

CHUCK SCHADEN'S NOSTALGIA DIGEST AND RADIO GUIDE

BOOK TWENTY-EIGHT

CHAPTER SIX

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2002

Hello, Out There in Radioland!

Our long radio nightmare is over.

As you probably know by now, *Those Were The Days* and all other programming on WDCB, 90.9 FM has returned to full broadcast strength after seven long months in "radio limbo" following the collapse of the station's antenna tower last December.

The tower came down, in fact, right in the middle of our Christmas broadcast, shortly after 3 p.m., on Saturday, December 22. The station was off the air entirely for four days before resuming its regular schedule of programming, but at greatly reduced power.

From that point on, continuing until about 10 p.m. Wednesday, July 17, most WDCB listeners heard only silence or distant sounds from other radio stations transmitting near 90.9 FM and "sneaking" onto the WDCB frequency.

All of the station's programming continued but only listeners within a limited broadcast radius could actually hear the material being presented on the air.

WDCB quickly added streaming audio technology to the station's website and, since early January, all the station's programming -- including *Those Were The Days* -- has been available via the Internet and the world wide web. So, we were heard around the world, but hardly at all in the Chicago area. Ironic, wasn't it?

But now we're back, broadcasting over the airwaves at full power. Many listeners have noted that our signal is better than ever, especially in some of the "fringe" areas.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to you for "hanging in there" during this tough time in our broadcast "life" and for being so patient. You are the greatest and we are humbled by your loyalty. We know that it has not been easy for you because it hasn't been easy for us, either.

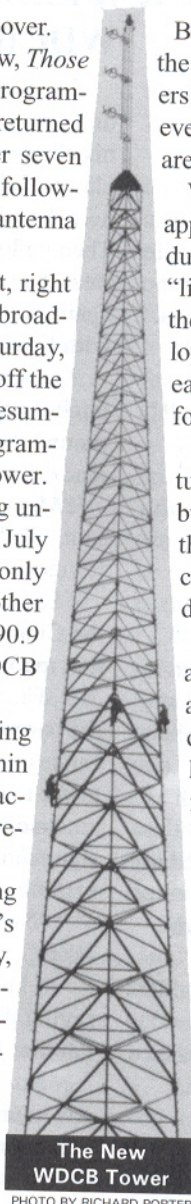
We would also like to offer our gratitude to our on-the-air supporters, the businesses who stayed with us through the "reduced audience" months. We cannot thank you enough for your dedication to our program.

And we want to salute WDCB management and staff who had to deal with all the administrative and technical considerations, delays and other problems that go with the preparation and installation of a new transmitter tower. We know it wasn't easy!

Now, as we've noted before in the *Nostalgia Digest*, and as we've said on the air, it is our plan to repeat, in the coming months, significant vintage broadcasts and features from *TWTD* during the seven-month "reduced power" period.

So that's just what we're going to do because WE'RE BACK and it sure feels GREAT!

--Chuck Schaden



The New
WDCB Tower

PHOTO BY RICHARD PORTER



THE NEW ADVENTURES OF THE CINNAMON BEAR

-OR-

SO THAT'S WHAT *REALLY* HAPPENED TO THE WDCB TOWER

A Fable for Old Time Radio Fans

BY WAYNE KLATT

"Gee, whillikers," Jimmy said, "I sure hope the silver star is safe."

"Don't be silly," Judy told him, "that Crazy Quilt Dragon won't be able to get it way up on top of the WDCB tower."

"I don't know," said Jimmy, "it's getting pretty close to Christmas and all."

Said a high-tenor voice in the corner, "Such a worry wart, didn't I put it up meself?" It was Paddy O'Cinnamon, who was wrapping gifts.

But as they spoke, the Crazy Quilt Dragon climbed out of Lake Michigan, shook himself off, and was prowling around the suburbs for something that interested him. Just then the late December afternoon sun was reflecting off the silver star atop the radio antenna.

"Oh, pretty-pretty," said the dragon as he approached the three-hundred-foot tower and started to climb. He inched up toward the top and just when his paw-tips touched one of the silver points, there was a crraaaack!!

"Oh, my goodness," said Crazy Quilt. Instead of sliding down, he hung on tighter, and that's when the tower crashed to the ground, but all the extra-special stuffing in Crazy Quilt just made him go flat instead of hurting him. Never wanting to take responsibility for what he

did, Crazy Quilt ripped a little patch off his elbow and wrote with one of his claws: "I didn't do it, and I wasn't even here. Yours truly, Crazy Quilt, Esquire." Then he loped off without even trying to steal the star, which could never break again because Santa Claus had mended it with Krazy Quilt Glue.

Later, when Judy and Jimmy went to fetch the star, they saw the tower on the ground. "Oh, oh, will Mr. Schaden be mad," Jimmy said.

"Maybe Santa Claus will fix it," Judy said. "Paddy, would you make a sleigh for us?"

"Sure as my middle name isn't O," the Cinnamon Bear said, even though that made no sense at all.

The twins and Paddy went down to the harbor and made a sleigh out of old canoes and sail cloth, and they hauled the tower to the North Pole. When they reached Santa's workshop, they saw a sign reading: *Closed for Vacation. Gone Fishing.*

"Now what will we do?" Jimmy asked.

"I know. Let's put out a press release saying the tower will be fixed by late February."

But the twins had many more adventures, and Jack Benny month passed in silence for the thousands of fans who lived outside the little beep

beep beep that the station transmitted without its proud tower.

"Oh, now what ever do we do?" Judy asked.

Paddy piped up by saying: "Never think you're alone in the world." Then he put his fist in his little mouth and whistled a whistle that made the twins and two rabbits jump in alarm.

Soon everyone heard the singing of the cowboys, led by Mr. Slim Pickens. "Need a hand?" he asked. "Why didn't you say so?"

Pickens and the other cowboys galloped around the tower and lassoed every part that stood out, then they hauled it across the mud land with the help of Indians.

Everyone set to work with hammers and solder guns, but the project was just too big for them.

"That's it," shouted Cinnamon Bear, "let's get Fee Fo the Giant!"

"I'm sorry, but we can't," Pickens said, pushing back his cowboy hat, "he's in retirement."

"Retirement/re-smirement, as long as he didn't shrink we can use him," Paddy said.

Then came another whistle. This time it was so loud the tough cowboy hid under a cactus. Then came the thump, thump, thump of the biggest man in Maybe Land.

"Please, Mr. Fee Fo..." Judy began.

"I see what you need," he said, his gentle voice quivering the ground. "Mr. Crazy Quilt, come here."

"M-m-m-me?" cowardly Crazy Quilt asked.

"See that bent ridge? Breathe on it."

But C.Q. was so scared all he could do was INhale until his eyes seemed to pop. Impatient, the giant took him by the neck, shook him a few times, then held him upside down over the tower and

patted his rump. Suddenly a blast of flame came out, and the twisted piece of metal bent back into shape all by itself.

"What do you know," the dragon said, his words making a kind of alphabet-soup of smoke in the air, "I am good for something! Oh joy!"

Fee Fo put a fingertip on Judy's and Jimmy's shoulders and said, "See, we'll have this thing fixed in no time as long as we work together. Each of us has some skill the others don't. It's all a matter of finding out what it is."

After many adventures, they arrived at the tower base in July. Fee Fo the Giant and the cowboys hoisted the tower into place, and Crazy Quilt kept breathing fire onto the broken parts of metal until they fused together.

Since Fee Fo's voice could be heard for thirteen and a half miles, he said, "How's that, Mr. Schaden?"

Chuck, who was stationed outside the broadcast range, turned on his radio and could hear his own program for the first time since December. "Loud and clear," he called out, and Cinnamon Bear ran with the message back to the tower.

When Mr. Schaden reached them by motor-scooper, a sort of bicycle that operates on ice cream, he told all his friends, "I don't know how to thank you."

"There is one way," Cinnamon Bear said. "You can have another Jack Benny Month for those who missed it through no fault of their own."

Mr. Schaden scratched his head and said, "Maybe not a whole month, but maybe I can work in a few extra shows between now and next February."

"Yeayyyy" they all shouted.

THE END

Tune in TWTD October 12 for the Best of Jack Benny Month, 2002.