Soak The Old (MGM, 1940) Directed by Sammy Lee. With: Ralph Morgan, George Cleveland, Robert Middlemass, Kenneth Christy, Catherine Lewis, George Lessey, George Lloyd, Charles Wagenheim, Hugh Beaumont, Lon Chaney, Jr., John Litel, Richard Barstreet, Betty Jackson, Barbara Bedford. 70 mins. The 31st in MGM's "Crime Does Not Pay" series, which ran to some 50 entries between 1935 and 1947, "Soak the Old" is typical of the series in focussing on the kind of crime most likely to directly affect the public. Slightly dated in its attitude to the old, who are depicted as being automatically vulnerable and helpless at an age when many people today are still un-retired and productive, it's a well-done little melodrama if unavoidably somewhat heavy-handed in having to carry both story-line and moral outrage in only two reels.

Don Donald (Walt Disney-Rko Radio 1936, rel: 1937) 8 mins. Technicolor. While not one of the funniest of the 14 one-reel cartoons Disney released in 1937—a good year that included "Little Hiawatha" and "The Old Mill" among the highlights—"Don Donald" certainly rates a place on the Archive Night program because of the work done for Disney by Donald Duck. Hartteco Donald had always been a second banana to Mickey Mouse, and while he would continue to co-star with Mickey and Pluto occasionally, his roles grew bigger and eventually he displaced Mickey as Disney's No. 1 star. Although still copyrighted as a Mickey Mouse cartoon, "Don Donald" gives Donald—Disney's combination of James Cagney and Ted Healey—undisputed star concentration throughout, and his own main title logo.

An Adventure to Remember (Warner Brothers, 1955) Written and produced by Robert G. Youngson, being a condensation of "Isle of Lost Ships" (Warner Bros. First National, 1929) Directed by Irvin Willat, with Jason Robards, Virginia Valli, Noah Beery, Robert E. O'Connor; 10 mins. Vigorously directed by Irvin Willat (who also directed last week's "Below the Surface"), "Isle of Lost Ships" was an early sound film from which the disc hasn't recovered any silent form players because of its fast pace and well-staged action. (Undoubtedly the earlier, 1923 version by Maurice Tourner was better, but seems to be permanently lost). This very enjoyable one-reel version manages to include most of the highlights, though its occasional jokes at the expense of an already tongue-in-cheek original are unnecessary.

Parisienne Follies (French, 1927) 15 mins. Color. Photographed during a performance of the Follies Bergeres in Paris, this is a wonderful record of the costumed Parisian and French revue of that noble institution. There is an interesting emphasis on Egyptian design, and Josephine Bakers is featured in one of the numbers. Interestingly, the original ads make no mention of a musical score which would have seemed logical in 1927 for a film of this type. However, an appropriate score was added in Britain. Its main interest however, décor and dancing girls apart, is in the quite beautifully applied stencilled color process.

THE LAUGHING LADY (Paramount, 1929) Directed by Victor Schertzinger; Screenplay by Bartlett Cormack and Arthur Richman from the 1922 play of the same name by Alfred Sutro; song, "Another Kiss", by Schertzinger; Camera, George Folsey; 80 mins. (Also released in a shorter silent version). HF premiere, Paramount Theatre, January 1930, with a stage show headed by Ethel Merman, cyclorama. With: Ruth Chatterton (Marjorie Lee); Clive Brook (Daniel Farr); Dan Healy (Al Brown); Raymond Walburn (Hector Lee); Nat Pendleton (James Dugan); Dorothy Hall (Flo); Nedda Harrigan (Cynthia Bell); Lillian B. Tonge (Parker); Margaret St. John (Mrs Playgate); Alice Hegeman (Mrs Collop); Joseph King (city editor); Helen Hawley (Rose); Betty Bartley (Barbara).

"The Laughing Lady" is a remake of the 1924 "A Society Scandal", directed by Allan Dwan and starring Gloria Swanson, Rod la Rocque and Ricardo Cortez, itself based on a play that had starred Ethel Barrymore. Today it seems like a rather typical Paramount/estoria transition-to-sound feature, mostly talk on interior stages (except for a key beach scene), and featuring many NY stage actors, some of whom would go on to Hollywood. (Ruth Chatterton and Raymond Walburn seem an extremely unlikely married couple, as indeed they are; what Preston Sturges could have done with that combination!). Its story of society morals and divorce also is unavoidably dated today. Yet in 1929 it was well ahead of its many competitors with similar plot-lines. Paramount knew what they were doing in teaming Brook and Chatterton, two players with widely contrasting styles and equally contrasting (though crystal-clear) diction. The teaming clicked, and they appeared in other similar films together. The New York Times gave the film a virtual rave, commenting on its intelligence, sophistication, the excellence of the acting, and urging other producers and directors to study it and to make more films of the same type, (we think they certainly did!). Seen in the context of 1929, the enthusiasm is quite justified, but on the other hand, 65 years later, so is its placement in an "Archive" program.