

The famous sign was built in 1923 to lure new buyers to an upscale housing tract. Vandals and time took a toll, and in 1949 the LAND was removed and the other letters renovated. Each is 50 feet tall by 30 wide.

## STORIES FROM PIPA BILL

### *HOLLYWOODLAND*

It was never explained to me at age ten exactly why we went to California in early 1938. But I was certain about one aspect, even then: it had something to do with money!

Most commentators, especially if they did not live in that era, think of "The Great Depression" as a sad episode which began in 1929 and spanned the early 1930's. But for many, the years 1937-8 were the worst years of all, sometimes called the "Roosevelt Depression." Not even during the collapse of 1929 - 32 had the industrial index shrunk at such a terrific rate. The stock market collapsed again and what was close to our own family experience: General Motors fell from \$60 per share to \$25 per share, and Chrysler fell from \$118 per share to \$35 per share. General Motors went to a three-day week as auto inventories accumulated. Nationally, two million (more!) men were thrown out of work in a few months.

Our family strategy is not clear to me to this day, but it involved driving to California in a Packard and selling the car there. Then, my father would return to Des Moines and repeat that same scenario with another car. We returned to Des Moines in 1939 by train.

The route was, however, clear: We took the "mother" road, Route 66, headed to California as so many did at the same time. As John Steinbeck was creating the most significant novel of the Great Depression, "The Grapes of Wrath," we witnessed the counterparts of the Joad family. As they desperately sought an escape in California from the plight of the dust bowl, we saw their automobiles. The Joads made their trip in a rundown Hudson (curiously, my father would one

day become the oldest Hudson dealer in the U.S.). Our trip was in a 1937 Packard sedan.

We were confronted by the same rude inspectors asking if we had any fruits or vegetables. The Joads didn't have any; we didn't either. I remember too automobiles loaded with pots and pans, even crates of dishes and sometimes live chickens -- all these families' belongings -- and I can't forget the dead armadillos in the road!

*Highway 66 is the main migrant road. 66 - the long concrete path across the country, waving gently up and down on the map, from the Mississippi to Bakersfield -- over the red lands and the gray lands, twisting up into the mountains, crossing the Divide and down into the bright and terrible desert, and across the desert to the mountains again, and into the rich California valleys.*

*66 is the path of a people in flight, refugees from dust and shrinking land, from the thunder of tractors and shrinking ownership, from the desert's slow northward invasion, from the twisting winds that howl up out of Texas, from the floods that bring no richness to the land and steal what little richness is there. From all of these the people are in flight, and they come into 66 from the tributary side roads, from the wagon tracks and the rutted country roads. 66 is the mother road, the road of flight.*

*The people in flight stream out on 66, sometimes a single car, sometimes a little caravan. All day they roll slowly along the road, and at night they stop near water. In the day ancient leaky radiators send up columns of steam, loose connecting rods hammered and pounded. And the men driving the trucks and the overloaded cars*

*listen apprehensively. How far between towns? It is a terror between towns. If something breaks – well, if something breaks we camp right here while Jim walks to town and gets a part and walks back and – how much food we got?*

John Steinbeck, "GRAPES OF WRATH"

Packard was the first manufacturer to put air conditioning in the auto vehicle, but that was not until 1939. We drove with the windows down except when the road was not paved. Needles, California was memorable: the hottest spot in the USA; there, "even rattlesnakes sweat."

But the trip was not all dull or miserable. We saw the Grand Canyon, the Hoover Dam and the Petrified Forest, not to mention countless tourist traps and bleached skulls and bones which formed the basis for much of Georgia O'Keefe's art.

But the most memorable episode was one created by myself. In 1938, the most popular radio (there was no television!) entertainers were Charlie McCarthy and Edgar Bergen. We think today of Jerry Seinfeld as an enormous success with a 22% market share, but Charlie McCarthy would bring much higher ratings in 1938. And Charlie McCarthy dolls, together with Shirley Temple dolls, would exceed the present success of beanie babies. My mother bought me a Charlie McCarthy doll in Kansas City to amuse and keep me occupied during the trip. But apparently the dolls had not reached Amarillo, Texas where by the time we arrived, I had developed the proficiency of a junior Edgar Bergen. This caught the attention of a large Texan who approached me and said, "Son, ah lock ya doll! Tell ya what: Ah! giv ya two hunna dollars for it!" Understand that this was the equivalent of \$3,000 in today's currency. In the depths of the Great Depression, this was like winning the lottery! I don't remember all that followed. I cherished and clutched the doll as if he were my dearest friend. Mother would assure me

(privately) we could get another. Did she sell it? My brother Jack has reminded me, "She sold everything else, didn't she!"

In the past year, one of Bergen's own dummies sold for \$150,000. But I have priced a duplicate of my doll (an antique now) at \$250.

Route 66 was officially closed in June 1977, but patches of it still exist; the longest portion is in northern Arizona. In my senior year in prep school, Nat King Cole and later the Andrews Sisters immortalized Bobby Troup's song, "Get Your Kicks on Route 66."

And we finally arrived in Los Angeles. It must have taken over ten days to make the trip; imagine that when today you can fly in less than three hours. But today, navigating the city in an automobile is a far greater challenge. It is actually possible to take days to just cross town!

We lived at first in my grandparents home in what was called Hollywoodland. This same space was occupied by Wilbur Shaw just five years earlier and is described in his autobiography, *Gentlemen, Start your Engines*:

*At that time our home was a small apartment in a house on top of a mountain which was part of a restricted area called Hollywoodland.*

*Originally, the apartment had been a laundry room in the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Peverill and their daughter Wilma. He was a retired Packard distributor from Waterloo, Iowa, and had been told he had only one year to live. He felt certain he could make a liar out of his doctor – and did – by getting lots of sunshine, fresh air and moderate*

*exercise. Being a mid-westerner, he also had converted the laundry room into one of the most attractive little apartments I had ever seen.*

Shaw was the nation's most outstanding race car driver pre-World War II. He won the Indy three times (a first) and was singularly responsible for saving the Indianapolis Speedway after the war. He became a good friend of my Dad's, and rumor has it they once raced on Fleur Drive (Des Moines) at 3 A.M. in a couple of "souped up" Hudsons.

The house was located at 2841 Hollyridge Drive and is still there. It was just a few blocks from the huge sign Hollywood, that grand icon of the 20th century. But then the sign read, Hollywoodland and called attention to the area as a development. The "land" was removed after the war. My brother Jack and I would play in and around these letters which are over 30 feet high.

I went to school, fourth grade, at Cheremoya Grade School which was on Cheremoya Avenue and, while the avenue still exists, the school (I am told) has been torn down. Attached is a copy of my report card which defines the school as a precursor to Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegone where "the women are strong and all the children are above average."

We moved from Hollyridge Drive to the La Belle Tour, an apartment hotel in Hollywood. John Charles Thomas lived there too, but of greater interest to Jack and me was the penthouse apartment rented by Laurel and Hardy. We never actually saw them, but we would regularly push the elevator "PH," ride up, and look around. The hotel was just blocks from Grauman's Chinese Theater where famous actors and actresses would put their hands and feet in concrete. I would walk to see the activities which were many and memorable at that time. Mickey Rooney and Charlie McCarthy were "installed" that summer.

Some of the greatest films ever produced were in the process of being created or completed in 1938: *Gone With The Wind*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Good-bye Mr. Chips*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Mr. Smith Goes To Washington*, *Jezebel*.

Perhaps my mother was caught up in the same momentum, as she made her stage mother effort to get me into the movies -- *Our Gang* to be more specific. We actually met with the producer, Hal Roach, who claimed to like me, could probably use me, but (was it an excuse, while true?) he was currently out of production. Family rumor also holds that an effort to make me Mickey Rooney's understudy was also attempted, but I don't remember that. I do remember meeting at the Fox Studio, Shirley Temple, then at the height of her popularity. She is exactly four months older than I.

Probably more memorable in the light of later developments was most of a day spent with Ronald "Dutch" Reagan. Reagan was a good friend of my two uncles, Dite and Hi Myers, and my mother. They had all spent many hours at the Moonlight Inn in Des Moines, and Reagan was toastmaster at Hi's bachelor party. He had only recently moved to Hollywood but was close to being engaged to Jane Wyman. The only thing I remember was asking him if he "really smoked Kentucky Club pipe tobacco" which he confirmed. Casting for the film, *Knute Rockne*, was in process at the time, and Reagan was picked for the ever memorable role of George Gipp. Pat O'Brien, who played Rockne, helped select Reagan for the part. O'Brien's wife was Eloise Taylor, a graduate of North High School (Des Moines)!

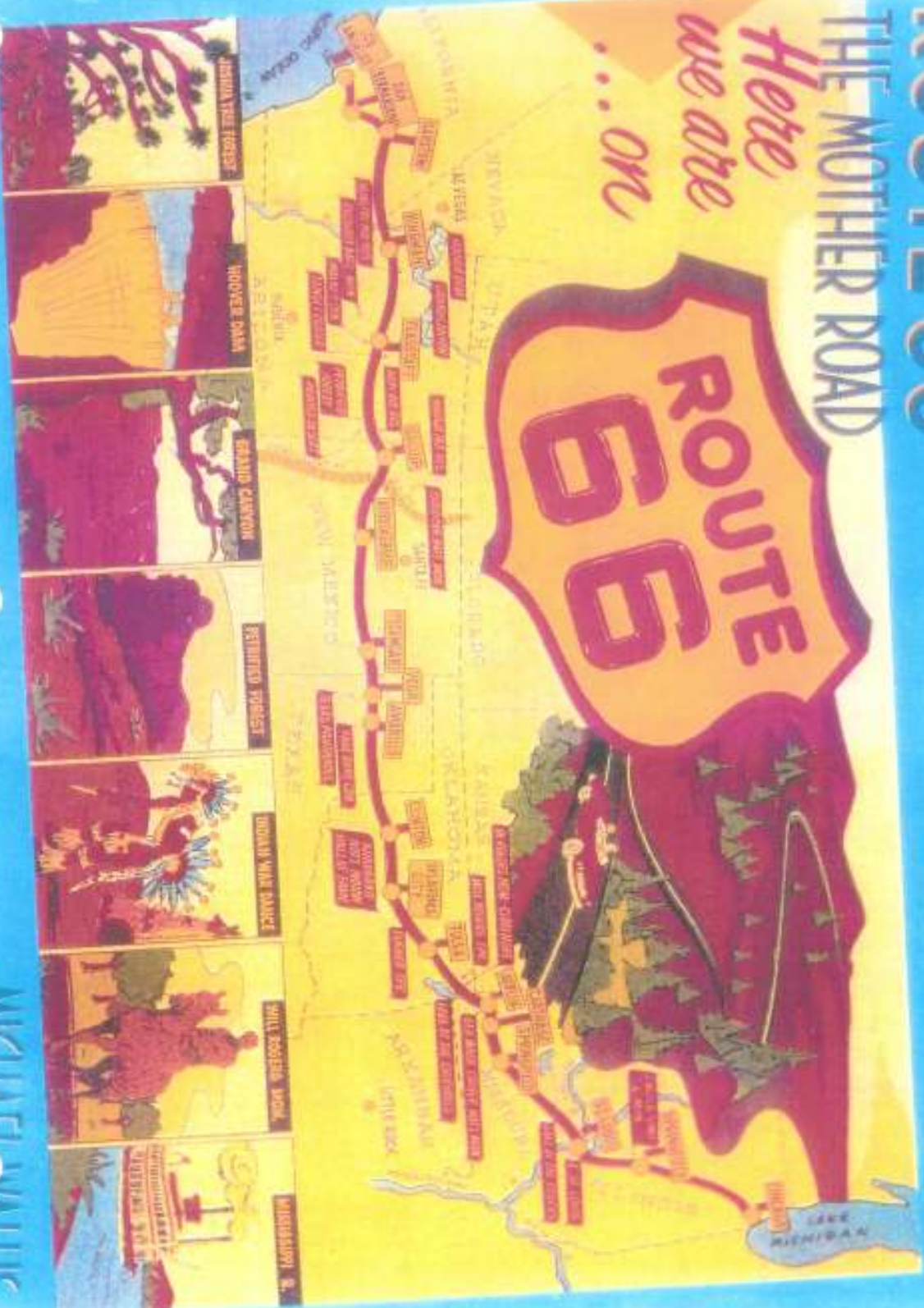
Reagan, of course, would sadly never remember these, or for that matter, many other events. Some would argue that he was one of our best Presidents, and history may give him this honor. Certainly, he was easily one of our best liked. There are many who would "win one for the Gipper," myself among them.



# ROUTE 66

THE MOTHER ROAD

*Here we are ... on*



MICHAEL WALKER



## EDGAR BERGEN'S ADVICE ON THE ART OF VENTRILOQUISM

VENTRILOQUISM, when once you understand the general idea, becomes a matter of practice—of saying something over and over until you have the sound effect just right. Actually, of course, the ventriloquist does not "throw" his voice—he only seems to do that. The more he seems to make his voice come from somewhere other than his own mouth, the greater is his skill at deception. For the ventriloquist, like the stage magician, is a master at deceiving his audience into believing something that is not so. After all, the ventriloquist IS doing all the talking, even if he does not appear to be saying a word.

That's the secret—not to appear to be saying a word. The first requisite in this is to refrain from moving your lips—the voice comes from within the throat (hence sometimes giving an excellent illusion of coming from a distance), and all enunciation must be achieved by the tongue and throat muscles. The lips are held slightly open, to permit the voice to come out, but otherwise they should be kept quite still—not rigid, but certainly motionless. When practicing this part of the art of ventriloquism, it is a good idea to look at yourself in a mirror, to detect the slightest twitch which may destroy the good ventriloquist's illusion.

A good way to begin to make sounds in your throat is as follows: Inhale deeply, and allow the breath to be exhaled slowly through your vocal chords, producing a kind of continuous groan. You should experiment with this exercise until the groan has become a clear, even voice tone. You can then raise the pitch or lower it to suit the voice you wish to create for ventriloquistic purposes—Charlie McCarthy's voice is pitched somewhat higher than my own natural speaking voice.

Once you have mastered the technique of producing a vocal tone through slightly parted lips, you are ready to try to speak words. The greatest trouble you will have to overcome is the avoidance of mumbling. When you do not move your lips—and you must not when you are supposed to be "throwing" your voice—you lose the aid of the lips in enunciating words clearly. But with practice you can overcome the difficulty, and there is always a way around any word which cannot be pronounced well without the use of the lips. Leave it out. Remember that whenever in sound motion pictures there is a word or phrase which blurs on the sound track, the dialogue is rewritten to get around the trouble. The ventriloquist is careful to use dialogue which best suits his art.

The illusion of voice throwing is secured by suggesting to the audience that the voice next to be heard is going to come from some other place than the ventriloquist's mouth. That is why a character like Charlie McCarthy is used—if his mouth moves as though it were really speaking, a better illusion is created, and the new voice is accepted more readily as coming from the "other speaker." Similarly, if the ventriloquist points to a closed trunk, or to the wings of the stage, or to some other place, and suggests that the voice or sound is to come from there, and the voice heard is then very much like that which would probably be heard if it did come from there, the voice seems to be thrown. This is especially true on a stage, where the performers are relatively close together and it is almost impossible for the audience to distinguish slight changes in the direction of sound.

So good luck—may you, too, succeed in this art or whatever you undertake!

EDGAR BERGEN

TO THE PARENTS:

This report is an estimate of the progress and needs of your child. When you have examined it, please sign below and return it to the school. If the report is not clear or if there is anything you wish to discuss with the teacher, you will be welcomed at the school.

VIERLING KERSEY,  
Superintendent

First Quarter

To the Teacher: I have examined this report.  
I wish to make the following comments:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Second Quarter

Assigned to Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal \_\_\_\_\_

To the Teacher: I have examined this report.  
I wish to make the following comments:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent \_\_\_\_\_

[4]

Los Angeles City School District

Form 34-E-6-312,500-3-17

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

of

LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA

PROGRESS REPORT OF

Bill Peverell  
Child's Name

GHEREMOYA SCHOOL

School

A-4  
Grade

April 8, 1963  
Date

Effie W. Logan  
Teacher

Grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

PROGRESS IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

	First Quarter	Second Quarter
<b>Reading</b>		
Understands what he reads	S	
Reads with reasonable speed	S	
Has good reading habits	S	
Reads widely	S	
<b>Language</b>		
Expresses ideas clearly in speech	S	
Expresses ideas well in writing	S	
Tends to use correct English	S	
<b>Spelling</b>		
Spells well in written work	S	
<b>Writing</b>		
Meets standard requirements	S	
<b>Arithmetic</b>		
Knows number facts adequately	S	
Shows ability to reason	S	
<b>Social Studies</b>		
Is able to discover and grasp facts	S	
Can use his information	S	
<b>Elementary Sciences</b>		
Works in this field with zest	S	
Has appreciation of nature	S	
<b>Practical Arts</b>		
Is gaining skill in using his hands	S	
Gaining in appreciation of beauty in materials and workmanship	S	
<b>Music</b>		
Shows increasing appreciation	S	
Enjoys singing or playing	S	
Growing in ability to read music	S	
<b>Art</b>		
Growing in appreciation of beauty	S	
Growing in ability of self-expression	S	
<b>Health Activities</b>		
Participates in physical activities	S	
Improving in health habits	S	

[2]

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR

	First Quarter	Second Quarter
<b>Cooperativeness</b>		
Works well with others	S	
Interested in the welfare of others	S	
<b>Courtesy</b>		
Is polite and mannerly	S	
Shows regard for others	S	
<b>Dependableness</b>		
Works well without being watched	S	
Is reliable in speech and conduct	S	
Respects possessions of others	S	
<b>Industry</b>		
Perseveres in work undertaken	S	
Not easily distracted	S	
<b>Initiative</b>		
Originates new activities	S	
Enters activities without urging	S	
<b>Judgment</b>		
Chooses sensibly when faced with need to make decisions	S	
<b>Orderliness</b>		
Neat in person	S	
Careful of belongings	S	
<b>Promptness</b>		
Is habitually on time	S	
Finishes work on time	S	
<b>Self-Reliance</b>		
Asks for help only when necessary	S	
Not easily discouraged	S	
<b>Days present:</b>	19.6	
<b>Days absent:</b>	2	
<b>Times tardy:</b>	1	

MEANING OF MARKS

The letter "S" indicates that the pupil is progressing satisfactorily for a pupil of his maturity.  
The letter "N" indicates that the pupil needs to improve.

[3]

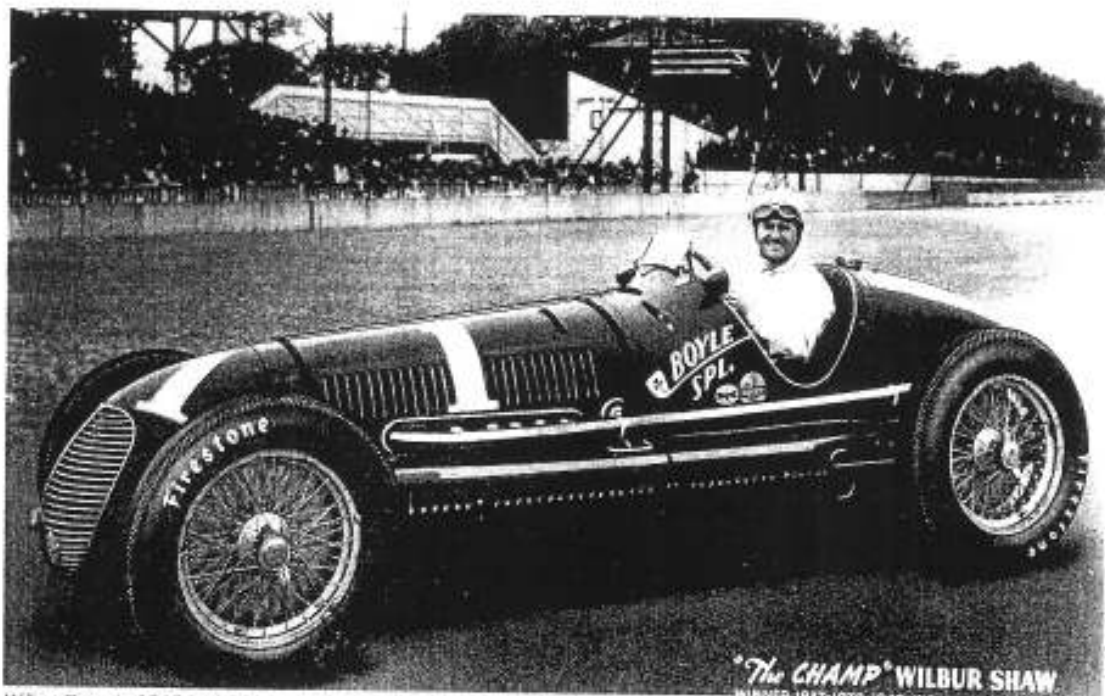


a helpless little boy about to burst into tears, because his playmates had grabbed all of his toys and were running away with them. Then I glanced at the pace car and realized, for one lap at least, I'd be out in front of the pack. Turning back to the mike, and taking a deep breath, I gave the traditional command: 'Gentlemen, start your engines.'"

The race was a success. The Speedway, under Shaw, survived and evolved into what it is today, largely because of Hulman's purchase of it in 1945—largely from the impetus of Shaw.

On October 30, 1954, while flying out of the Chrysler Corporation's private proving ground outside Chelsea, Michigan, where he had done a special testing of a pair of road cars, his plane's wings iced over. At 4:19, it crashed to earth in a corn field outside Decatur, Indiana. Shaw, his pilot, and a friend were killed instantly.

*At left  
Shaw being congratulated by fans after his 1939 Indy 500 victory. Shaw was a long-time Indianapolis resident, and was always smitten with the race and its traditions. Courtesy Bruce Craig*



*Wilbur Shaw in 1940 in the Maserati. He won his third Indy 500 in this car, which was his last. He won the race three times and the AAA championship three times as well. Courtesy Firestone*





### Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy Ceremony #45: July 20, 1938

They placed their prints in connection with the motion picture *Letter of Introduction* (Universal, 1938).

#### Edgar Bergen

Born: Edgar John Berggren on February 16, 1903, in Chicago, Illinois. Died: September 30, 1978.

The most famous ventriloquist in history, Edgar Bergen enjoyed a career that spanned more than fifty years. Aside from his ability to create hilarious comic repartee, Bergen's success was mainly attributable to his creation of the top-hatted, monocled dummy, Charlie McCarthy.

By age eleven Bergen discovered he had a gift for mimicry and throwing his voice, and by the end of his high school days he already had created the dummy that became Charlie McCarthy. In 1922 he made his professional debut at Chicago's New Mabel Theatre in a combination ventriloquism and magic act. He



finally branched out and played the Chautauqua and Lyceum vaudeville circuits, early on discarding the "magic" part of his act at the urging of management.

After making a hit at the Chez Paree in Chicago, he went to Hollywood and scored a huge success at the Casanova Club.

Bergen and Charlie began appearing in Vitaphone short subjects in 1930 and made about a dozen of them through 1937. Bergen set his sights on radio and was finally given a spot on Rudy Vallée's show in December 1936. By May 1937 Bergen had his own show (entitled "The Chase and Sanborn Hour," a.k.a. "The Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy Show"), which lasted for nineteen years.

In 1938 Bergen and Charlie entered feature films in *The Goldwyn Follies*. That same year Bergen received a Special Academy Award "for his outstanding comedy creation, Charlie McCarthy." Fittingly, the miniature Oscar statuette was made of wood.

Bergen later played straight dramatic roles without Charlie in such films as *I Remember*



Sid Grauman (left), Charlie McCarthy, producer/director John M. Stahl, Edgar Bergen, and cement artist Jean W. Klossner.



*Mama* (1948) and *Captain China* (1950).

His (and Charlie's) motion picture credits include "The Operation" (1930, short, debut), "The Office Scandal" (1930, short), *You Can't Cheat an Honest Man* (1939), *Charlie McCarthy, Detective* (1939), *Look Who's Laughing* (1941), *Here We Go Again* (1942), *Stage Door Canteen* (1943), *Song of the Open Road* (1944), *Won Ton Ton, the Dog Who Saved Hollywood* (1976), and *The Muppet Movie* (1979, final film).

### Charlie McCarthy

The wise-cracking dummy Charlie McCarthy was a sort of alter-ego to ventriloquist Edgar Bergen—Charlie argued with and insulted Edgar and made preposterous, witty, smart-alecky, and deflating remarks to just about everybody. Bergen often seemed astounded that words would come out of Charlie's mouth that could never come out of his own.

Charlie came into being when Bergen was a sophomore at Chicago's Lake View High School. One

day in school, Edgar sketched the face of an Irish newsboy who sold papers in the neighborhood and took the drawing to wood-carver Theodore Mack. Bergen showed him the sketch and described the character of the impudent newsboy to Mack, who produced Charlie carved in pine for \$35.

Earlier, Bergen had invested 25 cents for a booklet entitled *Herrmann's Wizards' Manual*, with which he taught himself ventriloquism and some magic tricks; so Charlie had a voice from his inception.

Many considered Charlie a real person in his own right; he even received an honorary degree from Northwestern University in 1937, as "Master of Innuendo and the Snappy Comeback." Bergen created additional dummies: Mortimer Snerd in 1939 and Effie Klinker in 1944, but Charlie always remained his star companion. Edgar once asked Charlie, "What would you be without me?" and Charlie replied, "Speechless."

The Bergen/McCarthy square is tinted gray and contains the inscription "Too Stumped For Words—Thanks To Sid Grauman from Edgar Bergen [signature]—Charlie McCarthy [name]." Also included are the date ("July 20th 1938"), Bergen's two footprints, and his two handprints, Charlie's two footprints, and his two handprints, plus a caricature drawing of Charlie in his trademark top hat and right-eye monocle.

In her memoirs, Bergen's daughter actress Candice Bergen had the following to say about the hand and footprint ceremony in which her father and Charlie McCarthy participated:

"In 1938, newsreels and front pages featured Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy—or sometimes simply Charlie, neglecting to mention the man standing conscientiously, inconspicuously behind the dummy.

"At Grauman's Chinese Theatre..., newsreels showed Edgar and Charlie, traditional in their white tie and tails, recording their hand-and-footprints in the famous star-stamped court. Charlie's tiny feet firmly embedded, attendants detach his hands, holding the little extremities high for the cameras as Edgar looks on, somewhat distraught. 'Hey, Charlie! Over here!' yells a photographer and a publicity man lunges to stick his hand through the dummy's back-flap to turn him. 'My God, is *nothing* sacred?' Charlie snaps sharply, the man jumps back and Bergen moves in, silent and steely, gently picks up his partner and obediently obliges the press, turning Charlie left and right, the two of them responding as one. 'Hey, Charlie! 'Over here!' Edgar, Charlie—it's all the same."



Charlie McCarthy (left), Edgar Bergen, and cement artist Jean W. Klossner.



Cement artist Jean W. Klossner and Shirley Temple. Klossner recalled in 1953 that six-year-old Shirley "...was so tiny, I had to help her write her own name."

HANNAH PEVERILL  
AGE 6

ORIGINATED THE  
SOPRANO "PIPA BILLY"



1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
 MARIE DRESSLER	 MARIE DRESSLER	 WILL ROGERS	 SHIRLEY TEMPLE	 SHIRLEY TEMPLE	 SHIRLEY TEMPLE	 SHIRLEY TEMPLE	 MICKEY ROONEY	 MICKEY ROONEY
 JANET GAYNOR	 WILL ROGERS	 CLARK GABLE	 WILL ROGERS	 CLARK GABLE	 CLARK GABLE	 CLARK GABLE	 THORNE POWER	 SPENCER TRACY
 JOAN CRAWFORD	 JANET GAYNOR	 JANET GAYNOR	 CLARK GABLE	 ASTAIRE ROGERS	 ROBERT TAYLOR	 SONJA HENIE	 SPENCER TRACY	 CLARK GABLE
 HAROLD ARKELL	 RENE CATEAU	 WALLACE BEERY	 ASTAIRE ROGERS	 ROBERT TAYLOR	 BING CROSBY	 MICKEY ROONEY	 CLARK GABLE	 GENE AUTRY
 GRETA GARBO	 WALLACE BEERY	 JACK WEST	 JOAN CRAWFORD	 JOE E. BROWN	 WILLIAM POWELL	 SPENCER TRACY	 SHIRLEY TEMPLE	 THORNE POWER
 NORMA SHEARER	 JEAN HARLOW	 JOAN CRAWFORD	 CLAUDETTE COLBERT	 DICK POWELL	 JANE WITHERS	 ROBERT TAYLOR	 BETTY DAVIS	 JAMES CAGNEY
 WALLACE BEERY	 CLARK GABLE	 BING CROSBY	 DICK POWELL	 JOAN CRAWFORD	 ASTAIRE ROGERS	 MYRNA LOY	 ALICE FAYE	 BING CROSBY
 CLARK GABLE	 JACK WEST	 SHIRLEY TEMPLE	 WALLACE BEERY	 CLAUDETTE COLBERT	 SONJA HENIE	 JANE WITHERS	 EDNA FLINN	 WALLACE BEERY
 J.P. WILL ROGERS	 DOROTHY DICKSON	 MARIE DRESSLER	 JOE E. BROWN	 JEANETTE MACDONALD	 GARY COOPER	 ALICE FAYE	 JAMES CAGNEY	 BETTY DAVIS
 JOE E. BROWN	 JOAN CRAWFORD	 NORMA SHEARER	 JAMES CAGNEY	 GARY COOPER	 MYRNA LOY	 TYRONE POWER	 SONJA HENIE	 JUDY GARLAND

year-by-year charts of top 10 box-office stars, begun in 1932 by "Motion Picture Herald," show Gable's durability, Shirley Temple's rise and fall.



The mid-1930s: Ronald Reagan when he was a sportscaster for Radio Station WHO in Des Moines, Iowa. Actress Joy Hodges met him there and, returning to Hollywood, got him his first agent in the film capital.

★ ★ ★



The turning point in Reagan's film career was the important supporting role of tragic football hero George (The Gipper) Glupp in *Knute Rockne, All American* (Warners, 1940). Star Pat O'Brien helped him get the part.

★ ★ ★



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# Where's the Rest of Me?

The Autobiography of  
**RONALD REAGAN**  
with Richard G. Hubler

rang. It was Pete. The familiar Scotch growl questioned, "Where the hell did you get that idea?"

So I told him: it just seemed in keeping with the season. It became a regular Friday night feature. It also became a stepping-stone for someone else's career.

Moon, now graduated from Eureka and unemployed, was my house guest. I think Nelle had something to do with that. Realizing that disintegration could take place if he sat around Dixon, diploma in hand and unemployed, she urged a brotherly visit on him and backed her urging with bus fare. On one subsequent Friday night he was sitting in the studio, waiting for me to finish so we could journey together to Si's Moonlight Inn.

No one could talk of Des Moines in those days without mentioning this establishment. Its main commerce was a drink that even the repeal of prohibition couldn't outlaw—near beer spiked with alcohol. Si always claimed the drink was safe because he bought the alcohol from government agents. To stay open he had to advertise that he sold food. One veteran customer told me that he had once ordered a sandwich, taken a bite, and the sandwich bit him back. At any rate, it was the cherished pub and a must for all homegoing Iowans. Even the swankiest of parties, where attire was white tie and tails, was not officially over until the guests had stopped by Moonlight.

But to get back to Friday night and my brother. On a couple of my predictions, I noticed he was shaking his head in disagreement, so I turned on the mike in front of him and asked why he disagreed. We continued the program, debating each prediction, sometimes agreeing, sometimes disagreeing, and promising the audience we'd tell who had the best percentage on the following Friday night. It was as unplanned as that. It led to a fifteen-dollar-a-week job for Moon, doing the football scoreboard on Saturday nights because I was still out of town on my football broadcasts. That job led Moon to an announcing job at the reinstituted WOC in Davenport, to program directing, network producing, and his present position in Los Angeles as vice-presi-

## Now I can tell you, I have known Ronald 'Dutch' Reagan

At long last, the speeches and debates are behind us and we have elected Ronald Reagan as our President for the next four years.

I was tempted to mention in my column my association with Ronald Reagan, but I felt it was unfair to my newspaper to show a political preference before the election.

Many newspapers come out endorsing the candidate of their choice, and I have never thought it was a particularly good thing to do. My thought is that they should tell all the news, and facts about a person running, and then let the voter make his or her own choice, from the information given them.

Now that the election is over, I can speak candidly about Reagan. I have known him since he was a young man, living in Des Moines, Iowa. That was before television. He was a sports announcer on radio. Most people know the story of how he went to California to cover the Rose Bowl game by radio, and Warner Brothers discovered him and hired him for movie roles.

I HAVE KEPT IN TOUCH with Ronald Reagan



### Longboat Key

By INEVEVERILL

over the years because I long ago recognized him as a truly outstanding person. I have letters written to me, and he signed them "Dutch," — the nickname his father gave him as a youngster. And for some of his close friends he is still called "Dutch."

There is so much I could tell of Ronald Reagan — I suppose I should write a book — but I will refrain from all the details, but just tell you that the United States of America is fortunate to have this outstanding man at the head of this country.

Now, get busy "Dutch" and get some of these things we are looking forward to being accomplished.

JAY KIRSCHENMANN and I will be guests on Ella Marie Sullivan Broadcast, WQSA, 1220 on y radio dial Thursday from 8 to 4 p.m.

THE LONGBOAT YOUTH CENTER will hold its annual breakfast at Shanks' on Saturday, Nov. from 8 to 11 a.m.

This program provides the Youth Center with income, and the people of Longboat should cooperate with the youngsters selling the tickets. The tickets are \$8.

The goal for the sale of these tickets is \$3,000 there will be prizes for the children who sell the most tickets. First prize is \$30 gift certificate for Trophy and Sports World. Second prize is \$25 savings bond from Freedom Savings and Loan. Third place is 10 silver dollars from Ellis Longboat Key Bank.

There will also be a garage sale at the Youth Center on the same day. Anyone having items to wish to donate will be greatly appreciated. Just to the Youth Center and let them know what you wish to donate.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 6, 1981

Dear Dite:

Your letter certainly makes me regret that I couldn't attend the luncheon in Des Moines. I know that Moon enjoyed himself and, were it not for my official schedule, it would have been a great pleasure to harmonize and reminisce about our good times at the Moonlight Inn.

Please thank Tine for sending the clipping and for her hard work and support. I hope she is enjoying Sarasota, and I understand it is very pleasant there.

With best wishes to you and Marge,

sincerely,

*Dutch*

Mr. Dwight L. Myers  
1909 Somerset Lane  
Northbrook, Illinois 60062

STORIES FROM

PIPA BILL

HOLLYWOODLAND

A POSTSCRIPT

The Hollywoodland story that I wrote over ten years ago, now "benefits" from some information found in the last couple years. The following includes a picture of me, Charlie McCarthy, my grandmother and Jack. We will never know: Did mother sell the doll or did she replace it?


The Wall Street Journal in August 2001 confirmed the existence of Cheremoya School. In a front-page article, they describe the current debate over the school's objectives.

It seems that Hollywood will forever lead a long and eventful life.







EP, LOWE


**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**

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## What Happened When Well-to-Do Parents Tried to Prep a Public School for Their Kids

By LISA BANNON  
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL


LOS ANGELES — One morning in November 1999, Ted Henning bounded up the stairs of Chermoya Avenue School to join other neighborhood parents on a mission. Inside the elementary school's cramped library, two dozen teachers sat waiting to receive them.

After filing in and exchanging polite hellos, Mr. Henning and the handful of other parents offered some suggestions for improving the school. Among them: setting up a computer lab, renovating the playground and perhaps adding music and art teachers. "No one thinks the school is a bad school," Mr. Henning, a now-35-year-old Hollywood screenwriter, told the faculty. But "all we have to go on is test scores. We would like to help improve things."

The offer wasn't what the teachers wanted to hear. "We hope you aren't viewing this school as something that needs a lot of fixing," one of them said, according to minutes of the meeting. "We haven't got all the fancy resources of some private schools, but we think we are doing a pretty good job of teaching the children."

Not the children of these parents, though.

Across the country, well-to-do parents have become increasingly aggressive about trying to improve the public schools their children attend. But in this affluent Los Angeles neighborhood, parents have taken the audacious step of attempting to upgrade their underperforming local school before even committing to sending their children.

 Have your local public schools improved over the past five years? Participate in the **Question of the Day**.

"Nobody is brave enough to send their kid there by themselves," says Kenneth Robins, the father of a toddler and president of Friends of Cheremoya Avenue School, or Focas, the group the parents formed just weeks before their fall 1999 meeting with the teachers. "I think we need this thing of having people hold each other's hands." The neighbors envision, in Mr. Robins's words, turning the school "into one of the top performers in the district" in just four years — by first getting to know Cheremoya, then working on projects they think will improve the school, and eventually recruiting enough families to form a first kindergarten class.



**Ted Henning**

Nestled on leafy Franklin Avenue, the Spanish-style stucco schoolhouse straddles the divided worlds of rich and poor, white and Latino, in one of this city's many segregated neighborhoods.

To the north, where Mr. Henning and the other Focas parents live, are spectacular Hollywood Hills homes with lush landscapes, swimming pools and movie stars such as Brad Pitt and Sandra Bullock. In the late 1970s, residents of the hills joined the nationwide white flight from public schools, moving their sons and daughters out of Cheremoya to the city's far-flung private schools after the start of busing and other desegregation efforts.

Since then, the vast majority of the school's students have come from the area south of Franklin, a narrow enclave of apartment buildings occupied by a growing population of Latino and Armenian families. Once in the minority, the Latinos now constitute more than 60% of Cheremoya's 500 or so students. Most families are recent immigrants who don't speak English fluently, and many qualify for Title I federal funding for the poor. If these two worlds come in contact with each other, it's usually through employment: Many residents from the south work as gardeners, nannies and housekeepers for residents in the north.



**Join the Discussion:**

Do you agree or disagree with the efforts and tactics of the parents seeking to enroll their children in Cheremoya Avenue Elementary School? What are your thoughts on the issues raised in this article?

nine," he says.

Mr. Henning doesn't know any of the families south of Franklin whose children attend Cheremoya. Yet on the day of his first visit, the orderly ocher schoolhouse reminded him of where he went as a boy in Princeton, N.J. Inside, the hallways had the same clean, clinical smell. Artwork hung on the same stark white walls. "The bell rang, and I had a flashback to when I was

Mr. Henning and his wife, Stefanie, a Hollywood music executive,

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### Hollywood Sign Timeline

**1923:** The sign is built as a huge advertisement for the Hollywoodland real estate development. It costs \$21,000 and includes 13 50-foot high letters covered by 4,000 light bulbs.

**1923-1931:** The sign becomes a tourist attraction and a glamorous symbol for Hollywood.

**1932:** A struggling 24-year-old actress, Peg Entwistle, climbs to the top of the letter H, and jumps to her death.

**Mid-1940s:** The sign begins to deteriorate so much that the neighborhood wants to get rid

## The Hollywood Sign

- ▶ Listen to Renée Montagne's report.
- ▶ Review a Hollywood Sign timeline.

**Oct. 28, 2002** -- The Hollywood Sign stands four stories high, each letter running 30 feet at its base along the rugged terrain of the Hollywood Hills. Up close, it's massive, but to those who have been around since its birth, something is missing. Actually, four somethings. Following the familiar HOLLYWOOD that still greets pilots and tourists arriving in Los Angeles today, there once stood more letters: L-A-N-D.

For *Morning Edition*, Special Correspondent Renée Montagne investigates the origins of the sign. Since its construction, the sign put up by the Hollywoodland Real Estate Group may have undergone a small amount of cosmetic surgery, but then again, what in L.A. hasn't? After all, doesn't the most famous billboard of all time deserve a little pampering?

In 1923, Los Angeles was in the midst of expansion, and the Hills beckoned those set on sniffing out opportunities to make a mint in the real estate game. Harry Chandler, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, had involved himself in other real estate schemes previously. "Chandler and his investors owned most of the San Fernando Valley," says David Wallace, author of the books *Last Hollywood* and *Hollywoodland*. "They just grabbed desert land because they knew the minute that water came through with the weather in the Valley it would become a garden!"

Sensing a similar opportunity in the Hills, Chandler teamed up with movie director Mack Sennett, who oversaw the investment company that did the development.

To tune everyone else in to the same signal they were picking up, Chandler had a baker's dozen worth of letters, each standing 50 feet tall, erected in the Hills. The HOLLYWOODLAND sign spelled out an invitation to up-and-comers and wishful thinkers alike that was hard to ignore. To enhance the effect, the sign was lit by 4,000 light bulbs; a nearby cabin housed a maintenance man whose sole job was changing them.

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MORNING EDITION



Harry Chandler, facing camera, participates in the 1923 dedication ceremony for the Hollywoodland sign. Photo: [HollywoodPhotographs.com](http://HollywoodPhotographs.com)  
[View full image.](#)



Hollywoodland Realty sold lots in the housing development that was advertised by the famous sign. Photo: Renée Montagne, NPR News

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