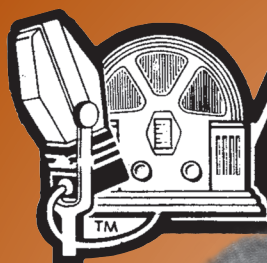


SOAP OPERAS ON RADIO FREE EUROPE • EDITH MEISER • 'SERENADE TO AMERICA' SOOTHES WWII LISTENERS



sperdvac

RADIOGRAM

Volume 47 • Number 9

January/February 2024



*The Songbird
of the South*



SPERDVAC graciously extends its gratitude to these individuals who have contributed \$50 or more to SPERDVAC during the past 12 months. If you wish to be a sponsor of SPERDVAC and join this select group your tax-deductible donation to SPERDVAC can be mailed to Alexander Chamberlain at 2625 Middlefield Road #171, Palo Alto, CA 94306-2516. Thank you!

- ALICE AKINS in memory of Glen Akins
- DAVE AMAREL in memory of Jim Harmon
- ARTHUR J.M. ANDERSON in memory of Orson Welles
- ERIC BAELEN
- JUDIE BARTELL in memory of Harry Bartell, Ben Wright and Vic Perrin
- PAUL M. BENNETT
- OLIVER BERLINER in memory of John Guedel, Martha Tilton and Lena Romay
- FRED BONDY in memory of the whole Gunsmoke gang
- TRISTA BRANT in honor of Larry Gassman and Walden Hughes
- GEORGE BRECKENRIDGE
- DAVID & LINDA BRENINGER
- FRANK & BOBBIE BRESEE dedicated to John & Larry Gassman and Walden Hughes for all they do for us
- BUD BRESNAHAN in memory of Jim and Marian Jordan
- RICHARD A. BROCKELMAN
- DENNIS B. BURK in memory of Phil Harper
- CHRIS M. BUZZARD to those who keep us alive for a new generation
- TROY CASEY to those great masked men of radio, Earle Graser and Brace Beemer
- XAN CHAMBERLAIN
- RICHARD CHANDLEE in memory of Truda Marsen Chandlee
- GEROLD M. CLEMENSEN
- WARD L. COCHRAN in memory of radio ad-man Burt Cochran
- BERT H. COHEN
- RICHARD F. COLAVECHIO in memory of Bryna Raeburn, Craig McDonnell, Bill Zuckert and Florence Robinson
- JOHN COLLINS
- THOMAS W. COLLINS in memory of William Conrad
- TOMMY COOK in memory of Arch Oboler
- IVAN CURY in memory of Bob Novak
- FRANCIS DALY
- DIX DAVIS
- LLOYD DE LLAMAS
- FREDERICK DENNIS in honor of "Mr. Radio" Elliott Lewis
- RICK DENNIS in honor of Gloria McMillan
- ROSEMARY DOBBS
- TED DONALDSON in memory of Rhoda Williams, June Whitley and Ben Cooper
- JUNE FORAY DONAVAN in memory of Hobart Donavan
- DOUGLAS DUE
- WIL DUFOUR
- BOB DUNCAN, JR. in memory of Martha Sleeper
- CHARLES DUNNWAY
- HERB ELLIS in memory of Larry Dobkin, Harry Bartell and Parley Baer
- PATRICIA W. ELLIS in honor of Charlie Lung
- JAY ELZWEIG in honor of the Long Island Radio & TV Historical Society, the WCWP-FM Alumni Association and Staff, John "The Movie Man" Carpenter and Eddie "The Old Philosopher" Lawrence
- HENRY C. ENGELHARDT III in memory of Michael Meredith
- CARMEN FINESTRA
- DAVID FOLKMAN
- ART FORSTER in memory of Gil Stratton and William Conrad
- JACK FRANCE
- GREGORY FRANKLIN

- LISA FROUG-HIRANO in memory of William Froug
- BARBARA FULLER in memory of John Newland, Peggy Knudsen and Laughter
- JACK GAGNE
- BARRY GERBER
- STANLEY D. GINSBURG
- RICHARD GLASBAND in honor of Bobb Lynes and Barbara Watkins
- NICHOLAS GOODHUE
- KATHLEEN GRAMS-GIBBS in memory of Mary Grams
- FRANK GREGORY
- DON GREWE
- TOM J. GRIMSLEY in memory of Rosemary Dobbs, Art Linkletter and Stuart Lubin
- CHARLES GULLO, JR. in memory of Jim Bannon
- JOHN F. HALLEY
- BARBARA HARMON in memory of Art Hern, Jack Lester and Curley Bradley
- HELPING HANDS FOR THE BLIND
- RICHARD HERD
- KAREN HICKERSON
- BOB HICKS
- GORDON HIGBEE
- JAMES W. HILL
- DR. MICHELE HILMES
- STEPHEN E. HOLDEN
- GERALD A. HOLZMAN
- JAMES F. HORNER in memory of The KNX Radio Drama Hour
- SEAMAN JACOBS in memory of Fred S. Fox
- ROBERT JANOVICI
- SALLY JANUS
- DENNIS C. JOHNSON
- RALPH M. JOHNSON
- SAM KAMLER
- MRS. JAIMI L.C. KELLER in memory of Frank Lumbert and Roy Hunter
- CASEY KASEM
- GLENDA KELLY in memory of Stuart Lubin
- NILAN L. KINCAID
- DON KING in memory of Lowell Thomas and Paul Harvey
- ALBERT J. KOPEC
- DENIS KRAY in memory of my beloved parents, Norbert and Florence Kray, and in memory of Glenn, Ray, Marion, Tex and all the boys in the band
- RON LANGSETH
- DOREEN LEAF in memory of Jay Ranellucci... thank you, Grandpa
- JEFFREY J. LEBRUN in memory of all departed voice artists
- ALFRED LUCAS
- MICHAEL MAIURI
- LON MCCARTT in memory of Smilin' Ed (Froggy the Grem-lin) McConnell
- ROBY & JOYCE MCHONE
- ESTHER GEDDES McVEY in memory of my leading man, Tyler McVey
- JAN MERLIN in memory of Frankie Thomas and Mona Bruns Thomas
- MELVIN MOREHOUSE in memory of Brace Beemer
- MIKE MORITZ in appreciation for all our preservationists
- JAMES L. MORRISON
- MILLIE MORSE in memory of Jim Harmon
- BOB MOTT to all the SFX artists when radio was still radio
- GEORGE (BOB) & VIRGINIA NEWHART in memory of Bill Quinn

- CHARLES NIREN in memory of Dave Siegel
- JAN ELLIS O'HARE in loving memory of Antony Ellis
- J. PHILIP OLDHAM
- ROBERT OLSEN
- DR. WAYNE OTT
- FORREST F. OWEN
- GARRY PAPERS
- KEN PARKE in memory of Jan Merlin
- DAVE PARKER in memory of John Harlan and Fred Foy
- PHIL PROCTOR in memory of my Firesign partners Phil Austin and Peter Bergman
- BRUCE W. RALEIGH
- BRIAN E. RAMSEY in memory of Ken Darby and Rod Robinson and the King's Men
- CHESTER RAWSKI in memory of Carolyn Rawski
- MARIE RAYMOND
- RONALD M. REISNER, M.D.
- DICK RICHARDS
- DAVID RICHARDSON in honor of Herb Ellis and Peg Lynch
- D.W. RICHARDSON
- NORMAN L. SCHICKEDANZ in honor of Chuck Schaden
- STEPHEN K. SHUTTLEWORTH
- STUART & JANIS SIMON in memory of June Foray
- CHUCK SIVERTSEN
- LOREN SLAFER
- KENNETH L. SLEEPER
- LEE SMITH to my dad, Ray Newton, a big fan
- MICKEY SMITH in memory of my beloved wife, Mary
- C. W. STAUFENBERG in memory of Paul Rhymer and members of the "Vic and Sade" cast
- RICHARD STONE
- BOB SUMMERS in memory of Yogi Yorgenson & Harry Skarbo
- JON D. SWARTZ in memory of Jim Harmon
- PATRICIA RYAN SWINDLER in memory of Stuart Lubin
- RICHARD & MADELENE TEPERSON in memory of Gil Stratton
- JOAN TREMAYNE in memory of Les Tremayne
- EDMUND TOTMAN
- EUGENE J. WARD
- WASHINGTON OLD TIME RADIO CLUB in memory of Jim Harmon
- EDWARD C. WEAVER
- BETSY L. WEINBERG
- LESLIE C. WEST
- JERRY & BARBARA WILLIAMS in memory of Michael Rye
- JAMES C. WORDEN



Volume 47 • Number 9 • January/February 2024

SPERDVAC

A CALIFORNIA NONPROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION

2625 Middlefield Road #171
Palo Alto, CA 94306-2516

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

president

Timothy Knofler

...

Sean Dougherty • Zach Eastman • Corey Harker
Walden Hughes • Phil Oldham • Robert Tevis

Officers

Vice-President..... Robert Tevis
Treasurer..... Alexander Chamberlain
Secretary..... Scott Mahan
Activities Chair..... Walden Hughes
Membership Chair..... Sean Dougherty
Acquisitions and Restorations..... Corey Harker
Elections Chair..... Sandi Hughes



Editor

PATRICK LUCANIO

RADIOGRAM is published bi-monthly by SPERDVAC, the Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation, 2625 Middlefield Road #171, Palo Alto, CA 94306-2516. Dues are \$20 for first year and \$20 for renewals; \$30 American currency for Canadian members. Annual subscriptions to *Radiogram* only are \$15 in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, and \$20 in all other countries. Editorial submissions are welcome, but the publisher assumes no responsibility for the return of unsolicited material. All editorial-related photographs and artwork received unsolicited become the property of SPERDVAC. SPERDVAC assumes first serial rights for all submissions accepted. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the opinions of SPERDVAC. All rights to letters sent to *Radiogram* will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication unless otherwise stated. The publishers make every effort to ensure the accuracy of information published in editorial material but assume no responsibility for inconveniences or damages resulting from editorial error or omissions. Publisher is not responsible for typographical errors. All photographs and illustrations are believed authorized for reproduction as set forth within. Entire contents are copyright © 2024 by the Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy. All rights reserved. Nothing contained in this issue may be reproduced, in whole or in part, by any means, including the Internet, without prior written permission from the publisher.

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS should be sent to Radiogram, Patrick Lucanio, Editor, 743 Edgemont Way, Springfield, Oregon 97477; e-mail: radiogram@spervac.com. E-mail attachments in Microsoft Word are encouraged for all articles submitted.

ADVERTISING RATES. Sorry, we can no longer accept advertising at this time.

ADDRESS CHANGE. SPERDVAC at 2625 Middlefield Rd. #171, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

AUDIO RADIOGRAM is available. Contact Larry Gassman at (877) 251-5771. This service is for blind members only.



E-MAIL

radiogram@spervac.com



from the president

GREETINGS, SPERDVAC MEMBERS,

AS WE STAND on the precipice of our 50th anniversary, it's a profound moment to reflect on our humble beginnings—the very first meeting that set the course for an extraordinary journey. One can't help but ponder the response had we questioned, "Did you know your dreams and efforts would endure over 50 years?" A debt of gratitude is owed to that initial gathering where the seeds of passion and vision sown by our founders blossomed into the welcoming haven we now call SPERDVAC.

The meticulous choreography of our 50th anniversary convention is well underway, orchestrated by the SPERDVAC board of directors. The location remains a work in progress, with cost, accessibility, and logistical considerations under scrutiny to ensure the utmost enjoyment for our esteemed members. In acknowledgment of the times, we're exploring the incorporation of a virtual component, offering a window of participation for those with limited travel capacity—a notion once deemed science fiction but is now an everyday reality.

Once the location takes its final form, the spotlight turns to the selection of shows for re-creation. Sentimental classics like "Sorry Wrong Number" and "War of the Worlds" linger on the list, but your input, dear members, is the linchpin. Your thoughts and suggestions, actors and actresses you'd like to see—we're all ears. Send your input to info@spervac.com with the subject, "50th Anniversary Convention." Your voices shape the narrative.

In the coming 60 days, the SPERDVAC archives will find a new home in a state-of-the-art facility, promising both financial prudence and greater access. Details and visuals will grace the pages of *Radiogram*, now making its bi-monthly pilgrimage—a shift embraced by our membership in response to mounting publication costs.

A tip of the hat to board member Zach Eastman for making our first virtual convention, from October 2023, available on YouTube. Simply type "SPERDVAC" in the search window, and a treasure trove of

videos awaits your exploration.

Special gratitude to our longstanding friend, advocate, and all around good-guy, Gregg Oppenheimer, whose unwavering support echoes through his online productions. Walden Hughes and Zach Eastman's live interview with Greg during our convention is just a glimpse of what's to come.

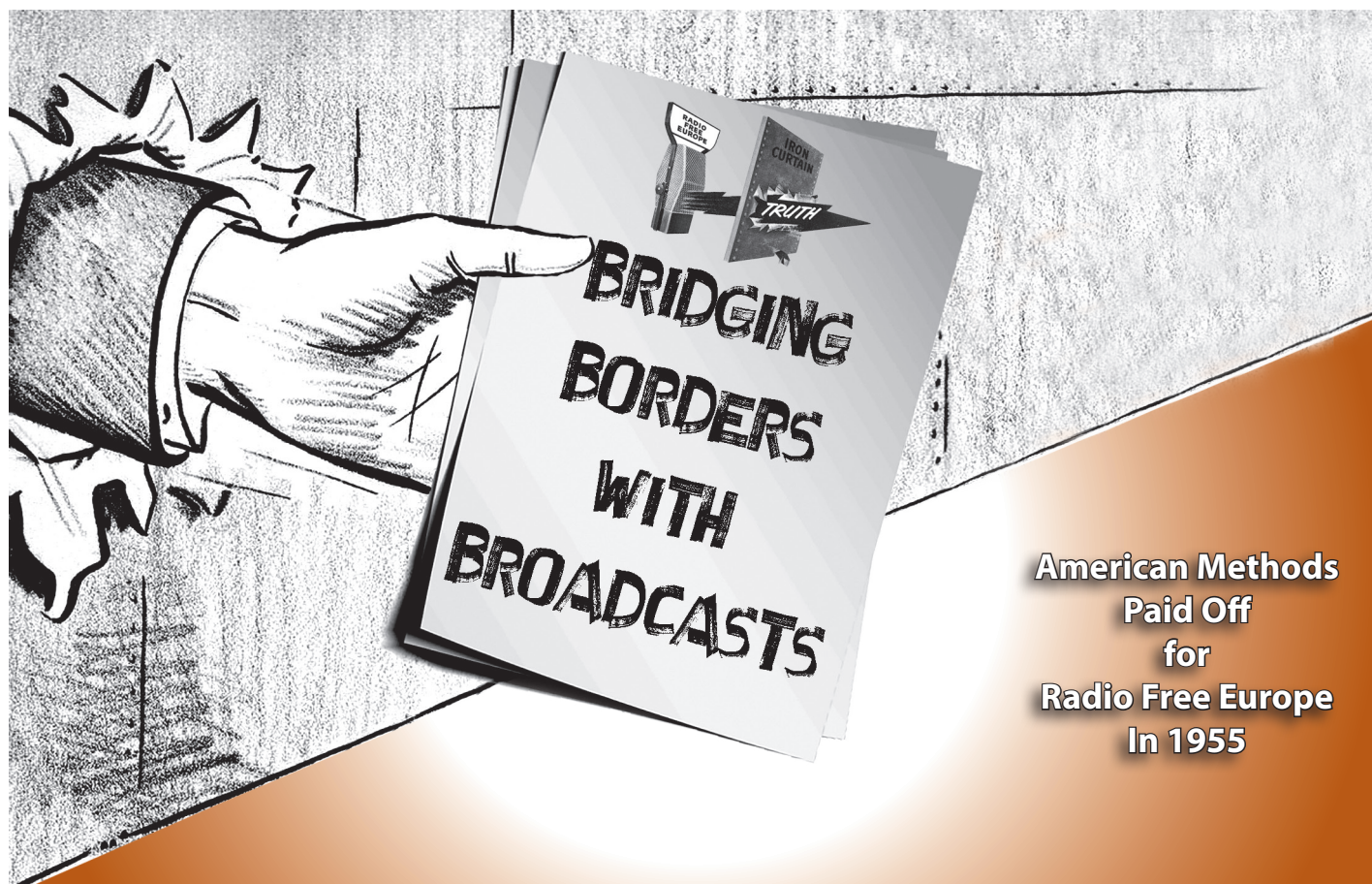
And now, a return to the upcoming convention—a moment to address the inquiries flooding my inbox about involvement in our radio re-creations. It begins with a simple note to info@spervac.com or president@spervac.com. Express your interest in acting, writing, producing, or sound effects. To our younger members, the torchbearer is you. Skills vital to preserving our legacy are ephemeral, and your participation ensures continuity.

A heartfelt thanks to our board members for their unwavering commitment to propelling our organization forward, confronting challenges with resilience.

Oh, and let's not forget—it's election time. Please remember to complete and return your SPERDVAC ballot.

Until next time, stay safe and stay tuned.📻

Timothy Knofler



American Methods Paid Off for Radio Free Europe In 1955

IN THE REALM OF RADIO, a listener's allegiance knows no borders. Whether tuning in from the bustling streets of Pittsburgh or the historic alleys of Prague, the universal appeal of well-established American radio techniques has found success even behind what was then called, the Iron Curtain. This revelation comes courtesy of Radio Free Europe, an anti-communist radio station that defied geopolitical constraints in 1955 to connect with audiences in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria.

Under the stewardship of William Rafael, former writer and producer for renowned figures like Kate Smith, James Melton, Sammy Kaye, and Bob Crosby, Radio Free Europe seamlessly integrated quintessential American radio methods into its broadcasts. These techniques, ranging from soap operas and round table discussions to quiz shows and singing commercials with a political twist, managed to captivate audiences on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

As Rafael explained, commercial radio was a rare phenom-



William Rafael, former writer and producer for such radio figures as Kate Smith, James Melton, Sammy Kaye, and Bob Crosby, seamlessly integrated quintessential American radio methods into Radio Free Europe broadcasts.

enon in the country's back of the Iron Curtain where stations were formally either state owned or operated on a subscription basis, but under autocratic control were merely the mouthpieces of the communist regime.

The introduction of these formats, then, was not without its challenges. Convincing the scriptwriters, many of them exiles, that American methods could effectively resonate with their compatriots required tact and patience. As Rafael emphasized, "We didn't want to railroad through our ideas. We feel that Radio Free Europe belongs to the exiles. It's actually been called a 'home station in exile.' So we had to show our European friends."

To demonstrate, Rafael and his staff began with a "hard one." They offered a quiz show, which faced immediate skepticism during a trial show at Camp Valka, a haven for Czech and Slovak refugees.

Contrary to expectations, however, the show not only succeeded but became a weekly fixture, offering refugees the chance to win coveted prizes in a society where such luxuries were scarce. Prizes were items hard to come by



Two Polish actresses chew the scenery in a broadcast of a soap opera titled *The Kubicz Family* over Radio Free Europe facilities to their homeland.

in a proletariat society, such as nylons, metal kitchenware, small electrical appliances, and even hams.

The result was that these quiz shows, laden with humor targeting the communist regime, became a staple of Radio Free Europe's broadcasts.

The same kind of fun was provided by the station's composers and lyricists who infused satire into music, creating songs that poke fun at the communists. From full-length compositions like the "Mig Polka" commemorating the escape of Polish Flyers to satirical music versions of the news, Radio Free Europe employed a diverse musical approach to engage its audience. Short jingles, echoing American radio's commercial "saturation campaign" technique, reinforced key messages throughout the day.

One of the most smarting musical campaigns followed a speech by Konstanty Rokossowki, the Polish Minister of Defense (ostensibly a Pole but regarded by Poles as a Russian), in which he referred to solutions affecting the Polish army as "important to *your* country and also to the

growth of *our* army." Seizing on this slip, RFE immediately began pelting Poland with a barrage of rhymes like this:

"You are honest, Rokossowki,
Thanks for the cue.
It's *your* army
It's *our* country;"

Alas, too true. Other, more serious, less lyrical RFE station breaks were of this sort:

"The main shortcoming in the diet of Czechoslovakian children is the deficiency of vitamin C. Yet the communists are selling one kilogram of oranges for 14 koruny, even though they are buying them abroad for one koruna per kilogram." Or: "The will of the people, even where it is not allowed to express itself, can overthrow a regime. An unarmed, but united people is always—and still is today—a greater power than an occupation force and a police force.

Beyond entertainment, soap operas served as effective propaganda weapons, addressing daily life under communism through relatable stories. Programs like *Within Four Walls* stated the problems

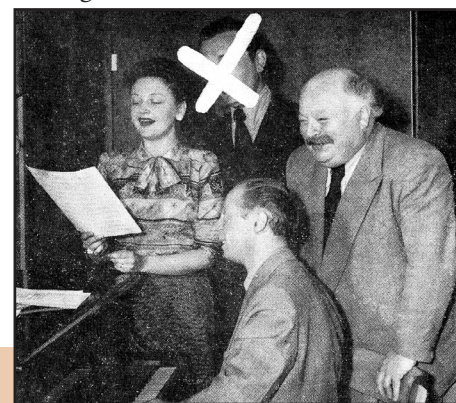
of daily life under communism in terms of a middle-class family living in Warsaw. Additionally, *Three Old Friends*, a program in Bulgaria, featured satirical comments by three Bulgarians, a patriot, a hard-core communist, and an treacherous opportunist.

Rafael proudly declared at the time that, "Really, we weren't so much different from a commercial network. We had a sponsor: the American people who supported Radio Free Europe through their contributions to the Crusade for Freedom. We had a product: freedom, ours and theirs. We had competition: the communist regime which would stop at nothing to keep their people from listening to Radio Free Europe. But we succeeded: on Poland's Radio Warsaw they'd broken their policy of officially ignoring Christmas and started broadcasting Christmas carols."

While public opinion polls were not possible in Iron Curtain countries, refugees, letters and press and radio protest by the communists made it clear that American radio techniques were winning many listeners to Radio Free Europe. Perhaps the greatest tribute to the effectiveness of commercial radio formats was the fact that in several cases, programs introduced to Radio Free Europe has been copied by the communist regime radios.

Rafael noted that it didn't bother him "so long as we continued to get letters like one from Poland which said, 'Even music sounds better over Radio Free Europe.'"

In the end, as long as letters like that one from Poland poured in Radio Free Europe remained steadfast in its mission to break down barriers and deliver the message of freedom across borders. 📻



Czech exiles rehearse a song for broadcast behind the Iron Curtain. The singer with face hidden, the original caption stated, still had family in Prague.

To Sherlock Holmes she would always be *the* woman

On this 170th birthday year of the great detective a quick glance at *the* woman of the best of Sherlock Holmes's radio adventures



THE GAME'S AFOOT

This past January 6 Sherlock Holmes, the great detective, turned 170-years-old. This is not to confuse the great detective's age with his first appearance in print, which was in 1887, in *A Study in Scarlet* in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*. No, we are talking about his birthdate. According to William S. Baring-Gould, the great detective's biographer (*Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street* 1962), Mr. William Sherlock Scott Holmes was born in Yorkshire on January 6, 1854; thus, the world's master of deductive reasoning enjoys retirement—and keeping bees—on the Sussex Downs at the youthful age of 170.

Pshaw!, you say. Perhaps rightly so. We all know—supposed to know—that Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character; his reality exists solely within his works, true, but what works they are! Never have literary characters and settings been more elucidated and refined than in the Sherlock Holmes stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and beyond in what are known as pastiches. So intricate are these delineations of character that many readers through the decades have mistaken the characters for genuine personages. In addition, for the Sherlockians (or is it Holmesians?)

Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Mycroft Holmes, Mrs. Hudson, Professor Moriarty, Scotland Yard Inspectors Lestrade, Jones, Gregson, et. al., have lives of their own, and we devotees appreciate what is called the *Great Game*, or just *the game*. We amass all the knowledge we can assemble from the *canon*—the 56 short stories and four novels—and make claims about the lives and times of the characters. For instance, just how did Baring-Gould arrive at the year 1854 as the year of Holmes's birth? Not arbitrarily although January 6 has no reckoning other than Epiphany, whose association with the amazing analytical gifts of the master of deductive reasoning shares symbolic significance. But the year 1854 was extrapolated from a passing reference in Holmes's final adventure, "His Last Bow" (final *chronologically* [1917]; an additional volume of stories that today would be called prequels followed in 1927 titled *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*). In "His Last Bow," which chronicled Holmes's service to his majesty's government in 1914, Holmes in disguise as an Irish-American named Altamount is described as a clean-cut fellow with an Uncle Sam beard who is a "tall gaunt man of sixty." Ergo, if Holmes was 60 in 1914

he had to have been born in 1854 *quod erat demonstrandum*.

Moreover, at times gamers try to make sense of things that confuse us, such as Dr. Watson's true Christian name. In the majority of the canon he is John H. Watson, but inexplicably in "The Man with the Twisted Lip," his wife, Mary, calls him James. There is nothing sinister about the odd remark, but surely, of all people, Watson's beloved Mary would know her husband's Christian name and yet there it is, James, not John. What are we to make of that? Some have argued that she was referring to their servant never mind that Watson's domestic staff was never acknowledged once in the canon. Cynics merely argue that Doyle forgot his character's name, but others, more in tune with the canon, offer judicious clarifications. In this case, no less a notable mystery writer than Dorothy L. Sayers explicated that Mary was referring to her husband's middle name, Hamish, which, according to Sayers, is Scottish for James. Therefore, Sayers, working backwards from James, arrives at Hamish.

At other times things are just made up although such suppositions follow a circuitous logical route from a casual mention in a story to an ultimate end. For instance, much has been conjectured about the "giant rat of Sumatra" referenced in "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire." In this story, Holmes tells Watson about the *Matilda Briggs*, a ship "associated with the giant rat of Sumatra, a story for which the world is not yet prepared." Speculations about just what that giant rat was have ranged, in subsequent writings by various authors, from the beast being a rare species the size of large dogs with an appetite for human flesh to ordinary rats infested with the black plague. The latter, in one particular narrative, was the intrigue of Holmes's eternal nemesis, Professor Moriarty, who, according to Baring-Gould, had tutored a young Sher-



EDITH MEISER

Here is the young lady who is responsible for those radio dramas on Sunday and Tuesday evenings. Author of Leslie Howard's popular radio series, "The Amateur Gentleman," and of "The New Penny," which serves Helen Hayes so delightfully, Edith Meiser previously was noted for her Sherlock Holmes adaptations. She also is the author of "Death Catches Up With Mr. Kluck," a popular novel dealing with murder in a radio studio.

Brief bio in *Radio Stars* February 1936

lock Holmes in mathematics before transmuting into the nefarious “Napoleon of crime.”

THE GIANT RAT OF SUMATRA

In “A Scandal in Bohemia,” Watson states that to Sherlock Holmes she would always be *the* woman. The woman in this story was the actress Irene Adler, but to all Sherlock Holmes radio enthusiasts it can be stated that *the* woman was Edith Meiser. She was also an actress but who also served as the guiding genius behind the radio adventures of Sherlock Holmes. In fact, she was the architect of radio’s *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (alternately *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and often just *Sherlock Holmes*) that began in 1933 with Richard Gordon in the title role before transitioning into additional series beginning in 1939 with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. Meiser scripted most of the adventures and her then husband, Tom McKnight, directed the series. He, too, was a Sherlockian, and as such he served as the technical advisor to what is referred to as the Baker Street dozen, i.e., the 12 superb Sherlock Holmes films with Rathbone and Bruce that were produced between 1942 and 1946 by Universal Pictures.

This era of Sherlock Holmes on screen and radio, however, belongs to Edith Meiser. It was she who first devised the narrative of the “story for which the world is not yet prepared.” Meiser did this for radio with “The Giant Rat of Sumatra,” first broadcast on NBC on June 9, 1932, with Richard Gordon

as Holmes and Leigh Lovel as Watson. So significant and, presumably, popular was the narrative of the giant rat that she reused it in February 1936 again with Gordon but with Harold West as Watson having replaced Lovel, who had died. “The Giant Rat of Sumatra” was again repeated July 18, 1936.

As most Holmes followers know Sherlock Holmes on radio took a meandering course, an on-again and off-again path, with the first series leaving the air in 1936. Holmes and Watson then remained absent from the airwaves until 1939 when the most recognizable of Holmes and Watson portrayers, Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce, were first heard. Their casting was a direct result of the success of two Sherlock Holmes films produced by 20th Century-Fox, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1939) and *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1939). The radio series was again with Meiser writing all the scripts, Tom McKnight directing, and together forging a camaraderie among the cast that proved to be one of radio’s more pleasurable experiences, according to many who were involved in the series. “The Giant Rat of Sumatra” was again presented this time on March 1, 1942, the final episode of season three.

The next season beginning in May 1943 saw Edith Meiser wearing thin and hence sharing script duties with Denis Green and Bruce Taylor (the latter a pseudonym of Leslie Charteris, creator of *The Saint*). Glenhall Taylor replaced McKnight, who was serving as

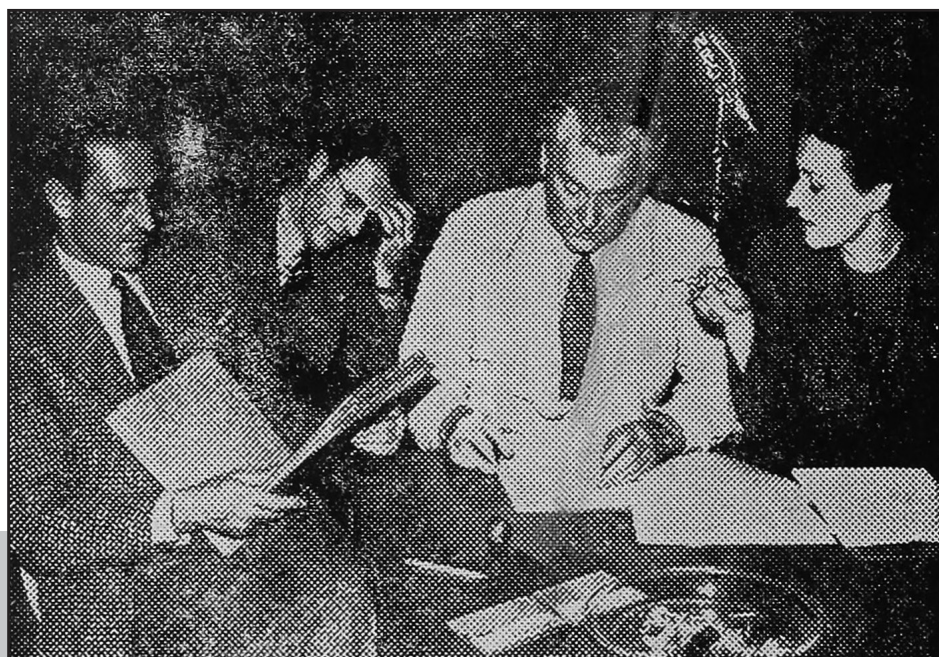
a captain in the U. S. Army. Again, Meiser’s “The Giant Rat of Sumatra” was part of the adventures, broadcast July 31, 1944, which would be its last broadcast.

Unfortunately, extant copies of radio’s “The Giant Rat of Sumatra” are non-existent. But Jim Harmon, in *The Great Radio Heroes*, apparently had heard a broadcast—presumably the Rathbone-Bruce interpretation of 1944—and did an excellent job of summarizing the episode, noting the suspenseful climax with Holmes and Watson confined with the rat in the hold of the ship. Holmes and Watson as well as all of London are saved from extinction, naturally, by a “rat-consuming” blaze that was started by ash from Holmes’ omnipresent calabash.

THE WOMAN

“I’ve been in love with him [Sherlock Holmes] ever since I first became seasick,” Edith Meiser once said. “It was when I was 13 and experiencing my first ocean voyage. I got violently sick. Mother didn’t rush to the ship’s doctor. Instead she went to the library, grabbed a Holmes book and dropped it in my lap. ‘Read that, Eadie,’ she said, firmly, ‘you’ll forget all about being sick.’ I read the book through twice and forgot all about being sick! I didn’t eat dinner, though. I was still daydreaming about Baker Street, Moriarty and dear Doctor Watson.”

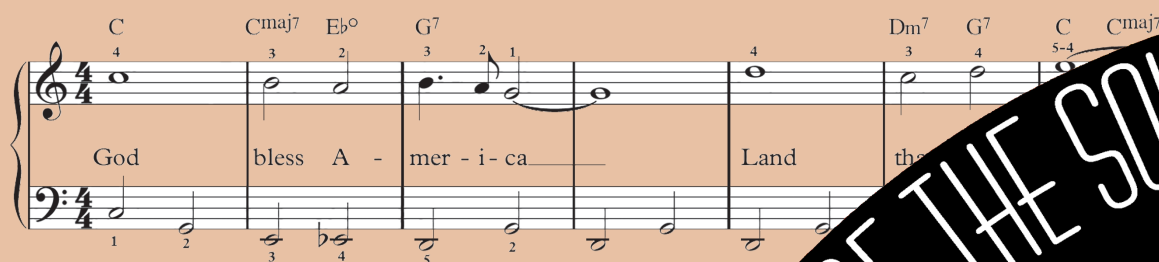
This experience led Meiser to devote a major portion of her career to Holmes and Watson. Born May 9, 1898 (the year of one of Holmes’s more interesting conundrums chronicled in “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”), Meiser was the daughter of a *Detroit Free-Press* journalist and socialite; she attended Vassar, where she headed the dramatic society, after which she found work in theatre. Although a consummate actress who had begun in vaudeville, appeared on the Broadway stage, served with the American Shakespeare Festival company, and who frequently took the female lead in the Sherlock Holmes radio dramas, Meiser admitted on numerous occasions that she preferred writing for radio. Her first series was *The Adventures of Polly Preston* (1929-1931), a sort of children’s radio version of the silent film serial *The Perils of Pauline*. Additional series included *Alias Edward Taylor* (1930), *Rudyard Kipling Stories* (1932), *Mysteries of Paris* (1933) and *The Helen Hayes Theatre* (1935). But her first love was adapting the Conan Doyle stories to radio.



Newspaper cut from 1943 shows the Sherlock Holmes radio team at rehearsal with Basil Rathbone, Tom McKnight, Nigel Bruce and Edith Meiser.

Continued Page 14





THE SONGBIRD OF THE SOUTH

**A Tribute
to Kate Smith
by
Yolanda Day**

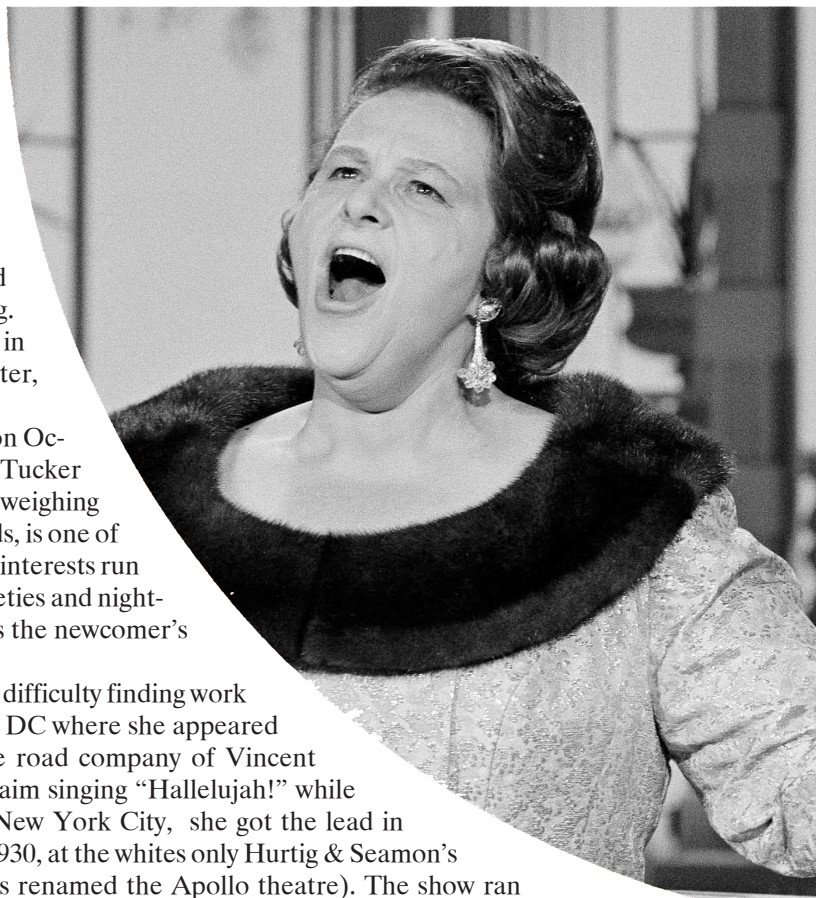
TODAY we might call her a pop diva but back in the day she was often called the Songbird of the South. Kathryn Elizabeth Smith was born May 1, 1907, in Greenville, VA. She was the youngest of three daughters. Although Kate failed to talk until she was four-years-old, a year later she was singing at church social events. By the time she was eight, she was singing for the troops at Army camps in the Washington DC area during World War I. Smith never had a singing lesson in her life and possessed a rich range of two-and-a-half octaves.

Kate's father sang in the choir at the Catholic church and her mother played piano at the Presbyterian church. Nevertheless, alarmed by his daughter's interest in the stage, her father sent her to the George Washington University School for Nursing where she attended classes for nine months before withdrawing to pursue a career in show business.

Kate knew what she wanted from a young age, bravely showing up for amateur nights at vaudeville theaters in DC. Then being in the right place at the right time, she got herself on the bill at Keith's theatre in Boston as a singer. Heading the bill was the actor and producer Eddie Dowling, who recruited the young Kate for a revue he was preparing. It was called *Honeymoon Lane*, and opened in Atlantic City on August 29, 1926. A month later, it moved to Broadway.

An unkind review in *The New York Times* on October 31, 1926, under the heading "A Sophie Tucker Rival," said the following: "A 19-year-old girl, weighing in the immediate neighborhood of 200 pounds, is one of the discoveries of the season for those whose interests run to syncopators and singers of what in the varieties and night-clubs are known as 'hot' songs. Kate Smith is the newcomer's not uncommon name."

When *Honeymoon Lane* closed, Smith had difficulty finding work in New York so she returned to Washington DC where she appeared sporadically in vaudeville. Smith joined the road company of Vincent Youmans' *Hit the Deck*, where she won acclaim singing "Hallelujah!" while dressed as a mammy in blackface. Back in New York City, she got the lead in George White's, which opened on March 3, 1930, at the whites only Hurtig & Seamon's New Burlesque theatre (later this venue was renamed the Apollo theatre). The show ran



VARIETY

"KATE SMITH SINGS"

With Ted Collins, Duke Ellington, guest; Four Chicks and a Chuck; Jack Miller orch.

Producer: Ted Collins
25 Mins.; Fri., 8:30 p.m.
GENERAL FOODS
WABC-CBS, N. Y.

(Young & Rubicam)

After last season's opposite-Jack Benny Sunday night fiasco, this new abbreviated Kate Smith show (it's been reduced from 60 to 25 minutes) shapes up as more of a natural. It's now called "Kate Smith Sings" and the title hits it right on the head. There's an air of unpretentiousness about it—one, in fact, that belies the \$13,400* package cost, same as last year—that's distinctly to its credit. In the words of Ted Collins, it's a "re-converted postwar" program, "with emphasis on music," punctuated with occasional Smith-Collins conversational pieces, and all for the most part aimed at accenting the qualitative side. Nothing sensational, but of a pattern calculated to pay off better rating dividends than last season's pot-pourri with its dubious comedy inserts.

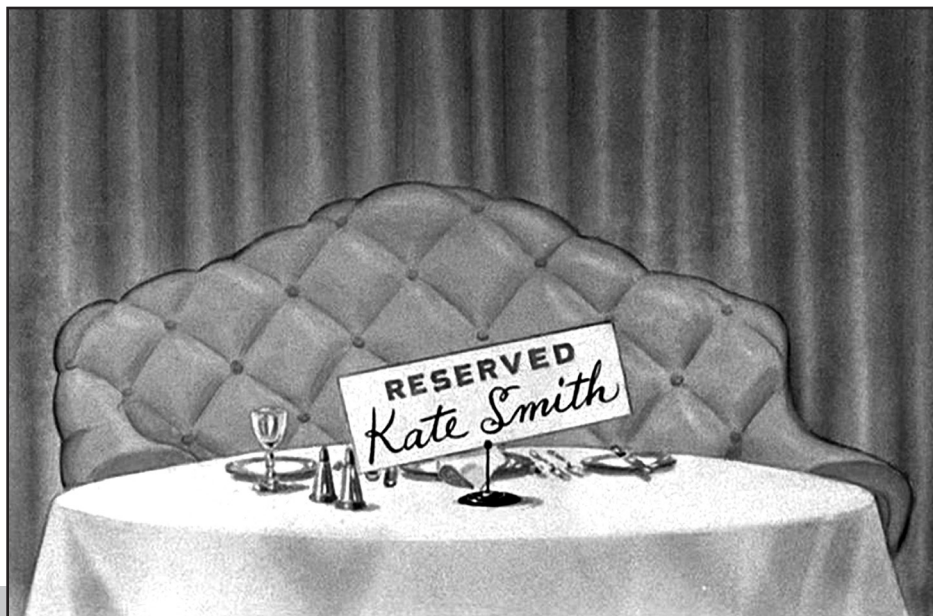
One of the chief assets of the show as it currently shapes up is the expanded Jack Miller 38-piece orch, which, as of last Friday, became one of the finest musical outfits on the air, with a notably fine string section. A good chunk of the talent-production cost has gone into the revamped orch, with Miller himself checking off both the "Molle Mystery Theatre" and "Aldrich Family" shows (also occupying Friday night slots) to take over the Kate Smith assignment with a sizable coin hike.

Miss Smith was in good voice on the preem. with "There You Are," "I Don't Care Who Knows It," "Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe" (latter plugged as the No. 1 tune of the week under the controversial plug technique inaugurated by Collins); "I'll Be Seeing You" and the English fave, "Just a Little Fond Affection." The musical background was superb. Four Chicks and a Chuck, also on last season's show, lend a good assist, and Dick Byron, known tradewise as the "Mazola Boy" since his "Stage Door Canteen" jingle scoring, is now doing some effective lyricism on Postum.

In keeping with the format, guests will be strictly on the instrumental side, with Duke Ellington clicking on the opener with "Mood Indigo" and capitalizing on some multiple plugs, including his Juilliard scholarship awards.

The Smith-Collins talkfest pace is still geared to a 60-minute show, much too slow considering the 25 minutes now apportioned and should be speeded up. And the singing star had a tendency to go overboard with her own switch-to-Postum-and-coffee-can-never-disturb-you-again commercial spiel. Ro.

Variety reviews the revamped Kate Smithg program now called *Kate Smith Sings* (September 19, 1946).



Warner Brothers' Merrie Melodies pokes fun at Kate Smith's weight in "Hollywood Steps Out" (1941), a spoof of Hollywood night life at Ciro's directed by Tex Avery from a story by Melvin Millar. Bert Lahr was particularly cruel when referencing Kate's weight, often leading to tears.

for 122 performances. As Pansy Sparks, Smith's role was to be the butt of Bert Lahr's often cruel jibes about her girth. Kate later said that she often wept with humiliation in her dressing room after the show.



Smith had become self-conscious regarding her weight in no small part because of both on and off stage mocking by co-star Bert Lahr (left).

She later credited Ted Collins, an executive at Columbia Records who would become her longtime manager in a 50-50 partnership, with helping her overcome her self-consciousness, writing, "Ted Collins was the first man who regarded me as a singer, and didn't even seem to notice that I was a big girl." She noted, "I'm big, and I sing, and boy, when I sing, I sing all over!" Smith was 5 feet 10 inches tall and weighed 235 pounds at the age of 30.

Once described by *Time* magazine as "The First Lady of Radio," she made her radio debut in 1931 on *Kate Smith Sings*. Her show featured music, but was also a variety show introducing new talent, such as Abbott & Costello, the show's resident comics. During this same time frame Kate also appeared on *Kate Smith Speaks*, a popular 15-minute weekday show where she offered homespun advice and uplifting sermonettes on topics of the day.

Other opportunities came her way in film appearances including *Hello, Everybody!* in 1932 with co-stars Randolph Scott and Sally Blane and the 1943 war-time film *This Is the Army*, in which she sang "God Bless America."

Later Kate branched out into television starring in two concurrent television programs in the early 1950s, *The Kate Smith Hour* on NBC from 1950 through 1954



Kate Smith

Presented by
GENERAL FOODS CORP.
"The Kate Smith Hour"
for Grape-Nuts and Grape-Nuts Flakes
CBS • FRIDAY • 8 to 8:55 P.M. E.W.T.
WEST COAST: 12 MIDNIGHT TO 12:55 A.M. E.W.T.

"Kate Smith Speaks"
For Swans-Down, Columet, and Diamond Crystal Shaker Salt
12 Noon to 12:15 P.M. E.W.T. Monday thru Friday

TED COLLINS
PRODUCER-DIRECTOR

"Thanks for Listenin'!"

Advertisement for *The Kate Smith Hour* and *Kate Smith Speaks* in *Radio Annual* 1942.

and the weekly *The Kate Smith Evening Hour* presenting both music and talk show formats until 1960.

Not one for missing out on any opportunity to sing, between 1949 and 1978 Kate made 30 record albums plus numerous singles. At least 19 of her recordings sold over 1 million copies. Among her most popular songs were “When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain,” “Dream a Little Dream of Me,” “River, Stay ‘Way from My Door,” “The Woodpecker Song,” “The White Cliffs of Dover,” “Rose O’Day,” “The Last Time I Saw Paris,” “I Don’t Want to Walk Without You,” “There Goes That Song Again,” “Seems Like Old Times,” and “Now Is the Hour.”

Much later Kate became a patriotic symbol for the sports world due in part to tensions over the Vietnam War. Her version of “God Bless America” was played by the Philadelphia Flyers ice

“In giving us a magnificent, selfless talent like Kate Smith, God has truly blessed America.”

—Ronald Reagan

hockey team in December 1969 rather than the usual “Star-Spangled Banner.” It received an enthusiastic response and as a result Kate would go on to make many public performances of the song at Flyers’ games through 1985. Her song was attributed to a remarkable 100 wins by the Flyers. In 1987 the team erected a statue in her memory outside their arena.

HOWEVER, in 2019 the statue was covered up and then removed due to controversy and criticism over racist lyrics in her 1931 recordings of two songs: “That’s Why Darkies Were Born” and “Pickaninny Heaven.” The New York

Yankees also stopped playing Kate Smith’s “God Bless America” which they had used since 2001. In a 2019 statement the Flyers president said, “The NHL principle ‘Hockey is for Everyone’ is at the heart of everything the Flyers stand for.” The Yankees added that they take social, racial and cultural insensitivity very seriously.

Some point to the fact that Smith called for racial tolerance in 1945 in an address on CBS radio, declaring, “Race hatreds, social prejudices, religious bigotry, they are the diseases that eat away the fibers of peace.” She went on to state, “it is up to us to tolerate one another in order to achieve peace.”

Taking into consideration the era in which Kate grew up, her singing of racist lyrics although certainly objectionable would have likely been overlooked by many if not most Americans of the time.

On other fronts Kate did much for her



THE INDIGNITY OF IT ALL. Kate Smith gets the woke treatment in Philadelphia, that city of brotherly love, in 2019 by Philadelphia Flyers hockey team management which covered the statue before having it removed from its once honored place near the Wells Fargo sports arena. Her sin was that she had warbled racist lyrics in 1931.



Kate Smith agreed to make a series of singing short-subjects for Columbia Pictures with all profit from the singer and the company going to the United Service Organization (USO). Here she signs the contract with observers from the USO: Mrs. Maurice T. Moore, national vice-chair, women's committee; James A. Farley, national vice-president, USO; and Prescott Bush, national chair, USO. *The Exhibitor* May 6, 1942.

country including contributing to the sale of over \$600 million (equivalent to \$11.9 billion in 2022) of war bonds during a series of marathon broadcasts. No other show-business star came near her as revenue producer of War Bonds to finance the United States' World War II effort. This effort plus the pleasure she gave to so many through her songs will hopefully be her legacy.

Among the honors Kate received during her lifetime were a command performance for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth at the White House on June 8, 1939. She received a Drake University medallion for "outstanding contributions to radio and the people."

On October 26, 1982, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. At the ceremony President Regan said, "In giving us a magnificent, selfless talent like Kate Smith, God has truly blessed America."

Smith was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame in 1999 and into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame in 2009. In 2010, the US postal service issued a commemorative stamp of Kate Smith.

She died at the age of 79 in 1986 due to many serious diabetic complications. 🕯

\$3,000,000 IN WAR BONDS

Three weeks after her New York success, Kate Smith stood before a WJSV microphone in Washington, D.C., at daybreak of October 29th. As the studio clock clicked to 6:05 A.M. she went on the air to speak for five minutes about the purchase of War Bonds. It was the first of 29 patriotic pleas Kate Smith made before one o'clock the next morning.

For nineteen tireless hours Kate "stood by" at microphone and telephone—making and taking orders for War Bonds—bringing to bear on this great cause all the deep sincerity of her nature, the persuasive power of her personality. At her side was Ted Collins, joining his efforts to Kate's with 23 air-appeals of his own.

Both Postal Telegraph and the Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Company lent their facilities to the campaign. And as in New York the listening public responded magnificently—telephoning and wiring Kate Smith at WJSV until War Bond sales for the day soared to \$511,650.

Washington's banks—sharing the warm enthusiasm of the public—donated their sale of Bonds to the Kate Smith campaign to bring the day's total to \$1,016,750.

In this great tribute to a cause, Kate Smith stands supreme. WJSV feels privileged to have been the means of carrying Kate's voice to every corner of the nation's capital market.



Owned and operated by CBS.
Represented by Radio Sales: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, St. Louis, San Francisco, Charlotte.



WJSV in Washington honors Kate Smith's efforts at selling war bonds. *Broadcasting* December 14, 1942.



**NOW
PLAYING**

Watch it free at SPERDVAC.com
or visit Gregg Oppenheimer's
YouTube channel
(@GreggOppenheimer)

**THE
GULF SCREEN
GUILD SHOW
PREMIERES
FEBRUARY 20!**



Groucho on the Radio



Starring

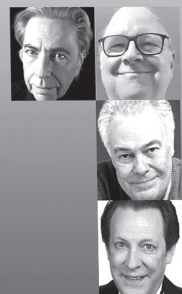
FRANK FERRANTE

with **IVAN CURY** • **ED FRENCH**

BRYAN HENDRICKSON • **JOHN JENSEN**

PHIL PROCTOR • **DEVON SORYARI** • **BRAD ZINN**

Produced & Directed by
GREGG OPPENHEIMER



The Gulf Screen Guild Show

with

Jack Benny, Joan Crawford and Judy Garland



Starring

IVAN CURY • **JOHN JENSEN** • **RHONDA MEDINA** • **JENN OLLIVIER**

PHIL PROCTOR • **BRAD ZINN**

Produced & Directed by
GREGG OPPENHEIMER





Sample panel from the 1954 comic strip written by Edith Meiser and illustrated by Frank Giacoia, himself a respected Sherlockian

"Sherlock is perfect air material," she said in a 1936 interview for *Radio Stars* magazine. "There are not too many clues. Holmes, you know, was the first deduction artist. He was the first to use the famous cigar-ash and fingerprint clues. Doyle, a scientist at heart, believed in mental, rather than physical action. Therefore, Sherlock has excellent radio pace. It's uncanny how smoothly it works out for radio adaptation. Conan Doyle had great vision."

Meiser added that most of the stories ran almost the exact time of a 30-minute broadcast and were complete. She even quipped that Doyle left room for the commercials.

But finding a sponsor for a Sherlock Holmes radio series proved her greatest challenge. Potential sponsors derided the idea, preferring what they described as a "streamlined private eye who spoke out of the side of his mouth and scared women and children."

Undaunted, she pursued sponsorship as doggedly as the great detective on the trail of Professor Moriarty. She probed anew into everything Sherlock including Sherlock's habits. And what she found elicited a eureka heard 'round Baker Street. She discovered that Holmes liked coffee—drank at least seven cups a day—and approached the fledgling G. Washington Coffee people. The company was seeking national exposure to sell what they considered their unique blend. Meiser did some fast talking and within 24 hours G. Washington Coffee had become Sherlock Holmes's first radio sponsor.

Meiser devised the strategy of having the announcer visit a retired Dr. Watson in the good doctor's lodgings. This not only allowed Watson to narrate an adventure he shared with Sherlock Holmes but also allowed the announcer and Watson a moment or two to chat

about the sponsor. This arrangement survived through Meiser's association with the series, and we devotees of radio's Sherlock Holmes have to this day a fondness for G. Washington Coffee as well as Groves Bromo-Quinine Cold Tablets and Petri Wines even if they have long passed their freshness dates.

As radio's Sherlock Holmes faded (after Rathbone left the series), Meiser returned to acting, primarily to film and television, and served for years on the council of the Actors Equity Association (at times with Basil Rathbone).

SHERLOCK CENTENARY

In 1954 the world, well, Sherlockians, celebrated the centenary of Sherlock Holmes's birth, and all Sherlockiana was agog at the prospects of new and celebratory adaptations of the great detective and his chronicler. Sherlockians were not disappointed. Among the observances was a new BBC radio series titled *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* produced by Harry Alan Towers, who had previously produced *The Black Museum* and *The Lives of Harry Lime*, both with Orson Welles and both profitable on American airwaves. Shakespearean luminaries Sir John Gielgud and Sir Ralph Richardson made a perfect Baker Street duo with Orson Welles making a special appearance as a formidable Moriarty in "The Final Problem."

Television also celebrated the centenary with the first Sherlock Holmes television series. Originally titled *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* but known today as simply *Sherlock Holmes*, the filmed series was first broadcast October 18, 1954, in New York over NBC. Ostensibly a British production featuring Ronald Howard and H. Marion Crawford, the 39 episodes were filmed in Paris by American expatriate Sheldon Reynolds,

whose Cold War series *Foreign Intrigue* had been a major success on American screens. Unique at the time to this series was that it earned the only endorsement for a screen adaptation from the Committee on Canonicity of the Baker Street Irregulars, which declared confidently after previewing the first episode that "we felt ourselves—and what could be more than this?—back in Baker Street again."

HER LAST BOW

Edith Meiser of radio fame was also back in Baker Street but this time in a different medium. She along with artist Frank Giacoia, himself an earnest Sherlockian, created a daily comic strip. The strip premiered March 1, 1954, and ran throughout the year, signing off as the centenary came to a close.

Edith Meiser died September 26, 1993, and her contributions to the world of Sherlock Holmes can never be undervalued. The gaslight, fog-shrouded atmosphere that is always 1888 surrounds the Rathbone/Bruce radio series because of Meiser's vision. She knew her characters and settings thoroughly to the point that, in her biography, she noted that the Conan Doyle family had praised her efforts. Furthermore, it has been reported that she was given honorary membership into that ol' fuss-budget group, the Baker Street Irregulars. Surely, a triumph.

To Sherlock Holmes radio enthusiasts everywhere she will always be *the* woman. ♀



CORRECTION

In last issue's article about celebrating 50 years of *Nostalgia Digest* we gave the wrong mailing address. The correct address is: *Nostalgia Digest*, Box 180078, Chicago, IL 60618.



NBC musical soothes war-weary listeners

RADIO GAVE BIRTH to countless shows that have failed to survive even as footnotes to history. However, each forgotten history, when rediscovered, adds to radio's story as a whole.

Recently, I stumbled across and purchased a few broadcast tickets from 1947 for a performance of *Serenade to America*, a radio program that failed to ring a bell of recognition. As a retired reference librarian, I am still unable to resist an intriguing research question.

The story behind *Serenade to America* begins with its premiere on December 6, 1943. The National Broadcasting Company was anxious to "revitalize" its 6-7 pm timeslot and set about reshaping its schedule. WEAf, NBC's New York flagship station, would host the anticipated transformation. The new WEAf-NBC schedule would shakeout to include George Putnam and the News at 6:00; *Serenade to America* at 6:15; Bill Stern reports at 6:40 and Lowell Thomas at 6:45.

Sandwiched between news and sports, *Serenade to America* was the new entry on the time block but with a few advantages worth noting. NBC had usually done well with musical programs going as far back as 1931 when the network started broadcasting Metropolitan Opera performances. Wedged as it was between mostly sober news reports, *Serenade to America* offered a 25-minute uplifting interlude. Presenting classical and popular music through a concert orchestra, guest conductors, choruses and soloists, expectations were high for the nightly series. The only thing missing seemed to be a sponsor and WEAf would work hard to remedy that problem.

An intensive advertising campaign promoting the new lineup was launched. Exploiting its 660 location on the dial, WEAf hammered its 660 at 6 on Your Dial campaign in print, on the air and in local New York tie-in promotions. *Serenade to America* received the major emphasis. Dr. Frank Black and H. Leopold Spitalny alternately conducted the program's 35-piece orchestra when absent a guest conductor. *Serenade to America*, the add campaign rhapsodized, was "dedicated to gracious living.... It's music that's different—soft and soothing."

To emcee the series, a radio actress and scriptwriter named Nora Stirling was selected. Stirling had started her radio career in 1932 when she appeared as Mary in the *Mary and Bob* serial, and wrote and starred in *Funny Things*, a children's program on CBS in 1937. Listeners were assured that Stirling "will fascinate you with her easy manner and absorbing stories drawn from her wide experience as an actress and writer." Only the year before, Stirling had joined NBC's script-writing staff.

Variety (December 8, 1943) judged *Serenade to America* in mostly positive terms. The primary discordant note seemed to be with Nora

Stirling. The reviewer pondered the "strange programming twist" that landed her on the program. "The high musical talent present seemed well able to hold their own," the reviewer opined, "without the between-tune interludes by Miss Stirling and her tabloid autobiography at the halfway point."

Political consideration seems to explain Nora Stirling's role on *Serenade to America*. When NBC added Stirling to its writing staff, she was a key member of the Writers War Board and chairman of a committee supervising writers turning out scripts on behalf of the Treasury department. Her presence on the air would prove a clear, if unstated, asset.

By January 1944, WEAf's 6:00 to 7:00 pm time slot had earned the highest Hooperating in New York. Despite *Variety* and its misgivings about Nora Stirling, there would be no changes.

Indeed, the prominence of *Serenade to America* would be showcased during the six-hour bond rally broadcast from Madison Square Garden on November 20, 1944. Carried across all major networks, the broadcast was a six hour extravaganza, part of the Sixth War Loan Drive, featuring top programming and talent drawn from the various networks. Not coincidentally, *Serenade to America*, with Nora Stirling, opened the broadcast that evening.

Serenade to America was paying off handsomely for NBC and

WEAf. The publicity effort to secure commercial sponsorship was about to show results. The next summer, *Serenade to America* was hyped in trade publications. In *Broadcasting* (July 2, 1945) WEAf proclaimed the "high quality of this musical program, plus its steadily increasing popularity, make it one of the outstanding bargains of the day" for sponsorship.

The campaign hit paydirt the following month. Benson and Hedges, the tobacco company, signed up to sponsor the series in what was announced by NBC as the biggest sale in WEAf history. Henceforth, *Serenade to America* would be singing the praises of Virginia Round and Parliament Cigarettes commencing on September 2, 1945.

Serenade to America, with Benson and Hedges' support, would continue on the airwaves for a few more years. With sponsorship and the end of the war, however, came cost-cutting and a slimmed down format. Reduced to a once-a-week presence, music was now supplied to listeners via recordings from the Associated Program Service. Nonetheless, *Sponsor* (March 2, 1950) reported that the program often turned in higher ratings than similar programming using live talent and blessed with significantly larger budgets.

Serenade to America would sign off for the last time on September 30, 1950. Originally designed as a form of palliative care for war-weary listeners, it had apparently outlived its purpose.■

TONIGHT AT 6:15

A GREAT NEW RADIO SHOW

Serenade to America

Here's an important new musical program you won't want to miss. *Serenade to America*—dedicated to gracious living—features the finest in light music. It's music that's different—soft and soothing—and it comes to you at an ideal time—the dinner hour.

A brilliant, 35-piece orchestra, led alternately by Dr. Frank Black and H. Leopold Spitalny, gives you striking arrangements of your favorite songs. To make the show complete, prominent soloists—recruited from the top ranks of the musical world—guest-star on every program.

Tune in tonight at 6:15—and every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday—to *Serenade to America*—for twenty-five minutes of top-flight musical entertainment. (And don't miss George Putnam's News at 6:00 and Bill Stern's Sports at 6:40.)

FRANK BLACK

Serenade to America brings you the brilliant music of Frank Black and his superb 35-piece orchestra. In addition, prominent guest stars are featured on every program. Tune in tonight at 6:15, and every weekday night except Tuesday.

NORA STIRLING

Nora Stirling, mistress of ceremonies, will fascinate you with her easy manner and absorbing stories drawn from her wide experience as an actress and writer.

660 on your dial

WEAf

The Showcase of NBC



SPERDVAC
2625 Middlefield Rd. #171
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Presort Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Albany, OR
Permit 188