

The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet

Broadcast History on ABC

Fridays at 8:00–8:30 PM, October 3, 1952 – June 8, 1956

Wednesdays at 9:00–9:30 PM, October 3, 1956 – June 11, 1958

Wednesdays at 8:30–9:00 PM, October 1, 1958 – May 10, 1961

Thursdays at 7:30–8:00 PM, September 28, 1961 – June 6, 1963

Wednesdays at 7:30–8:00 PM, September 18, 1963 – January 5, 1966

Saturdays at 7:30–8:00 PM, January 15, 1966 – April 23, 1966

The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet aired on ABC from October 3, 1952, to April 23, 1966 comprising of 435 episodes.

Ozzie and Harriet On Radio

Ozzie and Harriet started on radio with Red Skelton from 1941 to 1944. *The Adventures Of Ozzie and Harriet* program began on CBS radio from 1944 to 1948. Next, they went to NBC from 1948 to 1949.

Joel Davis played the role of David from 1944 until 1945. He was replaced by Tommy Bernard in 1945 and played that role until 1949. Henry Blair played the part of Ricky from 1944 to 1949.

David (age 12) and Ricky (age 8) eventually joined the radio cast on February 20, 1949.

The family went back briefly to CBS from April to October of 1949. They made their final move to ABC in October of 1949 until the radio show ended in 1954.

There were **402 episodes** of the radio version of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*.

The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet

For the television series, Ozzie tried to lease some sound stages from Universal Studios where *Here Come the Nelsons* was filmed. They turned him down because they felt television was competing with their features. The Nelsons wound up at General Sound Services Studio where *Bob Cummings*, *Eve Arden* and *The Lone Ranger* programs were being filmed. *I Love Lucy* also began filming at that studio in 1951. For almost the entire run of its series at General Service Studios, the Nelson family home scenes were filmed on Stage 5. For its final season it was forced to relocate to the Desilu-Culver lot. Filmways, already using virtually every other available stage, needed more space and *Green Acres* took over use of Stage 5.

The exterior of their home can be seen at the beginning of many of the early episodes. Their home was located at 1822 Camino Palmero Street in Los Angeles, California. The Nelsons bought the home in November of 1941. Over the years, there have been reports that Ozzie Nelson's ghost has haunted this home. The house was built in 1916 and has 5 bedrooms along with 7

bathrooms. At 5,283 square feet, the today is worth \$6,738,000. The Nelsons moved into the home in November of 1941. Harriet sold the house sometime in 1977.

The opening introduction of the family was a replica of their front door exterior of their home on the set of Stage 5 at General Service Studios (Las Palmas and Santa Monica Blvd.)

Ozzie was very hands-on with his show, both on radio and television as the producer and director of most of the episodes. He also co-wrote many of them. His brother, Don, was also a co-writer. Don was perhaps the most underrated member of the Nelson family.

Here Come The Nelsons was released on February 23, 1952. The film also doubled as a pilot for the television series, as Ozzie wanted to see if his family would be accepted on film as they were on radio. The film depicted Ozzie as an advertising executive.

This was the first time we hear the song used as the closing theme for their television show. It was titled **Mary, I'm In Love With You** and written in 1931 by Ozzie Nelson and J. Fred Coots (his wife was named Margie). Ozzie recorded that tune with his orchestra that same year. Ozzie didn't meet Harriet until 1932.

According to David Nelson

The story lines on the show came from real life experiences.

Several of the locations scenes were filmed at Griffith Park.

Many of the commercials featuring the Nelsons (Hot Point, Kodak and Coca-Cola) were filmed during lunch breaks.

The group scenes in the fraternity consisted of friends of David and Ricky with a few principal actors featured.

The jazz piano theme over the end credits on some of the later programs was created by Don Nelson, Lou Rawls and LeRoy Vinnegar.

The Nelsons - Later Years

Ozzie's Girls pilot episode was written by Ozzie Nelson and directed by David Nelson. It aired as an NBC "special presentation" on September 10, 1972. After NBC passed on the series, it was sold into first-run syndication where it aired as a weekly series from September 15, 1973 to September 1, 1974. It lasted for only 24 episodes. It co-starred Susan Sennett and Brenda Sykes. The story was based on Ozzie and Harriet discussing how empty and quiet their home is with their boys gone. They decide to rent their sons' old bedroom to a college student and place an ad in the campus news.

On August 11, 2009 the United States Postal Service issued a pane of twenty 44¢ commemorative postage stamps honoring early USA television programs. A booklet with 20 picture postal cards was also issued. The stamp honoring *The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet* pictured stars Ozzie Nelson and Harriet Nelson Nelson.

The Adventures Of Ozzie and Harriet - The Cast

Ozzie Nelson - was born Oswald George Nelson in Jersey City, New Jersey. He started his show business career as a band leader. One of Nelson's early female vocalists was Rose Anne Stevens. His next vocalist was Peggy Lou (Louise) Snyder. She took her family name of Hilliard and became Harriet Hilliard. Ozzie and Harriet were married in October of 1935.

Before they got their own radio show in 1944, Ozzie and Harriet were regulars on Red Skelton's radio show. Although Ozzie's TV character came off as a stammering, hesitant and slightly absent-minded character, Ozzie was actually a workaholic as well as a shrewd businessman. He supervised his show completely as producer, director, and editor.

Harriet Nelson - was born as Peggy Lou (Louise) Snyder in Des Moines, Iowa. She was married to comedian named Roy Sedley in 1930. After one year of an unhappy marriage, the two separated. In 1933, they divorced (or annuled?).

A heavy smoker most of her life, she never smoked in public, feeling it did not befit her "perfect mom" image.

David Nelson - was 12 years old when he joined the radio cast of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* in February of 1949. David was almost 16 years old when the televised version of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* began.

Ricky Nelson - was 8 years old when he joined the radio cast of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* in February of 1949. Ricky

was 12 years old when the television version of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* began.

Skip Young - was a partner with Dean Jones doing a "Martin and Lewis" type comedy act when David Nelson met them at Knott's Berry Farm. He appeared on *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* as Wally Plumstead (his real name was Ronald Blix Plumstead) 123 times from 1956 to 1966.

Jack Wagner was (for many years) "The Voice of Disney" and can still be heard as the voice of the Orlando International Airport Automated Guideway and on the Mark VI monorails at Walt Disney World asking you to "please stand clear of the doors".

Barbara Eiler was married to Ozzie Nelson's brother, Don, for 14 years from 1948 to 1962. The marriage ended in divorce. She appeared in 26 episodes of *The Adventure of Ozzie and Harriet* from 1952 to 1966.

Connie Harper was the real-life secretary of Ozzie Nelson. From 1958 through 1966, she would appear in *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* in various roles over the course of 77 episodes, eventually settling into the role as Rick and Dave Nelson's secretary, Miss Edwards. Among other television series she appeared in were *The Donna Reed Show*, *Ozzie's Girls* and *Sonic Boom*. Born Constance Garland Harper, she was the step granddaughter of filmmaker Cecil B. DeMille and lived in the DeMille house for many years. She married Don Nelson, Ozzie Nelson's brother in February 1967.

Lyle Talbot (Joe Randolph) - was born Lysle Francis Henderson. He was raised by her mother, Mary Hollywood Talbot, whose last name he later adopted professionally.

Quote From Lyle Talbot: "You kids think you invented free love in the '60s. You have no idea what it was like to be young and beautiful in the '30s in Hollywood. Everyone was sleeping with everyone."

Mary Jane Croft (Clara Randolph) - spoke in a normal voice (not in her usual nasal twang while playing Clara Randolph) in the episode titled *The Gay Blade* which aired on December 9, 1955.

Frank Cady who played the Nelson's neighbor Doc Williams from 1954 to 1964, appeared as an insurance claims inspector in *The Insurance Policy* episode which aired on December 11, 1953. Wearing a toupee, he also played Mr. Baxter four times from 1954 to 1955. He also played Sam Drucker over 300 times on *Petticoat Junction* and *Green Acres*.

REFERENCES

Ozzie by Ozzie Nelson
Internet Movie Data Base
Wikipedia