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# LAUGH

The Comedy Magazine

Issue 13 1995



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# ROUND THE HORNE

by Tony Lang

THE 1960s marked what many describe as the end of the great era of radio comedy. This had started in the 1940s with shows such as **ITMA**, and had continued through the 1950s with **Take It From Here**, **The Goon Show** and **Hancock's Half Hour**. The 1960s saw **Beyond Our Ken**, **I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again** and of course **Round The Horne**.

Barry Took had been scriptwriter for around forty programmes of **Beyond Our Ken** with Eric Merriman, before leaving to work for Granada Television with Marty Feldman. Then early in 1965 Took and Feldman were contacted by John Simmonds who had taken over production of **Beyond Our Ken** from Jacques Brown. He informed them that Eric Merriman wanted to give up writing the show, and asked if they would be interested in taking over the job.

They arranged to meet at the headquarters of BBC Light Entertainment, The Aeolian Hall in Bond Street. With him to discuss the idea were Roy Rich (Head of Light Entertainment), Edward Taylor (the Script Editor, who had originally suggested Took and Feldman for the role), and Kenneth Horne.

Initially, the writers considered that they were under too much pressure from other work and turned down the offer. After the meeting they changed their minds and agreed to write the scripts for a trial series of six shows.

**Beyond Our Ken** had been extremely successful, and Took and Feldman were reluctant to change the format of the show. However, they felt that the show should have a new name to reflect the new writing team, and so **Round The Horne** was born.

The cast was to be the same as before with Kenneth Horne as the central character around whom a team of crazy characters would revolve. He had started his radio career in 1940 as question master in the radio quiz show **Ack Ack Beer Beer** (named after the Anti Aircraft Barrage Balloon branch of the armed forces).

During and after the war he spent a long spell as one of the stars of **Much Binding In The Marsh** with Richard Murdoch, at first on the BBC and then later on Radio Luxembourg. He was also Chairman of **Twenty Questions** and **Does The Team Think**. He combined this work with a successful career in industry (he had read economics at Cambridge and was Sales Director of Triplex Glass and held other City Directorships).

In 1957 he suffered a stroke which led to his retiring from industry to concentrate on showbiz. His massive avuncular personality, rich 'plummy' voice and almost straight man roles, pictured him as a figure of old world authority, lending an air of respectability to **Round The Horne**. Many jokes were made about his baldness leading to his being named the "uncrowned head of the show".

Kenneth Williams was well known as a comedy actor, probably best remembered for his parts in the **Carry On** films. He was one of the stars of the legendary radio show **Hancock's Half Hour** where he supplied most of the funny voices, character roles and catchphrases. He had a bawdy sense of humour which seemed to conflict with his aesthetic attitude to life.

His autobiography, *Just Williams* was published in 1985, three years before his death. In **Round The Horne** he frequently complained that the writers were not servicing him properly, leading to outbursts of mock outrage that stopped the show. In fact he had some of the funniest lines in the scripts and provided most of the best remembered characters.

Many of the more dramatic roles were provided by Hugh Paddick. This well known actor had originally studied law but he soon found that he preferred the theatre.

Most of the female voices were provided by Betty Marsden. She had studied at the Italian Conti Stage School, followed by a spell with ENSA during the war. Betty has appeared in a wide range of roles from **Blake's Seven** to **The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie**.

Other roles were provided by Bill Pertwee, who made his show-business debut as a concert party impressionist in 1955. Apart from **Beyond Our Ken/Round The Horne**, his best known role is as the self important air raid warden Hodges in **Dad's Army**.

Many BBC comedy shows had comic announcers and **Round The Horne** was no exception, the job being filled by Douglas Smith. He joined the European service of the BBC in 1946 and went on to become a Radio 3 announcer and television newsreader. Interestingly, he was also a specialist in classical music. Douglas's characters were mainly assorted inanimate objects such as inflatable rubber rafts and volcanos. His other duties included linking the various sketches, and providing verbal sound effects along the lines of chug chug, splot, psssst and bang. In the fourth series he went a stage further and stepped up to the microphone to sing *Nobody Loves A Fairy When She's Forty*. He died of cancer in 1972.

The musical break was provided by The Fraser Hayes Four. This close harmony group was formed in the fifties and worked together in clubs TV and radio until 1967, when Tony Hayes formed another group called the Skylarks and Jimmy Fraser left to follow a solo career in the US.

Incidental music was provided initially by Paul Fenoulhet and the Horneblowers, until replaced by Edwin Braden from the sixth show in the first series onwards. For the second Christmas special and later episodes, The Max Harris Group took over responsibility for the incidental music and the musical break was dropped.

Trying to keep everything under control was the producer, John Simmonds. He had started as a sound effects boy and worked his way up to the Head of Department. His job was a hard one on **Round The Horne**, due to the problem of BBC censorship. This had always been quite strict. **The Goon Show** in the 1950s had pushed the barriers back a little, but **Round The Horne** almost tried to demolish them.

The show developed a reputation for double entendres, which led to the BBC receiving a large number of complaints. One recurring objection was that the cast put a strong emphasis on certain words. Luckily the BBC shared the attitude of the scriptwriters and cast — that if there was a degree of ambiguity in the script and it was made clear enough, then it was permissible. If the listeners wanted to attach a particularly vulgar meaning to some word or phrase then that was up to them.

Two of the most frequent complainers were the self-appointed censors of the day, Mary Whitehouse and Sir Cyril Black. When they took umbrage at some indiscretion, the writers counter attacked using the words of their complaint in the next show. The censors only won one round of the war when they registered disapproval of the quasi-biblical phrases used by J Peasemold Gruntfuttock, and made the writers stop using such language.

Barry Took described in his recent book of scripts that the head of the BBC Light Programme, Dennis Morris didn't enjoy the show, and whenever there was a question of taste, the script would be sent to the Director General, Hugh Greene, who always returned the script with the note 'I see nothing to object to in this'. He later admitted that he 'liked dirty shows'.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, television started to compete more strenuously for the attention of the public. In order to stay competitive, radio shows tightened up their production schedules to make them more economic. One of the ways to achieve this was in the advance preparation of sound effects, music and scripts, leading to much reduced rehearsal times. A typical 1950s radio comedy show would have been rehearsed and recorded in around six hours. **Round The Horne** achieved the same result in three hours.

The shows were all rehearsed and recorded at the Paris Studios in Regent Street, and followed a similar format to that started in the 1950s with **Take It From Here**. First there were the introductory items, followed by a longish story such as Moby Duck or the Three Musketeers (introduced as presentations of Armpit Theatre, Movie Go Wrong or The Kenneth Horne Theatre of Suspense). Some of these, such as The Muffplaster Saga and the Admirable Loombucket (a send up of The Admirable Crichton), ran for more than one episode.

In the first three series, this was followed by a song from The Fraser Hayes Four, which in turn was followed by either Trends or the Colour Supplement. A few special shows such as The Gruntfuttock saga strayed from this formula.

The first series of sixteen shows started on the 7th March 1965, and included the initial instalments of three ongoing segments — the backroom boys of the BBC, the Clissold Saga in which Kenneth Horne talked to the much married and much divorced, Lady Beatrice Counterblast nee Clissold (Betty Marsden) and her loony Butler Spasm (Kenneth Williams), and Trends, in which the cast discussed items of interest such as fashion, art and music.

The Clissold Saga introduced the first two of the many catchphrases used in the show — "Many, many, times" (first uttered by Lady Counterblast when asked how many times she had been married), and "We be doomed, we all be doomed", the favourite phrase of her butler. Many more catchphrases were to follow, despite Feldman and Took originally deciding not to use such devices. Apparently the cast kept pencilling them in until they eventually gave up.

The second show in the series included the answers to a nonexistent quiz (which had supposedly been set the previous week), an item which soon become a regular feature of the programme.

Episode four marked the first appearance of Julian (Kenneth Williams) and Sandy (Hugh Paddick) as a pair of out of work actors filling in by working for a domestic agency called Rent-A-Chap. They were two extremely camp gentlemen, named after Julian Slade and Sandy Wilson who separately wrote two of the biggest stage hits of the 1960s — **Salad Days**

and **The Boy Friend**.

The characters had quite different personalities. Julian was an introvert who had had several embarrassing experiences in the past. He was the submissive and vulnerable one, particularly about his friend Gordon (occasionally played by Bill Pertwee). Sandy, on the other hand, was more of an extrovert who wanted to 'bring it all out into the open'. They were very popular and again had a language all of their own, this time taken from the world of costumiers and window dressers.

They turned up every week with yet another part time enterprise, such as 'Bona Performers' or 'Bona Law' ("You name it, we'll do it, ducky"). Each had his own selection of catchphrases, including "Oh hello, I'm Julian and this is my friend Sandy", "That's your actual French" (supposedly invented by Peter Cook) and "Ohh bold! Very bold!". It was the first time that overtly gay characters had been portrayed on British radio (with the possible exception of Flowerdew in **The Goon Show**), but these two made few bones about their, then illegal, inclinations.

The fifth show included the first appearance by J Peasemold Gruntfuttock - the walking slum (played by Kenneth Williams). This dilapidated wreck started his radio career in **Beyond Our Ken** as the man who had been doing everything for 35 years, and developed into the sometimes King of Peasemoldia - a kingdom somewhere just off the Balls Pond Road.

He was a persistent letter writer to the show, supplying answers to quiz questions such as "complete the following song title: I'm gonna sit right down and.....", and guided by the voices who manifest themselves from a pig's head in a butcher's window. His wife Buttercup (Betty Marsden) comes from an even lower class background, although a later episode describes her as Dame Bella Goatcabin.

Show six saw the first change of personnel when Edwin Braden took over the Horneblowers from Paul Fenoulhet, and the first of many detective/spy story send-ups was launched, here entitled 'Inspector Horne's Casebook'.

Charles (Hugh Paddick) and Fiona (Betty Marsden) arrived with episode eight and introduced us to two melodramatic characters played in innumerable cinematic triumphs of the thirties and forties by Dame Celia Molestrangler and ageing juvenile Binkie Huckerback. Their films included such epics as Brief Ecstasy, In Which We Serve and The Hasty Nose, all played in the best tradition of Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter*.

In show nine, Kenneth Horne first crossed paths with Chou en Ginsberg MA (Failed) (Kenneth Williams), a fiendish Japanese mastermind who never managed to outwit his adversaries. Their first encounter was entitled 'Kenneth Horne, Counter Agent — The Spy Who Came In With A Cold'.

Chou was joined in the next show by his unerotic concubine, Lotus Blossom (Hugh Paddick) who was, in the words of her master, common as muck, and who has been described by Barry Took as like 'a depressed Derek Jameson'.

Another character to make his debut in this show was Rambling Syd Rumpo (Kenneth Williams). This doyen of folk singers, roamed the countryside seeking 'traditional airs' and then pulled his ditty from his gander bag each week in the studio. His offerings were sung to the tunes of well known numbers and featured a language all of their own with words such as nadger, cordwangle, grussetts and moulie. (For those who wonder about such things, a mooli is in fact a type of large radish — honest).





The songs were designed to sound obscene without actually being so. The majority of the audience, judging by their dirty laughter, gave them very suggestive meanings indeed, aided by Kenneth Horne's mock serious support. The producer preferred his own lily-white meanings, or so he said; which may be why the script writers often said that **Round The Horne** would never have got on the air but for his innocence.

Rambling Syd first burst forth with an old Hebridean goat whirling song and a Norfolk shree picking song. These sound quite tame compared to his later ditties, which rapidly became longer and more dubious sounding. An LP of a Rambling Syd Rumpo concert was later released and became a best seller.

Show twelve was the only edition to be recorded twice, the second version (on 22nd July 1966) for the BBC Transcription Service, who required a slight doctoring to remove topical references.

The series ended on June 20th with a patriotic song and a short thank you speech.

The second season of thirteen programmes began on 13th March 1966, with a format much as before. The main addition was The Seamus Android Show, a loosely disguised parody of well known chat shows. The host was a send-up of Eamonn Andrews and the epitome of all inept TV interviewers, who had apparently not only kissed the blarney stone but had been battered senseless with it. His guests in forthcoming segments included such well known personalities as Zsa Zsa Poltergeist, Rabid Daily, Michael Bain, Barbara Cartload, Gladys Runt and Daryl F. Cliffhanger IV.

The fourth programme of the series featured a new role for

announcer Douglas Smith. Due to the low rate of pay at the BBC he has decided to slip in adverts for Dobbroids, the magic horse rejuvenator (which formed a running joke during the next few shows).

The seventh show was a special — Dobbroids Theatre Of The Air presented Dr McKinley's Scrapbook, a musical send up of television's **Dr Finlay's Casebook**.

Programme eight included the first appearance in **Round The Horne** of an unnamed character, listed in the scripts as 'Dentures' (Hugh Paddick using his Stanley Birkenshaw voice from **Beyond our Ken**) whose sibilants gave a shower bath to everyone nearby.

The final edition of the series was broadcast on June 5th, and six months later a special seasonal offering was broadcast on Christmas Day 1966. This show is notable as being the only **Round The Horne** without Kenneth Horne (who missed the programme due to illness).

Two new characters made their debuts in this show. The first was Daphne Whitethigh, a hoarse voiced, thinly disguised send up of television chef Fanny Craddock. Her mouth-watering recipes included baboon in the hole, moose stroganoff and best end of rhino (it doesn't taste very nice but the crackling is fantastic!) She also provided amazing fashion tips with her comments being almost as crazy as the real thing.

The other new character was Brad Smallpiece (Hugh Paddick) who outlined current and forthcoming events. The magazine segment Trends was replaced by The Colour Supplement (same section, new name!).

The third series of twenty shows started on February 12th 1967, again with a similar mix of sketches.

The eighth edition featured the first appearance by the Gypsy fortune teller Madame Osiris Gnomeclencher (Hugh Paddick), whose predictions about the future seemed highly reminiscent of those seen in most magazines.

The series departed from its usual format for the ninth show — a special entitled The Gruntfuttock Saga. This epic tale told how Gruntfuttock fought in two world wars and became known as Gruntfuttock of Arabia. He described his later political career, and his memoirs published by Bona Press (Julian and Sandy). The show ended with the anthem "Gruntfuttock — 'Tis Of Thee".

By the middle of the season each episode began with a review of activities taking place to celebrate some important event, such as "Unzip A Hyena For Peace Week", "Smear A Traffic Warden In Bloater Paste For Asia Day" and "Festoon A Gnome In Bacon Rind Day". Frequent participants in these events were the Over Eighties Nudist Basketball Team.

The series ended with the twentieth show, broadcast on June 25th 1967. This was the last to include Bill Pertwee and The Fraser Hayes Four. Marty Feldman also left the writing team at this point, to concentrate on films and television, although he still made the odd contribution to later scripts.

Another Christmas special was broadcast on Christmas Eve 1967, with Kenneth Horne throwing a party for the other characters in the show.

The fourth (and last) series of sixteen programmes started on February 25th 1968. Barry Took was still writing the scripts, and he was now joined by Johnnie Mortimer, Brian Cooke and (for the first seven programmes) Donald Webster. The Max Harris Group took over the job of supplying the incidental music, and the cast performed a mid-show musical break in place of The Fraser Hayes Four.

A regular feature of this season was Radio Balls Pond Road, with its resident DJ Simon Dee... (followed by ceased, cayed, praved and other similar endings).

The sixth show featured the first appearance of Julie Coolibar (Betty Marsden) — the invention of Johnnie Mortimer and Brian Cooke. She was a neurotic Australian who saw something obscene in everything Kenneth Horne said.

Gerald Monkshabit (Hugh Paddick) made his first appearance in the seventh episode. This intrepid reporter commented on the week's events from such far away places as Washington and Antarctica. Unfortunately his reports were sent in via shortwave radio and suffered from interference which blotted out certain words.

The last edition was broadcast on June 9th 1968. A noteworthy inclusion is Julian and Sandy's surprise announcement that they are in fact both married — to Julie (Betty Marsden) and Sandra.

It was a rousing send-off for the series and, as fate would have it, for the show itself.

Kenneth Horne died of a heart attack (on stage at the SFTA awards ball) on 14th February 1969, aged 61. The BBC had been planning a fifth series of **Round The Horne**, and the project was subsequently revamped as **Stop Messing About**, with Kenneth Williams as the star. Barry Took was approached as scriptwriter, but felt unable to continue. Hugh Paddick and Douglas Smith stayed with the show, with Joan Sims replacing Betty Marsden (who also felt that the time had come to move on).

On television, the scriptwriters turned their attention to other successes such as **Took And Co** and **At Last! The 1948 Show** (see accompanying article for a summary of Feldman's career). Johnnie Mortimer and Brian Cooke created such TV favourites as **Father Dear Father**, **Man About The House** and **George and Mildred**.

A documentary entitled **Round And Round The Horne** was broadcast on Radio 4 in 1978. This was subsequently released on disc by the BBC Transcription Service for overseas broadcast.

The characters from **Round The Horne** can occasionally be heard today. Chou en Ginsberg appeared in a series of adverts for Funai video recorders on ILR in 1985, Charles and Fiona recorded an advert for British Rail on ILR in 1985, and Hugh Paddick was recently spotted using his Dentures character on Children's television.

Kenneth Williams and Hugh Paddick resurrected Julian and Sandy for the BBC1 programme **Wogan's Radio Fun** on the 28th December 1987. Their routine was very successful, and the material had to be cut in half as it was over-running due to the laughter of the audience. There was even talk of a new series, but this was scrapped when Williams died.

**Round The Horne** has proven to be a great success in many countries, including America and Australia, with most of the episodes being released by the BBC Transcription Service on disc for overseas stations to broadcast. They also issued four discs of extracts from the shows. These were **Rambling Syd Rumpo** (one disc with 20 sketches), **Julian and Sandy** (two discs with 28 sketches) and **Charles and Fiona** (one disc with 15 sketches). These were for use in DJ programmes, in magazine programmes of general interest or as fillers.

Several editions were released as commercial LPs, and the BBC has recently issued a number of shows on double cassette sets plus a collection of Julian and Sandy highlights.

## Episode Guide

**Series 1:** BBC Light Prog March 7 to June 20 1965 (16 eds.)

1/1 Trends In Art/Musicals of Lemule Garth/The Clissold Saga —the Millionaire

1/2 The Father Of The Doorknob/Trends - Private Ear Nose & Throat/The Clissold Saga—The Aviator

1/3 What Does Kenneth Horne Look Like?/Kenneth Williams Suicide/Sound Effects/Trends In The Home/The Clissold Saga —Pantomime Horse

1/4 Inventor Of Toad In The Hole/Censors/Rentachap/The Clissold Saga—The Archaeologist

1/5 Father Of The Christmas Pudding/BBC Personnel/The Clissold Saga—Early Films/Trends—Medicine/Butch Boutique

1/6 The Crumpet/Complaints/Inspector Horne's Casebook—The Tapdancing Monk/Trends- Marriage/The Faggot And Peas

1/7 Bird Man Of Potters Bar/Audience Research/Pirate TV/ Horne's Law—Edwin Braden Is Missing

1/8 Talent Spotters/Horne's Law—Who Killed The Amazing Proudbasket?/Trends In The Theatre/Bona Tours

1/9 The Shuddering Brethren/Kenneth Horne, Counter Agent - Spy Who Came In With A Cold/Tourist Tips/Bona Bouffant

1/10 King Gruntfuttock Of Peasmoldia/K. H. Master Spy—Turning Into Animals/Rambling Syd Rumpo—Hebridean Goat

Whirdling Song & Norfolk Shree Picking Song/Fabe Homes

1/11 Return Of King Gruntfuttock/K. H. Master Spy—From Russia With Love/Blithe Laughter/Rambling Syd—Old Gypsy

Clothes Peg Peddler Lament/Bona Homes Estate Agents

1/12 King Gruntfuttock again/Kenneth Horne, The Man With The Golden Thunderball/Relaxation/Rambling Syd—Sea

Shanty/Bona Homes And Fabe Gardens

1/13 Ex-King Gruntfuttock/K. H. Special Agent—Stolen Eiffel Tower/Present Encounter/Rambling Syd—Cornish

Lummock Woggling Song/Bona Pets

1/14 K. H. Secret Agent - Pirate Radio/The Glass Intermezzo/ Rambling Syd - Sea Shanty #2/The Studio Bona

1/15 Brother Gruntfuttock/K. H. Special Agent—Haitian Rocket Site/Bitter Laughter/Rambling Syd—Grummit Tinkers Song/Bona Seats

1/16 Gruntfuttock nee Count Rory O'Thighblast/K. H. Special Agent—Outer Space Traffic Wardens/Rambling Syd—Soldier Soldier/Forbidden Encounter/Bona Prods/Anthem

**Series 2:** BBC Light Prog March 13 to June 5 1966 (13 eds.)

2/1 Kenneth Horne Master Spy—Big Ben Is Missing/Rambling Syd—Hoary Old Folk Song/Seamus Android—Gladys Runt & Paddy Handbell/Bona Drag/Police Message

2/2 K. H. Master Spy - Missing Big Ben (part 2)/Rambling Syd—Gander Boggling Song/Seamus Android—Gladys Runt & The Earl Of Bedlam/Bona Books/Appeal

2/3 K. H. Master Spy—Escaped War Criminal/Bona Tottoos/Seamus Android—Gruntfuttock, Zsa Zsa Poltergeist, Rabid Daily and Daryl F. Cliffhanger 1V/What Is It?

2/4 Dobbroids Advert/K. H. Master Spy—Stolen World Cup/ Teenage Scene/Seamus Android—call from Frank Sinatra, Poltergeist, Cliffhanger, Lena Horne/Shipping Message

2/5 K. H. Master Spy—Nuclear Banana/Astrology/Rambling Syd—Song Of The Orangoutang/Seamus Android—Michael Bain, Poltergeist, Cliffhanger

2/6 K. H. Master Spy—The Joke Thief/Douglas Smith Sings/ Astrology/Rambling Syd—Ballad Of The Royal Scottish Pretender/Seamus Android—Barbara Cartload, Bain/What Is It?

2/7 Doctor McKinley's Scrapbook (special musical edition)



2/8 The Twilight Sanctum—The Giant Mouse/End Of The Pier Show incl. Gruntfuttock, Rambling Syd—Irish Bog Wanderer, Julian & Sandy Telepathy/Suggestions & Complaints  
 2/9 Curse Of The Blackstumps/Balls Pond Road Arts Festival—Gruntfuttock, Rambling Syd—Fly Little Bird, Bona Ballet  
 2/10 Portrait Of Florian Thrust/Rambling Syd—Hebridean Mouth Music/The Hasty Nose/Bona Promotions  
 2/11 The Gaylords/Rambling Syd—Cornish Scrumpty Dance/War Film/Bona Beat/Riddle Me Ree  
 2/12 Smith v Batman/Dr. Fu Man Chou En Ginsburg/Rambling Syd—Sussex Courting Song/War Film 2/Bona Relations  
 2/13 Moby Duck/Wartime Film 3/Rambling Syd—Runcorn Splod Cobbling Song/Bona Performers/What Is It?

\* *The B.B.C. Transcription Service rerecorded programme 1/12 (with script changes) on July 22 1966*

**Christmas special:** BBC Light Programme December 25 1966  
 Swinging London—Daphne Whitehigh, Brad Smallpiece/Colour Supplement—Rambling Syd—Clacton Bogle Pickers Lament, Christmas At B.B.C., Exchanging Gifts/Armpit Theatre—The Hunchback of Notre Dame (\*Kenneth Horne absent)

**Series 3:** BBC Light Prog Feb 12 to June 25 1967 (20 eds.)

3/1 Armpit Theatre—The Plastic Max/Seamus Android At Pinewood/The Horse/Rambling Syd—The Somerset Nog/Julian And Sandy Complain  
 3/2 The Three Musketeers (part 1)/Judge/Rambling Syd—Song Of Australian Outlaw/Brief Ecstasy/Bona Law/Mystery Noise  
 3/3 The Three Musketeers (part 2)/The Sea/In Which We Serve/Rambling Syd—Sea Shanty #3/Julian & Sandy - World Cruise/Riddle Me Ree  
 3/4 Lipharvest Of The River/Seamus Android—London Airport/Art/New Constable/The Moon And Fourpence/Rambling Syd—The Toddle Groper's Dance/Bona Antique  
 3/5 How the bullet proof vest was won/Lady Chatterly's Lover/Rambling Syd—A Lummockshire Air/Bona Soulmates  
 3/6 Trilby/Seamus Android—Rock Catalogue/The British Press/Rambling Syd—The Ballad Of The Woggler's Moulie/The Daily Polare  
 3/7 The Admirable Loombucket (part 1)/The Home/Rambling Syd—Song Of the Hobo/Bona Caterers  
 3/8 The Admirable Loombucket (part 2)/Madam Osiris Gnomeclencher/Medicine/The Wayward Streptococcus/Bona Nature Clinic/Rambling Syd—Highland Lament/Late News  
 3/9 The Gruntfuttock Saga (special)  
 3/10 Gaslight, Son Of Flicka/Seamus Android—London Airport (again)/Naval War Film/Bona Prods/Rambling Syd—Song Of The Bogle Clencher  
 3/11 The Phantom Of Bogmouth Hip/Money/Leg Insurance/Bona Tax Consultants/Rambling Syd—Old Cordwangler's Song  
 3/12 A Man Is Two Foot Tall/Travel/Rambling Syd—The Bogler's Lass In The Balls Pond Road/Bona Bijou Tourettes  
 3/13 Young Horne With A Man/The Occult/Rambling Syd—The Black Grunger Of Houslow/Bona Seances  
 3/14 The Maltese Brass Monkey/The English and Animals/Where No Hippos Fly/Rambling Syd—De Ye Ken Jim Pubes/Bona Hunt  
 3/15 The Nude Cyclist Of Polperro/The Big Top/Eating/Rambling Syd—The Pewter Woggler's Bangling Song/La Casserole De Bona Gourmet  
 3/16 The Muffplaster Saga—The Discovery Of America/Film Of Ulysses/Doctor At London Zoo/Big Ben/Rambling Syd—The Sweet Lass Of Hackney Wick/Guided Trippettes

3/17 Muffplaster Saga—The Boxer/Gruntfuttock At Cinema/Rambling Syd—The Drunken Nurker/Bona Guest House  
 3/18 Muffplaster Saga—The Bullfighter/TV Commercials/Bona TV Limited  
 3/19 The Palome Ranger/Gruntfuttock—Scriptwriter/Rambling Syd—Green Grows My Bogling Fork/BBC Wardrobe Dept.  
 3/20 The Head Of BBC Who Came In From The Cold/The Body/Rambling Syd—The Girl I Left Behind Me/Body Bona

**Christmas special:** BBC Light Programme December 24 1967  
 Armpit Theatre—Cinderella/Kenneth Horne's Party/Rambling Syd—Good King Borroslav/Julian & Sandy—Camp Fire Songs

**Series 4:** BBC Light Prog Feb 25 to June 9 1968 (16 eds.)

4/1 Movie Go Wrong—Doctor Doosweet B.A./Rambling Syd—On The Bonny Bonny Nerds Of Ben Nevis/Radio Balls Pond Road—Far From The Madding Julie Christie/Lazy Bona Ranch  
 4/2 Thoroughly Modern Willy/Rambling Syd—There Is A Nadger In The Town/Simon Deceased/The Forsooth Saga/The Amazing Grotty/Bona Gurumat/Motto  
 4/3 Frankenstein's Monster/There Are Bad Times Just Around The Corner/Simon Dehydrated/Theatrical Agent/Rambling Syd—The Grungerman Of Lowestoft/Portrait Of A Marriage/Bona Indoor Ski School  
 4/4 The Knights Of Camelot/I Remember It Well/Simon Deefunct/Phone-Ins/Rambling Syd—Knick Knack Gander Back/Bona Rags/Motto  
 4/5 Relatively Grand Prix/Songs For Swinging Epicures/Simon Deccayed/Phone-Ins/Rambling Syd—As I Was Going To Goosenadger's Fair/Bona Male Model Agency  
 4/6 Big Broads Don't Squeal/Thank U Very Much/Simon Deepraved/Good Food Guide/Julie Coolibar/Rambling Syd—Oh No John No John No/Bona Gift Boutique  
 4/7 The Celluloid Jungle/Oh Lucky Jim/Gerald Monkshabit (from Washington)/Julie Coolibar—Cricket/Rambling Syd—Irish Troubles/Bona Academy Of Ballroom Dancing  
 4/8 Around The World In Ten Minutes/Sing Us One Of The Old Songs George/Forum Of The Air/Rambling Syd—My Grandfather's Grunge/Julie Coolibar—Temp/Bona Songs  
 4/9 Listeners' Hobbies/Gerald Monkshabit (from Washington)/Julie Coolibar—Information Desk/Poor Old Father/Journey To Uranus/Rambling Syd—The Grunger And His Daughter Spotty Lill/Bona Books  
 4/10 Gerald Monkshabit (from Antarctica)/Julie Coolibar—Menswear Shop/Song Of The Hair Restorer/Apache Story/Rambling Syd—Some Folks Do/Keep Britain Bona  
 4/11 Charles And Fiona—On Bus/Julie Coolibar—Where She Comes From/Tongue Twisters/Escape From Stalag Limpwrist/Rambling Syd—Let The Grunge Flow/Bona Abbey  
 4/12 Ken's Week/Brief Re-Encounter/Medical Help/Among My Souvenirs/I Showed Them In Fleet Street/Rambling Syd—'Twas On A Monday Morning/Bona Detective Agency  
 4/13 Gerald Monkshabit (from the Sahara)/Julie Coolibar—Phone Directories/Nobody Loves A Fairy When She's Forty/Continuum Medicum Romanum/Rambling Syd—Sally/Bona School Of Language  
 4/14 Gerald Monkshabit (Greenland)/Rhymes/Rambling Syd—Early One Morning/Julian & Sandy—Efficiency Experts  
 4/15 Nudist Olympics/Julie Coolibar—Engaged/The Mobile Grocer/Bona Prince Charlie/Rambling Syd—Here's A Grunge Unto Your Artifacts/Bona Ads  
 4/16 He, Son Of She .../End Of Series Buffet/Rambling Syd—Ballad Of Loombogler's Boom/Julian & Sandy—Married

# Recordings

## Round The Horne

Pye LP NPL 18291

edited versions of editions of May 14 and June 18 1967  
(with extracts from editions of April 23 and June 11 1967)

## The Best Of Round The Horne

B.B.C. LP REH 193

extracts from the editions of March 28, May 23 and June 13 1965, May 15 1966 and April 30 1967

Down in the sewers/Last week's quiz answers/Forgotten men of British science - Robert Capability Lackwind, the inventor of toad in the hole/Kenneth Williams complains/The backroom boys of the BBC - The censors/Trends - Fashion - The home - Rent-a-chap/Rambling Syd Rumpo - Sea shanty/The Clissold Saga part four

The story so far - Rasputin/Last week's quiz answers/Brother Gruntfuttock/Kenneth Horne Special Agent - Rocket site/Trends - Society - Theatre, Excerpt from The Hasty Nose (Charles and Fiona) - Rambling Syd Rumpo, Bogler's lass in the Balls Pond Road/Bona Seats

## Round The Horne (Volume 2)

B.B.C. LP REH 240, CD ZBBC 1742CD

edited versions of the shows of April 16 1967 and June 5 1966

## Round The Horne (Volume 3)

B.B.C. LP REH 296

edited versions of the shows of March 12 and Feb 19 1967

## Round The Horne - 1

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC 1010

contains material previously released on LPs REH 193 and REH 240

## Round The Horne - 2

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC 1092

contains 3/4, 3/11, 3/7 and 3/8

## Round The Horne - 3

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC 1093

contains 3/5, 3/2, 3/6 and 3/19 (details on inlay are incorrect)

## Round The Horne - 4

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC 1222

contains 1/7, 1/8, 1/11 and 1/13

## Round The Horne - 5

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC 1326

contains 1/9, 1/14, 1/15 and 1/16

## Round The Horne - 6

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC 1463

contains 3/1, 3/3, 3/9 and 3/13

## Round The Horne - 7

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC ????

## Julian & Sandy

B.B.C. double-cassette ZBBC 1415

Rentachap/Bona Pets/Studio Bona/Bona Books/Bona Seats/Bona Performers/Bona Homes and Landscape Gardens/Bona Mindreaders/Ballet Bona/Bona Promotions/Bona Beat Songs Ltd/Bona Dance/Bona Caterers/Bona Nature Clinic/Bona Prods/Le Casserole de Bona Gourmet/Bona Gift Boutique/Bona Academy of Ballroom Dancing/Bona Seances/Keep Britain Bona/Bona Abbey/Bona Private Detective Agency/Bona Bijou Tourettes/Bona Song Publishers

\*\*\* On July 3 1967, Kenneth Williams performed a selection of Rambling Syd Rumpo songs at E.M.I.'s Abbey Road studios in front of an invited audience of 200 people. Recordings from the session were subsequently released as a single, two EPs and (three years later) an LP ...

The Ballad Of The Woggler's Moulie/Green Grow My Nadgers, Oh!

Parlophone single R 5638

## Rambling Syd Rumpo In Concert

Parlophone EP GEP 8965

The Song Of The Bogle Clencher/The Sussex Whirdling Song/The Pewter Woggler's Bangling Song/The Drunken Nurker/The Runcorn Splod Cobbler's Song/The Terrible Tale Of The Somerset Nog

## Rambling Syd Rumpo In Concert, Part 2

Parlophone EP GEP 8966

The Song Of The Australian Outlaw/A Lummockshire Air/The Black Grunger Of Hounslow/The Ballad Of The Royal Scottish Pretender/Tinker's Lament/The Clacton Bogle Picker's Lament

## The Best Of Rambling Syd Rumpo

Regal/Starline SRS 5034

(\* also issued in the U.S. as **What's His Name's Greatest Hits** on Stanyan LP SR 10038)

Song of the Australian outlaw/Song of the bogle clencher/Sussex whirdling song/Tinker's lament/The ballad of the Royal Scottish pretender (Postlewaite lament)/Pewter woggler's bangling song/Runcorn splod cobbler's song/The ballad of the woggler's moulie/Sea shanty Medley/Clacton bogle picker's lament/A Lummockshire air/The terrible tale of the Somerset Nog/Soldier soldier/The black grunger of Hounslow/Green grow my nadger's oh!

\*\*\* On September 6 1976, Kenneth Williams and Hugh Paddick recreated a number of Julian and Sandy routines (with Barry Took taking over the Kenneth Horne parts) at a special recording session in front of an invited audience at the Pye Studios in London ...

## The Bona Album Of Julian And Sandy

D.J.M. LP DJF 20487

Intro/Bona Books/Bona Prods/The world troll/The Ballet Bona/Bona Grapplers/La Casserole de Bona Gourmet/Fabe Homes and Bona Gardens/Bona Law/Bona Pets/Bona Palare/Bona Musicals

## B.B.C. Transcription Service Issues

(not available to the public)

In the late 1960s (while **Round The Horne** was still in production), most of the episodes were made available to overseas radio stations for leasing. They were slightly edited from their original British running lengths (to allow for the insertion of commercials).

Twelve editions were not released ... 1/5, 1/10, 1/12, 3/9, 3/11, 3/13, 3/14, 3/18, 3/19, 3/20, 4/14 and the 1966 Christmas special. In addition, a new version of 2/7 was specially recorded for inclusion in the package.

In 1978, the special **Round And Round The Horne** (hosted by Frank Bough and Kenneth Williams) was offered to overseas outlets.





In mid-1981, packages of **Round The Horne** character segments were also made available ...

#### **Rambling Syd Rumpo**

*Cornish Lummock Woggler's song/Grummet Tinker's song/The Ganderboggling Song/An Orang-Utan Who Would A-Wooing Go/The Posselswaite Lament/The Herring Fisherman's Sea Shanty/The Pewter Woggler's Bangling Song/The Cornish Drinking Song/The Essex Grauncher's Song/The Australian Outlaws Song/The Lummockshire Air Of The Spume Pickers/The Highland Lament Of The Turve Croppers/The Song Of The Bogel-Clencher/Bogler's Lass Of The Balls Pond Road/The Cornish Scrumpy Dance/The Old Sussex Courting Song/The Runcorn Splod Cobbler's Song/A Tinker's Courting Song/Somerset Ditty/Good King Boroslav*

#### **Julian and Sandy and Charles and Fiona**

Julian and Sandy

*Rent-A-Chap/Bona Waiters/Bona Tours/Bona Bouffant/Bona Pets/Bona Seats/Bona Productions/Bona Drag/Bona Tattooists/Bona Disguise/Bona Dance/Bona Antiques*

Charles and Fiona

*Charles the window cleaner/Charles in hospital/Charles the liftman/Charles and his dog/Charles and his haircut/Charles and Roger/Charles the sailor/Charles the peeping tom/Charles and the stars/Charles hits the jackpot/Charles the discoverer/Charles on leave/Charles and London/Charles Marries/Charles the artist*

Julian and Sandy

*Bona Gardens/Bona Mind Readers/Bona Ballet/Bona Wrestlers/ Bona Songs/Bona Relations/Bona Law/Bona Tripettes/Bona Reporters/Bona Caterers/Bona Nature Clinic/Bona Films/ Restaurant Bona*

## **Books**

#### **Round The Horne**

by Barry Took and Marty Feldman

Woburn Press 1974 (Futura paperback 1975)

contains the scripts of 1/4, 2/1, 2/8, 2/12, 3/7, 3/11 and 3/20

#### **The Bona Book Of Julian And Sandy**

by Barry Took and Marty Feldman

Robson Books paperback, 1976

contains the Julian And Sandy scripts: Bona Books, Bona Prods, Bona Bijou Tourettes, La Casserole De Bona Gourmet, Bona Hunt, Fabe Homes And Bona Gardens, Bona Tattoos, Ballet Bona, Bona Grapplers, Bona Law, Bona Pets, Bona Palare and Bona Performers

#### **The Best Of Round The Horne**

Selected and introduced by Barry Took

Equation Books, 1989

contains the scripts of 1/5, 1/13, 2/3, 2/4, 2/9, 2/10, 2/13, The special Transcription Service remake, 3/1, 3/4, 3/6, 3/10, 3/12 and 3/14

\*\*\* reference to **Round The Horne** will also be found in ...

#### **Solo For Horne**

by Norman Hackforth (Angus And Robertson, 1976)

#### **Laughter In The Air**

by Barry Took (Robson Books, 1976, updated paperback 1981)

#### **Nigel Rees Book Of Slogans And Catchphrases**

by Nigel Rees (Unwin Paperbacks, 1984)

#### **A Point Of View**

by Barry Took (Gerald Duckworth And Co., 1990)

# MARTY FELDMAN

by Peter Tatchell

**F**OR a handful of years in the late 1960s he was the funniest man on television. But Marty Feldman wanted to be a movie star and set off on a quest for big screen immortality which would ultimately cause his downfall.

Marty was born in London's East End in 1933, the son of a Jewish dressmaker. He left school at the age of fifteen for a life in show business. By his late teens his love of comedy and jazz led him to form a knockabout stage act with two friends called Morris, Marty And Mitch, very much under the influence of Hollywood heroes like the Marx Brothers and Olsen And Johnson. They were enthusiastic, but not a success.

He met Barry Took in 1954 and the pair found common ground in their sense of humour. They gravitated to writing (and occasionally appearing on) several early A.T.V. programmes in the early days of commercial television.

By the end of the 1950s, Feldman was part of the team scripting radio's **Educating Archie** and Took was supplying material for **Beyond Our Ken** and the final series of **Take It From Here**. Unable to work with partner Eric Merriman, Took asked Marty to assist him (uncredited) on the parts of the show he had to supply, in particular the Glums segments.

As a result, Took and Feldman were also invited to contribute scripts for the Harry Worth/Peter Jones radio programme **We're In Business** (which also featured Irene Handl and Dick Emery) and Granada's top-rating television series **The Army Game** (then in its fourth season).

The popularity of two of that show's characters, Sgt. Major Claud Snudge (played by Bill Fraser) and Private Bisley (Alfie Bass), led to a spinoff series **Bootsie And Snudge**, and Feldman and Took were assigned to be the chief writers. Relocating the ex-army types to an exclusive London club (with Clive Dunn as a doddering waiter and Robert Dorning as the establishment's hon. sec.) soon had the show the most watched on British television, but there were problems on the horizon.

By the end of the first season (in mid-1961), Marty had become noticeably erratic in his behaviour and eventually insisted on working alone. Took had to bring in other writers to ensure the required number of scripts would be forthcoming and only after several months of frustration, did he discover his partner was suffering a severe hyperthyroid condition.

Urgent treatment and convalescence resulted in Marty's full recovery, but the operation caused a noticeable bulging of his eyes as an unavoidable side-effect. At the time, it was most distressing, but in later years it would be a huge advantage when he went back to performing.

Feldman resumed working with Took, and the two helped resurrect Frankie Howerd's flagging career with material for guestspots and on radio. Marty eventually left **Bootsie And Snudge** to his partner (preferring to confront new challenges) and in a freelance capacity contributed a number of one-off episodes for B.B.C. television's **Comedy Playhouse** series.

Titles included *Nicked At The Bottle*, *Good Luck Sir - You Got A Lucky Face*, *Here I Come - Whoever I Am* and *Judgement Day For Elijah Jones*. With Barry Took he scripted *The Walrus And The Carpenter*, *Barnaby Spoot And The Exploding Whoopee Cushion*, *Memoirs Of A Chaise Longue* and two

not produced for several years ... *Tooth And Claw* and *The Making Of Peregrine*. The **Playhouse** series was primarily a testing ground for prospective sitcoms, but only *The Walrus And The Carpenter* (with Felix Aylmer and Hugh Griffith) led to a spinoff season, although it was a dud with viewers.

Other B.B.C. TV projects at the time included a series called **Barney Is My Darling** (with Irene Handl and Bill Fraser) and several Terry Scott specials (*Scott On Birds*, *Scott On Money* and *Scott On Food*).

Took and Feldman's most successful venture of the mid-1960s was the B.B.C. radio programme **Round The Horne** (see accompanying article by Tony Lang), the new series for Kenneth Horne and his **Beyond Our Ken** cast. It became enormously popular and thirty years later cassette recordings of the show sell in huge numbers.

In 1966, Marty was asked to be chief writer for David Frost's new BBCTV series **The Frost Report** (which launched John Cleese, Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett on successful careers). In a writing sense, the show included many names who also influenced the future of British comedy ... Barry Cryer, Dick Vosburgh, Neil Shand and prospective Pythons Michael Palin and Terry Jones, among others.

**The Frost Report** was a milestone for all concerned and after an initial thirteen episode run, Frost decided to finance his three main performers in individual projects for commercial television. In the case of John Cleese, it was to be a sketch comedy series called **At Last! The 1948 Show** (the title being a veiled dig at the procrastination of programme planners).

The programme was in effect a visual linking of the brains behind the two top radio comedies of the 1960s ... **I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again** (which starred Cleese and Tim Brooke-Taylor, Graeme Garden and Bill Oddie) and Feldman and Took's **Round The Horne**. In addition to Cleese and Brooke-Taylor and fellow Cambridge Footlights alumnus Graham Chapman, Cleese shocked Frost by suggesting Marty Feldman himself should be part of the performing team.

Any reticence anyone may have had about Feldman's looks quickly vanished when the show got under way. His strange little man character was a huge success and he more than held his own in the company of his illustrious fellow cast members (who went on to triumphs in such programmes as **Monty Python's Flying Circus** and **The Goodies**).

Despite being a victim of unfortunate programming decisions on the commercial television networks around Britain (resulting in London being the only area to get all episodes), **At Last! The 1948 Show** produced a remarkably high standard of material throughout its two seasons (for a total of thirteen episodes). Made at the end of the black-and-white era, the programme also enjoyed screenings on Australian television.

It is particularly disappointing to note that all but one of the recordings were subsequently junked. Happily, some three decades later, two additional episodes have recently surfaced, as well as five "best-of" editions (preserved by a Swedish TV company!). With most of the **1948 Shows** out of circulation in the years after its demise, a large number of the scripts were performed again by the **Two Ronnies** (on television) and by various **Monty Python** cast members in various stage productions throughout the 1970s (see an itemisation below).





For Feldman, **At Last! The 1948 Show** was a huge career boost, and he was offered his own sketch-comedy series on BBC2 the following year. Two series of **Marty** were made (in colour) with a supporting cast of Tim Brooke-Taylor, John Junkin and Roland Macleod. A half-hour compilation of highlights subsequently won an award at the Montreux festival.

**Marty** had a much higher budget than its Rediffusion predecessor, and Feldman could indulge in a number of clever outdoor routines highlighting a day in the life of a stuntman, a long-distance golfer and a henpecked husband (all paying homage to the great days of silent movies).

Television success led to roles on the cinema screen as well. He appeared with an all-star cast in *The Bed Sitting Room* in 1969 before starring in his own vehicle *Every Home Should Have One*, about the tribulations of being an advertising executive. It would be the last time he and Barry Took wrote together, and the venture suffered from excesses of ego and inexperience on both sides of the camera.

By a strange quirk of fate, Marty also made his debut on American television soon after. Not because of his film work, but as a result of producers there having seen copies of his BBC2 series (sent out routinely by B.B.C. Enterprises to encourage programme bookings). Several sketches were subsequently aired on the then-popular **Dean Martin Show** on N.B.C., to such acclaim that Marty himself was invited to appear on the programme. The sight of Feldman in dinner jacket (as was customary for guests on the show) was quite a novelty in itself. In one episode he and the host performed the door-to-door undertaker skit (from **At Last! The 1948 Show**).

He was so popular that in 1970 Marty was signed as a regular on the Martin show's summer-season replacement **The Goldiggers In London**, which ran for nine editions on N.B.C. until major programming was set to resume that September.

A year later, Britain's A.T.V. decided to capitalise on Feldman's success on both sides of the Atlantic by financing a series of hour long programmes called **The Marty Feldman Comedy Machine** (with a supporting cast of Spike Milligan, Orson Welles, dancer Tommy Tune, Bob Todd and Hugh Paddick). The result though was an uneven mix of various comedy styles and (despite having some nice moments) had nowhere near the consistency of his earlier efforts. A 30-minute compilation did win another award at Montreux, however.

Taking a break from television, Marty toured Australia in early 1972 and appeared on stage with a selection of favourite TV routines. One of the local networks signed him for a special during the visit as well.

Feldman was back at the B.B.C. in early 1974 for a series called **Marty Back Together Again**. In an attempt to recapture the glory of his earlier series, all the stops were pulled out to promote the project ... he even appeared on the front cover of the *Radio Times*.

Despite all the hype, the show lacked the writing talent of the 1960's venture and was prepared to rework earlier material (even the Undertaker resurfaced, and each episode featured the star performing a classic Tom Lehrer composition from a decade before). Amid some offscreen clashes of egos during production only five editions made it to air and the programme was not seen outside Britain.

Soon after the television disappointment, Marty Feldman embarked on a significant career change. Mel Brooks signed him to play the hunchback to Gene Wilder's hero in his burlesque of horror movies, *Young Frankenstein*. And Marty was in his element, a film star on a Hollywood backlot appearing in a major motion picture by a leading American director.

*Young Frankenstein* was a successful moneysaver for 20th Century-Fox and Wilder asked him to take part in his first directorial effort soon after, *The Adventure Of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother*. Marty also appeared in a segment of the Italian *40° In The Shade* (aka *Sex With A Smile*). Brooks wanted Feldman for his next production *Silent Movie*, a loving lampoon of an even earlier genre of tinseltown. This time Marty was cast as a Ben Turpin-like clown whose eyes are his most notable comedic asset.

Having made three major motion pictures, Marty Feldman was now ready to sit in the director's chair himself and convinced Universal to finance several projects, beginning with *The Last Remake Of Beau Geste*. With Michael York, Terry-Thomas, Peter Ustinov, Spike Milligan and Feldman himself, it was more of a remake of *The Three Feathers* than the title suggested, and was notable for a clever piece of editing which saw Marty having a conversation with Gary Cooper in footage from the original. The device would later be used in the Steve Martin film, *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*.

With only a modest return from his first venture, Universal hoped the follow-up *In God We Trust* (a religious satire) might be better received. Unfortunately, not all roads down the *Life Of Brian* trail were paved with yellow brick, and the movie turned out to be a disaster.

Feldman was distraught when Universal cancelled the contract for future projects and in his despair he swallowed an overdose of pills as a quick way out. Luckily, medical help was able to revive him, but his career in Hollywood was over.

As he tried to rebuild his life, he agreed to take minor roles in a couple of forthcoming productions ... the Jerry Lewis/Madeline Kahn *Slapstick (Of Another Kind)* and then in his **At Last! 1948 Show** friend Graham Chapman's pirate sendup *Yellowbeard*. Both ended up unsuccessful vehicles for their participants, but in Marty's case it didn't matter. The day after he'd completed his scenes on the Chapman venture, he suffered a heart attack in his Mexico hotel room and died, aged forty-nine. A decade of living the Hollywood life (with its drink and drugs) had caught up with the gifted funnyman and any future plaudits would have to come from recordings of the great moments of his heyday in the 1960s.

## AT LAST! THE 1948 SHOW

(Associated-Rediffusion) b/w

Cast: Tim Brooke-Taylor, Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Marty Feldman and Aimi MacDonald

**Series #1:** February 15 to March 22 1967 (6x25m)

1. Doctor and Man With Skinny Legs/Witch/One Man Wrestling/Secret Service Chief/Treasure Trove/Vox Pop
2. *Four Sydney Lotterbys/Lucky Gypsy/Judge Not*
3. *Visitors For The Use Of/Sleep Starvation/Mice Laugh Softly, Charlotte/Sheepdog Trials/Bookshop/Job Description*
4. *Someone Has Stolen The News/Grublian Holidays/Memory Training/One-Man Battalion/Ministerial Breakdown/Engine Driver/Undercover Policemen*
5. *Top Of The Form/Gentleman Farmer/The Wonderful World Of The Ant/John And Mary In Malaya*
6. *Let's Speak-a English/Headmaster/The Seige In The Frock/Choral Repetition/Chinese Restaurant/Beekeeping/Ferret Song*

**Series #2:** September 26 to November 7 1967 (7x25m)

1. *Spiv Doctor/Reptile Keeper/Thief In Library/Come Dancing/Joke Shop*
2. *Shirt Shop/Nosmo Claphanger Game Show/Clothes Off!/Insurance For Accident Prone Man/Thuggish Ballet Supporters*
3. *Pessimistic Customer/Meek Bouncer/Men's Club/Neurotic Scientist/Sydney Lotterby Craves The Test Score/Shop For The Sight And Sound Impaired*
4. *Discussion On Pornography/Door To Door Undertaker/Uncooperative Burglars/Topic Discusses Freedom Of Speech/Programme Announcement/Studio Tour*
5. *Reluctant Choir/Psychiatrist/Secret Service Cleaner/Reprimanded Soccer Player/Deadly Architectural Model*
6. *Sydney Lotterbys Renew Acquaintance/Chartered Accountance Dance/Dangers Of Dentistry/Four Yorkshiremen*
7. *TV Current Affairs/Railway Carriage/Pet Shop/The Rhubarb Tart Song*

\*\*\* Only three complete episodes - 1/4, 1/6 and 2/3 - plus the sketches italicised are known to survive. Amateur sound recordings (in various degrees of fidelity) exist of the complete soundtrack of 1/1 plus a number of other segments.

## Recordings

### The Ferret Song/The Rhubarb Tart Song

Pye single 7N 17336

these are *John Cleese And The 1948 Show Choir* studio vocals (not original soundtracks) released in June 1967 ... before the start of series 2

### At Last! The 1948 Show

Pye LP NPL 18198

contains Bookshop/Sheepdog Trials/Where Were You?/The Wonderful World Of The Ant/Gentleman Farmer/Witch/Top Of The Form/Someone Has Stolen The News/One Man Battalion/Doctor And Man With Skinny Legs/Ministerial Breakdown/Job Description/Engine Driver/The Four Sydney Lotterbys/Beekeeping/The Ferret Song (Cleese studio version)/Vox Pop



\*\*\* Despite the junking of much of **AT LAST! THE 1948 SHOW**, a number of sketches were performed again ...

\* **How To Irritate People** (an unaired 1968 pilot featuring Cleese, Brooke-Taylor, Chapman and others, now released on commercial video) includes *Topic Discusses Freedom Of Speech*

\* **Marty Amok** featured *Bookshop* (with Feldman and Junkin)

\* **The Dean Martin Show** (weekly series) featured Feldman and Martin recreating *The Door-To-Door Undertaker*

\* **Marty Back Together Again** also included a version of *The Door-To-Door Undertaker* (with Feldman and James Villiers)

\* **The Two Ronnies** featured versions of *Grublian Holidays* (also on LP), *Spiv Doctor*, *Psychiatrist* and *Choral Repetition*

\* **Monty Python Live At Drury Lane** (LP/CD) features *Secret Service*, *Wrestling* and *Four Yorkshiremen*

\* **Monty Python At The Hollywood Bowl** (on video/laser disc) features *Wrestling*

\* **Monty Python's Contractual Obligation Album** (LP/CD) features *Bookshop* (performed by Cleese and Chapman)

\* The Amnesty fundraising concert **The Mermaid Frolics** (LP and video) includes *Bookshop* (with Cleese and Connie Booth)

\* The Amnesty fundraising concert **The Secret Policeman's Ball** (LP and video) includes *The Four Yorkshiremen* (performed by Cleese/Michael Palin/Terry Jones/Rowan Atkinson)

\* The Amnesty fundraising concert **The Secret Policeman's Other Ball** (LP/CD and video) includes *Clothes Off!* (with Cleese/Chapman/Pamela Stephenson), *Beekeeping* (Cleese and Rowan Atkinson) and *Top Of The Form* (Cleese/Brooke-Taylor/Chapman/Atkinson/John Bird/John Fortune/Griff Rhys Jones)

## Books

### No More Curried Eggs For Me

(compiled) by Roger Wilmut (Methuen, London 1982)  
features script of *Bookshop*

### Son Of Curried Eggs

(compiled) by Roger Wilmut (Methuen, London 1984)  
features script of *Sheepdog Trials*

### The Golden Skits Of Wing-Commander Muriel Volestrangler FRHS & Bar

by John Cleese (Methuen, London 1984)  
features scripts of *Shirt Shop*, *Top Of The Form*, *Bookshop*, *Hearing Aid*, *The Good Old Days* (aka *Four Yorkshiremen*), *Lucky Gypsy*, *Railway Carriage* and *Slightly Less Silly Than The Other Court Skit* (aka *Judge Not*)



## MARTY

(BBC2) colour

Cast: Marty Feldman, Tim Brooke-Taylor, John Junkin, Roland Macleod and Mary Miller

**Series #1:** April 29 to June 3 1968 (6x30m)

1. Ticket Agency/*Bishop*/The Candidate/Police 6's/*Vet's Waiting Room*/*A Hard Day's Night*
2. Irritation/*Little Old Couple - Travel Agency*/*A Day In The Life Of A Stuntman*/Parliamentary Report/*Lady Chatterly*/*Eat Your Prunes*/*Tabletop Battleground*/*Whiffenpoof Song*
3. Weather Report/*No-one's Perfect (song)*/*Royalty At Soccer Match*/Traffic/*Salome*/Headmaster Visits/*The Yechh*/Feet (song)
4. Dr. Jeckyl/*The Little Old Couple 2 - Marriage Councillor*/Weighing Machine/*The Wedding*/*Egyptian Statues*/*Bullfighter Policeman*/*Ballet*/*My Father's Shirt (song)*
5. *Eye-O-Fry*/*The Gnome*/*The Sentry*/*House Flies*/*Who Are The Black And White Minstrels?*/*Father And Son*/*Opera Without Music*
6. Is It True What They Say About Dixie?/*Hospital Visitor*/*Driving Instructor*/*Backchat*/*Woodworm*/*Country Tavern*/*Florist Jungle*

**Series #2:** December 9 1968 to January 13 1969 (6x30m)

1. B.B.C. Apology/*May I Paint You In The Nude?*/*Lightning Coach Tour*/*Soccer Commentator*/*The Loneliness Of A Long-Distance Golfer*/*Newspaper Expose*/*The Battle Of Britain's Taxis*
2. *Dixon Of Dock Green*/*Little Old Couple 3 - Post Office*/*Fritz von Angst*/*Serbian Restaurant*/*The Stuntman On Holiday*/*My Kingdom For A Horse*/*The Seance*
3. Z-Cars/*Insurance Policy*/*Kiss Me Hardy*/*Super Midwife*/*The Shooting Of Flicka*/*Holiday Movies*/*Population Explosion*/*Henry V*/*Late Night Call From Mother*/*Is It Wrong To Love An Elephant? (song)*/*The Curse Of The Mandervilles*/*Flying Rabbi*
4. *Orchestrated Coughing*/*Television Censorship*/*Obituary To David Frost*/*Telephone Callers*/*Pas De Deux*/*Danny Gruntfuttock*/*Carols*
5. *Mr. Christian*/*House Welcomer*/*Clothists*/*Football Reunion*/*Headmaster's Office*/*French Song For Sauce Lovers*/*Auction*/*Newsreader*/*A Life In The Clergy*/*Hospital Visitor*
6. *Call Marty Feldman*/*Wine Treaders*/*The Fly*/*Shortsighted Driver*/*Science Lecture*/*Cost Of Living*/*Punch And Judy*

Montreux Edition: March 17 1969 (30m "best of")

incl.: *Lightning Coach Tour*/*Vet's Waiting Room*/*A Day In The Life Of A Stuntman*/*No-one's Perfect (song)*/*May I Paint You In The Nude?*/*The Loneliness Of A Long-Distance Golfer*/*A Hard Day's Night*

**MARTY AMOK:** BBC1 March 30 1970 (45m)

*Restaurant*/*Bookshop*/*Long-Distance Bowler*/*Judge*/*Royal Handicap*/*Cockpit*/*Atilla The Hun*/*Buying A Double Bed*/*Changing Cubicles*/*Reality In The Cinema*

\*\*\* Only two complete episodes - 1/2 and 1/5 - together with the Montreux edition, plus the sketches italicised are known to survive.

## Recordings

### Marty

Pye LP NPL 18258

Irritation/Weighing Machine/Ticket Agency/Father And Son/Police Notice/God/Woodworm/Headmaster/Lady Chatterly/Weather Forecast/Funny He Never Married/Eye-O-Fry/Travel Agency/Parliamentary Report/Eat Your Prunes/Bishop/Ballet/Salome

### Funny He Never Married/Travel Agency

Pye single 7N 17643

### I Feel A Song Going Off

Decca LP LK/SKL 4983, SPA 134 (**The Crazy World Of Marty Feldman**)

studio vocals of songs, several of which were featured in MARTY:

*Waltzing With You*/*District Nurse Hargreaves*/*The World's In Rhyme*/*The Elephant Song*/*Eurovision Song*/*Ilford Town Hall*/*Kensington High Street*/*La Sauce*/*There's A Little Part Of Me*/*Psychedelic Rubbish*/*The Five To Eleven Waltz*/*Mavis Wavertree*/*You Without Me*/*The Great Bell*/*Death*/*The Back Of Your Neck*/*My Father's Shirt*/*Please Let Me Love You*/*Bayswater Road*/*Cautious Love Song*/*French Folk-song*/*No Nuts*/*Loo*/*Eternity*

### A Joyous Time Of Year/The B Side

Decca single F 17285

## Video

### It's Marty

B.B.C. Video BBCV 5360 (64m)

Irritation/*A Day In The Life Of A Stuntman*/*Bishop*/*Newspaper Expose*/*The Loneliness Of A Long Distance Golfer*/*May I Paint You In The Nude?*/*Travel Agency*/*Wine Treading*/*The Gnome*/*World Cup 1966*/*Vet's Waiting Room*/*Florist Jungle*/*Lightning Coach Tour*/*Eat Your Prunes*/*A Hard Day's Night*/*French Song For Sauce Lovers*/*Long Distance Bowler*/*Restaurant*/*The Battle Of Britain's Taxis*

## Later Television Work

### THE GOLDDIGGERS IN LONDON (N.B.C.)

July 16 to September 10 1970 (9x50m)

Cast: Charles Nelson Reilly, Marty Feldman, Tommy Tune, Julian Chagrin and the Golddiggers

**MARTY ABROAD:** BBC2 January 1 1971 (40m)

### THE MARTY FELDMAN COMEDY MACHINE (A.T.V.)

October 1 1971 to January 14 1972 (14x50m)

Cast: Marty Feldman, Spike Milligan, Orson Welles, Hugh Paddick and Bob Todd

Montreux edition: February 15 1972 (30m "best of")

### THE MARTY FELDMAN SPECIAL (9 Network, Australia)

July 31 1972 (50m)

### MARTY BACK TOGETHER AGAIN (BBC1)

February 20 to March 27 1974 (not on Mar 6)(5x30m)

Cast: Marty Feldman, James Villiers and Derek Griffiths

# GEORGE BURNS

## Part 2: BURNS AND ALLEN — TELEVISION

by Peter Tatchell

**T**HE end of 1950 was a turning point for American television. It was finally able to overtake radio as the leading player in the home entertainment market, and could offer big money to entice name performers to switch mediums. Within a two-month period, Jack Benny, Eddie Cantor, Jimmy Durante and Burns And Allen all appeared coast to coast for the first time on the major networks.

George decided they would appear live on C.B.S. on a fortnightly basis in a continuation of their successful radio sitcom format. Supporting players Bill Goodwin, Bea Benaderet and Hal March all made the move with them, along with a sizeable number of their radio fans who had invested in a TV set.

The first programme opened with George talking directly to the audience from the edge of the stage, before stepping into the storyline with Gracie and the rest of the cast. It was a clever device he would use in every episode of the show's run, and set the series apart from the scores of other 1950s sitcoms.

As on radio, the plots revolved around some simple misunderstanding that would lead Gracie and the Mortons off on a farcical chain of events until George usually managed to sort things out by the programme's end.

As with most other network offerings of the time, these early editions emanated from New York (though the setting was supposed to be George and Gracie's west coast home). From the seventh episode, production moved to C.B.S. in Hollywood.

About the only hiccup for the show during that first season (which actually ran without a break for two years) was the coming and going of several cast members, whose success resulted in them being offered starring roles in other ventures. Bill Goodwin stayed for the first year before heading off for hosting roles and George replaced him with another of radio's "golden voices" Harry Von Zell (who had been a regular on Eddie Cantor's series for most of the 1940s, and had actually replaced Goodwin for six months on the Burns & Allen season of early 1945).

The character of Harry Morton, however, was to suffer a veritable musical chairs of players with Hal March leaving after only seven editions, to be replaced by John Brown for a further ten, before he was caught up in the House of Un-American Activities Committee hearings. Well-known movie actor Fred Clark took over the part at the end of May 1951 and stayed with the series for over two years (including the earliest editions in the syndication package).

After two years (without a break) of producing live half-hours every fortnight, it was decided to film the show in advance, for screening on a weekly basis. Thus from October 1952 on, **The George Burns And Gracie Allen Show** appeared in regular 40-episode seasons for the next six years (until the series concluded its run).

Like most other sitcoms, the show didn't rely on weekly guest-stars, but concentrated on the activities of the regular ensemble of characters. However, George's lifelong friend Jack Benny did make several appearances over the years (twice in the live editions, and again in the pre-filmed episodes). In later seasons Benny's wife Mary Livingstone, actors George Jessel, Ronald Reagan, Francis X. Bushman and Bob Cummings, and director King Vidor all paid visits to George and Gracie as well.

By mid-1953, Fred Clark decided to vacate the role of Harry Morton (yet again) and Larry Keating was signed to replace him. Keating would stay with the role for seven years (and into the spin-off **George Burns Show** after Gracie retired). Otherwise, the show continued on without change through the 'Golden Years Of Television' having established itself as a weekly favourite for millions of fans.

Episode #189 (of May 16 1955) saw a welcome addition to the format. At the conclusion of that week's story, George and Gracie appeared for an encore to present one of their old vaudeville double act routines. This "afterpiece" chat about one of Gracie's family members was so well-received it became a regular feature from then on, and one of the highlights of each programme.

At the start of the next season it was decided the cast would relocate from sunny California and spend some time in a hotel in New York. And by the second week in the big apple, George and Gracie welcomed a new cast member ... their real life son Ronnie, who played himself.

Both Ronnie and his sister Sandy had appeared in bit parts in a couple of earlier episodes, but this latter arrival elevated him to a major participant in each story. And for the next three seasons many of the plots centred on the younger Burns' circle of friends and his scholastic pursuits. A regular in many of these later editions was a college pal with a broad Texan accent, played by Robert Easton (who later became one of Hollywood's leading dialect coaches).

Despite the continued success of the show, Gracie was tiring of learning lines, costume fittings and rehearsals week after week and having a half-hour television programme occupying most of her life. After forty years of performing she wanted a rest and following several years of agreeing to "just one more season", by 1958 her decision had been made. Episode #291 would be her last, and she would retire from show business.

George was disappointed, but he understood how his wife felt. Gracie's health was also becoming a factor as she was beginning to suffer from heart problems which would dog her later years.

The team of Burns And Allen was no more ... and for the first time since the early 1920s George Burns would have to work up a new act. Little did anyone realise that the next phase of the Burns career would span four decades!





## The George Burns And Gracie Allen Show

**Series 1:** CBS October 12 1950 to September 25 1952 (52 live fortnightly editions, with an extra edition on Dec 28 1950) with Bea Benaderet, Hal March repl. by John Brown repl. by Fred Clark, Bill Goodwin repl. by Harry Von Zell  
 \* no official titles were allotted

1/1 George organizes a card game called Kleebob to decide whether the Burns and Mortons go to the fights or the movies  
 1/2 Inspired by a visit to the museum, Gracie decides to become a painter  
 1/3 Gracie tries to hide a dented fender  
 1/4 Blanche believes Harry has hired a pretty young secretary  
 1/5 Gracie's method of writing cheques leads to a visit to the bank manager  
 1/6 Gracie buys a Christmas tree and reminisces about festive seasons as a child  
 1/7 George and Harry aren't keen on having dancing lessons  
 1/8 Jack Benny is a guest at Gracie's party (\* John Brown replaces Hal March)  
 1/9 George arranges for a phony doctor to advise against a visit to humid Palm Springs  
 1/10 When Gracie finds a lost dog it drives George crazy  
 1/11 Blanche moves in with Gracie to get even with Harry for hiding money from her  
 1/12 Gracie is proving a problem for an income-tax man  
 1/13 Gracie wants the Mortons to go to the Vanderlips' party  
 1/14 Gracie is a witness against a notorious gangster  
 1/15 George is ill but get-well food can't seem to reach him  
 1/16 Gracie tries to help Emily Vanderlip with her homework  
 1/17 George's singing threatens Harry's real-estate deal  
 1/18 Gracie is looking forward to the Vanderlips' costume party (Fred Clark replaces John Brown)  
 1/19 Gracie's old school chum has become an unwanted guest  
 1/20 Harry prefers fishing to visiting Blanche's mother  
 1/21 George wants the Burns to get a break from the Mortons  
 1/22 Residents have started a petition to stop a gangster moving into the neighborhood  
 1/23 George and Harry rebel at the health food their wives insist on serving them  
 1/24 George regrets allowing a woman with three children to park her trailer in the backyard (Harry Von Zell joins the cast)

1/25 Gracie learns she can make lots of savings by buying things wholesale (Bill Goodwin's final appearance)  
 1/26 Gracie stages a wedding in the Burns home  
 1/27 Gracie visits a psychiatrist on behalf of Blanche  
 1/28 The Uplifters Society relocates to the Burns home  
 1/29 George has extra tickets to the football game  
 1/30 Gracie's plans for George's birthday party create havoc  
 1/31 Gracie thinks Harry's business partner has married a horse  
 1/32 The girls want new dresses for the Uplifters concert  
 1/33 Gracie tells a Christmas story to house guests  
 1/34 George wants Gracie to get rid of her storeroom for home-canned food items  
 1/35 Blanche wants to be elected president of the Uplifters  
 1/36 George and Harry aren't looking forward to an evening with the Vanderlips  
 1/37 Gracie tries to keep George from finding out about the car's dented fender  
 1/38 Blanche wants to go to Palm Springs with George and Gracie  
 1/39 George tries to teach Gracie a lesson for losing her engagement ring  
 1/40 Gracie tries to fix Harry Von Zell up with a gold-digger  
 1/41 George and Gracie recall their vaudeville career for a movie producer  
 1/42 George and guest Jack Benny feud over a stolen joke  
 1/43 Gracie connives to get George out of the house while she redecorates  
 1/44 George is being driven crazy when the kids in the trailer make a return visit  
 1/45 A phony swami predicts Gracie will marry again  
 1/46 George and Harry Von Zell are conned by promoters of a musical  
 1/47 Gracie thinks George is hiring a gorgeous woman and hires a detective to check up on things  
 1/48 Gracie arranges for George to be signed up by a recording company  
 1/49 George pretends he needs money so Gracie rents out the spare room  
 1/50 Gracie is conned into buying a stolen horse  
 1/51 Gracie thinks George needs glasses  
 1/52 Gracie and Blanche arrange a trip to Las Vegas to have the houses redecorated without their husbands finding out

**Series 2:** CBS October 9 1952 to March 26 1953, March 30 to June 1, June 18, and July 27 to August 17 1953 (40 editions) with Bea Benaderet, Fred Clark and Harry Von Zell

\* no official titles were allotted, but repeats in syndication have the following identification ...

- 2/1 *Wardrobe Woman Wins Free Trip To Hawaii*
- 2/2 *Gracie Giving Party For Atomic Scientist*
- 2/3 *George Sneezing - Gracie Thinks He's Insane*
- 2/4 *Gracie Buying Boat For George*
- 2/5 *Gracie Having George's Portrait Painted*
- 2/6 *Gracie And Blanche Hire Two Gigolos To Take Them Out*
- 2/7 *Sampter Clayton Ballet - Selling Tickets*
- 2/8 *Skating Pearsons Come To Visit*
- 2/9 *Gracie Selling Swamp So Harry Will Buy TV Set*
- 2/10 *Silky Thompson - Gracie Writes - My Life With George Burns*
- 2/11 *Gracie Thinks George Is Going To Commit Suicide*
- 2/12 *Von Zell Dates Married Woman - Jealous Husband*
- 2/13 *Uncle Clyde Comes To Visit - Renting Room*
- 2/14 *Gracie Thinks Harry Morton Is In Love With Her*
- 2/15 *Gracie Trying To Keep Mortons From Moving Away*
- 2/16 *Gracie Thinks She's Not Married To George*
- 2/17 *Tax Refund*
- 2/18 *Cigarette Girl - Georgie Jessel - Teddy Bear*
- 2/19 *Gracie On Train - Murder*
- 2/20 *Blanche Wants New Car - Gracie Gets Von Zell A Wife*
- 2/21 *Gracie Gives A Swamp Party*
- 2/22 *George And Gracie Hear A Burglar - Up All Night*
- 2/23 *Gracie Buying A Ranch For George*
- 2/24 *Gracie Gets George In The Army*
- 2/25 *Gracie Reports Car Stolen*
- 2/26 *Gracie Pretends To Be College Boy's Mother*
- 2/27 *Misunderstanding Over Buying Mountain Cabin*
- 2/28 *Blanche Secretly Buys A Fur Stole*
- 2/29 *Gracie Takes Spanish Lessons*
- 2/30 *Gracie And Cleaning Woman - Vanderlips*
- 2/31 *Von Zell's Girlfriend Between Trains*
- 2/32 *George Lectures At UCLA*
- 2/33 *Gracie And Harry Morton - Missing Persons Bureau*
- 2/34 *Surprise Party For Mortons - Sanatorium Routine*
- 2/35 *Perry And Pete - Gracie's Cousins - Sneak Thieves*
- 2/36 *Gracie Doing A Picture Without George*
- 2/37 *Gracie Trying To Get George To Go On Trip East*
- 2/38 *Gracie Sees A Hold-Up - Johnny Velvet (with Ronald Reagan)*
- 2/39 *Gracie And George Locked Out Of Their Home*
- 2/40 *Gracie At Department Store*

**Series 3:** CBS October 5 1953 to May 10 1954 and July 5 to August 23 1954 (40 editions)

with Bea Benaderet, Larry Keating and Harry Von Zell

\* no official titles were allotted, but repeats in syndication have the following identification ...

- 3/1 *Morton Buys Iron Deer - Gracie Thinks George Needs Glasses*
- 3/2 *Gracie Helps Morton Get CPA Account*
- 3/3 *Gracie Gets A Jury Summons*
- 3/4 *George Teaches Gracie Not To Be Careless*
- 3/5 *George And Harry Morton Mad At Each Other*
- 3/6 *Gracie Getting A Business Manager - Roger*
- 3/7 *Raccoon Coat Story*
- 3/8 *Gracie Thinks Harry Von Zell Is Broke*

- 3/9 *Going To San Francisco*
- 3/10 *Gracie Trades Home For Mountain Cabin*
- 3/11 *George And Gracie Going To Rose Marie Premiere*
- 3/12 *Jane (Wardrobe Woman) And Her Problem*
- 3/13 *Gracie's Anniversary Present*
- 3/14 *Uncle Harvey's Invention*
- 3/15 *George Reading Play To Be Done In London*
- 3/16 *Gracie Helps Mechanic With Girlfriend*
- 3/17 *Gracie Discovers George's Secret Weakness*
- 3/18 *Gracie Has To Sell George's Car By Five O'Clock*
- 3/19 *Gracie Wins A Television Set*
- 3/20 *No Fan Mail For George*
- 3/21 *George And Gracie Going To Opera "Carmen"*
- 3/22 *Harry Morton Is Missing*
- 3/23 *Gracie Goes To Psychiatrist For Blanche's Dream*
- 3/24 *Gracie's Old Boyfriend, Dan Conroy, Comes To Town*
- 3/25 *Gracie Tries To Get George In College*
- 3/26 *Columbia Pictures Doing Burns And Allen Story*
- 3/27 *An Elephant Sits On Gracie's Fender*
- 3/28 *George Gets Black Eye From Open Door*
- 3/29 *Dolores De Marco, George's Ex-Vaudeville Partner*
- 3/30 *Vanderlip Buys Black Negligee For His Wife*
- 3/31 *Gracie And George Have A Mystery Anniversary*
- 3/32 *George Resting For Insurance Examination*
- 3/33 *Harry Morton Has Only One Week To Live*
- 3/34 *Gracie Buys Old Movies To Sell To Television*
- 3/35 *Emily Vanderlip's Elopement*
- 3/36 *Gracie Runs For City Council*
- 3/37 *Burnses And Mortons Choosing Movie To Attend*
- 3/38 *Gracie Buys A Toaster Wholesale*
- 3/39 *Mortons Exchange Houses With The Gibsons From New York*
- 3/40 *George Teaches Gracie Not To Start Rumours*

**Series 4:** CBS October 4 1954 to July 4 1955 (40 editions)

with Bea Benaderet, Larry Keating and Harry Von Zell

\* no official titles were allotted, but repeats in syndication have the following identification ...

- 4/1 *George Invites Critics To Watch First Show Of Season*
- 4/2 *Gracie Goes On The Do-It-Yourself Show*
- 4/3 *Gracie Gives Wedding In Payment Of A Favour*
- 4/4 *Gracie Gives A Baby Shower For Virginia Beasley*
- 4/5 *Auto License Bureau - George Becomes An Author*
- 4/6 *George Trying To Keep Doctor's Appointment*
- 4/7 *Gracie Thinks She And George Moving To New York*
- 4/8 *Shoplifter And The Missing Ruby Clip*
- 4/9 *Gracie Saves Blanche's Marriage*
- 4/10 *Burnses And Mortons Going To Hear Antonelli Concert*
- 4/11 *George Gets Call From Unknown Visitor About Him*
- 4/12 *Harry Morton's Alumni Banquet*
- 4/13 *Gracie Thinks Bob Cummings Is In Love With Her*
- 4/14 *George's Mother-In-Law Trouble*
- 4/15 *George And The Glendale Eagle Publicity Stunt*
- 4/16 *No Seats For Friar's Club Dinner*
- 4/17 *Blanche And Clara Bagley Leave Their Husbands*
- 4/18 *Gracie Gets A Valet For George*
- 4/19 *Vanderlip Leaves His Parakeet With George*
- 4/20 *Blanche's Brother, Roger The Moocher, Visits*
- 4/21 *George And The Missing Five Dollars, And Missing Baby Pictures*
- 4/22 *Gracie Becomes A Portrait Artist After Museum Visit*
- 4/23 *George And The Fourteen Carat Gold Trombone*



4/24 *The Romance Of Harry Morton And Countess Braganni*  
 4/25 *The Mistaken Marriage Of Emily Vanderlip And Roger*  
 4/26 *Gracie Adopts Great Dane Dog*  
 4/27 *Gracie Tries To Select George's Next Wife*  
 4/28 *Gracie Gets A Ticket Fixed By The Judge*  
 4/29 *Gracie Hires A Safe Cracker For Her Wall Safe*  
 4/30 *Gracie Consults Doctor Kirby's Problem Clinic*  
 4/31 *Gracie Wants The House Painted*  
 4/32 *Gracie Plays Talent Scout For Imitator*  
 4/33 *Gracie And George Try For A Day At The Beach*  
 4/34 *The Uranium Caper*  
 4/35 *Blanche And Brother Roger Move In With The Burnses*  
 4/36 *Gracie Believes George Has A Criminal Record*  
 4/37 *Gracie Gets An Extension Visa For Jeannette Duval*  
 4/38 *Gracie Tries To Cure Roger Of Amnesia*  
 4/39 *Lucille Vanderlip Gives A Barbecue Party*  
 4/40 *Burnses And Mortons Going To Hawaii*

**Series 5:** CBS October 3 1955 to June 18 1956 (38 editions)  
 with Bea Benaderet, Larry Keating, Harry Von Zell and (from  
 5/2) Ronnie Burns

\* from now on, the scripts had titles ...

5/1 *The Burnses And Mortons Go To New York*  
 On the train trip to New York, Harry Von Zell tries to drum  
 up a publicity photograph with an atomic scientist  
 5/2 *Ronnie Arrives*  
 Ronnie arrives in New York to become a dramatic actor  
 5/3 *Ronnie Meets Sabrina*  
 To help him play a role, Ronnie dates an older woman, who  
 turns out to be a con artist  
 5/4 *Changing Names*  
 Gracie adopts a new name so she won't hinder Ronnie's act-  
 ing career  
 5/5 *Harry Morton's Cocktail Party*  
 Blanche has to pretend to be the Morton's maid to avoid em-  
 barrassing Harry in front of an important dinner guest  
 5/6 *The Musical Version*  
 George and Gracie perform song and dance routines from the  
 golden days of vaudeville  
 5/7 *Ronnie Moves To The Village*  
 Ronnie decides to share an apartment with a student friend  
 and his artist father  
 5/8 *Gracie Helps Lola*  
 Gracie fills in for a waitress and has to serve the dean of Ron-  
 nie's school  
 5/9 *Anniversary Party*  
 Gracie tries to sort out the Boardman's marital problems  
 5/10 *George Becomes A Dictator*  
 George arranges for Ronnie to appear on the Jackie Gleason  
 show but he'd rather be in a serious drama that night  
 5/11 *Ronnie's Elopement*  
 Gracie thinks Ronnie is about to run off to Connecticut and  
 get married  
 5/12 *Company For Christmas*  
 Gracie tries to create a vacancy at the hotel, which is fully  
 booked over the holiday season  
 5/13 *Gracie Pawns Her Ring*  
 Gracie raises a thousand dollars to finance a play written by  
 Ronnie's friend  
 5/14 *Appearances Are Deceiving*  
 The puritanical father of a female student thinks Ronnie is  
 having an affair with his daughter

5/15 *Let's Dance*  
 Gracie helps to sell tickets to Ronnie's school dance  
 5/16 *George Goes Skiing*  
 George is talked into being more fatherly to Ronnie by going  
 on a snow trip  
 5/17 *Ronnie Gets An Agent* (with guest Jack Benny)  
 Show business acts disrupt Gracie's dinner party for the par-  
 ents of Ronnie's girlfriend  
 5/18 *Politeness Never Pays*  
 Gracie engages a gigolo to make George jealous  
 5/19 *Alice Gets Married*  
 Harry Von Zell thinks he is being pursued by an old flame so  
 Gracie tells everyone he's married  
 5/20 *George Needs Glasses*  
 Gracie thinks George's eyesight is failing  
 5/21 *The Indian Potentate*  
 Gracie is intent on getting a look at a reclusive maharaja  
 5/22 *The Ladies Club*  
 Harry Morton tries to keep Gracie from joining an exclusive  
 women's club  
 5/23 *Cyrano De Bergerac*  
 George tries to help Ronnie study the part of Cyrano  
 5/24 *The Stolen Plants*  
 Gracie thinks she'll be arrested for taking some plant bulbs  
 from Central Park  
 5/25 *The English Playwright*  
 Gracie pretends to be a poor widow so Ronnie will get a part  
 in a play  
 5/26 *A Weekend On Long Island*  
 Ronnie wants to have a party at the apartment and Gracie  
 promises she'll arrange for George to be away  
 5/27 *The Newlyweds*  
 George tries to stop Gracie from finding out that Emily  
 Vanderlip has secretly married  
 5/28 *Night Of Vaudeville*  
 Gracie organises a show for Ronnie's drama school  
 5/29 *Burlesk*  
 Ronnie and a friend audition for a job at a burlesque theatre  
 run by an old friend of George's  
 5/30 *The Right People*  
 Gracie thinks Ronnie is about to marry the daughter of snob-  
 bish socialite  
 5/31 *The Magic Act*  
 Gracie thinks George is planning to work solo in a movie and  
 becomes a magician's assistant so he won't be deserting her  
 5/32 *The Paris Creation*  
 Gracie organizes a trip to France to have her dress redesigned  
 5/33 *Back From Paris*  
 Gracie wants to open a dress shop full of Parisian creations  
 5/34 *The 24 Dresses*  
 Gracie sells her own clothes to finance her shop  
 5/35 *Ronnie Is Lovesick*  
 Gracie thinks Ronnie is about to run off and join the French  
 Foreign Legion  
 5/36 *The Night Out*  
 Gracie thinks George has been out on a date at the Stork Club  
 5/37 *Questions And Answers*  
 Blanche wants Gracie to join a literary club but first she has to  
 pass a test  
 5/38 *The Triple Surprise Party*  
 Several parties have been planned for George and Gracie's  
 apartment

**Series 6:** CBS September 17 1956 to July 1 1957 (42 editions) with Bea Benaderet, Larry Keating, Harry Von Zell and Ronnie Burns

6/1 *Mrs Sohmers Needs A Psychologist*

Gracie fills in for Blanche at the Psychologist's

6/2 *The Switchboard Operators*

Blanche and Gracie take over the hotel switchboard to intercept a call Harry is expecting

6/3 *Return To California*

Ronnie has filled the empty Beverly Hills homes with his college friends so there is no room for his parents or the Mortons

6/4 *The Shakespearean Paper*

Gracie tries to improve Ronnie's essay

6/5 *The Woman In The Car*

Gracie borrows the Morton's car and gets a ticket

6/6 *The Interview* (with guest Francis X. Bushman)

A T.V. Guide reporter tries to write an article about George and Gracie's home life

6/7 *The Initiation*

Ronnie has to say and do the opposite of what would be expected

6/8 *Ronnie's Bashful*

Ronnie agrees not to go to the college dance while his girlfriend is out of town

6/9 *The Big Stamp Robbery*

Gracie uses one of Harry's rare stamps to mail a letter

6/10 *George's Gray Suit*

Gracie sends George's favourite suit to Blanche's brother

6/11 *Von Zell's Raises*

George gives Harry Von Zell a raise because he thinks he's getting married

6/12 *The Refrigerator Salesman*

George decides to help Ronnie make some commission on his holiday job by buying some of his electrical goods

6/13 *The Girl Behind The Perfume Counter*

Gracie thinks Ronnie has fallen in love with an older woman

6/14 *Ronnie Quits College Because His Father Goes Broke*

Gracie tells Ronnie that George has gone broke because he didn't have an education

6/15 *Christmas In Jail*

Gracie switches pearl necklaces, landing George behind bars

6/16 *The Costume Party*

George inadvertently ejects the Vanderlips from Gracie's dinner party

6/17 *Gracie And The Bullfighter*

Gracie thinks Ronnie has become interested in bullfighting

6/18 *The Ugly Duckling*

Gracie helps transform a plain-Jane into a ravishing beauty

6/19 *The Aptitude Test*

Gracie believes George must be in the wrong profession and arranges for a psychologist to examine him

6/20 *Going To Palm Springs*

Gracie wants George to see Ronnie doesn't get pestered by girls during his rest holiday

6/21 *The Matrimonial Bureau*

Under the impression Ronnie must marry by the age of twenty-one, Gracie tries to arrange a prospective bride for him

6/22 *The Fortune Teller*

A gypsy predicts George will come into a fortune

6/23 *Fighting For Happiness*

Gracie tries to provoke a fight with George to enhance their marriage

6/24 *The Termites*

Gracie wants to get George out of the house so she can have the bedroom redecorated

6/25 *The \$15,000 Error*

Gracie thinks the redecorating has cost \$15,000 and she tries to mortgage the house

6/26 *The Ring*

Gracie loans her engagement ring to Ronnie so he can propose to his girlfriend

6/27 *The Plumber's Friend* (with guest Mary Livingstone)

Gracie agrees to let the plumber's four beautiful daughters stay in the house while he's out of town

6/28 *Going To Houston*

Ronnie tries to help a classmate stay on at college

6/29 *The Stray Dog*

Gracie minds a lost dog in her Houston hotelroom

6/30 *Ronnie Gets A Movie Role*

Harry Von Zell has to cover for Ronnie who has an early morning call at the film studio

6/31 *The Plumber's Union*

Gracie places an advert in the personals column to help Mr. Jantzen get a wife

6/32 *Harry's Homecoming*

Harry Morton pretends to be an amorous Frenchman to put a spark back into his marriage

6/33 *The Publicity Romance*

Ronnie has to pretend to fall for his Italian starlet costar

6/34 *The Texan Lady Macbeth*

The sister of Ronnie's classmate wants to become an actress

6/35 *Ronnie's Boat*

George doesn't like Ronnie spending his movie pay on a boat

6/36 *A Trip To Tahiti*

The arrival of the Jantzen sisters causes Ronnie and Ralph to reconsider their planned cruise

6/37 *The Home Graduation*

Gracie sets up a fake graduation ceremony to please Brian McAfee's father

6/38 *Blanche's Mother Arrives*

Gracie lets Blanche's mother stay at her home to avoid trouble with Harry

6/39 *A Marital Mixup* (with guest Robert Cummings)

Gracie is trying to help the plumber get a wife, but the lady mistakes Harry Von Zell for the prospective groom

6/40 *The Wading Pool At Acapulco*

George tries to stop Ronnie getting a job as lifeguards at an Acapulcan hotel pool

6/41 *A Pain In The Back*

Gracie and Blanche try to get their husbands to go camping

6/42 *Ronnie's Twenty-One*

A French exchange student says that Ronnie has agreed to marry her so she can stay in the country

**Series 7:** CBS September 30 1957 to June 23 1958 and September 8 and 15 1958 (39 editions)

with Bea Benaderet, Larry Keating, Harry Von Zell and Ronnie Burns

7/1 *The General*

Gracie tries to stop an Army general from finding out his son has married

7/2 *Too Much Pot Roast*

Gracie thinks filling the house with beautiful women will cure Ronnie of his flirtations





*7/3 The Texan Italian*

Gracie transforms Bonnie Sue McAfee into an Italian to help her acting career

*7/4 An English Tea*

Gracie tries to impress the upper-class mother of Ronnie's latest girlfriend

*7/5 September And May*

Gracie thinks the plumber is going out with a younger woman

*7/6 The Star Maker*

Brian McAfee asks Gracie to help him pass his exams

*7/7 The African Hunter*

Guests at Gracie's dinner party include a big game hunter and a witch doctor

*7/8 One Little Fight*

Ronnie and Ralph are feuding over a girl

*7/9 With Or Without Glasses*

Gracie tries to convince one of Ronnie's college pals to go back to wearing his glasses

*7/10 A Box Of Cigars*

Gracie thinks up a novel way of helping Ronnie campaign for his choice for homecoming queen

*7/11 Misery Loves Company*

Gracie tries to help Ronnie's friend Ralph get over a lost love

*7/12 A Hole In The Carpet*

When Gracie trips in a store, the claims adjuster is in for a rough time

*7/13 How To Wrap A Mink*

Gracie and Blanche are under the impression they're getting mink coats for Christmas

*7/14 Invitation To The Party*

The Mortons have apparently been invited to a swank party

*7/15 The Stolen Car*

When Ronnie gets a job as reporter on the college newspaper, Gracie stages a scoop for him

*7/16 Ronnie Finds A Friend An Apartment*

Gracie thinks Ronnie has become a father

*7/17 McAfee And The Manicurist*

Confusion reigns when everyone tries to convince the rich Texan to stop seeing the hotel manicurist

*7/18 Too Many Fathers*

Gracie poses as the mother of one of Ronnie's college pals to impress her parents

*7/19 The Accident*

Ronnie falls for the young driver of a car involved in a minor accident with Harry Morton

*7/20 The Japanese Texan*

Bonnie Sue is hoping to be cast as a Japanese girl in a movie

*7/21 Hypnotizing Gracie*

A hypnotist succeeds in transforming Gracie into the smartest woman in the world, and no one can snap her out of it

*7/22 Gracie Is Brilliant*

Gracie starts winning all the quiz shows and George is reduced to doing all the household chores

*7/23 Ronnie's Fan Club*

A fourteen-year-old girl has a crush on Ronnie

*7/24 Frozen Passion*

George is producing a movie and everyone wants to be in it

*7/25 High Blood Pressure*

Gracie wants George to take the plumber's physical for an insurance policy

*7/26 Softening The Professor*

Gracie tries to matchmake for one of Ronnie's college professors, unaware the man is newly married

*7/27 The Publicity Marriage*

Gracie tries to convince Ronnie's fourteen-year-old admirer he's married to Bonnie Sue

*7/28 Blanche Gets A Jury Notice*

Harry Morton is delighted when he hears Blanche will be required for jury duty

*7/29 Gracie And The Jury*

Gracie accidentally gives a fake note to Blanche while on the jury of a counterfeiting case

*7/30 Ronnie Makes A Record*

Gracie thinks George is disappointed when Ronnie gets a record deal instead of him

*7/31 Ronnie's Royalty Check*

Gracie thinks Ronnie has spent his record royalty on a dress for a gold-digger

*7/32 A Visit From Charles Vidor (with guest Charles Vidor)*

Gracie tries to get a movie director to cast Bonnie Sue

*7/33 Ronnie Goes Into The Army*

Gracie tries to prevent Ronnie being sent to Alaska for his army service

*7/34 Locked Out*

George can't take a call from a visiting B.B.C. man because everyone is locked out of their homes

*7/35 A Week In New York*

Ronnie plans on having a big party while his parents are away

*7/36 The June Wedding*

George and Gracie let newlyweds honeymoon in their house as the hotel has mixed up their reservations

*7/37 Summer School*

Ronnie plans to vacation at Big Bear Lake but George insists he attend summer school to make up his grades

*7/38 The Grammar School Dance*

Ronnie has to cancel his date to take his young fan to a prom

*7/39 The Exchange Student*

Ronnie is worried Bonnie Sue will leave him for a handsome French exchange student

\* At this point, Gracie retired. George and the rest of the cast continued on in the spin-off series **The George Burns Show**, which will be itemised in the concluding chapter of this article (in LAUGH #14).

## Records

**Burns And Allen - Their Greatest Radio Shows** (3-LP Set)  
Murray Hill LP #898047  
includes soundtrack of the TV show of June 8 1953 (actually a repeat of the December 11 1952 show)

**The George Burns And Gracie Allen Show**  
Radiola LP MR-1028  
includes afterpiece routines from shows of June 3 1957, November 25 1957, January 20 1958, February 10 1958, April 8 1957 and January 14 1957

## Books

**I Love Her, That's Why! - The Burns & Allen Story**  
by George Burns (with Cynthia Hobart Lindsay)  
(W.H. Allen, London 1956)  
includes the script of the TV show of February 21 1955

• Later books by George Burns (following Gracie's death) may be found itemised in LAUGH #14.

**Say Goodnight, Gracie! - The Story Of Burns And Allen**  
by Cheryl Blythe and Susan Sackett  
(E.P. Dutton, New York 1986)

## Videos

**TV Classics - Volume 5: Comedy**  
MPI Home Video MP 1317 (NTSC)  
features the premiere edition of October 12 1950

**The Burns And Allen Show - Volume 1**  
RCA/Columbia (NTSC)  
features editions of December 11 1952 and January 22 1953

**Burns And Allen (1950)**  
release details unknown (NTSC)  
features editions of October 12 1950 and December 7 1950 (?)

**George Burns And Gracie Allen Show (1951)**  
release details unknown (NTSC)  
features edition of December 20 1951

**Burns And Allen (1951)**  
release details unknown (NTSC)  
features editions of April 26 and October 11 1951

**Burns And Allen - Gracie Gives A Wedding**  
release details unknown (NTSC)  
features editions of September 13 and August 2 1951

# DICK BENTLEY (1907 - 1995)

**B**ROADCASTING lost one of its greatest performers with the death of Dick Bentley on August 28th. An impressive career in Australian radio in the 1930s and 1940s led to a thirteen year run in the B.B.C.'s landmark series **Take It From Here**, where he, Jimmy Edwards and June Whitfield created the immortal Glums and became favourites on both sides of the globe.

**Harry Griffiths** ("Young Harry" of **McCackie Mansion** fame) who worked with Dick in the legendary Colgate-Palmolive unit of the 1940s pays tribute to his friend of fifty years ...

**D**ICK Bentley, a great Australian comedian, has passed away in London aged 88.

Dick started off in Australian show business as a professional musician playing saxophone and violin. He graduated to comedy doing impressions, singing humorous songs and doing gags. After getting himself established in Melbourne in the 1930s, he set off to try his luck in England.

He got himself a job as a radio announcer at the B.B.C., which was good going for an Aussie. When a request was sent to the B.B.C. for him to play the George Formby recording of *When I'm Cleaning Windows*, Dick said he couldn't play it as the windows were too dirty. This caused a furore and made Dick a name in England. He joined forces with a man named George Moon and started doing radio comedy for the B.B.C.

Dick returned to Australia and started doing radio comedy on A.B.C. variety shows **Merry-Go-Round** and **Out Of The Bag**.

When Jack Benny visited Australia during the war to entertain American servicemen, some busybody told Benny that Dick Bentley was stealing his material. Benny replied, "No, that's not right - I'm here to steal Dick Bentley's material. I hear it's very good - my material is trash". However, Dick was inspired by Jack Benny, who was after all, the most successful radio comedian in the world.

The success that Dick achieved doing comedy in **Out Of The Bag** led to an offer to join the Colgate Palmolive Radio Unit to be the star comedian in **Calling The Stars**, which was the highest rating radio show on air. Dick accepted the offer and the good money that went with it. He was in this show to play to a larger and broader audience than the A.B.C. shows, and he was to have his own writers - Fred Parsons and Alexander McDonald.

Dick was an instant hit in **Calling The Stars** and was with the show for about three years. Dick also did several successful shows on stage at the Tivoli.

He left to try his luck in England. Under his arm he had recordings of some of his best comedy sketches from **Calling The Stars** to play to the nabobs of the B.B.C. to convince them of his value.

It wasn't long after his arrival that newspaper headlines proclaimed 'BBC Radio Star Tommy Handley Dies'. Dick's timing was always good.

The B.B.C. put Dick in a show with Jimmy Edwards and fellow Australian Joy Nichols. It was **Take It From Here** which enjoyed success for many years.





## Some career highlights from the LAUGH files...

- Dick Bentley first went to England in 1938 and was heard on such B.B.C. radio programmes as *You've Asked For It* and (with George Moon) on *Lucky Dip* (throughout 1939).

- Dick first appeared with the Colgate-Palmolive unit in August 1944 joining *Calling The Stars* for programmes #133 to #138, #161 to #204 and #217 to #269 (of July 1 1947).

- Arriving in London in late 1947, he appeared on B.B.C. radio's *Navy Mixture* in monologues written by Denis Norden. Also in the cast were Jimmy Edwards and fellow-Australian Joy Nichols. He was also heard on *Beginners Please* and *Showtime*.

- The success of *Navy Mixture* led to *Take It From Here* the following March and a record-breaking run of thirteen seasons and some 325 editions (see LAUGH #5 for a feature article on this groundbreaking show).

- In 1951 (during a break in *T.I.F.H.*) Dick returned to Australia to star in an antipodean equivalent *Gently Bentley* for the A.B.C., also scripted by Frank Muir and Denis Norden (20 editions: August 31 1951 to January 11 1952). The scripts were adapted back in Britain for a B.B.C. version (from August 11 1952). There were further Australian seasons in 1955 (15 editions: July 1 to October 21) and 1966 (13 editions: May 16 to August 8) the latter batch scripted by Bentley himself. A.B.C. archives hold recordings of several first season episodes.

- Muir and Norden also scripted his B.B.C. television series *And So To Bentley* (6x30m editions, screened fortnightly from October 1 to December 10 1954) which featured Peter Sellers, Charlotte Mitchell and Bill Fraser.

- Dick starred with Bernard Braden in two series of *Mr. Bentley And Mr. Braden* for B.B.C. radio (Series 1: from October 20 1957, Series 2: from August 28 1958)

- Following the demise of *Take It From Here*, Dick appeared with Ted Ray in the B.B.C. radio series *Once Over Lightly* (Light Programme from October 4 1961) and *Clancy Of The Outback* (Light Programme from April 24 to June 12 1963).

- In the 1970s, Barry Humphries (a longtime Bentley fan) invited Dick to take part in his feature films *The Adventures Of Barry McKenzie* and *Barry McKenzie Holds His Own*. The two also recorded a couple of vocals for record release (*Is 'e An Aussie*, *Is 'e Lizzie* and *The Road To Gundagai*).

- In 1978, Dick appeared in several episodes of Michael Crawford's hit B.B.C. television series *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*, playing Frank Spencer's grandad.

During the run, two earnest, young and ambitious comedians came to see Dick to ask him for guidance. Dick went through their scripts week after week making suggestions and giving advice. These two comics never forgot his help. Their names were Morecambe and Wise.

After *Take It From Here* finished, Dick retired with his wife Peta in London, but had the feeling that Australia had forgotten him.

I had lunch with Dick Bentley at the Savoy Hotel in London in November 1989 and he told me this story about himself:

During World War II, the A.B.C. put on a party for Noel Coward to welcome him to Australia. Noel was here to entertain the troops. At the party was a big crowd and they had an orchestra playing. Dick was asked to entertain so he got up and did an impression of Noel Coward singing *Mad Dogs And Englishmen*. During the applause which followed, Noel walked forward with his hand extended to shake hands with Dick, saying loudly, "Congratulations ... that was very good ...", then quietly added "... you bastard".

Dick never forgot this incident.

# ALLEN AND ROSSI

by Peter Tatchell

**I**N the early 1960s the most popular double act in America was Marty Allen and Steve Rossi. Almost overnight they inherited the mantle of Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis as the country's favourite Italian singer and his goofball offsider, and were much in demand at Las Vegas nightclubs and on television programmes like **The Ed Sullivan Show**.

The pair met in 1959 when 37-year-old Allen was Nat King Cole's opening act ... Rossi (ten years younger than his partner) had previously worked as a straight man in a revue starring Mae West. Fans everywhere delighted at Marty's crazy antics as a punch-drunk boxer, a spaced-out astronaut and even a Playboy Bunny.

The duo's best-known routine featured Rossi as interviewer to all the famous names in the news. No matter which politician, movie star or headline-maker Allen would be playing, his greeting would invariably be the unlikely "hello, dere", a catchphrase that would become their trademark. It also served as the title of their first record album, which caused a smash when released in 1962.

The pair produced a number of discs as the decade rolled on ... they also starred in a movie *The Last Of The Secret Agents*, which unfortunately was not a success. By the time of its release in 1966 their popularity had begun to wane, and they decided to go their separate ways.

Allen appeared on his own on game shows such as Hollywood Squares, while Rossi teamed with a succession of partners like ex-Bilko and **Car 54, Where Are You?** funnyman Joe E. Ross and later Slappy White. In the early 1970s he even performed with a comic named Bernie Allen (to enable the act to be billed Allen And Rossi) but none of the pairings was successful.

Marty and Steve eventually reunited in 1983 for a series of casino appearances at Las Vegas and Atlantic City, and for a time recaptured a portion of their earlier success.

## Recordings

### Hello, Dere!

ABC-Paramount LP ABC 2270

Allen And Rossi: Introduction/Hello, Dere: Famous People In The News/Christopher Columbus/The Wine Taster/The Japanese Ball Player/The Man On The Moon/The Portrait

### One More Time — Hello Dere!

ABC-Paramount LP ABC(S) 445

Hello Dere/Famous People In The News/I've Got The World On A String (Rossi vocal, with Allen interjections)/The Punch Drunk Fighter/Hello Dere (song)/The Peace Corps/The Lion Tamer/Because You're Mine (Rossi vocal)/The Golfer

### Two Funny For Words

Reprise LP R 6104

Cleopatra/Playboy Bunny/The Folksinger/All-American Football Coach/The Mechanical Man/Hello Dere: People In The News/Fire Chief/The World's Greatest Bullfighter/Japanese Teenager/Dog Days/Olympic Coach/Chief Of Central Intelligence Agency/The Prison Break/Paraders For Peace



### In Person

Mercury LP MG 20979/SR 60979

Opening Gags/Hello Deres/Marty The Spy/Tony Martin Impression - There's No Tomorrow/Marty The Indian/The Boy Scout/When You're Smiling/How To Make A Date On The Phone/Battle Hymn Of The Republic

### Allen And Rossi Meet The Great Society

Mercury LP MG 21015/SR 61015

a satire on the Lyndon B. Johnson presidency, also featuring Dyanne Thorne, Carol McKinley, Harvey Miller, Bill Levine and Bob Prescott

Hubert/Medicare/L.B.J.'s New Dog/Homecoming/L.B.J. Dance Lesson/Martin Luther King/Ranger Photographs/Poverty Program/President's Tailor/Russian Premier/Lady Bird/Jimmy Hoffa/L.B.J. Ranch/Free Enterprise/Dumb/Lynda Bird's Date/Countdown/Passport, Italian Style/Beautiful America/Peace Corps/Two Man Gemini Capsule/L.B.J. Radio/Farm Subsidy Program/Balance The Budget/White House Correspondent/United Nations/Lady Bird Luncheon/New Image/On With The Show/The Great Society (L.B.J. Singalong)

### The Adventures Of Batman And Rubin

Mercury LP MG 21077/SR 61077

Rubin's Dream/Enter Batman/Enter Commissioner Gordon/Enter The Penguin/At The Discoteque/Enter The Catwoman/Enter The Riddler/A Clue/Batman And Rubin Meet The Riddler/Rubin Awakes

### Allen And Rossi Tell The Truth About The Green Horn-Nut And Ca-toe

Roulette LP (S)LP 507

also featuring Sterling Yates and Sharon Dale  
Friday Nites On T.V. Station B.U.G./Gung Fu/The Horn-Nut's Weapon/Office Of The D.A./How The Green Horn-Nut Really Started/The Horn-Nut Hummm/The Green Horn-Nut Takes His Army Physical/Buying The Black Beauty/Crisis At The Daily Centinul/Green Horn-Nut's Driving Lesson/The Ca-Toe And Green Horn-Nut Weather Report/The Case Of The Missing Gems/Green Horn-Nut Has Tax Problems

### **Dedicated To Our Armed Forces**

Roulette LP (S)R 508

Marty's Monologue/Hello Dere!/Punchy The Fighter/Celebrities/Guess Who/Somewhere My Love & If You Love Me (Rossi vocals)/See The Funny Clown/Marty Allen Speaks/United Nations Translator/— Started Out In Show Business/Blood Brothers/Shadow Of Your Smile & Strangers In The Night (Rossi vocals)/The Drunk Winetaster & Joke Medley

\*\*\* Marty Allen also appeared on the following LP ...

### **Zingers From The Hollywood Squares**

Event LP EV 6903

\*\*\* Steve Rossi also appeared on the following LPs ...

with Slappy White:

**I Found Me A White Man, You Find Yourself One!**

Roulette LP SR 42065

with Bernie Allen:

**According To Allen And Rossi, Sex Is ...**

Cappo LP CPS 1001

Obscene Phone Call/Erogenous Zones/College Sex Lecture/Sex And Marriage/Sexascope/Statuary Rape/Gay Sex/Kid Sex/Birth Control/Sex, Pollacks & Jews/2 Pickets To Titsburgh/The Dirty Old Professor

## **CLUBS & SOCIETIES**

### **The Goon Show Preservation Society**

c/o 27 Kew Drive, Davyhulme, Urmston, Manchester M31 2WW, Great Britain

c/o P.O. Box 114, Boronia, Victoria 3155, Australia

c/o 34 Denham Way, Thornlie, Western Australia 6108, Australia

c/o 7004 Westmoreland Road, Falls Church, Virginia 22042

### **The Tony Hancock Appreciation Society**

c/o 426 Romford Road, Forest Gate, London E7 8DF, Great Britain

### **The Tony Hancock Society**

c/o 77 The Avenue, Acock's Green, Birmingham B27 6NL, Great Britain

### **The On The Buses Fan Club**

c/o 108 Western Avenue, Briarsleigh Estate, Walsall WS2 0NJ, Great Britain

### **The Steptoe And Son Appreciation Society**

c/o 47 Cornwell Crescent, Stamford Le Hope, Essex SS17 1DL, Great Britain

### **The Official Red Dwarf Fan Club**

c/o P.O. Box 29, Hitchin, Herts SG4 9TG, Great Britain

c/o P.O. Box 1044, Bundoora, Victoria 3083, Australia

### **The Only Fools And Horses Appreciation Society**

c/o 92 Whalebone Grove, Chadwell Heath, Essex RM6 6BL, Great Britain

### **The Dad's Army Appreciation Society**

c/o 11 Airedale View, Cross Hills near Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 7DJ, Great Britain

### **The Spike Jones International Fan Club**

c/o 129 East Colorado Boulevard, Monrovia, California 91016, U.S.A.

### **The Goodies Fan Club of Australia**

c/o 47 Kansas Ave, Bell Post Hill, Victoria 3215, Australia

### **We Love Lucy (The Lucille Ball Fan Club)**

c/o P.O. Box 56234, Sherman Oaks, California 91413, U.S.A.

### **The Abbott And Costello Society**

c/o P.O. Box 2084, Toluca Lake, California 91610 0084, U.S.A.

### **The Marx Brotherhood**

c/o Darien 28 New Hope, Pennsylvania 18938, U.S.A.

### **S\*T\*A\*R\*S (Savers of TV & Radio Shows)**

c/o 96 Meadvale Rd., Ealing, London W5 1NR, Great Britain

### **The British Comedy Appreciation Society**

c/o 1a Woodbury, Castle Rd., Woking, Surrey GU21 4ET, Great Britain

### **'Cor' Magazine**

c/o 24 Richmond Rd., Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2NX, Great Britain



