



GARTENBERG MEDIA ENTERPRISES



Note: All photographs from I Married Joan were taken from screen projection of 35mm prints in this collection.

Series Overview

I Married Joan is an American situation comedy that originally aired on NBC from 1952 to 1955. It starred actress Joan Davis as the manic, scatterbrained wife of a mild-mannered community judge, the Honorable Bradley Stevens (played by Jim Backus). Over the course of 3 seasons, ninety-eight (98) episodes were produced in total. Virtually every episode had a plot which provided the star of the series, Joan Davis, with a setup for at least one scene of over-the-top physical comedy.

This series was a competitor to the *I Love Lucy* show, which overshadowed *I Married Joan* and originally ran on the CBS network from 1951 to 1957. It is noteworthy that both these series had overlapping production histories, as producer Al Simon worked on both shows, as did director Mark Daniels and cinematographer Karl Freund. The *I Married Joan* series was produced by Joan Davis Enterprises (i.e., owned by the comedienne), just as Desilu Productions (i.e., Lucille Ball) owned the *I Love Lucy* show. Joan Davis died of a heart attack in 1961, and tragically, her mother, her daughter Beverly Wills, and her grandchildren all died in a fire in 1963.

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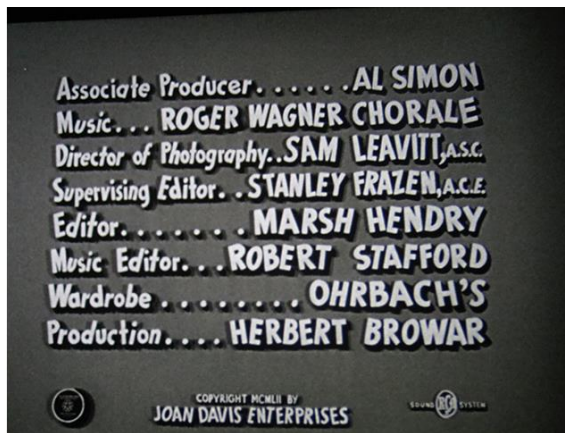
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Due to litigation over Joan Davis's estate, *I Married Joan* was pulled from syndication for a period of time. Whereas *I Love Lucy* continued in reruns, *I Married Joan* gradually faded from the public's memory.



Provenance

Beverly Wills' husband at the time of her own death in 1963 was Martin Colbert, a real estate developer. He apparently inherited the *I Married Joan* series, as this is the name under which the physical materials in this collection had lain fallow for so many decades. GME acquired the film elements in dead storage through legal chain of title as a result of a warehouse auction.





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Materials

GME possesses 35mm separate picture and track negatives for all 98 episodes, together with more than fifty (50) 35mm composite fine grain masters. In addition, there are 16mm preprint elements (comprised of separate 16mm picture negatives and 35/32 track negatives) for many of the episodes. Finally, the collection contains numerous 35mm and 16mm prints.

We prepared condition reports, resulting from our inspections of all the types of elements (i.e., 35mm picture negative, 35mm composite fine grain master, et al). These include AD readings for most all of the materials.

These materials appear to be the original master elements, and those that were subsequently used for syndication purposes. The physical identifiers embedded in them (such as edge code dates, lab printing cards, and production/airdates notated on various 16mm prints) provide insight into the history of the original production and subsequent syndication of this series. These elements have the original GE commercials embedded in them, which feature Joan Davis with her various kitchen appliances. For these reasons, this collection should also prove useful for scholarly research.



We have inspected the various elements, but not necessarily rewind items where cores were missing, winds were loose, or cans were original (especially as they contain important information about the original production and syndication on the can markings, leaders, and lab cards).



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As a result of the inspection process, we have systematically reorganized the storage of the materials by element type and then by episode. This should facilitate identifying the materials and processing the collection in systematic fashion.

Copyright

A copyright search on the individual episodes in this series indicates that 57 of them were not copyrighted or else the copyright was not renewed. This report will be furnished as a deliverable, together with the collection.

Digitization

A number of these episodes have been released on DVD, but they have been made from poor 16mm prints. The preprint elements in this collection would produce vastly superior digital copies, which could be suitable for publicly available digital platforms, consistent with The Packard Humanities Institute's other digitization efforts for moving image, stills, and documents. Various video distribution companies, have been interested in accessing GME's master elements for this series, but GME would only supply celluloid film elements to a nonprofit archive for digitization purposes.





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Cataloguing Database

We have compiled an electronic database and are continuing to refine the entries based on double checking various elements. This has taken quite a bit of detective work on our part, as we determined that incorrect episode numbers and/or titles were spliced onto the leader of various elements. We have been cross-checking the 35mm picture and track negatives with the 35mm composite fine grain masters, 16mm preprint materials, and 35mm and 16mm prints to correctly line up the element identification as best we can. A sample of the technical information for *Bev's Mistaken Marriage* is included below. There are multiple elements which can be used for celluloid preservation and for digital scanning purposes. GME's inspection reports are to be considered as a deliverable to accompany the acquisition of the physical elements.

9/6/2019

Ep.# 57	Episode Title BEV'S MISTAKEN MARRIAGE	Sound N/A	B&W / Color B+W
Element 35MM PICTURE NEGATIVE R1-3	Reels 3x 1000'	Edge Code R1, R3 K1950; R2 K1953	
Complete/Incomplete COMPLETE	Inspection Notes R1-3: CAN LABEL AND LAB CARDS: "BEV'S MISTAKEN MARRIAGE" SHOW 70. "BEV'S MISTAKEN MARRIAGE SHOW 70 AL SIMON" ETCHED ON ALL LEADERS FOR TRK AND PICT NEG. WINDS ARE GOOD. HEAD OF PICT TNEG R1 SHOWS GENERAL ELECTRIC LOGO FOLLOWED BY WHAT APPEARS TO BE A COMMERCIAL WITH JOAN WHICH FADES TO GE LOGO THAT FADES INTO JOAN DAVIS TITLE		
BCN 164945	Inspection Sheet # GME 1	AD R1 0.0 R2-3 0.25	
Ep.# 57	Episode Title BEV'S MISTAKEN MARRIAGE	Sound ENGLISH-MONO-VA	B&W / Color N/A
Element 35MM TRACK NEGATIVE R1-3	Reels 3x 1000'	Edge Code R1-2 D59; R3 D43	
Complete/Incomplete COMPLETE	Inspection Notes R1-3: CAN LABEL AND LAB CARDS: "BEV'S MISTAKEN MARRIAGE" SHOW 70. "BEV'S MISTAKEN MARRIAGE SHOW 70 AL SIMON" ETCHED ON ALL LEADERS FOR TRK AND PICT NEG. WINDS ARE GOOD. HEAD OF PICT TNEG R1 SHOWS GENERAL ELECTRIC LOGO FOLLOWED BY WHAT APPEARS TO BE A COMMERCIAL WITH JOAN WHICH FADES TO GE LOGO THAT FADES INTO JOAN DAVIS TITLE		
BCN 164945	Inspection Sheet # GME 1	AD R1-3 1.5	
Ep.# 57	Episode Title BEV'S MISTAKEN MARRIAGE	Sound ENGLISH-MONO-VA	B&W / Color B+W
Element 35MM COMP FINE GRAIN POSITIVE	Reels 3 x 1000'	Edge Code R1 D 52; R2 D 44; R3 D 50	
Complete/Incomplete COMPLETE	Inspection Notes "I MARRIED JOAN # 57" ON ALL LEADERS. POSSIBLY "TROPICAL FISH". GOOD WINDS AND EXCELLENT PICTURE QUALITY ON ALL REELS.		
BCN 164906	Inspection Sheet # GME 14	AD R1-3 1.0	



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We are also in the process of merging filmographic data (airdates, alternate show titles, synopses, guest stars, copyright information, DVD availability, et al) into the database with the physical elements, so as to generate a more complete catalogue record for each episode. This detailed database will be furnished as a deliverable together with the physical elements.

Archival Repository

GME's mission is to place its celluloid film collections in archival repositories so as to insure their long term care and preservation. The preprint elements in this collection would, in our estimation, comprise a significant asset to be preserved on celluloid and digitized for the acquiring archive's online platform. Acquisition of this collection would therefore provide an opportunity for an archive to elevate Joan Davis's legacy from a relatively unknown and under-rated comedienne to a more substantial position in the history of the entertainment industry.





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Other 1950s Television Materials

GME also possesses 16mm prints of other television materials, including *Age of Kings* (a British BBC production), *Bus Stop*, and *O. Henry Playhouse*. These are orphaned titles from warehouse consolidation. Many of these elements are worn 16mm prints, but may be relatively rare as they encompass television series dating from 1956 to 1962. There is also a 35mm picture and track negative of one episode of *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*. We would include them together with the sale of the aforementioned *I Married Joan* materials.