

American Radio Archives

Robert Q. Lewis Collection

Introduction

The Robert Q. Lewis Collection of the American Radio Archives contains approximately 21 linear feet of papers relating to the network radio and television careers of Lewis, which were in Lewis' possession at the time of his death in 1991. The collection contains material for Lewis' television and radio programs – both complete scripts and jokes and monologues written for use on these programs, as well as correspondence, news clippings, musical scores, and photographs that document his entertainment career between the mid-1940s and 1960. Programs that are represented in this collection include *Arthur Godfrey Time* (radio), *Arthur Godfrey and His Friends* (television), and the *Robert Q. Lewis Show* (both radio and television versions).

Because of severe water damage to portions of the collection, many of the correspondence and scrapbook files consist of photocopies of the damaged originals.

Biography

Robert Q. Lewis (1920 – 1991) was a comedian, radio disc jockey, and host of numerous television and radio programs from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. Lewis, born and raised in New York, attended the University of Michigan. After returning to New York, he worked as a disc jockey for a local radio station until he was hired by NBC to host his own radio variety program, *The Robert Q. Lewis Show*. This first version of his show ran from April to December 1945, at which time NBC cancelled it. Lewis went back to working as a disc jockey until he was noticed by William Paley, the head of CBS. Paley hired Lewis, and one of Lewis's first jobs was to act as a guest host for the *Arthur Godfrey Time* when Godfrey was away on vacation. Lewis was soon given his own program, called *The Little Show*, which featured a mix of comedy and music. This program ran from June through December 1947, and was replaced in 1948 by *The Robert Q. Lewis Show*, a comedy and variety program with a different format, which ran in various time slots until August 1949, when Lewis took over both *The Arthur Godfrey Time*, Godfrey's radio program that was broadcast five days a week, and *Arthur Godfrey and His Friends*, the weekly television program. While Lewis filled in for Godfrey from August to October 1949, he gained greater visibility and favorable attention from the critics. Lewis returned to his own program in 1950, and throughout the 1950's he broadcast both the television and the radio versions of *The Robert Q. Lewis Show*. In addition to his own programs, Lewis often appeared as a guest host on other radio and television programs, and in the latter part of the 1950s and 1960s, he increasingly worked as a television game show host.

With the decline of network radio and the end of Lewis' CBS programs, he returned to being a disc jockey, working for radio stations KHJ, KFI, and KRLA in Los Angeles at various times in the 1960s and 1970s.

Scope and Content

Although Lewis was active in radio and television broadcasting for several decades, the bulk of this collection documents his career with CBS between 1947 and 1959. The collection contains scripts from his radio and television programs during this time period as well as material written for his shows; musical scores used in Lewis' programs are also included. The remainder of the collection consists of Lewis's correspondence during the period covered, as well as photocopies of scrapbooks containing articles about his various programs and appearances, and a sampling of catalogs from art galleries from which Lewis purchased pieces of art.

Scripts

Radio Scripts

<u>Box</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Air Dates</u>
1	Arthur Godfrey Time	08-02-1948 – 08-15-1952
2	Arthur Godfrey Time	08-18-1952 – 11-20-1953
3	The Little Show	05-10-1947 – 11-16-1947
3	Robert Q. Lewis Show	01-05-1948 – 04-07-1949
4	Robert Q. Lewis Show	04-08-1949 – 07-29-1949
4	Chesterfield Supper Club	[n.d.]
4	ABC's of Music	05-31-1950 – 08-30-1950
4	Robert Q's Waxworks	07-02-1951 – 07-05-1951
4	Robert Q. Lewis Show	01-00-1953 – 03-26-1955
5	Robert Q. Lewis Show	04-02-1955 – 02-14-1957
6	Robert Q. Lewis Show	02-15-1957 – 09-28-1957
7	Robert Q. Lewis Show	09-30-1957 – 05-01-1958
8	Robert Q. Lewis Show	05-02-1958 – 01-02-1959

Television Scripts

<u>Box</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Air Dates</u>
3	Arthur Godfrey and His Friends	08-03-1949 – 06-30-1953
9	Esso Christmas Show	12-24-1949
9	Robert Q. Lewis Show	02-13-1950 – 08-09-1954

10	Robert Q. Lewis Show	08-10-1954 – 03-30-1956
11	Robert Q. Lewis Show	04-02-1956 – 05-23-1956

Musical Scores

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
12	1	Bye bye Blackbird
12	2	I'm Gonna Change my Name
12	3	Whatever Happened to the Old Song
12	4	[Song lyrics to special songs: Robert Q. Lewis Show]
12	5	[Music performed on the Robert Q. Lewis Show, television]
12	6	All You Need to Do Is Smile
12	7	Baby You
12	8	Girls, Girls, Girls
12	9	Grand Central Station
12	10	Hard Hearted Hannah
12	11	Honey
12	12	Honeymoon on TV
12	15	Horn Rimmed Glasses
12	16	I Gotta Get out on the Floor
12	17	I Guess I'll Have to Change my Plans
12	18	I'm Gonna Change my Name
12	19	Little Green Girl
12	20	Noodlin' Rag
12	21	Robert Q's Blues
12	22	Santa Claus Junior
12	23	Sunday is my Night with You
12	24	Tag to Rob't Q. Lee
12	25	There she Goes
12	26	Vanilla, Chocolate and Cherry
12	27	What Is the Q for R.Q.?
12	28	Where's Your House?

Comedy Material

Monologues and Jokes by Title

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
13	1	Agnes, Chestnut Fillie

13	2	Air (C)
13	3	Alcoholics Think Politely
13	4	Alouette (Trans.)
13	5	Apartment Hunting
13	6	Bad Day—R.Q.L.

Monologues and Jokes by Title (cont.)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
13	7	Ballet
13	8	Bootlegging Comic Books
13	9	Borneo
13	10	Channel Swimmers
13	11	Brooklyn Fathers
13	12	Buckingham Palace (D)
13	13	Burglar's Advert-Safe Explosives
13	14	Chop Suey (D)
13	15	Circus
13	16	Cocktail Mixing Contest
13	17	Christmas [12 – 26 – 1953]
13	18	Christmas Carol Resume
13	19	Cranberries (D)
13	20	Credits
13	21	Crime Display in Grand Central
13	22	Daylight Savings
13	23	Donkey Serenade
13	24	Door (D)
13	25	Elevator Operator (Polite)
13	26	Elsie the Cow in Spanish
13	27	Embraceable You and Pigs Feet
13	28	Etiquette: Terminating Friendship
13	29	Everything Happens to Me (Parody)
13	30	Fashion of Senators
13	31	FBI Type Picture
13	32	Fight With Food
13	33	Fish as Money
13	34	Fish Gets Nervous Breakdown
13	35	France (D)
13	36	France...Tour of
13	37	Freddy the Frog (F)
13	38	French Film Titles
13	39	"Funnies"...Reading on Radio
13	40	Hobo Convention
13	41	Honeymoon When Over
13	42	Hooper Tension

13	43	Katy Kangaroo (F)
13	44	Lie Detecting Machine
13	45	Lie Detector [politician spot]
13	46	Lincoln's Birthday
13	47	Long Phone Conversation
13	48	Macaroni Bit

Monologues and Jokes by Title (cont.)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
13	49	Met. Opera House (D)
13	50	Mexico (D)
13	51	Mistakes
13	52	"Monday," Invention of
13	53	Movie Column on Air
13	54	Movies—Bad Effects on R.Q.L.
13	55	Mystery Show Kids
13	56	New Year's Resolution
13	57	New York (D)
13	58	Night and Day...Double Station
13	59	Night on Broadway
13	60	Old Man Act Like Teenager
13	61	Olive
13	62	Opera Singer Orders Food
13	63	Opera Singer Takes Job in Diner
13	64	Phone in Delicatessen
13	65	Prisoners of San Quentin Radio Show
13	66	Psychological Thrill
13	67	Radio
13	68	Rep. Convention and Wolcott Fight
13	69	Restaurants [June 6, 1949]
13	70	Robert Q. Lewis
13	71	Rodeo
13	72	Russian Kiddie Stories
13	73	Salt Water Taffy (D)
13	74	Santa Claus Inter.
13	75	Schoolteacher Cheerful
13	76	Secretary—Looking for New One
13	77	Secretary's Memoirs
13	78	Senator as Usher
13	79	Shoes
13	80	Shortnin' Bread Parody [Robert Q. Lewis, 8 – 10 – 1948]
13	81	Soap Opera in Foreign Language
13	82	South America (D)
13	83	Spring

13	84	Subway Ceremony
13	85	Sweaters (D)
13	86	Taxi Cabs
13	87	Taxi Driver (Polite)
13	88	Telephone Dir. (D)
13	89	Television...Ball Game and Love
13	90	Traffic Light

Monologues and Jokes by Title (cont.)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
13	91	Uniforms Made by Paris Designer
13	92	Whiskey Tasting
13	93	Witch Hazel
13	94	Xmas Opening Bit
13	95	Xmas Present Happy to Return
13	96	White House (D)
13	97	“Wanted....A Wife”
13	98	Listing of bits for future use

Comedy Material by Subject

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
14	1	Bum spots
14	2	Cameraman Bit
14	3	Carol Letters
14	4	Christmas Bits
14	5	Delivery Boy Spots
14	6	Fan Spots [Jean Stapleton]
14	7	Frankenstein Bit
14	8	Hillbilly Bit
14	9	Kiddie Bits
14	10	Lie Detector Bit
14	11	Musician Spot
14	12	Pageants
14	13	Pelish Spots
14	14	Secretary Bits
14	15	Singing Teacher Bit
14	16	Slides Bits
14	17	Sponsor Bit
14	18	Television Audience Participation
14	19	Trip Material
14	20	TV—Household Hints

14	21	TV—Pageants
14	22	Usher Spots
14	23	Vaudeville Bits
14	24	Visual Spots

Comedy Material Arranged by Cast Member or Guest

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
15	1	Cast bits [misc.]
15	2	Cameron Andrews bits
15	3	Dead Cameron Andrews spots
15	4	Jan Arden spots
15	5	Jan Arden spots
15	6	Ray Bloch spot
15	7	Cabot spots
15	8	Bob Cone
15	9	Hermione Gingold spots
15	10	Lois Hunt bits
15	11	Pert Kelton spot
15	12	Al Kelly spots
15	13	Don Liberto spots
15	14	Tom Mahoney spots
15	15	Doro Merande spots
15	16	Jaye P. Morgan bits
15	17	Howard Smith
15	18	Howard Smith (Duologues)
15	19	Special Guests (Rocky Graziano)
15	20	Jack Sterling material [guest M.C.], folder 1
15	21	Jack Sterling material [guest M.C.], folder 2
15	22	Lee Vines bits
15	23	Earl Wrightson spots

Commercial Sponsors: Material for Show, Arranged by Sponsor

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
16	1	Chesterfield—Godfrey
16	2	Chesterfield bits
16	3	Gold Seal Co. [Arthur Godfrey Time]

16	4	Lever Bros.—Rinso
16	5	Nabisco bits—10:45 – 11:00
16	6	Nabisco bits
16	7	Pillsbury
16	8	Wildroot

Commercials

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
16	9	Advertising for the Arthur Godfrey Time
16	10	Chesterfield commercials [Robert Q. Lewis Show]
16	11	Gold Seal Wax
16	12	Lanolin Plus
16	13	Lever Bros.—Rinso
16	14	Nabisco
16	15	Nucoa ideas
16	16	Pillsbury [Arthur Godfrey Show]
16	17	Spray A Wave
16	18	Toni Home Permanent

Unused Show Material: By Cast Member, Topic, or Miscellaneous

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
17	1 – 8	Unused material, miscellaneous
18	1	Unused Bruno Zitato jokes
18	2	Unused Lee Vines jokes
18	3	Unused Mailbags, Old Philosophers, and Dear Abie
18	4	Unused material—Holidays
18	5	Unused material—Traffic
18	6	Unused Johnny Pepper jokes
18	7	Unused Ray Bloch jokes
18	8	Unused Riddle Cards
18	9	Unused “Dr. Robert Q.” cards
18	10	Unused Sound Cards

Miscellaneous Comedy Material for Shows

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
19	1	Leftover material
19	2 – 5	Miscellaneous material, n.d.
19	6	Miscellaneous material, ca. 1954
19	7	Miscellaneous material, scripts
20	1	“From Files” [ca. 1945]
20	2	[Joke cards—sound effect jokes]
20	3	[Joke telegrams—anniversary of show, n.d.]
20	4	Program material—George Foster, Mort Green [writers]
Miscellaneous Comedy Material for Shows (cont.)		

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
20	5	[Comedy material by Herb Rikles for Robert Q. Lewis]
20	6	[Funnies...from Harvey Bullock]
20	7	Proposals for television and radio shows [for Lewis}

Speaking Engagements

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
20	8	Boy Scout Luncheon
20	9	“I Am an American Day” [n.d.]
20	10	Future Out of Town
20	11	Indiana University [n.d.]
20	12	Lewis Philadelphia trip [n.d.]
20	13	Out of Town

Nightclub Material

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
20	14	Songs, jokes, stories, parodies

Guest Host Appearances

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
20	15	Bing Crosby replacement (spot announcement)
20	16	Faye Emerson, 01-09-1950

Correspondence

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
21	1	01-21-1948 – 12-30-1948
21	2	00-00-1949 – 05-18-1949
21	3	06-21-1949 – 12-21-1949
21	4	00-00-1950 – 05-28-1950

Correspondence (cont.)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
21	5	06-07-1950 – [06-30-1950]
21	6	07-03-1950 – 12-26-1950
21	7	01-22-1951 – 05-23-1951
21	8	06-25-1951 – 12-28-1951
21	9	01-07-1952 – 06-16-1952
21	10	07-00-1952 – 09-30-1952
21	11	10-00-1952 – 12-30-1952
22	1	01-12-1953 – 10-23-1953
22	2	06-09-1958 – 03-08-1963
22	3	CBS office memoranda: 06-03-1949 – 08-08-1949
22	4	CBS office memoranda: 04-03-1950 – 01-10-1951

Scrapbooks: Clippings, Promotional Material, Photographs [copied from damaged original]

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
23	1	00-00-1940 – 08-15-1941
23	2	00-00-1942 – 05-00-1946
23	3	04-00-1947 – 09-00-1948
23	4	11-00-1948 – 07-20-1960

Fine Art Collection

Gallery Catalogue: Parke – Bernet

24	26 items	10-00-1958 – 03-00-1962
24	1 folder	Artist and art descriptions:

Henry Nise, Aubrey Schwartz,
“On the River” (Emile Bernard), “Heads” (Paul Gauguin)

Purchases and Provenance Sheets

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>
25	35 items	Brochures, art catalogues, and related material
25	1	Purchase receipts and descriptions: 1959 – 1962
25	2	Provenance sheets