



“The DX King of Hollywood!” There aren’t many left who can recall “Tinseltown” cashing in on the new fad “shortwave listening.” Various personalities were alleged to be active SWL’s - and some with suspected am tickets such as Rudy Vallee and mogul Howard Hughes.

There was a highly publicized “DX Feud” of 1934 conducted between crooner Bing Crosby and actor Richard Arlen.

Although Arlen’s career faded into potboiler westerns after the mid 40's (he retired in the late 60s) and died in 1976 at age 78. In the late 20's and throughout the 30s he was a big name.

In 1934 and 35, Crosby and Arlen were much reported in the press to be SWL’s who had become “most rabid” DX fans.

The press was quick to point out that although it had been a common practice to pose movie stars in front of radio receivers for advertising purposes, it didn’t necessarily mean that they were actually DX listeners,

Crosby & Arlen however, were supposedly genuine static chasers. According to the news media of the era, the contest between the two was to show who could display the greatest ability to hear DX. A one thousand dollar side bet was to go along with the unofficial title of “Hollywood’s DX King”

No details of the contest or its winner seems to have ever been announced, although most of the press coverage did mention that both contestants would be using their McMurdo Silver Masterpiece III receivers. It may well have been that it was all a publicity stunt for the receiver manufacturer, but it did help to increase public awareness about SWL’ing.

Arlen’s 1943 flick called “Submarine Alert” sounded interesting, the plot, Nazi spies use a stolen short wave transmitter prototype to broadcast secret shipping info to an offshore Japanese submarine. The Govt uses planted counterspies as top radio engineers, they’re hired by the Nazis to complete work on the prototype radio. Arlen plays Lee Deerhold, falls prey to a maelstrom of deceit and danger. Partially scripted
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