

The Old Time Radio Researchers are excited to bring to you these little-known country and western programs. 'Pinto Pete and His Ranch Boys' recorded 104 shows and 'Pinto Pete in Arizona' an additional 78.

References to the Ranch Boys are found as early as 1930, though they may have been on earlier. They broadcast over KTM those first few years, nearly every day and at various times. Jack Ross, a versatile actor and producer apparently served as Pinto Pete, with Joe 'Curley' Bradley and Ken 'Shorty' Carson rounding out the trio. All three had acted as stuntmen. They also appeared in a few movies, including 'It Happened One Night' and 'In Old Monterey'.

The first recorded notice of the Pinto Pete And His Ranch Boys that researcher Ben Kibler was able to locate was a December 13, 1933 broadcast in Sandusky, Ohio. Mentions of the broadcast appeared through 1936.

In 1935, they auditioned for the Tom Mix radio show in Chicago and Curley got the part of "Pecos," Ross got the lead of Tom Mix, and Carson was to play bit parts. But Ross only got to play Mix once. While in Hollywood doing some movies in the summer of 1938, In 1938 they rode their horses from Hollywood to Chicago in a publicity stunt that landed them on National Barn Dance for three months.

Researcher Ryan Ellett purused the Los Angeles times from 1930 to 1935 and turned up a few mentions that indicate the trio might have moved on to better pastures.

Producer Grace Gibson introduced Australia to 'Pinto Pete And The Ranch Boys' about 1934, according to researcher Ian Grieves, and the program was heard off and on through 1944.

They were on the Blue Network in the U.S., according to a 1940 magazine ad, and on a Phoenix Arizona station in 1952.

On a curious note – at the Ponomo, CA fairgrounds Feb 4-7 2010 an act described as 'Pinto Pete And The King Of The Rangers(Old Time Radio Star of the 30s) was scheduled to appear!

For The Old Time Radio Researchers, I'm _____, your announcer. Now on with the show!

I just left a word search of 20 years of Radio Call running while I was busy elsewhere and the following showed up which will assist me to look in other magazines at those times:

1937 5DN Adelaide Pinto Pete in Arizona

1940, 1941, 1946, 1947 2BH Broken Hill Pinto Pete

1940 5AU Port Augusta Pinto Pete & The Ranch Boys (sometimes called Pinto Pete & His Ranch Boys), time varied 7.15pm to 8.45 pm

1941 3UZ Melbourne Pinto Pete

1943 3UZ Melbourne Return of Pinto Pete, varied time 7.45 - 8.45pm

1942 2GZ Orange Pinto Pete 8.45am and 5.15pm

I've been looking into the Pinto Pete series and found a few leads that may help us dig up more. So far I've only perused the LA Times from 1930 to about 1935. Getting the name Jack Ross was the key. Here some notes:

* Requests that we present a picture of Jack Ross, KHG's singing cowboy, are hereby fulfilled. [Picture of Jack Ross] He baptizes a new sustaining feature at 10:45 p.m. Dubbed "Jack Ross's Dude Ranch" which is to be released to the Columbia-Don Lee network. He will act as master of ceremonies, introducing Ruth Royale, Wade Lane, Joe Twerp, the Islanders and the Stewart Sisters. The broadcast marks Twerp's introduction as a producer for the network. Ross, who first saw the light of day in Arizona, twenty-eight years ago, served as manager of the Ranch Boys of KFI for four years. He is a mixture of Irish, French and Cherokee Indian. A bone fide cowboy, thoroughly at home in the saddle, Ross brings a note of realism to his broadcasts.
LAT 11/6/33 p. 16

*That versatile young cowboy singer and producer, Jack Ross, is billed to present another informal variety show over KHJ at 10:30 pm with Bill Doemling, announcer who turned radio crooner; Joe Twerp, Ole Swenson, the Stewart Sisters, Jeanne Carroll, Joe Bradley, Hubert Flatt, the Islanders, Ruth Royale and Clark Dennis in supporting roles.
LAT 1/15/34 p. 14

*Wendell Hall's program is replaced on NBC and KFI at 7pm by a feature titled "Sunset Dreams" with the Morin Sisters and Jack Ross's Ranch Boys in the stellar spot. Although the two trios have achieved nation-wide popularity separately over the networks, it was not until recent weeks that they happened to blend their voices in the sextet combination which is ballyhooed as the backbone of the new series.

LAT 6/9/35 p. 8

They are on the Blue network at least as late as 1940 according to an ad, and a Phon. I have yet to find a mention of recorded or syndicated programs.

From my research done over 35 years ago, here are three mentions of Pinto Pete and His Ranch Boys from 1934 issues of Broadcasting magazine:

Feb 15, 1934 page 17 Australian distributor of Lever Bros Rinso took 104 Pinto Pete and His Ranch Boys through A.E. Bennett. Also using Pinto Pete badges, card signs, etc.

April 1, 1934 page 35 Along with the Pickard Family, part of a hillbilly series of 72 programs for Columbia Phonograph Co. Programs for United Remedies.

May 15, 1934 p 37 Sold by 2GB to New Zealand Broadcasting Board Radio Transcription Co of America.

I guess this shows where the badges in Australia come from. It might also mean that there were two syndicated shows in 33 and 34. If The Pickard Family shows up, their similarity to Pinto Pete would solidify the identity of one of the series.

Grace Gibson

NFSA Title No. 716392 Portrait of Grace Gibson, circa 1955.

Grace Gibson

Grace Gibson was born in Texas in 1905. On completing her schooling in Hollywood, Gibson found work with the Radio Transcription Company of America. This was one of the first radio drama production companies in the USA. A few years later, she was selling radio programs to prospective sponsors. Managing Director of 2GB, A.E. Bennett, travelled to America to buy transcriptions and it was there he met Grace Gibson. Gibson sold him every program her company had available. On returning to Australia, Bennett found the radio programs well received on air and profitable for re-sale. In 1934 Bennett called for Gibson to come to Australia and help him set up his own transcription company. Gibson was scheduled to stay six months, but she stayed for the rest of her life.

The company Gibson and Bennett established was called American Radio Transcription Agencies. People called the company by its acronym: ARTRANSA, and Grace Gibson was its first manager. With ARTRANSA, Gibson introduced early American serials in Australia including: **Pinto Pete and his Ranch Boys**, Chandu the Magician and Jimmy Allen's Air Adventure.

After marrying Ronnie Parr (Ronald McDonnell Parr), in 1944, Gibson set up her own production company, Grace Gibson Radio Productions, in Savoy House, 29 Bligh Street Sydney. At that time the building already housed 2GB, 2UE and the Australian Record Company, otherwise known as ARC. The first show Gibson produced was a documentary series called Here Are The Facts. Her early radio dramas were: Nyal Radio Playhouse, a series of half hour plays, and the comedy-thriller Mr and Mrs North. Both of these programs were produced by Lynn Foster, one of Australia's first women producers.

Lawrence H. Cecil became Gibson's Production Manager in 1951. He produced Night Beat, an American script which was adapted for local audiences. Grace Gibson Radio Productions also created The Castlereagh Line, the most popular radio serial of all time, with a total of 910 episodes. Dossier On Dumetrius, Cattleman, I Christopher Macauley, Portia Faces Life, Life Can Be Beautiful and Doctor Paul are all credited to Grace Gibson Radio Productions.

Oral History

Grace Gibson interviewed by Diana Combe

Grace Gibson discusses her early career in selling radio transcriptions both in America and in Australia. Her company, Grace Gibson Radio Productions, established in 1934, influenced Australian radio culture with the introduction of American serials. She discusses the process of producing radio programs and selling them internationally.

21 mins (NFSA Title No. 380783)

Phoenix Radio Schedule

Saturday, October 4, 1952 KRIZ 1230 7:45 am Pinto Pete.

West Wind Ranch PINTO PETE AND THE KING OF THE RANGERS (OLD TIME RADIO 1930's)

Equestrian Affaire Feb 4-7 2010

Pomona Fairgrounds