

FOR THE RECORD

by Dr. Michael Biel

Entries represent information culled from a myriad of sources, spys, under the counter deals, as well as the usual formalities as libraries, bookstores, and the U.S. Postal Service; but a mention in this column does not represent endorsement by ARSC (I'm not sure if ARSC is even willing to endorse me!); as items to be included are chosen at the discretion of this columnist who has proven not to have a great deal of discretion. (This is beginning to sound like the reading of the rules at the Academy Awards! How many different ways can I phrase it?)

PART ONE: OLD EDITORS NEVER DIE, THEY JUST FADE AWAY.

I don't know what Mike Gray is planning to say about this, but I wanted to put my two cents in and announce it to you in case you did not know, that you are reading the last ARSC Journal to be edited by Michael H. Gray. He ~~is sick and tired of having to call and tell me to hurry up and get my column in.~~ He is stepping down voluntarily from this difficult task which he has done remarkably well since taking over from Gerald D. Gibson in 1976. I think we all owe Mike a vote of thanks and a standing ovation. He has a busy schedule of writing and publication ahead and I know that his work will not be absent from these pages.

As Contributing Editor since 1977 I have had many contacts with Mike Gray and have trusted him to be a knowledgable, fair, and discriminating reader of submissions. I am sure that our new editor will be able to maintain these standards, and the standards of the Journal itself. But he needs your help. The ARSC Journal can not write itself. It can not exist without articles submitted--that's your job. If you feel that the emphasis of the Journal is skewed away from your own interests, take the first step in solving that problem by doing some research and writing on your area of interest.

Before we get on to the other matters at hand, I also want to point out that Journal articles are only one of the ways you express yourself in ARSC. The Annual Conference, usually referred to as "The Convention", offers everyone--member or non-member--an opportunity to present their research or knowledge. I recently received a letter from a member wondering how the convention programs are devised and why we don't have a formal "Call for Papers." That is because ARSC has a 365-days-a-year call for papers. The position of 2nd Vice President is designated as the Program Chairperson for the conventions. Any time you wish to propose a topic for the convention, and/or volunteer to make a presentation, just write or phone the 2nd Vice President. Naturally you should not put it off too long until it is too late to fit anything else on the schedule, but ideas can always be considered for the following year. There are some presentations

which originate with the Program Chairperson, but all too often that person has had to expend much time and energy seeking out the participants. It would make the job much easier if the ideas and proposals flowed to him in a steady stream. Selection and approval is not automatic, but all ideas are considered.

The ARSC Newsletter offers an opportunity to make announcements, ask questions, request research assistance, and bring up ideas for consideration of the readership. Its quarterly publication schedule and shorter deadline leadtimes make it a quicker way to get your message across. If you have a publication, product, or service to offer that is of interest to ARSC members, it can be publicized with a note in the Newsletter, an advertisement in the Journal, and a display at the Convention. If you have a record to be reviewed, send it to the Journal Review Editor, Les Gerber. If you know of publications or other items of interest that should be discussed in "For The Record" send them or the information about them to me. (You, too, can be one of my spys!)

If you are still mainly interested in soaking up the facts and knowledge about sound recordings, attendance at the conventions (and soon, the local branch meetings) can greatly further your quest. And once you are ready to step forward and help guide and run this organization there are many options. There are a number of standing and ad-hoc committees which could use your help and your input. And beyond that, ARSC is always desirous of fresh blood running for office on the Executive Board. The candidates are chosen by a nominating committee. You can inquire of the President of the status of the nominating committee, and when they are in the process of selection, they will usually be willing to consider suggestions or volunteers for candidates.

ARSC is not a closed shop. It is always open to new ideas, suggestions, and recommendations. This is how Mike Gray, and I, and all the other active ARSC members worked towards their positions. And this is an explanation, for the record, of what ARSC is, and can be, and was, as of late 1982/early 1983.

PART TWO: YES, VIRGINIA. THEY'RE STILL MAKIN' 'EM.

In my last column I presented information on 78 r.p.m. records which have been made since the total demise of the speed. I asked for information on any that I might have missed. A number of interesting things happened. Tim Brooks had seen an item in Billboard concerning a promotional Tommy Dorsey/Frank Sinatra 78 that RCA was releasing, but my contact inside RCA was unsure about it. So, awaiting confirmation, I sent my column to our esteemed editor without reference to this disc. No sooner than the pages were shipped to the printer than Steve Simels reported on the disc in the August 1982 issue of Stereo Review. Alas, I figured, now I'll never get a copy of the record. But shortly thereafter a copy arrived in my mailbox! My contact at RCA had come through!

The delay, it appears, is that the records were not available until June 29. Anyway, I used the occasion to get a little free publicity for ARSC by writing a letter to the editor of SR. It seems that Simels' item suggested that this "may be the first such in over three decades." While mentioning my column--which still had not appeared--I listed the promotional 78's that I knew about. That is why some of you saw my letter in the October 1982 SR discussing the Dorsey/Sinatra 78 before you saw my column which did not mention that record!

Full details of that record appears below along with what details I was able to gather about three other recent 78s. This information came from a number of people who wrote in response to my SR letter, not, unfortunately, this column. I frankly am amazed that apparently I had known of five times as many records of this category as I had not. That's a ratio of 15 to 3. Certainly there must be more of them out there.

Private Stock [England] number unknown. Robert Gordon

"The Fool."

reverse side unknown.

All that is known about this record is that it is a 12" pressing released possibly as a promotional item in 1977.

Solid Rock SREP-207-DJ Daniel Amos

Side A I Believe In You; Hound of Heaven; Horrendous Disc.
mx. SREP-207-A

Side B On the Line. mx. SREP-207-B

This is a ten inch pressing on marbled blue and white vinyl giving the impression of a cloudy sky, according to my informant. Side one is at 33 1/3 r.p.m. Only side two is at 78 r.p.m. This was a promotional disc for the album "Horrendous Disc" by the religious rock group Daniel Amos, on Solid Rock SRA-2011 in 1980. The labels (my correspondant, apparently a young rock collector, called it "the cardboard island in the center of the disc,") are dark blue with silver letters. The sleeve is off-white with black printing on the front. The label indicates that the record is distributed by Myrrh Records of Waco, Texas, while the cover indicates only the parent company, Word, Inc. As a play on the album title, in addition to mentioning that the record is "For Promotion Only: Not For Sale," it also says: "HANDLE AT YOUR OWN RISK! // The Horrendous Disc // by // Daniel Amos." I have not heard this record so I can't say if it is really horrendous, but if it is anything like some of the Jesus-rock records some of my students play . . .

Victor JN-13247-C (Mono) Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra.

Vocal refrain by Frank Sinatra, Connie Haines and The Pied Pipers.

[A] Oh! Look At Me Now. mx. JN-13247

10", raised rim and center, dull gold on dull black label, 3 5/8" diameter with raised pressing ring 2 7/8" diameter. Label is a fuzzy facsimile of the original style, but includes such modern information as the new record number, the speed, "(Mono)," "NOT FOR SALE," and the intro, end, and total timings for DJ's. Reverse side has blank grooving and a white label.

The sleeve is a heavy brown kraft paper with a 2 7/8" center hole on both sides. The front is printed with the format of the three albums this record promoted, "The Tommy Dorsey Frank Sinatra Sessions, Volumes 1,2, and 3," but nowhere did they actually give the LP album numbers!! A limited edition serial number is crash printed in the lower right corner. (Mine is No. 80.) The back of the sleeve reprints the original review of the record from The Billboard, Feb. 1, 1941. Below it is a mention of scope of the LP sets with an indication that "Where the masters were not available, the highest-quality 78s were sought from collectors so that the entire Dorsey/Sinatra era could be presented . . ." Embarrassed again, eh, RCA? In a box at the bottom is this note: "This is a special limited-edition 78 disc. Only 1,000 copies have been pressed to mark the release of The Dorsey.Sinatra Sessions (Volumes 1,2, & 3). June 29, 1982." Enclosed was a two page press release with a decorated cover, all on gray paper, which gave further information on the disposition of these records: "Only one thousand numbered copies of the record will be pressed; the first will be given to President and Mrs. Reagan. The remaining 78's will be sent to select members of the press, radio and retail communities and, in some cases, be used as special prizes in radio contests on 130 "Music Of Your Life" format stations and Sid Mark's Sinatra Program, which airs in 21 markets." (I suppose Frank had to enter a contest to get a copy! Rather than give him copy No. 1, RCA chose to give it to the President, perhaps to influence him favorably towards the anti-taping measures the record industry is crying for. I hope the bribe of one record won't influence him in either direction--but this record has become a rather expensive instant collector's item. The Sinatra fans are willing to pay ridiculously high prices for his records.)

Gary Shivers, who edits a Sinatra club magazine, reports that a friend of his in Kansas City has a copy with the number 1206--so there may be more than 1,000 copies out there.

Warner Bros. number unknown Leon Redbone

Titles and any further information unknown except that this was a 10" promotional 78 released in 1978. It is appropriate to have a Leon Redbone 78 release because he is about as close to the 1920's as we are liable to get in rock-oriented pop music for some time. Who else could sing a song like "Shine On

Harvest Moon" on NBC's "Saturday Night Live" and not only get away with it, but make appearances on four shows! (I never fast-scan through his numbers on my SNL time-shift videotapes!) (That also goes for Eubie Blake and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band who each made one appearance on the series.)

Unfortunately, I must end this edition of this section on an unhappy note. For the past year there have been advertisements in the collectors' press about the forthcoming release of new vinyl pressings off the original stampers of sides from Gennett, Brunswick, Paramount, Decca, Victor, and others. The first set was to be of "Classic Jazz" with sides by artists like Alphonso Trent, Jimmy Blythe, Albert Wynn, and Junie Cobb. It was scheduled for the fall of 1982. The latest word I have received (second hand) is that the project has been shelved for the time being because allegedly MCA was demanding full payment up-front before starting any of the pressing. Boxed sets of 12 records each were planned for the areas of Jazz, opera, blues, personality, and country. I hope to present details if any of the records ever come out. The company's name and address is: Old Masters, Ltd., P.O. Box 351, Glendale, California 91209.

In the meantime, I again ask for any information about 78s from the modern era. As I said, there must be some others out there.

PART THREE: NEW BOOKS

Smart, James R. Radio Broadcasts In The Library of Congress 1924-1941: A Catalog of Recordings. Washington: Library of Congress, 1982. 149 + xiv pp. illus.

Both Jim and I were surprised when copies of this catalog arrived hardbound! We had expected it to be softbound like the Literary Recordings catalog I reviewed last year. This makes me a bit worried about the way this catalog will be treated and about the future it will have. I have a feeling that the people upstairs at LC think that the contents of this are now engraved in stone and completed. I am sure that Jim would be the first one to agree that nothing could be further from the truth. This is the working catalogue of a growing collection that still has a backlog of cataloging to be done. What we have here is the status report as of some day in mid-1981. It was probably out-of-date the following week--I know it was when I saw the galleys in June 1982, because Jim pointed over to a stack of cards that had been compiled since the catalog went to the typewriter. I just hope that the powers that be will not look at the great expense they went to with the hard binding when a decision is made to publish the next edition in (I hope) not too many years. Just remember as you use this, that there are now many, many more great broadcast recordings where these came from! And as they are cataloged I hope LC will publish new editions.

The recordings are listed in chronological order, which I especially appreciate because it makes it easy for me to see at a glance all of the

earliest recordings from the 1920s which has become a speciality of mine. This might be a disadvantage to others, but they are welcome to start by using the index. Because the contents within a program and the names of the entire cast are not listed, only the title and/or the main personality will be listed. The index shows you the date to refer to. The main listing will have the date, the title, a mention of the approximate length of the recording in minutes, the originating station or the key flagship station of the network, and a locating number to find the recording. If the program has been transferred to tape then there is no way to determine from this catalogue what form the original of the recording took. LC has many, but not all, of the originals. I realize that most users don't care what the originals were, they only want to hear the tape. But in order to be able to document the broadcast recording industry I have to see the originals--many of them I have. I fully expect one day to take some time out and with book in hand go through the shelves and stacks and annotate this with physical descriptions and matrix numbers. A few matrix numbers do appear on the first page from the 1920's. These are from the A.F.R. Lawrence collection of vinyl test pressings from Columbia which were discussed and listed by Jim in the Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress, January 1975. From experience with these discs I can tell you that there is a good deal of interesting discographical discoveries hidden away in this catalogue under the guise of a tape number!

24 of the only 25 recordings from the 1920's appear all on the first page. 11 of them are of 1929 "Amos 'n' Andy" WMAQ syndicated broadcasts. In one respect it made me glad that Jim did not have a chance to show me the catalog before it was frozen in the galley proof stage--he would have had to delete the "Amos 'n' Andy" recordings because he had set the guidelines that only recordings of live broadcasts were to be included. Not recordings made for broadcast. From the evidence these programs were recorded in a studio--Marsh Labs at first, possibly Brunswick by the time of these recordings--and the scripts were later done live on WMAQ on the day all the other 40 stations were playing the record. The records were also used on WMAQ in the last months prior to going over to NBC.

The first sentence of the introduction is a little cryptic about this exclusionary practice: "This catalogue lists audio recordings available for study in the Library of Congress that stem from live radio broadcasts aired before the end of 1941--a period when virtually all network programming was 'live.'" He does not come out and say that only live broadcasts were to be included and all recordings made for a broadcast were to be excluded. We have to infer this, and the accidental inclusion of the syndicated "Amos 'n' Andy" discs could confuse the knowledgeable user.

Actually, I would have preferred that this limitation not have been made. It automatically wipes out any syndicated programming from being included. While the idea probably was to avoid having to include music library services such as NBC Theasurus, World Broadcasting System, and Standard, it eliminated many interesting commercial items that LC has.

It biases the catalogue unfairly towards network programming merely because it was broadcast while it was being performed. Indeed, on these grounds we should object to the inclusion of the Mark 56 commercial release of Herbert Morrison's complete Hindenberg Disaster recording because it was not a live broadcast. It is footnoted as such, but the version in question is from the original master discs across town at the National Archives, and as such is more complete than anything possibly broadcast at that time.

My point is that I wish none of these had to be excluded. The quantity of syndicated programming at LC is not that great and it is being catalogued at the same time as these recordings are. I might mention that I know that there are some very interesting recordings at LC which are not included although they do meet the criteria for inclusion. This includes a fascinating glimpse at the sound of local radio in mid-1935 from WNEW in the A.F.R. Lawrence collection, and many short air-checks recorded in 1931 and 1932 by Robert W. Gordon on little 6 1/2-inch aluminum Remson discs. The former probably got lost in the shuffle (it's XTO 1582, Jim) but the latter discs came with absolutely no documentation and I know that there has not been enough time to research these, and they probably will never be accurately datable. If they had been included then they would have been the exception to the statement that "apparently none of the recordings in this catalogue was made on . . . home recording devices . . ."

There are a few other things I would have tightened up in the introduction. It makes it appear that the networks themselves made the recordings in the early years when this was not the case. NBC relied on outside recording studios until 1934 and CBS until 1938. He also makes it seem that uncoated aluminum discs were 16-inches in diameter, when they were almost always 10 or 12-inches only. Coated aluminum discs were made with cellulose nitrate lacquer, not cellulose acetate. They should only be called "lacquers," not "acetates." Acetate discs were something else again. While the terms are commonly confused, we should try to encourage the correct use of the terms.

I will abide by the explanation given as to why some programs appear with their popularly remembered titles like "The Jack Benny Program" rather than an official title like "The Jell-O Program Starring Jack Benny." I might not agree with it but he makes a good case for it. Except that he violates it very quickly. While not using "Town Hall Tonight" which was a distinctly formatted program of Fred Allen's, Allen's first series, "The Lint Bath Club Revue," is listed under that title. The format of Allen's programs changed as the title changed and should be treated the same way as the different TV situation comedies starring Lucille Ball must be treated. I can sense where the problem is: when 1942 rolls around and the Armed Forces Radio Service un-commercialized versions of the programs are catalogued side-by-side with a network original version, then there is going to be trouble unless a common title is selected. Personally I would rather use the title we hear on the disc and let the index be used to cross-list. At least we should all be

deliriously happy that people are not alphabetized by their FIRST name as so many of the radio tape-traders do!

But these are nit-picks, because this is a very fine first effort. It belongs on the shelves of everyone who might feel a need to reference a broadcast recording from the pre-WWII era. The scope of the recordings contained in the LC collection is overwhelming, and this catalogue gives us a portable glance for the first time. Sure, they are a little heavy in "Easy Aces," Nino Martini, and Andre Kostelanetz's Chesterfield Program, but this is an indication of how this collection is formed, the philosophy of those entrusted with its care and retention, and the understanding that it is the potential user, not the storehouse keeper, who should be the judge of the value of the items. Drama, news, opera, symphonic music, light comedy, world statesmen, soap opera, pop music, jazz, and much more are to be found here. It is the tip of the iceberg of perhaps the finest collection of broadcast recordings in the world. Sure, it doesn't have everything. Yes, I have many early broadcasts from the '20s that they don't have. But between LC and the National Archives and UCLA and the other major public and private collections we have a chance to save what is left. Perhaps this catalogue is the first step in increasing public awareness in these institutions as being the foremost preservers of this material; and that a collection with as great a depth as this one has, is what is really needed when any serious research is to be done.

Barnes, Ken. The Crosby Years. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.
216 pp. illus.

Relax, this is not just another biography of Bing Crosby. It is not going to tell you about how rotten he was to his first set of kids. And it is not going to leave an evil taste in your mouth like Michael Brooks' article on the inner-sleeve of all three volumes of Columbia's "A Bing Crosby Collection." Instead, this book is going to tell you what a peach of a man Bing was, told through the eyes and experience of the producer of most of his last records.

If you have any of these albums made by Bing in the 1970s then you must also get this book to explain those records. It goes into exacting details including reprinting the letters that went back and forth across the Atlantic between Crosby and Barnes while they were in the initial stages of planning the albums, all the way through to the recording, mixing, and editing. You might not think that Crosby had any singing voice left by the time these records were made, but it is fascinating reading how they came to be recorded.

The middle part of the book is an analysis of what Barnes feels are Crosby's greatest records from the past. Following an essay the early formative years through early 1931, Barnes goes on a year by year view of specific records from 1931 through 1959, with an essay on the '60s and '70s. What follows this is one of the most laughable excuses for a

Discography that has been seen in book form for some time. This listing is chronological by recording date, but although only commercially issued recordings are listed, there are no record numbers included at all! All we have is the date, the title and accompaniment, and most useless of all, the writers of the song. There is no way for a collector to use this discography to learn anything important about their records that other discographies do not do better, with the exception of a few foot-noted anecdotes. One of these shows how important matrix and record numbers are to a real discography. He lists only one version of "Robins and Roses" in the March 29, 1936 session but footnotes it as being a parody "directed against various Jewish publishers who almost monopolized the industry." The record referred to in the footnote, which he mentions "was made, for a joke, at the end of the session" was matrix DLA-326. The issued version of the song was not a parody, and was recorded in the indicated early portion of the session on matrix DLA-323-A and released on Decca 791 and English Brunswick 02223. The two are different recordings--the numbers alone would tell you--but he doesn't feel the numbers are worthy of inclusion. The footnote should have begun: "Also recorded at the end of the session was a parody of this song . . ." instead of the way he noted it: "This was a parody which became a collectors' item . . ." The numbers also would have shown that "Would You" was really the first song of the March 29 session rather than the last of March 24. Are there other errors as well? Yes. A July 4, 1943 recording of "Mississippi Mud" and "I Left My Sugar Standing In the Rain" is listed as being composed by "Chase, Sanborn, Borris, Fair and Kahal." Sounds like a stock broker or law firm for the coffee industry! Judging from the earlier recordings of this pair of intermixed songs, the composers should have been listed as "Barris, Cavanaugh, Fain and Kahal." Was this a recording session or a broadcast? What would Paul Whiteman's Orchestra be doing making a record before Decca signed the AFM contract? And why would anyone work at a recording session on a holiday? Well, with a little research on my part it turns out to be the broadcast of "Paul Whiteman Presents" sponsored by Chase and Sanborn Coffee and Tenderleaf Tea. This is the famous reunion of the three Rhythm Boys with Whiteman which was issued in an edited form (deleting the original announcer, Bill Goodwin) by Grand Award Records in the '50s. (I guess we are lucky Barnes didn't include "Tenderleaf" as one of the composers!) But these are the sort of things a discography is supposed to tell us--not make us search for.

What makes this discography even more laughable is the notation at the end of Barnes' request for info on omissions, that "every effort has been made to include everything except matrix numbers." Where are the issue numbers??? There also is a "Filmography" but what is missing most of all is some sort of listing of television broadcasts. They are the least documented of all of his activities. They could have been included at the end of this section. As for the radio broadcasts, they are being fully documented elsewhere by Larry Kiner and others. But Barnes does include an interesting sidelight to the Crosby radio career when he describes the re-working, over-dubbing, and issuing of songs sung on broadcasts from the mid-'50s. That story is worth the price of the book.

The most unusual section is saved for last; the reprinting of the music for ten songs sung by Bing in his career. Not all of them are "his" songs, such as "As Time Goes By" which the sheet music heading notes is from "Casablanca." What we really would have wanted were the covers of the sheet music. Still, this is a valuable book because it provides an unequalled and detailed look at the last years of the recording career of one of the industry's most important personalities. And that part of the book can not be faulted.

Hounsoume, Terry, and Chambre, Tim. Rock Record. New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1981. 526 + X pp.

When the top of a book cover exclaims: "Everything you ever wanted to know about damn near every rock record ever made--ever!" you sit up and take notice. And when the publisher is the esteemed Facts on File company, you drop everything to look at it. After all, even Walter Cronkite has "Facts On File" in his shelves in his office, and if the most trusted man in America trusts it, well . . .

What we are confronted with is a computer generated discographic listing with so little white space that only a computer can read it. The lettering is so small that even Lenny Kunstadt of Record Research magazine would be envious! But even the Acknowledgements page is a pain to the eyes to read--and the lettering on that page is very LARGE. No, layout is the chief problem. The object was to cram the most facts in the least space--if you really need to know the info you will force yourself to read it!

A main feature of this book is the complete personnel rosters which are keyed to the albums each person played on. This includes not only groups, but also the back-up musicians for solo artists. Each main listing is given an initial letter and number code which becomes the indexing reference. Thus you can find out on what albums your favorite back-up axman played.

Each main artist listing also includes the titles of each album, along with the year of initial release, the U.S. and U.K. record company, and the record numbers, complete with prefix letters in most cases. The records are listed chronologically by release year, and re-issues are listed with the original issues with the new date, but this is only if the title remained the same. The possible abridging of the contents is not mentioned, nor are the selection titles in the albums--which is something I might want to know about some (if not damn near every) record. The British origin of the book shows in the improper use of "CBS" instead of "Columbia" for American issues. CBS has been a distinctly different label name from Columbia at times. All RCA or RCA Victor records are listed as just RCA, while RCA Camden is listed as Camden.

It may not be the perfect discography, but it will become a convenient one-volume "first place to look" when all you might need is a record number or a release year. With Ken Clee taking care of the 45s, it may now be easier to locate the existence of a rock record (if you care about such things!)

Katz, Mickey, as told to Hannibal Coons. Papa, Play for Me. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977. 223 pp. illus.

A few days ago I was wandering through my bookshelves and I suddenly realized that I had never mentioned this book. Actually, there is not much needed to be said other than to announce that Mickey Katz has written his autobiography! That alone should be enough to encourage many of you to seek out this book.

For record collectors, there is a chapter covering his work with Spike Jones, and another chapter covering his recording career with RCA Victor and Capitol. This latter chapter includes some illuminating examples of problems faced trying to get his records played on certain radio stations back in the late '40s and early '50--things were just as strange then as now!

The book is generously laced with humor, as one might expect. There are a few slight errors such as placing RCA Victor's factory in Scranton (that's where Capitol's was), calling one album his second when really it was his third, and pre-dating two albums by about six years each in the captions for their photos. But these are extremely minor. Naturally, the book also tells about the early career of Katz's son, Joel Gray, who also wrote the book's introduction. And we are reminded of the great jazz musicians who always graced his records. Also revealed for the first time--is that it was Mickey who did the frog glugs on Pinto Colvig's truly great Bozo record "Filbert the Frog."