Ask any cop what their favorite con show is and the answer may shock you. Not "NYPD Blue" or "Hill Street Blues." They all loved "Barney Miller."

Sunday

Because TV Land is adding the classic silcom to its regular primetime schedule this week, we asked the original cast to tell us what it was like to

EV MICHAEL GILTZ

THE ROLL CALL TO MAKE ST

work on ...

Hat Linden — Barney Miller Abe Vigoda - Fish Max Gail — Wojohowicz (Wojo)

Ron Glass - Harris Steve Landesberg - Dietrich Florence Stanley — Bernice Fish Marcy Carsey - ABC executive

STAFFING THE

HAL LINDEN: I had the job before Lever met Icreator and producert Danny Arnold, He saw me in "The Rothschilds" on Broadway in 1970, "Barney Miller" didn't turn up until '74 but he'd seen me in that show and decided I was the one for the part.

And at the time I was a relatively good name o nadway but nobody knew me in California. I was nothing in the rest of America. Nobody knew me And I know he had a lot of

difficulty with the network by saying I was the one for the part ABE VIGODA: I'm a jogger. I was jogging in Los Angeles at the time, 1974. My agent came to me

doing this play and I can't get and said, "Go up to see Danny Arnold at Studio City. They're And it was Charlie Haid [who went on to star in "Hill Street casting for a show called Barney Miller. But I said I'd been jogging now for three miles; I should go RON GLASS: Danny called me home and take a shower. He said, It wasn't an audition, it was just a

'No, no. You must go right now. So I went and sat down. There he was, Danny Arnold

And he said, "You look tired." I said, "I am tired; I've been jogging

episode of "All in the Family" I had done. We just sat around and talked. There was a black character in the pilot and that He said, "You look like you have actor, Rod Perry, got hired to do hemorrhoids." I said, "What? Are

you a doctor or a producer?"

No auditioning and I haven't

to leave acting for music. But I

went over and I read for it.

MAX GAIL: I was getting ready

Danny said, "I did this pilot once

before. I'm doing it again. The guy

that played this part was great;

I'd really like to use him. I've got

scripts written for him. But he's

meeting to talk with him.

Apparently he had seen an

He said "Perfect!"

He took that job so the black slot became open [laughs] STEVE LANDESBERG:

Danny Arnold saw me on Ithe sitcom | The Paul Sand Show laka Friends and Lovers". He hired me as a crook on Barney Miller" based on that.

VIGODA: Florence Stanley did not have to audition with me at all. Danny Arnold knew her. And Neil Simon knew her and he mentioned to me that "she'd be a wonderful wife for you."

FLORENCE STANLEY: Danny Arnold was so sure of himself I was in New York at the time and I just got a phone call that he wanted to talk to me. To this day I have no idea what he saw [me in].

But he wanted to talk to me and offer me the part of Bernice Fish. He'd never even met me

MARCY CARSEY: I had just been hired by ABC and, in doing my homework, I looked at pilots they had made recently but weren't picking up and "Barney Miller" was one of them. But they ended up putting it on the schedule. So I was given a group of three or four shows and "Barney Miller" was one of them.

# TOP COP, CREATOR

GAIL: Danny had a big shock of sandy red hair and a wonderfully expressive face. Big shoulders and no butt. Danny was into his race horses and his cigars and living larger than life. And he was absolutely certain about his own judgment.

LINDEN: Danny was tall and stocky and there was no "Barney without Danny That's why he redirected almost every piece. We kept losing directors because of

GAIL: You know how Hal and I came to direct? We knew that

when it came time to shoot, Danny would let these directors carry on for a few minutes and then he'd step in and say, "Do you mind a little suggestion?" And two minutes later he'd taken over. And we'd have to carry these guys through this very crushing experience.

So Hal and I went to him and said it's getting pretty awful with these poor directors. We know, you're going to direct anyway so why not just let us direct for the

LANDESBERG: He was the guy. We were all a piece of him. At the beginning, I thought, maybe Dietrich is too intellectual: he knows too much. Maybe cops won't like him. But what's wrong

with being a smart cop? STANLEY: I think Danny Arnold knew more about everything than anyone else I ever worked with. He knew about acting. He knew about casting.

acting. He knew about casting. And he knew about directing. And he knew about cameras And he knew about editing. He knew

verything. It was just incredible. CARSEY: I was kind of afraid of him actually because he was a temperamental guy. But you'd really want to have dinner with him or share a cigar Loften did go have a vodka with him to get him out to lunch because it was the only way I could get him to talk to

### WORKING THE NIGHT SHIFT

VIGODA: Most of the time, the day of the shoot we would work till 5 in the morning when most itcoms would be done at 11 p.m. He was ... let's say a perfectionist. We'll say that. He vas a perfectionist. He wanted it just the way he had it in mind and that was it.

GLASS: I thought I had gone into "The Twilight Zone." I really didn't understand that at all Fortunately there was a card game we played on the set that kept things going while we were waiting for the script to come down. Hal used to play once in a while; it was mostly the cameramen and the crew

CARSEY: I was the program xecutive assigned to the show, so I was there a lot. You have to be there at run-throughs and tapings. With "Barney Miller" it was a laborious process because Danny was such a perfectionist.

anchor especially when it was I don't remember my bosses two in the morning and we'd just gotten the last six pages of the getting nervous. It was just understood that was the way Danny worked. Everybody wished didn't. But he did. Stakeout," filmed first but aired

GLASS: Danny Arnold's two ids - David and Daniel - used to come down to the set. They eren't even teenagers yet and Danny would bring them to the lice. They'd spend the night there on pallets to get to see their

#### MUG SHOTS

LINDEN: We were la idsenson replacement | and I member at the end of that half cason we were on the list of lows to be cancelled according to he television critic of the Los ogeles Times, the list of shows hat were probably going to be

all the cash in to the police LANDESBERG: In the very station. eginning, when we were nitically acclaimed," we were with these stacks and stacks of possite "The Waltons." Then greenbacks. This guy in the lockben we followed "Welcome Back. up was watching all this and he ofter."That's when we became a can't stand it any more! Finally he grabs hold of the bars and And also we were on at 9 clock, which was a better time says, "Stick 'em up!"

bathroom.

my could not relate to it.

GAIL: One of the times there GAIL: Alse's a really wonderful was really stress on the set was the episode where Ron Glass was ay but a real character. Abe had way of working. When we took a shot at by other cops because he eak. Abe would stay right in his was black. And it dealt with at and would not lose his sense racism in the police force and place. And I thought that other things. And the character tributed a lot to his being able Harris got po same off about that. At the end they wrote a scene be funny just getting up to go to

where Harris came back and be had some wonderful poetic apologized to all his buddies. Ron tions of how to work that he didn't want to apologize. His committed to. But Hal and feeling was, "What have I got to apologize for?" I agreed with him.

Hal Linden best

remembers the bash

brownies episode:

"You thought well

often on sitcoms."

you don't see this too

Hal had been a musician in the

big band era. He was really, "Play

the score."That made him a real

GAIL: In the first show | The

as the seventh episodel. Wojo had

across the floor ending up in front

that necessary? Which Abe could

turn into a funny line; Danny had

that kind of ear.
LINDEN: I think the one we all

characters had an aria. It looked a

to come in the door in a karate

outfit doing a series of moves

of Fish and Fish would say "Is

remembered was the hash

on siteom

prownies episode. Each of the

little different and you thought.

well, you don't see this too often

STANLEY: I have a favorite

something happened at the bank

next door and they had to bring

The cops were all walking in

episode I wasn't in. The one I

always love is the one where

of his perfectionist work habits it was very hard to get him to do THEODORE another show I think part of the reason we wanted to spin off a character from "Barney Miller" was that we

12 0 1

But Danny and Hal could not get

GLASS: That was a pretty

intense experience. Danny was

highly opinionated and did not

to get him to see it.

feel I know how to fix it

Ron was saying and he was

also didn't want to take the

black people with whatever

happened. He was very clear

MEW ASSIGNMENTS

called me and said. "I want to give

was enormously popular and got a lot of fan mail. I said, "You got it:

STANLEY: That was in the air

LINDEN: The fact of the matter

is that Abe caught attention more

something about the character or

nd they insisted that he spin off.

Abe himself. He was much more

popular, I suspect, than I was.

GAIL: After the first half

season. Abe wanted them to

He was a hit, the first hit

change it to "Barney and Fish.

than anybody else. Everybody

loved Abe. There was obviously

VIGODA: The head of ABC

you a series of your own." Fish

I'm going to do it

about that

move easily. It took a while for me

it was all Danny.

knew if we started from scratch on another concept that we would probably never get anything out VIGODA: Danny Arnold wasn't that happy with me leaving

Abe's talent and way of working

set it up.
Abe tended to think it was all

CARSEY: We at the network

show out of Danny. And because

were desperate to get another

and Danny understanding how to

because it was a good ensemble and he didn't want any of the elements to leave But I felt that's show business; you gotta take a "Fish" ran for two seasons 35

episodes. I knew I was taking a chance. But it gave me an opportunity to be the star of my un show. It was worth it to me GAIL: I was told they wanted to to a Wojo spinoff and I really

lidn't want to do it LINDEN: Max Gail quite frankly was afraid of having the

same thing happen that appened to Abe

## CODE BLUE

LINDEN: When Jack Soo (who played Yemenal finally went into the hospital, Danny called us and told us Jack had cancer.

SHEEHAN: I'm not sure how Very often, in a situation like that, I can tell when something's long we were aware of how ill he not right but I don't necessarily was, but by his last season it was clear he couldn't do as much

GAIL: The second time I GAIL: I did understand what directed. Jack Soo had just found having a hard time saying it. It's out he had cancer. He was hard for all of us. But particularly unposed to go into the bosnital Ron is a very sensitive guy and he right away. And he made the lecision to stay and do the show, mantle that he was speaking for work those last few days just to not throw any curves at me when was directing

GLASS: I didn't know Jack was So when there were arguments I until he went into the hospital. it was about deeper stuff that LANDESBERG: If you watch nounle carried about. In the end, by the shows, you can see Jack didn't apologize. That was the respect level. Danny's response brought him back after he was was. "I don't really get it; but

operated on.

GAIL: Danny had his heart attack like days after we filmed the Wojo spinoff. I really felt for years that I was responsible. I

Years later, I talked to him about it and he let me know I was not that important in his life. |laughs| It took a lot of pastrami sandwiches and cigars and stuff

LANDESBERG: When Danny got sick he said. This ain't no big surprise." He was smoking too many cigars and eating too much and maybe drinking too much but mostly working too hard.

GAIL: It got to the last season when . . . there was a third generation of writers. They wrote an episode about fat people wearing tight Levi's But they were really mean-spirited jokes about fat people - so far from what Danny would do if he

character. It was a combination of decided to do a show about a situation like that

That's when he came in and said, "I'm going to come back and do these last ones. I'm going to get Abe - and Danny tended to think the nose of the plane up.

# RETIREMENT FOR

LANDESBERG: When we did that last show - and Danny was directing it — we did take after take after take of that last scene [When we were done ] he didn't say, "That's a wrap" which he sually did. He said, "That's it."

I don't think he could say "That's a wrap." It was too tough for him. It was very emotional that last show

GLASS: Our last show — that SHEEHAN: It wasn't as

climactic as I thought it would feel. You're done and it just happens that you're going to be making no more of them. But no one wanted the show to keep going because seven and a half years is really plenty of episodes of anything

VIGODA: When they taped the final episode I was doing a stage play in Canada Then they had a wrap party that I couldn't make either. People magazine had a feature on the wrap party and the writer wrote that they were all sorry the late Abe Vigoda wasn't

By golly, that stuck with me for

LANDESBERG: I saw Danny in the hospital and had a great time with him. He was in great spirits and great fun. Then I called him a couple weeks later and he didn't sound so good. And then I got the phone call and it

GAIL: It was disappointing. He was struggling, but it seemed like he might actually get a couple more years plide out of it

GLASS: I was at his funeral and I got to give him a public farewell. He was obviously a mentor professionally. But ersonally Danny felt something like a cross between a dad -- not a father, but a dad - and a friend. Not a buddy, but a friend.

### STILL ON THE BEAT

STANLEY: They often forget to mention "Barney Miller" when they go through the list of the best sitcoms of all time. I notice that. I can never understand.

They say "All in the Family."
"M\*A S\*H," "Mary Tyler Moore. And they skip "Barney Miller,"

LINDEN: You know we never really made it to the Top 10 lin the weekly Nielsen ratingss! We were more like Top 20. I think we only made the Top 10 once and that was during a week the World

Series cancelled all the Top 10 VIGODA: I get stopped a lot on the street. People seem to feel I stayed with "Barney Miller" all the eight years. They don't seem to realize I was with it only three

Two things in my life made my career: The Godfather and "Barney Miller."