

Meet Corliss Archer

Episode for class: Dexter and the Car (1954)

These 39 episodes aired in syndication from April to December of 1954.

A Date with Judy is a comedy radio series aimed at a teenage audience which ran from 1941 to 1950. Ann Gillis originated the role with Louise Erickson following in the role of Judy from 1943 to 1950.

A television version of this show ran on ABC on Saturdays during daytime hours beginning on June 2, 1951. It originally starred Pat Crowley as Judy.

Playwright and novelist F. (Frederick) Hugh Herbert's* most enduring creations was the character of American teenager Corliss Archer, who was introduced in 1943 in a series of Good Housekeeping short stories.

*Not to be confused with the actor Hugh Francis Herbert.

Adapted to radio when CBS developed *Meet Corliss Archer* featuring Janet Waldo as Corliss with Sam Edwards as Dexter. This program also enjoyed a long run through 1956 and proved to be equally successful as *A Date with Judy*.

Corliss Archer in the 1945 film version titled *Kiss and Tell* and in the 1949 sequel, *A Kiss for Corliss*. Both films starred Shirley Temple as Corliss Archer.

Herbert's property was later adapted as a comic book series also titled *Meet Corliss Archer*.

In 1948 the *Meet Corliss Archer* comic book was published by Fox Feature Syndicate and came out in three issues from March to July 1948.

The first TV version of *Meet Corliss Archer* was seen on CBS from July 13, 1951 to August 10, 1951 and again on January 26, 1952 to March 29, 1952. It starred Lugene Sanders as Corliss Archer. Sanders would be best remembered as Babs in *The Life Of Riley* starring William Bendix from 1953 to 1958. *Meet Corliss Archer* was one of the first series to make an attempt at a transition to television.

In 1954, *Meet Corliss Archer* with Ann Baker began its 39 episode run in syndication.

Gene Hazelton - was hired by the Walt Disney Studios in 1939, where he worked as an animator. Hazelton did the character designs for Disney's *Wind In The Willows* in 1939. The characters were translated to the screen exactly as he created them when the film was made ten years later. He also animated goat kids and cherubs for Disney's *Fantasia* and the boys in the "Pleasure Island" sequence of *Pinocchio*. Hazelton then went to Warner Brothers, where he worked for Robert Clampett. He did animated lay-outs and character designs at MGM for Hanna & Barbera and Tex Avery from 1950-1957. When MGM closed its animated studio, he partnered with fellow animator Ray Patterson and

began producing some of the first animated television commercials. While freelancing for several animation companies, Hazelton created the newspaper panel 'Angel Face' for the McNaught Syndicate in the mid-1950s.

He was eventually assigned by Hanna-Barbera to oversee the creation of the comic strips based on 'The Flintstones' and 'Yogi Bear'.

During this period, Hazelton also co-operated on Hanna-Barbera's animation productions, such as the creation of *The Jetsons*. He created Pebbles and later Bamm Bamm for *The Flintstones* TV show. Bamm Bamm was modeled after his real-life son, Wes. After retirement in the 1990s, Gene Hazelton drew nearly all of the Hanna Barbera seriagraphs produced for sale at The Circle Gallery.

Hazelton provided the artwork for *Meet Corliss Archer* for the opening and closing titles along with the scene transitions.

Ann Baker - was born July 23, 1930 in Sedalia, Missouri. She was one of eleven children. Ann was on an episode of *Place The Face* which aired on February 11, 1954.

Ann had more than 100 magazine cover appearances to her credit before winning the role of Corliss Archer in 1954.

By 1957, Baker felt that she was "**caught in a teen-age trap**" caused by her youthful appearance. Although she was married and in her 20's, people still viewed her as the teenaged Corliss Archer. She said, "**My looks are against me for the more**

mature roles". Her other television credits include *Crossroads* (1955), *Queen For A Day* (1956); *Casey Jones* (1957), *Man With A Camera* (1959) and *The Millionaire* (1959). Her acting career came to an end in 1959.

John Eldridge - began his acting career with stock companies and in vaudeville before moving on to Broadway.

Under contract with Warner Brothers as a general purpose actor from 1934, he often appeared in roles as minor villains. From the early 1950's, he also had a busy career in television.

Among his other film credits are, *High Sierra* (1941), *Angels In The Outfield* (1951), *Girls In The Night* (1953), *North By Northwest* (1959) and *Five Guns To Tombstone* (1960). For television, his credits include *The Lone Ranger*, *The Adventures of Superman*, *The Twilight Zone*, *The Loretta Young Show* and *Wanted: Dead or Alive*.

Mary Brian - was born Louise Byrdie Dantzlera. She was in a bathing beauty competition in Long Beach that resulted in a second-prize letter of introduction to Herbert Brenon at Paramount and the girl with the dark brown curls and blue/gray eyes wound up being screen-tested for the role of Wendy in *Peter Pan* (1924), co-starring Betty Bronson and Esther Ralston (with whom she would form lifelong friendships). She not only got the part, but also a five-year contract with Paramount (1925-1930) and a new name.

In 1926 she became one of the WAMPAS (Western Association of Motion Picture Advertisers) Baby Stars, which further enhanced her popularity. During the next few years she played leads and

second leads as adolescent heroines, co-eds and ingénues in early silent features (*Paris At Midnight* (1926) and *The Air Mail* (1925)). Mary made the transition from silents to talkies, co-starring with Gary Cooper in *The Virginian* (1929). One of her biggest hits was as Gwen Cavendish in *The Royal Family Of Broadway* (1930) with Ina Claire and Fredric March. Mary acted three times opposite W.C. Fields, first as his daughter in *Running Wild* (1927), later reprising her role for *The Man On The Flying Trapeze* (1934) (the third was *Two Flaming Youths* (1927)).

After signing for another four-year contract with Paramount, she was dropped from her contract (alongside her more illustrious colleagues Fay Wray and Jean Arthur) when Paramount began to forsake innocence and charm in favor of films with glamour and sophistication.

Mary's motion picture career faded after 1937 and she turned towards the stage. In 1940 she went on tour with "Three after Three", alongside Simone Simon and Mitzi Green and later entertained American troops in the South Pacific as part of the USO.

She was once engaged to Cary Grant and also to Dick Powell. Mary was considered for the role of Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone With The Wind* (1939). *Meet Corliss Archer* was her final acting role. She spent her retirement years fulfilling a lifelong passion for portrait painting.

Robert "Bobby" Ellis - appeared in films such as *The Babe Ruth Story* (1948) playing Babe Ruth as a kid, *Meet Corliss Archer* as Dexter Franklin, *I Love Lucy*, *Fireside Theatre*, Walt Disney's *Peter*

Pan (1953) as one of the lost boys, *The Loretta Young Show*, *The Lone Ranger*, *The McConnell Story* (1955), *The Adventures of Jim Bowie*, *The Joseph Cotten Show: On Trial*, *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *Code 3*, *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*, *Gidget* (1959) as Hot Shot, *Don't Give Up the Ship* (1959) with Jerry Lewis, *The Donna Reed Show* and *The Jackie Gleason Special* (1973).

He made his acting debut at age of 5 and portrayed Henry Aldrich on NBC Radio's *The Aldrich Family* (1952-1953). He played the part of Ralph Grainger, a college friend of Ronnie Burns, on the final two seasons of *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*.

Ann Marcus credited as Ann Spencer (Miss Hibbs) - had only nine credits as an actress, but had a very successful career as a writer for such television programs as *Knotts Landing*, *General Hospital*, *Days Of Our Lives*, *Peyton Place* and *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*.

In 1969 she became head-writer of the daytime drama, *Love Is a Many Splendored Thing* and was nominated for an Emmy Award. *Search for Tomorrow* followed for which she won the Writers Guild of America award for outstanding daytime serial. Norman Lear hired Ann as co-creator and head-writer of *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*, winning an Emmy in 1976. She also co-created *Fernwood 2-Nite*, *All That Glitters* and *Julie Farr, MD*.

Billy Nelson (Policeman) - His film career began in 1935 and evolved into television programs such as *The Adventures Of*

Superman, The Lineup, Tombstone Territory and The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp.

Hank Patterson (Locksmith) - played the same character (Fred Ziffel) in three different series: *The Beverly Hillbillies* (1962), *Petticoat Junction* (1963) and *Green Acres* (1965). He worked his way out to California in the 1920's where he began his film career.

Steve Pendleton (Mr. Higgins) - His 53 year acting career began in 1923 when he was 15 years old. After many uncredited roles in films, he found his way to television in the 1950's on such programs as *The Cisco Kid*, *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*, *The Adventures of Wild Bill Hickcock*, *The Roy Rogers Show* and *Julia*.

Stanley

Stanley was a short-lived sitcom that ran for 19 episodes on NBC from September 24, 1956 to March 11, 1957. It was broadcast live from New York. At that time, *Stanley* was the only sit-com being aired "LIVE".

Filmed at the New Century Theater on 58th Street and Seventh Avenue in Manhattan. The theater was converted to an NBC broadcast studio in 1953, then to a videotape studio in 1958. Upon the theater's destruction in 1962, an apartment building 200 Central Park South was erected on the site.

Stanley's producer, **Max Liebman** was a producer, director and composer who worked on Broadway, but is best known for having created the TV variety show *Your Show of Shows* (1950) that made Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca stars and helped launch the careers of Carl Reiner, Howard Morris, Nanette Fabray plus the writers Mel Brooks, Neil Simon and Mel Tolkin.

Don Pardo was the announcer. He worked at NBC for over 70 years on programs such as *Jeopardy*, *The Price Is Right* and *Saturday Night Live*.

Woody Allen was one of the writers of this episode of *Stanley*.

The *Stanley* theme song was written by Mel Pahl and Clay Warnick. This same song writing team wrote *Silver Bells*, *It's Christmas Time In The City* later that same year in 1956.

Celia Goes To A TV Show - (aka Stanley Gets Jealous) - Aired October 22, 1956, Monday evening at 8:30PM on NBC.

Buddy Hackett - Hackett was born in Brooklyn, New York. He grew up on 54th and 14th Ave in Borough Park, Brooklyn, across from Public School 103. Living next door was an aspiring baseball player named Sandy Koufax.

On February 16, 1964, Hackett and Burnett were reunited on CBS-TV's *What's My Line?* A blind-folded Hackett recognized his former co-star's voice who appeared as that evening's mystery guest. After briefly discussing their short-lived roles on *Stanley*, Buddy exclaimed "That's the one the Nielsen guy threw off the air for us!" This was a reference to the show's first guest that

evening who signed in as "Mr. X". He was actually A.C. Nielsen Jr. who headed the Nielsen ratings company.

Hackett never stuck to a script if he could avoid it. In 1965, while he was starring in the Broadway musical *I Had a Ball*, Buddy Hackett broke character at almost every performance to speak directly to the audience and perform long comedy monologues that were irrelevant to the proceedings onstage. Reportedly, he tried to pull similar antics during the brief run of *Stanley*.

Carol Burnett - appeared in 14 of the 19 episodes of this series. This was only her third television credit at the start of the career. Carol Burnett was in no position to make waves this early in her career, but years later she made known her dislike of Hackett, stating that he was a chronic troublemaker who was notorious for ad-libbing and trying to make other actors break character on-camera. During the long run of Carol Burnett's variety show, Buddy Hackett was never booked for a guest appearance, even though he was a major name at the time.

Burnett's trademark ear tug for her grandmother can be seen in all 14 of the 19 episodes of *Stanley* in which she appeared.

Carol Burnett leaned into her physical comedy skills on *Stanley*, playing Stanley's awkward girlfriend, Celia. In her interview with the Archive of American Television, Burnett said the sitcom "was good training because it was LIVE." However, Burnett was still focused on her stage career at the time and did not truly fall in love with television until she was cast as a regular performer on *The Garry Moore Show*. Simultaneous to her brief run in this series, Burnett was attracting attention with her guest shots in variety shows on rival network CBS.

Wayne Sherwood - this was his only known appearance on television. His work on stage included roles in *Catch A Star*, *The Story Of Alice*, *Room For Rent* and *Bachelor Hoedown*.

Dick Gautier - is best remembered as Hymie the robot on *Get Smart*. Stanley was his first television acting experience.

According to Gautier, "Buddy Hackett was mean from the ground up. I did his show *Stanley* (1956), when I was flailing around in New York trying to get something going, when I was working clubs. He was never nice. He was just never nice. But when I got his television show I had very little to do. I was almost like an extra. Carol Burnett was in it. I tell you, he was just impossible to work with, even for Carol. Carol Burnett never knocks anybody but, boy, she does not like Buddy Hackett. When I was in Philadelphia trying out "Bye Bye Birdie", Buddy was doing a show called "Viva Madison Avenue". And it was getting killed. Just gettin' killed. When he found it was me who had been like an extra on his show and I was now playing the lead in "Bye Bye Birdie" and getting great reviews, it really p****d him off. So much so that one night when he was eating at Harvey House, I walked by and said hello and he took his keys and he threw them at me. He said, "Hey, Dick, bring my car around, would ya!" I said, "Certainly, Mr. Hackett." I took the keys and went back to my theater and dressing room and back to rehearsal. He looked around everywhere for his keys and couldn't find them. Four hours later he comes storming in, "Where are my *\$#&*% keys!" That's the kind of guy he was. He was . . . just . . . awful. Mean. Always an angry man."

