association with Lord Lew Grade's ITC Entertainment conglomerate. Clayton Moore, at age 70, expresses interest in the new film but Wrather, rightly so, says a younger image is needed. A feud between longtime friends Moore and Wrather erupts as Moore publicly condemns Wrather for yielding to "commercial whim." Wrather, in turn, seeks an injunction against Moore to prevent him

from making personal appearances as the Lone Ranger. Moore then sues Wrather for \$30 million, charging Wrather with exploiting him for over 20 years. Moore's suit is eventually dismissed.

1979

June 5. ABC broadcasts a special called *When the West was Fun*, a reunion of television's western stars many in character who reminisce about those thrilling days of yesteryear, when the west was fun. Included was Clayton Moore in full costume as the Lone Ranger, just a few months before the courts would order him to remove the mask and refrain of making public appearances as the Lone Ranger.

•August. Los Angeles Superior Court judge Vernon Foster issues an injunction against Moore. Undaunted, Moore replaces his mask with a set of sunglasses. Nostalgia merchants and deejays begin a campaign to "put the mask back on the ol' Lone Ranger." Wrather is deluged by angry letters but he holds his ground.

1980

•March 5. Jay Silverheels dies of pneumonia at the age of 60.

•September. CBS premieres another cartoon series, *The Lone Ranger/Tarzan Adventure Hour*, produced by Filmation Associates. William Conrad voices the Lone Ranger.

•*The Lone Ranger Outwits Crazy Cougar*, a Big Little Book softcover reprint of the 1968 book, written by George Elrick, is published.

1981

•April 29. *The Greatest American Hero: "My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys."* John Hart makes an appearance as the Lone Ranger as Ralph Hinkley's conscience.

•May. Universal Pictures releases *The Legend of the Lone Ranger*, an \$18 million Wrather-ITC production. The roles of the



John Hart as the Lone Ranger shakes hands with a stunned Fonzie in a *Happy Days* episode.

Lone Ranger and Tonto are played by Klinton Spilsbury and Michael Horse, respectively. Directed by cinematographer William A. Fraker from a convoluted script credited to four writers—Ivan Goff, Ben Roberts, Michael Kane and William Roberts—the story traces the origin of the Lone Ranger to the rescue of President Ulysses S. Grant from the Cavendish gang. For the first time, the Lone Ranger's mystique is compromised by the backstory as he is depicted as a lawyer who becomes a Texas Ranger; moreover, he finds a love interest in deliberately named Amy Striker; John Hart makes an appearance as Amy's father. True to its time, the film is laden with profanity and excessive killings.

As a children's film it misses its mark totally; as a mature film it is miserably uninteresting and pretentious. As noted by critics, it takes a full hour before the Lone Ranger dons his mask. Consequently, the film was a commercial and critical flop and was quickly sold to television.

•September. CBS continues the cartoon series now titled *The Lone Ranger/Tarzan/Zorro Adventure Hour*.

•Barnes issues a revised edition of Rothel's book which includes notes on the making of the Wrather-ITC film.

•*The Lone Ranger*, a newspaper comic strip written by Cary Bates and illustrated by Russ Heath is syndicated by the New York Times Syndicate. The strip's characters and incidents are based on the Wrather-ITC film. It ends in 1984.

1982

•February 9. *Happy Days*: "Hi-Yo Fonzie Away." John Hart makes an appearance as the Lone Ranger, a special guest at Fonzie's birthday party.

1984

•*His Typewriter Grew Spurs*, a biography of Fran Striker written by his son, Fran, Jr., is published.

•November 12. Jack Wrather dies following surgery for cancer at the age of 66.

•December. Following the critical and commercial failure of *The Legend of the Lone Ranger*, the Wrather organization capitulates, and "The Lone Ranger," i.e., Clayton Moore, get his mask back.

•*The Lone Ranger* newspaper comic strip by Bates and Heath ceases publication.

1986

•Terry Salomonson privately publishes *The Lone Ranger Log*, a compilation of 3,379 radio broadcasts.

1987

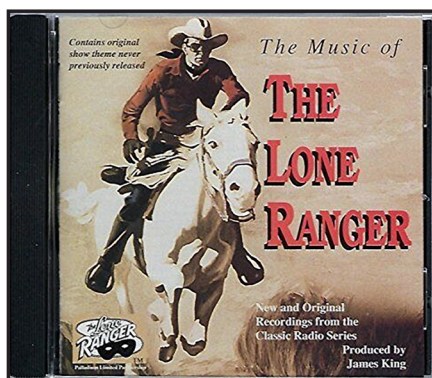
•The Scarecrow Press publishes Reginald M. Jones, Jr.'s *The Mystery of the Masked Man's Music: A Search for the Music Used on the Lone Ranger Radio Program, 1933-1954*.

1988

•David Holland privately publishes *From Out of the Past: A Pictorial History of the Lone Ranger*, a comprehensive history of the Lone Ranger in all media, including a brief synopsis for each of the 226 television episodes.

•Countryside Advertising publishes Lee Felbringer's *The Lone Ranger Scrapbook*, a compendium of Lone Ranger merchandising and related collectibles.

1992



•*The Music of the Lone Ranger: New and Original Recordings from the Classic Radio Series*. Conducted and supervised by James King, released on CD by Cinédisc. Includes the actual taped recordings of the music composed by various musicians for the Republic Pictures serials and reused extensively for the b/w television

episodes.

1993

•*The Lone Ranger*, a compendium of the 1981 comic strip by Bates and Heath is published in book form by Pure Imagination.

1994

•*The Lone Ranger and Tonto*, 4-issues, is published by Topps Comics,

1999

•December 28. Clayton Moore dies after suffering a heart attack at the age of 85.

2006

•*The Lone Ranger*, 24-issues, a Graphic Novel series, is published by Dynamite Entertainment.

2008

•*The Lone Ranger and Tonto*, 4-issues, Graphic Novel series continuation is published by Dynamite Entertainment.

2010

•December 22. Fred Foy, long-time radio announcer and who portrayed the Lone Ranger during the March 29, 1954, broadcast when Beemer was ill, dies of natural causes at the age of 89.

2011

•The Brace Beemer-Lone Ranger museum has grand opening in Mt. Carmel, IL.

•*The Lone Ranger: The Death of Zorro*,



5-issues, is published by Dynamite Entertainment.

2012

•*The Lone Ranger*. Additional Graphic Novels of modernist interpretations continue to be published by Dynamite Entertainment.

2013

•*The Lone Ranger*, a large budget production by the Disney organization, fails miserably with critics and audiences, becoming one of the biggest box-office flops in the history of the film industry. In a reverse of tradition, the narrative is told by Tonto, who seems to make up for years of being accused of inanity by explaining how he, and not the Ranger, created the legend and initiated all the derring-do. In this regard, the Lone Ranger comes across as almost an afterthought; moreover, he is obviously depicted as the less intelligent of the duo. Despite the film's heavy emphasis on Native American mysticism the narrative does little to enhance the myth of the Lone Ranger itself. He is more than just a lot of mumbo-jumbo supernaturalism.

2021

•OTR Publishing releases *The Lone Ranger: The Early Years, 1933-1937* by Terry Salomonson and Martin Grams, Jr. The book is a comprehensive, detailed history that includes a section on pulps and novels and an episode guide through 1937.

•February-March. *True West* magazine publishes western historian Art T. Burton's assertion that real-life black Texas Ranger Bass Reeves was the inspiration for the Lone Ranger. Burton constructs his case based on the flimsiest of circumstantial evidence that even Burton admits cannot prove the connection between the real-life and truly heroic Reeves and the fictional Lone Ranger. But nonetheless, the claim fell into the hands of the media where it got repeated attention and became "fact."

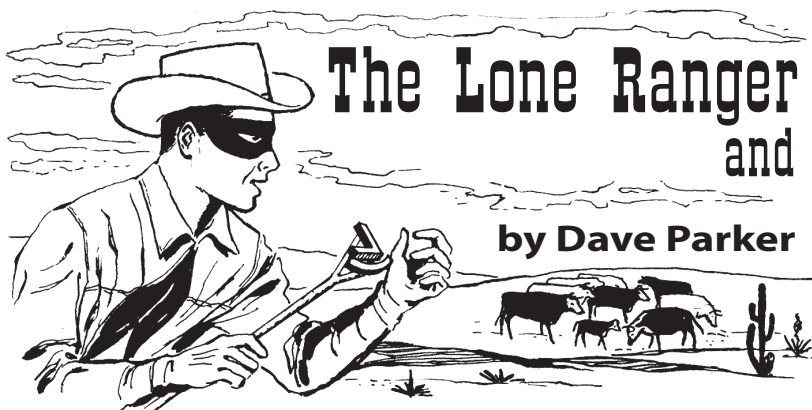
Present

•Both color and black and white television episodes in truncated form continue in syndication on various cable networks.

•TV episodes in truncated form are available on DVD.

•Radio programs continue to be available online as well as sold on compact discs in retail stores.

•The dreadful *Legend of the Lone Ranger* Wrather feature and the even worse Disney feature *The Lone Ranger* have all but disappeared, leaving Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels intact as the embodiment of the masked man and his faithful Indian companion. Moreover, the failure of the two large budget films and their revisionist narratives leaves Trendle's original concept as the archetype of the Lone Ranger.♣



The Lone Ranger and

by Dave Parker

SO THE RANGER just turned 90 and here I am, the last surviving member of the radio cast—and there's scarcely a day goes by that I don't think of the masked man and his faithful Indian companion, Tonto.

I remember my first day in the studio, back in 1948, and how Brace Beemer introduced himself, smiling, saying, "Hi, I'm Brace Beemer. I sweep up around the place." I chuckled, and then, much more seriously, he told me that I was sitting in his personal chair and needed to move—*right now*. I did as he requested, much to the amusement of the cast.

Looking back on the Ranger and the magic of audio drama I can still marvel at "the sound world" so perfectly pictured by toilet plungers and coconut shells as the galloping hoofbeats of the great horse Silver. And the fist slaps in fights the Ranger always won. "Take that Butch!" shouted the masked man in his final fight with arch enemy Butch Cavendish as the cowardly Butch screamed for mercy. Just writing those words brings back all that excitement to me.

Add recorded gun shots and for scene transitions the music of Franz Liszt and other royalty free classics and the world of the Lone Ranger came to vivid life and remains to this day a great example of the mind pictures radio drama could paint.

The show, of course, became an American institution, known to everyone as its leading man led the fight for law and order in the early western United States.

But there were other radio heroes with horses and six guns and sound effects and music and faithful friends and they came and went while the Ranger never left.

In wondering why the Lone Ranger endured I went to the program's creators who knew I was working on a Ph.D. about the show. They were more than willing to help by providing me with scripts and access to the writers, cast members, directors, sound effects wizards and most important the producers who knew the show from day one.

The Ranger, they said, had always stood for something more than the drama itself. "It's

his *values*," they said. "Everything the Ranger does is inspired by his honesty, patriotism, tolerance and willingness to face physical danger in support of righteous causes."

They were dead serious about this as they cited program listings in the Congressional Record, awards of all kinds and a trove of letters thanking the masked man for his heroic leadership.

What distinguished the Lone Ranger as a unique character in the world of popular art was his dedication to a value system shown on every page:

"Ted—you've been weak, but by helping me in the coming fight you can redeem yourself."

"General, you've shown what it means to fight for love of country."

"Jimmy, you've shown your friends how to love your country and respect its flag."

"Judd, you learned that to keep your family safe sometimes you have to fight."

"Mary, as a frontier schoolteacher, you can help instill the importance of patriotism and love of country at an early age."

So the Lone Ranger was a wildly successful hero in a program that won top ratings for years. Truly, there was nothing like him. He was the greatest hero ever created on the air, according to *Time* magazine. So beautifully crafted and artfully envisioned that he was that he burst through the studio doors to be featured in books, comic strips, movie serials, phonograph records, paintings, and, of course, on television with Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels.

It made me smile when one young listener told me with wide-eyed wonder, "Gee, I didn't know the Lone Ranger was ever on the radio."

And finally, as an afterthought, the Ranger became of academic interest to me, as mentioned, with a Ph.D. dissertation I called, *A Descriptive Analysis of the Lone Ranger as a form of Popular Art* (Northwestern University 1955)

As one embattled rancher said to the Ranger: "I don't know what it is about you, masked man, but somehow I trust you."

And somehow, we *all* did—for 90 years!

Hi-Yo Silver! 🤠



BEFORE COMPUTERS THERE WAS RADIO!

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