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# WRVA's public service broadcasting from 1925 through World War II

Mary Julianne Roman-Daffron

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**WRVA'S PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING  
FROM 1925 THROUGH WORLD WAR II**

**By**

**MARY JULIANNE ROMAN-DAFFRON**

**M.A., University of Richmond, 1990**

**DR. RICHARD BARRY WESTIN, Thesis Director**

**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze WRVA's public service broadcasting from 1925 through 1945. The four criteria used in making selections from archival material at the University of Virginia and from other sources include: historical significance, importance of authorship, relationship to World War II, and broad topical significance emphasizing WRVA's public service broadcasting.

WRVA's public service broadcasting is defined as unsponsored programming. Often produced at WRVA's expense, it readily separates into six subject areas: political and legislative, community service, religious, educational, agricultural, and war-related programming, and three program classifications: public service announcements, special one-time programs, and regular ongoing programs.

WRVA's public service broadcasting, in keeping with the station's motto "Service," was good business and an extension of the establishment which supported the Byrd Organization in Virginia. A discussion of WRVA's historical background, financial sacrifices, problems, complications, and controversial issues reveals that WRVA was a station with a heart.

I certify that I have read this thesis and find that, in scope and quality, it satisfies the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

*Richard B. Westin*

Dr. Richard B. Westin, Thesis Director

*Emory C. Bogle*

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**WRVA'S PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING  
FROM 1925 THROUGH WORLD WAR II**

**By**

**MARY JULIANNE ROMAN-DAFFRON  
B.A., University of Richmond, 1965**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
of the University of Richmond**

**in Candidacy**

**for the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**in History**

**August, 1990**

**Richmond, Virginia**



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## PREFACE

By the end of the Second World War, WRVA radio had played an important role in the lives of Virginians. The twenty years from 1925 to 1945 were WRVA's life history and that of radio broadcasting in the United States as well. During this time, broadcasting came of age. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze WRVA's public service broadcasting from the station's inception in 1925 through World War II. The facts provide an interesting story.

In about fifty feet of shelf space at the University of Virginia, WRVA's archival material fills 555 boxes containing several thousand selections of single, letter-size pages. These boxes, a gift from WRVA to the University, hold memos, interviews, correspondence, logs, news releases and feature articles, guidelines poems, announcements, regulations, plays, private papers and transcriptions of dialogues.

The four criteria used in making selections from this collection and from other sources include: historical significance, importance of authorship, relationship to World War II, and broad topical significance emphasizing WRVA's public service broadcasting. The Communications Act of 1934

provides definitions of "radio station," "broadcasting," and "chain broadcasting." "'Radio station' or 'station' means a station equipped to engage in radio communication or radio transmission of energy." "'Broadcasting' means the dissemination of radio communications intended to be received by the public, directly or by the intermediary of relay stations."<sup>1</sup> Broadcasting is not two-way or point-to-point communication. In the 1920's, this was called narrowcasting. "'Chain broadcasting' means simultaneous broadcasting of an identical program by two or more connected stations."<sup>2</sup> WRVA's public service programming is defined as unsponsored programming.

Often produced at the station's expense, WRVA's public service broadcasting from 1925 through World War II readily separates into six subject areas and three program classifications. The six subject areas include political and legislative, community service, religious, educational, agricultural, and war-related programming. The three program classifications include: public service announcements, special one-time programs, and regular ongoing programs.

After introducing background information obtained from station papers, interviews and an unpublished manuscript, this paper discusses the program classifications by subject areas. A discussion of WRVA's financial

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<sup>1</sup>Erik Barnouw, A History of Broadcasting in the United States, vol. II - 1933 to 1953 The Golden Web, Appendix, "Laws" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 313.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

sacrifices, problems and complications involved in wartime public service broadcasting, controversial issues and a conclusion follow.

In the fall of 1988, John Tansey and Alden Aaroe of WRVA suggested that I interview Miss Bertha Hewlett because she had been a member of the WRVA staff since the station's beginnings in 1925. I am indebted to them for their suggestion, and to Miss Hewlett and John Tansey, President of WRVA, for sharing "The Voice of Virginia," WRVA RICHMOND, "Down Where the South Begins," an unpublished manuscript written by WRVA's first General Manager, Calvin Tomkins Lucy, after his retirement on October 2, 1961. Chapter One presents highlights from Lucy's manuscript.

MJR-D

Richmond, Virginia

August, 1990

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When selecting a topic for my thesis, there were so many possibilities. Upon expressing this to my advisor, Dr. Emory C. Bogle, he suggested that I write of WRVA's public service broadcasting during World War II. To give historical perspective to the topic, Dr. Richard Barry Westin, my thesis director and with whom I spent many productive hours, suggested that I write of WRVA's public service role from the time of the station's inception in 1925 through World War II. Dr. Ernest C. Bolt, Dr. Bogle and Dr. Westin read the manuscript and suggested needed changes that prevented mistakes of interpretation and fact. All have encouraged the project in every way. Much of the credit is theirs for whatever merit may be claimed.

Laurie Fraley provided invaluable assistance with her skillful use of "Microsoft Word" and the Macintosh computer. Miss Bertha Hewlett, Alden Aaroe, John Tansey, Harvey Hudson, Carl Stutz, and Sam Carey, all of WRVA, offered information, time, and tremendous support. Most of all, I appreciate the support of my son, Philip Valentine Daffron, Jr., who probably has made the most accommodations. My mother, Mary Roman, provided encouragement and hours of childcare only suffering bankruptcy once in the many games of "Monopoly" that she played with Philip this summer. Anita Vaughn, Dulcie Lacey, Nancy Jordan, Joan Lines, Oleta Sheppard and staff librarians at the

University of Richmond and the University of Virginia are among others who have sustained me in my research. They gave assistance that aided me greatly and I thank each of them. I hope that the this project will promote further inquiry. For its deficiencies, the author stands alone.

Mary Julianne Roman-Daffron

Richmond, Virginia

August, 1990

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**PART I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

CHAPTER ONE  
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

WRVA: 1925-1945

The 1920's were the pioneering days of commercial radio. There were no stations that had long been in existence from which new stations could choose experienced individuals to serve as station managers. There were no college courses in radio broadcasting. The story of the rise of the early station managers is one that is yet to be told. For radio station WRVA in Richmond, Virginia, it began as early as 1912 when a young man by the name of Calvin T. Lucy joined Larus and Brother Company, Incorporated, as an administrative assistant to John Hobart Reed. It was Reed's recommendation and encouragement that influenced the selection by his brother, Pleasant Larus Reed, of C. T. Lucy to build and operate WRVA.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C. T. Lucy, WRVA General Manager, FOREWORD from "The Voice of Virginia," WRVA RICHMOND, "Down Where the South Begins," from papers in possession of Miss Bertha Hewlett. Richmond, VA, TD, n.d. Documents from this collection are hereafter cited as Hewlett Papers.

Lucy was still working for Larus and Brother Company in the early 1920's when the idea of a broadcasting station began to grow in the mind of young Charles D. Larus, III. KDKA in Pittsburgh had gone on the air in 1920 by announcing the Harding-Cox Presidential election results in November of that year. Charles Larus, a ham radio operator, earlier tried to convince his uncles, William T. Reed, Sr., and Pleasant Larus Reed of Larus and Brother Company, that radio broadcasting would become "big business." In early 1925, Charles' idea finally "took root" in the mind of Pleasant Reed after he had listened to a speech by the Attorney General of Missouri "broadcast by station WOS (Watch Our State) from Jefferson City, Missouri. The next day 'Uncle Pleas' requested information from WOS, while Mr. Reed received George Marchmont with whom he placed an order for a "complete 1,000-watt Western Electric station."<sup>2</sup>

Larus and Brother Company had been a manufacturer of tobacco products since 1877. Throughout its existence, its officers and directors had been very active in civic affairs locally, statewide, and regionally. Among the old established firms in the city and in the state, C. T. Lucy recalls that "it was no surprise to most people that Larus and Brother Company recognized the future of radio and its potential value to Richmond and to Virginia."<sup>3</sup>

In April, 1925, Pleasant Larus Reed, vice-president of Larus and Brother Company, summoned C. T. Lucy to his office. The following conversation occurred:

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

"Do you have a radio," asked Mr. Reed.

"No, sir," I replied. "In fact, I have never seen nor heard one."

"Have you seen or ever been inside a radio broadcasting station?"

"No, sir," was my reply.

"Well, you are going to see and hear a lot about both because we have just purchased from the Western Electric Company, the largest broadcasting station they manufacture and we want you to find out all you can about the business, build the station, and operate it for us. I'm too old to do it; you are young and the logical one in our organization to do the job."<sup>4</sup>

Lucy became General Manager, Radio Section, and as such an officer of Larus and Brother Company; WRVA was its subsidiary.<sup>5</sup>

Lucy soon discovered that WBAZ, a station sponsored by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, had operated for a short time in 1922 and had "folded for lack of funds and interest."<sup>6</sup> Then he learned that three other stations were in operation in the region. They were WDBJ Roanoke (20 watts, 1922-1923), WTAR Norfolk (150 watts), and a small (10 watts) station, WBBL in Richmond, which was operated on Sundays by the Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church.<sup>7</sup> The 1000 watt station purchased by Larus and Brother Company was the latest product of the Western Electric Company, and was only the fourth of its kind to be installed in the United States. It would be the most powerful radio broadcasting station between Washington

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>75 Years: Larus and Brother Company, Inc. 75th anniversary publication (n.p., [1952]), Hewlett papers.

<sup>6</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

and Atlanta.<sup>8</sup> Because Larus and Brother Company lacked neither funds, interest nor wattage, WRVA's position of leadership was secure.

At this time, construction of a new factory and office building for Larus' tobacco operations was in progress in Richmond, on Cary Street between 21st and 22nd Street.<sup>9</sup> Lucy explained:

It was decided in conferences with the Western Electric officials in Richmond and our building contractors, that the roof of our factory was the logical place for our two 125-foot steel towers to support the flat-top antenna with its "squirrel cage" lead-in, also a penthouse for our transmitter and generating equipment. Plans for a two-studio operation with the announcer booth in between, such as I had seen at WCAP Washington, and appropriate office, lounge and reception spaces, were quickly drawn and approved, including the latest material for sound-proofing and acoustical treatment recommended by Johns-Manville Company . . . Then came a shock! Nobody had said anything about the necessity for obtaining a license from the U.S. Government to operate the station . . . Although told by a Mr. William D. Terrell, Chief of the Radio Inspection Service, 'You are too late in trying to get on the radio bandwagon.' . . . Mr. Reed appealed to U.S. Senator Claude Swanson and they appealed to the Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, for "justice for Virginia." We were promised reconsideration and promptly assigned to a temporary wavelength.<sup>10</sup>

Being well-connected and successful helped Larus and Brother Company establish WRVA and was critical in the station's success.

Preparations for an official opening scheduled for November 2, 1925, proceeded rapidly under the leadership of Studio Director Elmer G. Hoelzle. Miss Bertha Hewlett, secretary to Hoelzle, went shopping with several wives

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid..

of executives from Larus and Brother Company in order to purchase furniture for the studio. Men delivered the furniture and placed it in the studio in time for the official opening. Miss Hewlett, also soon to be employed as studio hostess, "Gal Friday," "Aunt Sammy," talent scout, performer and announcer, had come early to the studio only to discover there were no lamps! They were still on the truck. She quickly returned home and retrieved her lamps so the official opening would not be without light. Promptly at 9 o'clock p.m. on November 2, 1925, WRVA officially went on the air as the highest powered station in Virginia, a position it still occupies today.<sup>11</sup> In his dedicatory remarks, William T. Reed, Sr., president of Larus and Brother Company, said, "It is our desire to render service to Richmond and Virginia, and we feel that the establishment of this station will be of service."<sup>12</sup>

Established in 1877 by Charles Dunning Larus and his brother Herbert Clinton Larus, Larus and Brother Company began operations in Richmond, Virginia. Shortly after manufacturing operations were acquired on South 21st Street in 1897, the business was incorporated as Larus and Brother Company with Charles D. Larus, Sr., as president; William T. Reed, vice president; Pleasant Larus Reed, second vice president; and Charles D. Larus,

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<sup>11</sup>Miss Bertha Hewlett, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, June 8, 1989.

<sup>12</sup>William T. Reed, President, Larus and Brother Company, Typed speech excerpted from WRVA's 20th anniversary program, "First With Twenty," Nov. 2, 1945, Box 104, "WRVA Twentieth Anniversary" folder, WRVA Radio Station Papers (Accession #9340), Manuscripts Division, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA. Documents from this collection are hereafter cited as WRVA Papers.

Jr., secretary-treasurer. Following the death of President Larus in 1908, William T. Reed, Sr., was elected president and operations continued to flourish. By 1921, operations increased; Larus purchased additional property adjoining the 21st Street site, on which a modern five-story tobacco factory was constructed. It was in this factory on the Main Street side of the Larus Building in 1925 that Larus and Brother Company provided the Commonwealth of Virginia with its first powerful radio broadcasting station, WRVA.<sup>13</sup>

As a civic and community station, WRVA, operated on a non-commercial policy, obtaining program material from all sections of Virginia and numerous North Carolina communities. The station broadcast live musical talent and picked up by remote control, special events programs performed live over a wide area. No tapes or records were used; during the first year of operation, WRVA aired live broadcasts only. WRVA's twice-a-week schedule expanded until 242 programs had been broadcast with 2,358 people appearing before the WRVA carbon microphones by the end of the year. WRVA with Studio Director Hoelzle inaugurated "The Corn Cob Pipe Club," an informal variety program with Pat Binford as master of ceremonies in 1925. National networks carried "The Corn Cob Pipe Club" for several years, too. Miss Hewlett was the talent coordinator and accompanist for "The Corn Cob Pipe Club," which became one of WRVA's most popular programs. Listeners all over the United States and Canada avidly followed the programs. The Club's entertainers included philosophers, comedians, novelty acts and musical entertainers, old time fiddlers and string band artists.

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<sup>13</sup>75 Years: Larus and Brother Company, Inc., Hewlett Papers.

Negro spiritual singers were also very popular.<sup>14</sup> Interest in the program spread like wildfire and ran so high that Corn Cob Pipe Clubs "sprang up everywhere.". By July, 1935, there were 786 clubs in the United States and ninety-seven in foreign countries. New York State alone had 118 clubs.<sup>15</sup>

Daytime broadcasting began on June 9, 1926, with a midday program public service program called "Aunt Sammy," played by Miss Bertha Hewlett. "Aunt Sammy" was an information program for homemakers including farm news, music, recipes and household hints provided by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. WRVA broadcast the program until it was ended in 1931.<sup>16</sup>

WRVA's first year's offering included 230 orchestra programs, thirteen band concerts, eight glee clubs and ten college programs, with a total of 906 participants from out of the city.<sup>17</sup> WRVA broadcast its first network program, the Maxwell House Hour, on November 10, 1927. In 1929, WRVA affiliated with the National Broadcasting Company leaving this network in 1937 to join the Columbia Broadcasting System. In 1936, WRVA affiliated with the Mutual Broadcasting System. The station continued to be an affiliate of both Mutual and Columbia during World War II, leaving Mutual after the war and continuing with CBS.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Hewlett, Oral interview, June 8, 1989.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>TD, Dec. 21, 1945, Hewlett Papers.



WRVA's affiliation with NBC in 1929 signaled that financial support from advertising was practical. Although WRVA's station policy forbade direct selling at that time, network advertising had begun. The leading product group advertised on network radio was that of radio manufacturers; the second largest group was made up of insurance and finance companies, with this group's number diminishing in favor of food, drug and tobacco product groups.<sup>19</sup> The earliest advertisers added the company's name to that of the performer's to promote products; examples are the "Clicquot Club Eskimos,"<sup>20</sup> the "Maxwell House Hour" and the "Edgeworth Dance Party."<sup>21</sup> Mention of price was banned until 1932.<sup>22</sup>

Although broadcasting as an industry was but a few years old by the time WRVA joined NBC in 1929, there was a precedent for broadcasting in the United States to be privately owned and commercially supported. With the growth of broadcasting networks, or chains, Congress began to define and to regulate the radio industry. Although WRVA enjoyed its affiliate status with NBC, the station continued to produce and to emphasize its own public service broadcasting.

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<sup>19</sup>Sydney W. Head, Broadcasting in America: A Survey of Television and Radio, 2d ed., Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972, 264.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 265.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 266.

<sup>22</sup>35 YEARS: WRVA Radio, WRVA, Richmond, Va, n.d., Box 104, "WRVA 35th Anniversary" folder, WRVA Papers.

### Public Service Policy and Leadership

From its first day of broadcasting on November 2, 1925, the management of WRVA stated that "service to the community" was its primary purpose. Larus and Brother Company President W. T. Reed spoke on behalf of the company in an opening-day broadcast, saying:

It is our desire to render some service to Richmond and Virginia, and we feel that the establishment of this station will be of service. It is our earnest endeavor to render a real service, and we invite at all times constructive criticism. SERVICE is going to be our motto.<sup>23</sup>

In the station's twentieth anniversary broadcast two decades later, Senator Harry Flood Byrd expressed his belief that WRVA, in fact, had adhered to the motto over the years, saying:

. . . WRVA has kept faith with the opening night promise made by my great friend, the late William T. Reed, Sr., who on that occasion twenty years ago said the WRVA motto would be 'Service.'<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, Larus President W. T. Reed announced upon the establishment of WRVA that "Under no circumstances do we intend to use this station for money-making purposes."<sup>25</sup> The 1,000-watt transmitter was to be used for "wholesome entertainment, for public service, and for advertising Richmond and the state to the rest of the nation." Larus and Brother Company also desired to offer "to the rest of the nation the spiritual and folk songs of the

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<sup>23</sup>William T. Reed, President, Larus and Brother Co., Typed speech excerpted from WRVA's 20th anniversary program, "First With Twenty," Nov. 2, 1945, Box 104, "WRVA 20th Anniversary" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>24</sup>Sen. Harry Flood Byrd, Virginia, Typed speech, "First With Twenty," *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>James R. Short, "Catwhiskers and Kilocycles," Virginia Cavalcade, Autumn 1955, 26.

Negroes who worked in Richmond's tobacco factories." WRVA's musical programming included the Old Southern Negro Quartet, the Dixie Spiritual Singers, and the Silver Star Quartet.<sup>26</sup> Although Reed frankly admitted that Larus "might stand to gain by ownership of the station . . . ," it was intended that such gain be "secondary to the philanthropic motive." Over three years passed before WRVA, "under the pressures of expanded services and of commercial competition," was forced to go "commercial enough to sell regular time for advertising purposes."<sup>27</sup>

Richmond Mayor J. Fulmer Bright, speaking on the station's twentieth anniversary broadcast, cited WRVA as "an invaluable asset to the City of Richmond, the State of Virginia, and our Nation - for every important happening . . . [through the years had been] broadcast from its keyboard."<sup>28</sup> William T. Reed, Jr., speaking also on the station's twentieth anniversary broadcast of November 2, 1945, reiterated the Larus and Brother Company's philosophy of responsibility to the public "to render the utmost public service with our radio station," and he took pride in the recognition the station had received for such service.<sup>29</sup>

The anniversary broadcast called attention to how the leadership of Calvin Tompkins Lucy, general manager of WRVA, had been largely

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Richmond Mayor J. Fulmer Bright, Richmond, Virginia, Typed speech, "First With Twenty," WRVA Papers.

<sup>29</sup>William T. Reed, "First With Twenty," *ibid.*

responsible for the success of WRVA's public service policy. Four years earlier in 1941, Lieutenant Commander R. E. Vining, a public relations officer of Norfolk's Naval Operating Base, had written in praise of Lucy to Program Service Manager Irvin G. Abeloff, saying that "as long as we have executives of his type in the radio business that the public service of the radio listener will receive first consideration."<sup>30</sup>

Although Lucy was "the guiding hand behind WRVA,"<sup>31</sup> the attitude of the station's ownership, from whom Lucy took his direction for WRVA, was just as important. Lucy commented during the anniversary broadcast, saying, "Without the encouragement, guidance, and public spirit of the station owners, there would be no glorious record for WRVA . . . ."<sup>32</sup>

Governor Colgate Darden gave further testament to WRVA's public service effectiveness during the twentieth anniversary celebration: "During my term as Governor I frequently called upon the station to assist in civic and State affairs, and it never failed." Darden also spoke of the many awards presented to WRVA over the years for its public service accomplishments, including citations for outstanding services from the Treasury Department and the Army and Navy, and three awards from *Variety Magazine* - the

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<sup>30</sup>Lt. Comdr. R. E. Vining, Public Relations Officer, Headqtrs. Fifth Naval District, Norfolk, VA., to Irvin G. Abeloff, Program Service Manager, WRVA, Richmond, VA, TLS, June 26, 1941, Box 6, "Naval Operations Base" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>"First With Twenty," *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

official magazine of show business - for outstanding work during the war years in coordinating civilian and military activity.<sup>33</sup>

Lucy, in seeking to ensure the dominance of public service in the station's policies, established a public relations department in 1937, with Walter R. Bishop as its head because "Public relations, educational activity, and civic events are the cornerstone of our success."<sup>34</sup> Other reasons for establishing the new public relations department were "intense competition between the four Richmond stations" and the anticipated change by WRVA to 50,000 watts of power to enlarge its listener area.<sup>35</sup> Larus and Brother Company, having determined that WRVA should remain number one among Virginia stations, increased the station's transmitter power to 50,000 watts by 1939 so that WRVA need not surrender its position, or its ability to control, to inform, and to serve. The change dramatically curtailed the influence of the now smaller competing stations and outclassed them, too.

The station's attitude of responsibility toward the public, beginning with WRVA's first three non-commercial years applied not only to its programming but carried over into the activities of management itself. Walter Bishop became WRVA's "goodwill ambassador" speaking to local citizens' groups and schools on the role of radio in the community.<sup>36</sup> As

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>C. T. Lucy to WRVA Staff, Typed memo, Sept. 15, 1937, *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup>WRVA Annual Report, Studio and Commercial Depts., TD, 1938, *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup>Lucy to Staff, Typed memo, n.d., Box 53, "Personnel - Station Civic Activities" folder, *ibid.*

public service director, Bishop, worked with non-profit groups and enhanced the public service reputation of WRVA.

WRVA's station manager, C. T. Lucy, and Larus and Brother Company valued Bishop's excellent public relations skills. He could get things done. Bishop's interest in politics proved especially useful to the station as well as to the many organizations with which Bishop became involved. Newspaper articles on Bishop's political and public-relations activities elaborated on his commitment and "public-first" attitude. One described Bishop as a Southwest Virginian who enjoyed politics, Methodist Conferences, and "With the possible exception of one . . . Mr. Bishop is the most politically-minded man we know in Virginia . . . ."37

Bishop was effective and sensitive in his dealing with many requests for free publicity. He revealed his attitude in his explanation of how to keep the good will of those he had to refuse:

"Make your visitor feel welcome. Give your visitor ample time to tell her (or his) story fully. Listen as you would to a friend. Make an honest effort to comply with worthwhile time requests. If allotting less time than requested, state why. In refusing to grant any time, state why truthfully and politely; if necessary, give a detailed explanation, even to the point of showing that the proposed program would not be mutually well-adapted to broadcasting - in which a 'majority' ear has to be served most of the time."

Although the 1940 article referring to network programs said that "the station's crowded commercial schedule" made Bishop's job more difficult, it continued to praise Bishop and WRVA observing that "WRVA and the term

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<sup>37</sup>"Richmond Sideshow," *Richmond News Leader*, n.d., Box 53, "Personal and Station Civic Activities" folder, *ibid*.

'public service' [were] synonymous."<sup>38</sup> This was especially significant because the article appeared when both network broadcasts and available advertising dollars were increasing. Although the temptation to trade service for profits must have been great, listener response indicated that WRVA remained consistent in programming public service. Bishop received letter after letter thanking him for his attendance and speeches as he represented WRVA at numerous women's clubs to which he was invited, from the Richmond Federation of Garden Clubs to the local D.A.R. chapter to the Roanoke Rapids Woman's Club.<sup>39</sup> In 1941, Bishop accepted an invitation to participate in a conference of the Public Relations Association for Negro Colleges. He gave a ten minute talk on "Radio in College Public Relations Programs."<sup>40</sup>

As a member of the Richmond-First Club, which "devoted [itself] to a study of city government"<sup>41</sup> from at least the early thirties, Bishop

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<sup>38</sup>Edwards, "You Simply Must Give Time," *Broadcast Advertising*, Feb. 15, 1940, *ibid*, 13.

<sup>39</sup>S. L. Brauer to Mrs. J. Cranford Hoyle, Roanoke Rapids Womans Club, TLS, July 27, 1939, *ibid*. The writer found no letters in the WRVA papers which criticized Bishop's community involvements. Upon interviewing WRVA President, John Tansey on June 18, 1989, the writer also discovered that Tansey supervised the packaging of the WRVA papers (accession #9340) when they were donated to the University of Virginia. Tansey said that to his knowledge no one culled the WRVA papers.

<sup>40</sup>David Apter, President, Public Relations Association for Negro Colleges, Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Dec. 11, 1941, Box 52, "Schools and Colleges" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>41</sup>"Radio, a Community Member," W. R. Bishop to Lakeside Community League, Typed speech, Oct. 20, 1941, *ibid*.

demonstrated independent thinking in his report to the Club on his visit to the City Jail as a Club representative. Intended to act as a "stronger indictment" of the institution, "concerning which I had heard only condemnation," Bishop's visit resulted in his changing his view. In spite of dissenting, however, Bishop was later elected president of the Richmond First Club, in July, 1941.<sup>42</sup> The respect that the community accorded Bishop helped WRVA's standing in the community. Although his election did not directly enhance WRVA's public service broadcasting, it did enhance WRVA's public service image essential to audience development in Virginia. In a speech on October 20, 1941, to the Lakeside Community League, Bishop - as a representative of the Richmond First Club - expressed his feelings concerning the public service role of radio in the community. He stated that "broadcasting has had the opportunity to break down sectionalism by exploring and extending . . . mental and physical frontiers."<sup>43</sup>

Other Bishop speaking engagements and committee involvements included those for the Dedicatory Exercises of the new YMCA building in 1942 with the governor of Virginia and Dr. Douglas S. Freeman <sup>44</sup> and the Radio Committee of the Citizens' Committee on Crime. As a member of the Radio Committee, Bishop favored assisting the Police Department in a general

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<sup>42</sup>W. R. Bishop, Typed notes to Richmond First Club, n.d. (probably 1933), *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup>Bishop to Lakeside Community League, "Radio, a Community Member," Typed speech, Oct. 20, 1941, Box 53, "Richmond First Club" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup>M. W. Lee, General Secretary of YMCA of Richmond, Richmond, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Apr. 3, 1942, Box 53, "Personal and Station Civic Activities" folder, *ibid.*



way as well as broadcasting daily bulletins regarding missing persons, informal conversations with citizens with dramatization of actual traffic accidents, and weekly broadcasts by the Virginia Better Trade Bureau warning the buying and investing public against the presence of confidence men and others engaged in fraudulent operations. Bishop also endorsed the "Richmond Crimes" series, cases taken from police files to prove that "the way of the transgressor is hard." Bishop did not think that whatever "the public wants justified the conversion of news broadcasts into radio editions of the yellow covered tabloid." He also thought there was danger in broadcasting proceedings from the courtroom, converting the courtroom into a "theater for dramatic performances, which may lessen respect for the majesty of the law."<sup>45</sup> Although indirect in affecting public broadcasting, these activities built listeners' trust in WRVA and enhanced the station's public service image in positive and useful ways.

In 1927, at Governor Byrd's request, the New York Bureau of Municipal Research published its survey, "County Government in Virginia." William T. Reed of Larus and Brother Company and "a Byrd backer, screened the New York report. He was reinforced in his endeavors by the General Assembly and a citizens' committee."<sup>46</sup> William Reed also assisted in the revision of

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<sup>45</sup>"Report of the Radio Committee, Citizens' Committee on Crime," possibly written by Bishop, TD, n.d., Box 57, "Personal and Station, Civic, and Activities" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>46</sup>Pocahontas Wight Edmunds, Virginians Out Front, (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1972), 433.

the state Constitution serving as chairman of the Committee to Simplify Government. This effort resulted in reducing more than a hundred agencies to fourteen departments.<sup>47</sup> In 1932 at the Chicago convention, William Reed and Colonel Henry Breckenridge of New York "hired the band of the Richmond Blues to blare 'Dixie' and other native militant airs to bestir Byrd's candidacy." Roosevelt offered Byrd, a New Dealer, in the beginning, the Vice-Presidency if he would deliver the Virginia vote for Roosevelt. Virginia voted for Roosevelt. Byrd declined the Vice-Presidency.<sup>48</sup> In 1938, Governor James H. Price appointed Bishop as a delegate to represent Virginia at the 12th annual session of the University of Virginia's Institute of Public Affairs.<sup>49</sup>

Members of the Larus and Company Board of Directors were part of the establishment and captains of industry who influenced WRVA. They often met the needs of government leaders mentioned earlier in the chapter. That Larus' executives and state officials were friends in Virginia probably enhanced WRVA's opportunities for public service broadcasting. Having 50,000 watts capability and a direct line from the WRVA studio to the governor's office helped, too.<sup>50</sup> Another factor contributing to WRVA's outstanding record of public service broadcasting was C. T. Lucy who insisted

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 439.

<sup>49</sup>WRVA typed news release, June 25, 1938, *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup>Hewlett, Oral interview, June 8, 1989.

outstanding record of public service broadcasting was C. T. Lucy who insisted throughout his career that WRVA's commitment to service continue in the tradition in which it was begun.<sup>51</sup>

Irvin G. Abeloff, WRVA's program service manager, continued his services as a community volunteer during World War II. The Radio Committee of the Richmond War and Community Fund Campaign in 1942 asked Abeloff, along with other local radio personnel, to help publicize the needs and goals of the Fund and the Campaign.<sup>52</sup> Abeloff not only served as a member on the Radio Committee but also as a member of the Fund's committees for "Educational Publicity" and "Year-Round Interpretation."<sup>53</sup> In addition, Abeloff served on the Treasury Department's Publicity Committee,<sup>54</sup> the National Association of Broadcasters Committee of the Fourth War Loan Campaign,<sup>55</sup> the Office of Civilian Defense State Information

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>A. H. Herrmann, chairman of Publicity Committee, Richmond War and Community Fund, Richmond, VA, to I. G. Abeloff, TLS, July 22, 1942, Box 3, "Community Fund Drive" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup>J. Kaminsky, Richmond War and Community Fund, Richmond, Va, to Abeloff, TLS, n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>54</sup>R. F. Nelson, Administrator, War Savings Staff, Office of State Administrator, U. S. Treasury Dept., Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Mar. 27, 1943, Box 10, "Treasury Dept." folder, *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup>Neville Miller, Office of the President, NAB, Washington, D.C., to Abeloff, TLS, Nov. 6, 1943, Box 6, "NAB - 1942" folder, *ibid.*

Committee<sup>56</sup> and War-Slogan Contest Committee.<sup>57</sup> Abeloff executed his assignments at WRVA so well, that he received the Seabee Award from Navy Commander Charles D. Kessler for his " ' Intensive military job in conceiving and carrying out programs fostering good will, understanding and appreciation between the services and civilian population.' "<sup>58</sup>

Another staff member, Norfolk WRVA Manager Harold Lucas, agreed to serve on the Office of Civilian Defense's Information Committee in Norfolk beginning in 1943, expressing the feeling in his acceptance letter that the Office of Civilian Defense and the Office of War Information broadcasts would constitute a "big step in aiding [civilians] in their desire to 'do their part' in the War emergency."<sup>59</sup> C. T. Lucy, who served as president of the Virginia Association of Broadcasters for nine years, was a member of the National Association of Broadcasters and the state chairman of the War Salvage Campaign in Virginia during World War II. In 1943, Lucy was elected to serve as the first chairman of the Columbia Affiliates Advisory Board for all nine United States' districts. He was also the elected representative to the CBS Advisory Board from his district which included Virginia, Maryland,

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<sup>56</sup>Richard M. Marshall, Civilian Defense Coordinator, OCD, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Dec. 2, 1942, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>57</sup>M. Rider, unknown title, OCD, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Nov. 10, 1943, *ibid*.

<sup>58</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>59</sup>Lucas to Marshall, TLS, Jan. 9, 1943, *ibid*.

Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.<sup>60</sup> He was a 32nd degree Mason, and member of St. Marks Episcopal Church.<sup>61</sup>

WRVA equated service with prestige. The station officials actively participated in community affairs with Larus and Brother Company and WRVA General Manager, C. T. Lucy, together determining WRVA's effective public service policy. Beginning in 1937, WRVA Public Service Director Walter Bishop worked with service agencies and the community giving station time and personal time to service projects. During the war years, the war-related public service broadcasts conflicted with WRVA's crowded commercial schedule, but WRVA chose to accomodate the War Department and the listening community even to the point of sacrificing commercial programming and money if need be. From 1925 through World War II, WRVA remained faithful to its motto, "Service."

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<sup>60</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>61</sup>"C.T. Lucy Dies; Broadcast Pioneer" *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, May 17, 1980, Richmond, VA, WRVA papers.

**PART II**  
**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PROGRAMS**

## CHAPTER TWO

### PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMMING

In 1912, Congress passed the Act to Regulate Radio Communication, which empowered the Secretary of Commerce to license all United States radio operator applicants and to assign call letters to radio stations.<sup>1</sup> In 1927, an amended version of the Radio Act legalized the formal recommendations of the National Radio Conference held in Washington in 1925. Conference participants that year had recommended that radio programs should be of a "high quality" and that advertising was an appropriate means of support for broadcasting. The conference rejected the idea that radio stations should be classified as public utilities. Although "public service" was supported, it was not defined at the conference. In fact, statutory definition of public service does not exist to this day. However, the participants did decide that an applicant must meet more requirements than a fee and a desire to obtain a license. Their recommendations became the Radio Act of 1927, which also established the Federal Radio Commission. Because the Radio Act of 1927 applied to independent stations that

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<sup>1</sup>Erik Barnouw, A History of Broadcasting in the United States, vol. 1 - 1933, A Tower In Babel, Appendix B, "Laws" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 291-299.

developed their own programming, it was not suitable for regulating affiliates of networks. Talk about networks was common but only one sentence of the Radio Act referred to network or "chain broadcasting . . . a development that was to dominate broadcasting for decades to come."<sup>2</sup> The Radio Act lacked relevance in other ways, too. Before 1927, only a few radio stations sold time. The Radio Act stated that information broadcast for consideration must be "announced as paid for or furnished, as the case may be, by such person, company, or corporation." The act neglected both advertising and education leaving advertising unregulated and the "public interest" to defend and assist education. Stations influenced by profits from advertisers, would probably broadcast educational programs in the public interest less frequently.

On February 3, President Coolidge signed into law the Radio Act of 1927. Two months later, the Federal Radio Commission revoked all licenses previously issued to the approximately seven hundred U. S. radio stations.<sup>3</sup> While not weak, the Radio Act of 1927 "was obsolete by the time it was passed" because the lawmakers failed to consider or "sidestepped" chain broadcasting, radio advertising or sale of time, developments that would dominate broadcasting in the future. At a time when time-selling stations were rapidly increasing, the Radio Act of 1927 applied regulation to a radio world that was changing, if not disappearing.<sup>4</sup>

Still operating as a non-commercial station at this time, WRVA broadcast hours of public service announcements meeting the requests of

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 199.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 199-201.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 300-315.



both local agencies and the United States government. WRVA originated and produced many programs for the community at its own expense. This was the continuation of a tradition that had existed since the station's inception in 1925. WRVA was the first Virginia radio station to undertake remote control origination of programs and to broadcast the visit of a United States president. As early as May, 1926, WRVA sent a crew to Williamsburg for a remote broadcast of the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Virginia Convention of 1776. Coming from Washington to be the guest speaker, President Calvin Coolidge accompanied by Governor Harry F. Byrd, arrived forty-five minutes late. During this time, WRVA General Manager, C. T. Lucy, unflappable, read to listeners from a 1776 issue of *The Williamsburg Gazette*, becoming the first person to ad lib over WRVA radio.<sup>5</sup>

#### Political and Legislative Programming

WRVA had the distinction of carrying the first broadcast of a Virginia governor's inauguration. Beginning with Governor Harry Flood Byrd, Sr., WRVA covered inauguration ceremonies of all Virginia governors since 1925.<sup>6</sup> In 1928, WRVA was one of forty-nine stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company for the first network coverage of a presidential election, that of Herbert Hoover.<sup>7</sup> Walter Bishop conducted the "WRVA Legislative Forum" in which guest speakers discussed issues then

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<sup>5</sup>Calvin Tompkins Lucy, General Manager, WRVA, Richmond, VA, to D. Coulter, vice-president, CBS, New York, NY, Typed attachment ("Highlights of WRVA") to typed letter, Oct. 29, 1945, Box 3, "CBS" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>WRVA Typed release, Jan. 6, 1938, Box 96, "Personal/Public Continuities - Legislative" folder. *ibid.*

before the General Assembly. Prior to local primaries, WRVA regularly broadcast "Meet Your Candidates" a program giving a brief sketch of each candidate running for state political office.<sup>8</sup> WRVA broadcast talks by candidates and the primary election returns as well.<sup>9</sup> These programs were produced as a public service at WRVA's expense.

WRVA was the first station to air by remote broadcast a regular session of Virginia's law-making body held in Williamsburg. Beginning in 1936, WRVA maintained broadcast facilities at the Capitol Building in Richmond, covering every meeting of the General Assembly since that time.<sup>10</sup> Miss Bertha Hewlett verified WRVA's coverage of the General Assembly and added that Walter Bishop, himself, reported the news from the Capitol.<sup>7</sup> A 1958 letter from John Tansey to the director of the Commonwealth's Division of Purchase and Printing revealed the station's willingness to broadcast the regular sessions of Virginia's law-making body. Tansey wrote that for thirty-two years, since 1925, WRVA broadcast the proceedings of the Virginia General Assembly to keep Virginia listeners more fully informed.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>"Meet Your Candidates!," WRVA Typed script, July 30, 1937, Box 79, #727 "National Political Misc. - 1936-48" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>9</sup>"Meet Your Candidates!," WRVA Typed script, Aug. 4, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>10</sup>Attachment ("Highlights of WRVA") to TLS, Lucy to D. Coulter, vice president, CBS, 10/29/45, Box 3, "CBS" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>7</sup>Miss Bertha Hewlett, Oral interview by author, July 31, 1989.

<sup>12</sup>John B. Tansey, President, WRVA, Richmond, VA, to R. C. Eaton, Director, Virginia Division of Purchase and Printing, Richmond, VA, TLS, Jan. 9, 1958, Box 79, #727 "National Political Misc. - 1936-48" folder, *ibid*.

WRVA illustrated well the seriousness of its commitment to public service in broadcasting primary election returns, an even more complex broadcast than that of President Coolidge from Williamsburg. Walter Bishop's summary to Abeloff of countless details involved in broadcasting primary election returns stated once more WRVA's eagerness to provide this service and pointed out WRVA's need to surpass other stations in such broadcasting as well.

On the primary election night in 1938, when eminent historian and newspaper editor Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman had news to report, he was to call WRVA from the Library of the *Richmond News Leader*. Anticipating his being ready to report around eight o'clock, even if it meant losing an opportunity to broadcast commercials, Bishop said, ". . . we don't want either of the other stations to beat us at a thing tonight." Broadcasting from remote locations required the placing of microphones, equipment and lines, along with "plenty of operators and announcers," in the Hotel John Marshall, the Hotel Richmond Winter Garden, as well as the library of the *Richmond News Leader*. Although WRVA took care not to cut into the regularly scheduled CBS network programs "Alias Jimmy Valentine" and "Mike Houston," Bishop said, "This looks like an opportunity for WRVA to give a real service tonight. Let's not overlook a trick."<sup>13</sup>

Speaking of the station's policy concerning local political campaigns and how candidates' requests were handled, Bishop said that while the station would not solicit political broadcasts, it would, when requested,

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<sup>13</sup>Walter R. Bishop, Public Relations Manager, WRVA, "RE: WHAT MUST BE THE BEST POSSIBLE COVERAGE OF PRIMARY ELECTION RETURNS," to Abeloff, Control Room and Mr. Whitehorne, Typed memorandum, n.d., Box 79, #732 folder, *ibid*.

supply services on behalf of the candidates: "The position of the salesmen is to be that of service men. You are to use no sales effort beyond placing yourself at the service of the candidates upon request."<sup>14</sup> Because of responsible public service broadcasting, many listeners respected WRVA. During World War II they would depend on the station for war-related and general information, for WRVA had become a Virginia habit.

### Community Service Programming

WRVA replied to the question posed in a *Variety* questionnaire submitted in 1939: "Have you taken the initiative in any community movements?": WRVA answered: "It has been the policy of WRVA to cooperate with every civic movement of worth, . . . [but] we refrain whenever possible from being the motivating force in the inauguration of civic movements, although we have suggested many such moves."<sup>15</sup>

One example of public service programming suggested by WRVA to the Richmond Department of Public Welfare appeared to be a forerunner of today's radio traffic reports broadcast from the station's traffic helicopter. "Traffic Sergeants" stationed at various points in the city described over WRVA's microphones actual traffic conditions at peak rush hours.<sup>16</sup>

In accordance with Richmond's high regard for beautiful gardens, WRVA arranged in 1938 a weekly series, "In Your Garden." These programs

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> *Variety* questionnaire, TD, n.d., Box 64, "Public Service Record . . ." folder, 3, WRVA Papers.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

were presented under the auspices of the Federation of Richmond Garden Clubs.<sup>17</sup>

The station requested that the Richmond Chamber of Commerce supply WRVA with short "plugs" about the city, which the station made and tied in with station identification for over a year in the late 1930s.<sup>18</sup> It also broadcast numerous public service announcements and programs for the Chamber. The Chamber's director of public relations, Albert L. Stoffel, wrote WRVA indicating the popularity of the Chamber's seventy-fifth anniversary program broadcast,<sup>19</sup> and Chamber President W. Owen Wilson thanked WRVA for the work and effort put into the production.<sup>20</sup>

One WRVA announcement made for the Chamber over WRVA publicized Richmond's July Fourth Celebration.<sup>21</sup> WRVA also broadcast a Chamber of Commerce "Spring Outing" held at the Reed [of Larus and Brother Company] property in Goochland County. Said the script: "We hope this informal visit has given you some idea of BUSINESS AT PLAY . . . men engaged in the building of a larger and even better community."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Albert L. Stoffel, Director of Public Relations, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Oct. 16, 1942, Box 3, "Chamber of Commerce - 1940-41," WRVA Papers.

<sup>20</sup>W. Owen Wilson, President, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Oct. 10, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>Stoffel to Abeloff, TLS, June 29, 1941, WRVA Papers.

<sup>22</sup>"Chamber of Commerce Outing," WRVA Typed script, June 5, 1941, *ibid.*

The Junior Bar Conference of the American Bar Association was also served by WRVA through the broadcast of several defense-related programs in 1941. "Virginia Defense," using a question-and-answer format to deal with the concerns of State and national defense work and featured as speakers the State director of Selective Service for Virginia and the chairman of the Richmond, Petersburg and Hopewell Regional Defense Council.<sup>23</sup> WRVA also broadcast a series called "Order Number," sponsored by the Junior Bar Conference, whose aim was to inform the public about the Selective Training and Service Act and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act.<sup>24</sup> A letter from the American Bar Association indicated the favorable reception to the series.<sup>25</sup>

Beginning in January, 1940, after a heavy snowstorm, WRVA was the first Virginia station to broadcast weather-related road conditions and attendant school, business and other closings. From then on, the station broadcast a daily report on winter snow and ice conditions, obtained through the Virginia Department of Highways.<sup>26</sup> WRVA also broadcast during the same period other snowstorm-related information, from bus and taxi service available in the city and city ordinance requirements for snow shoveling to closings for schools, public agencies, private businesses and organizations. One announcement of interest went as follows: "Mrs. William H. Cardwell has

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<sup>23</sup>Richmond Moore, Jr., Local Public Information Director, American Bar Association, no address, to Charles Hamilton, City Editor, *Richmond News Leader*, Richmond, VA, TLS, Apr. 12, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>24</sup>"Order Number," Program No. 6, Typed script, Apr. 9, 1941, p. 1, *ibid*.

<sup>25</sup>Ralph H. Ferrell, Jr., State Director, Public Information Program, American Bar Association, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, May 15, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>26</sup>"Daily Report for WRVA on Snow and Ice Conditions," Virginia Dept. of Hwys., Richmond, VA, TD, Jan. 30, 1940, Box 107, "January '40 Blizzard" - Public Service File" folder, *ibid*.

asked us to announce that her tea, originally to be given tomorrow afternoon at The Country Club, has been indefinitely postponed on account of the weather."<sup>27</sup> Also listed were a good many closings and cancellations of "entertainments" and "clubs," such as those for the Hawaii Social Club Ball, the Richmond Woman's Duckpin League and the Richmond Homing Pigeon Club.<sup>28</sup> Another weather-related WRVA memorandum from Lucy in August of 1940 congratulated his staff for "a beautiful piece of public service in connection with the recent high water of the James."<sup>29</sup>

WRVA broadcast a weekly series in 1942 called "Action on the Home Front - The Story of Business at War." Ninety-six other stations throughout the country also carried the CBS series in cooperation with local chambers of commerce. The programs featured interviews with such individuals as pioneer aircraft builder Glenn Martin, the national chairman of the U.S. Treasury's Retail Advisory Committee, Major Benjamin H. Namm, and James D. Francis, "possibly the largest single coal producer in the country,"<sup>30</sup> who spoke on behalf of the coal industry.

A letter to WRVA from Hardy Burt, radio director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said: "Both private and federal broadcasting authorities in Washington have attested [to] the series' definite morale-building value." A handwritten note by Lucy at the top of this letter indicated his feelings

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<sup>27</sup>WRVA Public service announcement, TD, Jan. 29, 1940, *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>"Entertainments, Clubs, Etc.," WRVA Typed list of closings, Jan. 26, 1940, *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>Lucy to Bishop, Abeloff and D. C. Woods [Chief Engineer], Typed memo signed, Aug. 22, 1940, Box 99, #962 "Memos - Lucy" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>Hardy Burt, Radio Director, Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, Washington, D.C., to Abeloff, TLS, May 6, 1942, Box 3, "Chamber of Commerce" folder, *ibid.*

about the usefulness of "Action on the Home Front - The Story of Business at War": "I'd like to know about rest of series. Not so hot on one only - but business in general needs its story told."<sup>31</sup> WRVA carried the entire series from May 20, 1942,<sup>32</sup> to February 4, 1943.<sup>33</sup>

Scripts about the growth of organized labor did not appear in the station papers. "Cavalcade of America," a CBS network program available through 1940, did not mention the labor movement either. Even so, "Cavalcade" won awards, pleased educators, and "virtually represented American history."<sup>34</sup>

In early 1940, WRVA, as well as other stations in Virginia and across the country, broadcast the March of Dimes campaign against infantile paralysis. Through a series of public service announcements, dramatic shows, variety programs and talks by prominent health authorities, WRVA's 1940 March of Dimes campaign featured Virginia Governor James H. Price, youngsters from the Crippled Children's Hospital in Richmond, and an array of popular entertainers of the era during one typical program.<sup>35</sup> The station broadcast the Campaign each year during World War II and afterwards.

After running spot broadcasts in October, 1941, for the Manchester Lions Club's "Roaring Revue" fundraiser, the Club thanked WRVA for its service and in their letter detailed the various beneficiaries of the fundraiser: "Our School Lunch Program, Eyeglass Fund and other worthy

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<sup>31</sup>Burt to Program Director, WRVA, TLS, Apr. 23, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup>Abeloff to Burt, TLS, May 12, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>WRVA Typed memorandum to Miss Elizabeth Nuckols, Miss Ruth Rowlett, Mr. Ward Adams et al., Feb. 4, 1943, *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>Barnouw, 91.

<sup>35</sup>"WRVA March of Dimes," WRVA typed script, Jan. 29, 1940, Box 4, "Misc." folder, *ibid.*



needs of the underprivileged are assured funds for the next twelve months, and they will be the ones to benefit from the fruits of our endeavor."<sup>36</sup>

Other local organizations to benefit from WRVA's public service efforts in the early forties were the Danville Tobacco Association and the Knights of Columbus. Both organizations thanked the station for its "fine spirit of cooperation"<sup>37</sup> and its courtesy in handling the broadcasts.<sup>38</sup>

WRVA broadcasts during 1939-41 included the following "sustaining programs in addition to special events:" WRVA Salute to Industry, Gaslight Theatre, Let's Visit, Carillon Concerts, The People's Voice, Surf Club Orchestras, Coast Artillery Band, Stadium concerts, and Chamberlin Hotel Orchestras. WRVA produced these programs and broadcast them at their own expense.<sup>39</sup> Because of the continued high quality of WRVA's public service broadcasting, the station and the communities of Virginia had become friends. WRVA radio was a significant part of everyday life in the Old Dominion.

### Religious Programming

WRVA placed coverage of different church services and church-related events high on its list of broadcasting priorities. Beginning in September, 1927, at the Second Presbyterian Church in the morning and at

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<sup>36</sup>J. R. Woods, Publicity Chairman, Manchester Lions Club, Richmond, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Oct. 24, 1941, Box 107, "Appreciation - 1941" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>37</sup>Thomas H. Brown, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer, Danville Tobacco Association, to WRVA, TLS, Jan. 13, 1942, *ibid*.

<sup>38</sup>Publicity Chairman, Knights of Columbus, Richmond Council No. 395, Richmond, VA, to Bishop, TL, Oct. 16, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>39</sup>Barron Howard to Abeloff, "Local Productions," Typed memo, n.d., Box 1, "1939-41 Memos" folder, *ibid*.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church in the evening, WRVA broadcast by remote pick-up the Sunday worship services of a different Virginia church every month. These broadcasts continued for fifty years without interruption and at no cost to the churches.<sup>40</sup>

In an article in the *Richmond Christian Advocate* in 1939, Walter R. Bishop echoed the sentiments of WRVA's management concerning religion's place in broadcasting. He wrote that radio ". . . should be considered as dedicated to the service of the Creator whence come all blessings for mankind," and that broadcasting religious services "contributed to a spirit of tolerance" in the world.<sup>41</sup>

On November 2, 1925, WRVA's first day of service, the station formally opened with a prayer by the Reverend W. Taliaferro Thompson, who asked that WRVA ". . . be consecrated to God, a blessing to [many] . . .

with [its] mystery of operation making men more ready to think of God and to listen to the still small voice."<sup>42</sup> The exercises on March 17, 1939, for the dedication of the new transmitter also opened with a prayer by the Reverend Ben R. Lacy, president of Union Theological Seminary, who asked that "through the unseen avenues of the air, faith may be renewed, hope rekindled and love increased in the hearts of men."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Variety* questionnaire, n.d., Box 64, "Public Service Records" folder, p. 1, *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Walter R. Bishop, "Radio and Religion, WRVA's Director of Public Relations Explains Why Broadcasting of Religious Programs Benefits Both Religion and the Radio Industry," *Richmond Christian Advocate*, April 27, 1939, p. 13, Box 105, "Clippings" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 4. WRVA had converted to a 50,000-watt station on May 13, 1938.

In "Radio and Religion," Bishop also wrote that twenty years of broadcasting had proven that both radio and religion may have been mutually beneficial to the other. Surely, "each needs the other for a more complete fulfillment of its destiny." Continued Bishop, ". . . Radio does make available services to a host unable to attend a place of worship. This blessing to a congregation of shut-ins and invalids cannot be appraised. Nowhere are there more appreciative listeners."<sup>44</sup>

WRVA broadcast the "Sunshine Hour" a tri-weekly program designed for shut-ins. Holland R. Wilkinson, "The Singing Evangelist," broadcast "familiar hymns and a message of cheer."<sup>45</sup> Wilkinson's birthplace was Ettrick, a village in Chesterfield County. One of thirteen children, the Methodist family moved to Richmond "in horsedrawn covered wagons in the midst of a snow storm." It was January, 1900. In the spring, Holland "was on his way home with a jug of fresh lithia water for his mother who was sick with fever." Joining some boys, he rode the trolley two blocks to the end of the line. Unaccustomed as he was, when "the car gave a sudden lurch, he was thrown under its wheels while hundreds of volts of electricity charged and countercharged his small frame and the wheels severed both legs above the knee." It would be ". . . thirteen long years before Holland Wilkinson walked again . . ." <sup>46</sup> "'Pushed' through school in his rolling chair," he later worked with his father and brother.

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>35 Years: WRVA Radio, WRVA, Richmond, VA, n.d., Hewlett Papers.

<sup>46</sup>Walter E. Bishop, "A Biographical Sketch of Holland R. Wilkinson," Holland R. Wilkinson, comp., Sunshine Hymns and Stories (Richmond, VA: Holland R. Wilkinson, n.d.), Hewlett Papers.

Soon after his marriage to Martha Ledbetter, Holland became the "Singing Evangelist" for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.<sup>47</sup> While visiting Pittsburgh in January, 1925, he was invited to sing over station KDKA. "Scarcely three years before, broadcasting as we [know] it," began there ". . . with the presenting of the Harding-Cox election returns." Returning home, Holland participated in WRVA's Christmas Eve, 1925. Holland Wilkinson began the "Sunshine Hour" in 1927 "[a]veraging over a hundred songs a week, . . . appearing without compensation, assisted by his wife, singing duets with Miss Bertha Hewlett and being accompanied by Miss Hewlett at the piano or chief announcer Bob Beadless at the organ, he never looked back." WRVA broadcast the "Sunshine Hour" until Wilkinson's death after World War II.<sup>48</sup>

WRVA thought that reaching many individuals who no longer attended church was another reason to broadcast religious messages. Through radio, the lives of these disenchanted or "cynical" souls might be "transformed" as they listened to the spiritual messages carried over the airwaves.<sup>49</sup> Eventually, WRVA was forced to form a religious policy, in part because of the growing number of requests to the station from different quarters and various denominations. Lucy stated the problem to his staff and proposed the establishment of rules to "guide us in the acceptance,

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>WRVA Typed release, n.d., Box 64, "WRVA Policies re. Churches, etc." folder, WRVA Papers.,

refusal, or consideration of most of the religious program material offered us

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The guidelines, which WRVA published later in 1943, stipulated in part that the Sunday morning period from 11 a.m. to noon was "not for sale and [would] be reserved indefinitely for the broadcasting of local church services," generally scheduled in the order of their request, and that "no time [would] be sold for religious programs." Also, "local . . . programs, promoting the revival or cooperative effort" of local established, regularly operated denominations, would be allowed one to six programs prior to or during the [revival] Campaign . . . ." In addition the station allowed programs by speakers "of national reputation appearing locally in behalf of a locally established church."<sup>51</sup>

At this time, it was the policy of WRVA to broadcast religious programs at no charge. In a letter to the National Association of Broadcasters, Bishop wondered just how common it was. While the station felt the policy was "somewhat unusual in that most stations either sell time or bill them for cost of lines, remote control charge, etc.," they saw their policy as a "means of building good will for the station."<sup>52</sup> The reply from Kenneth Baker of the National Association of Broadcasters basically corroborated Bishop's thoughts, revealing that a one-week survey by the National Association of Broadcasters showed that two-thirds of such programs were sponsored or paid for by the religious organization

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<sup>50</sup>C. T. Lucy to Messrs. Howard, Abeloff and Woods, Typed memo, July 9, 1943, Box 88, File #840, *ibid*.

<sup>51</sup>"1943 - WRVA Religious Program Policy," TD, Box 64, "WRVA Policies . . ." folder, *ibid*.

<sup>52</sup>Bishop to Kenneth Baker, Director Research, NAB, Washington, D.C., TLS, Aug. 11, 1948, *ibid*.

concerned. In fact, the study found that religious programs constituted "a sizeable proportion of the total commercial time of some types of stations."<sup>53</sup>

Baker also recommended that Bishop contact a radio station in Jamestown, New York, which did a study on how religious programs were handled in the Second District (New York and New Jersey) among "small market stations." Simon Goldman, the station manager who conducted the survey, said that most stations running Sunday church services required each church to cover line charges and remote costs, with the station providing air time free of charge.<sup>54</sup>

Goldman's Jamestown, New York, station had its own unique way of handling Sunday services. Using its own format, the station broadcast weekly a different church's program which was "primarily music and . . . a short and effective sermon by the minister . . . ." <sup>55</sup> Those churches paid line charges and the station covered all remote and other costs.

A congratulatory letter from a Fifth Naval District public relations officer in Norfolk, concerning an "Inter-Faith Rally" broadcast from the Mosque in Richmond in 1941, pointed out WRVA's sacrifices, "financial and from a program standpoint," in having to cut the Coca-Cola Hour and other commercials in order to carry the Rally.<sup>56</sup> Abeloff replied, "As you suggest, it was expensive so your compliments are very heartening . . . ." <sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Baker to Bishop, TLS, Aug. 12, 1948, *ibid.*

<sup>54</sup>Simon Goldman, V.P. and Mgr., WJTN 7, WJTN-FM, Jamestown, NY, to Bishop, TLS, Aug. 20, 1948, *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup>Richard A. Velz (jg), USNR, Asst. Public Relations Officer, Headquarters, Fifth Naval District, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Dec. 16, 1941, Box 6, "Naval Operating Base" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup>Abeloff to Velz, TLS, Dec. 18, 1941, *ibid.*

Although the Rally had been planned before and broadcast after the United States entered World War II, WRVA's commitment to public service influenced the station's decision to cut commercial programming because the Rally had been previously scheduled for broadcast.

In addition to church services, WRVA broadcast religious programs of a more general nature. "Report on Russia," a weekly round-table discussion program addressed socio-religious subjects proposed by Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, with the hope that the discussions broadcast would foster better understanding and peace between Russia and the United States.<sup>58</sup> WRVA also broadcast church-related events such as anniversaries and conventions. One program, requested by Judge Lawrence W. I'Anson of Portsmouth, was the "Christian Mission" of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America in early February, 1942, with speakers from Portsmouth and Norfolk broadcasting from the Norfolk studio.<sup>59</sup> Another was the Baptist Layman's Day Program, for which Harold Seever, chairman of the Radio Committee of Virginia, thanked Bishop for the station's "splendid cooperation" and "friendly spirit."<sup>60</sup>

"The Baptist Hour," a series of Sunday morning programs under the auspices of the Second Baptist Church in Petersburg, Virginia, received very favorable response from WRVA listeners.<sup>61</sup> J. B. Hill, secretary to the

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<sup>58</sup>Joseph E. Porter, Richmond, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Jan. 15, 1942, Box 52, "Schools and Colleges" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>59</sup>Judge Lawrence W. I'Anson, Portsmouth, VA, to Manager, WRVA, TLS, Jan. 20, 1942, Box 4, "H. Lucas" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>60</sup>Harold W. Seever, Chairman, Radio Committee of Virginia, Richmond, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Oct. 24, 1941, Box 107, "Appreciation - 1941" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>61</sup>Clyde N. Parker, Th., M., Ph.D., Minister, Second Baptist Church, Petersburg, VA, to Manager, WRVA, TLS, Mar. 31, 1942, Box 73, "Religion - 1941" folder, WRVA Papers.

Virginia Baptist Board of Missions and Education, expressed his appreciation for the Baptist Hour broadcasts, saying he had listened to them for thirteen Sunday mornings as he traveled in his car to engagements in every section of the state.<sup>62</sup>

The Radio Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention wrote that they had received 3,321 pieces of WRVA fan mail about "The Baptist Hour" during 1942. The Committee was so impressed with the response to the series that the Convention established a permanent Radio Committee and a full-time staffperson to handle radio affairs for Southern Baptists. According to Committee Chairman F. S. Lowe in a letter to Bishop, "So far as I know this is the first great denomination that has given so much emphasis to radio."<sup>63</sup>

The WRVA files included numerous other letters praising "The Baptist Hour" as well as other WRVA programs of a religious nature. A listener who wrote concerning a particular broadcast that urged people to attend church called the program "very fine" and went on to praise WRVA for its prohibition of alcohol ads as being ". . . much better than to urge them to drink the different kinds of beers . . . . Congratulations on your high standard of broadcasting. I am not a minister, just an interested listener . . . ." <sup>64</sup>

In reply to the *Variety* questionnaire, WRVA listed numerous other programs of a religious nature carried in 1938-39, including a consecration

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<sup>62</sup>J. B. Hill, Secretary, VA Baptist Board of Missions and Education, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Apr. 7, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup>S. F. Lowe, Chairman, The Radio Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, Atlanta, GA, to Ward Adams, WRVA, Richmond, VA, TLS, June 1, 1942, Box 107, "Appreciation - 1942" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup>(Unreadable name) to WRVA, ACS, Nov. 2, 1940, Box 99, "Virginia Listeners" folder, *ibid.*



service for an Episcopal bishop; sessions of the Southern Baptist convention; appointments of Methodist ministers for the Virginia Conference; Jewish observances by the Hadassah Society; ceremonies for the 197th anniversary of St. John's Episcopal Church; "Practical Christianity," a weekly series from Reed Memorial Presbyterian Church; Midnight Masses and sessions at the National Convention of Catholic Charities.<sup>65</sup> WRVA's Recording Service presented weekly transcriptions of the Business Men's Bible Class on Saturday afternoons.<sup>66</sup> After WRVA completed its changeover to a 50,000 watt station in 1939, the station extended its service to most of Virginia and especially to the Tidewater area, continuing to broadcast programs of religious interest at it's own expense.

### Educational Programming

WRVA regularly broadcast school and college-related programs and announcements, from commencement and centennial exercises to public service announcements of school events. It also carried regular programs for schoolchildren through the schools, such as "American School of the Air," a daily program produced by CBS which was heard in school classrooms. A 1941 WRVA letter to Virginia educators told of the import of the series to Virginia schoolchildren.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *Variety* questionnaire, n.d., Box 64, "WRVA Policies re: Churches," pp. 1-2, *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>67</sup> WRVA, "To Our Virginia Educators," Rough draft of letter to Virginia educators, TD, Sept. 11, 1941, Box 64, "Public Service Record" folder, *ibid.*

For a half-hour each school day morning, WRVA broadcast educational programs like "Frontiers of Democracy," "Folk Music of America," "Tales of Near and Far" and "This Living World." The latter part of each program consisted of a discussion of the day's topics by groups of students from various Virginia schools, who gathered in WRVA's studios.<sup>68</sup> These programs were produced at WRVA's expense and carried no commercials.

In late 1941, WRVA put on a demonstration of "School of the Air" at a State Teacher's Convention in Virginia. The director of the CBS program wrote WRVA praising the staff for their efforts and congratulating them on the result.<sup>69</sup> CBS provided WRVA and other affiliates the sustaining schedule free; this represented approximately two-thirds of the network hours.<sup>70</sup>

In 1943, WRVA broadcast a popular war savings program which originated at Mount Vernon, Virginia, on Washington's Birthday. The chairman of the Virginia Education War Savings Committee of the Treasury Department wrote: "From all reports, this program was heard by practically every teacher and pupil of our Virginia schools. Reactions have been most complimentary."<sup>71</sup>

WRVA files included many requests from Virginia schools for announcements. One from Bruton Heights School in Williamsburg, Virginia

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Sterling Fisher, director, School of the Air, Department of Education, CBS, New York, NY, to Bishop, TLS, Dec. 10, 1941, Box 107, "Appreciation - 1941" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup>Barnouw, The Golden Web. 57, 63.

<sup>71</sup>Edward Alvey, Jr., Chairman, Virginia Education War Savings Committee, War Savings Staff, Treasury Department, Fredericksburg, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Feb. 23, 1943, Box 10, "Treasury Dept." folder, *ibid.*

was for the Virginia Union University's Choral Club concert given for the benefit of the Belgian Building Fund.<sup>72</sup> Another school in 1942 requested that WRVA broadcast their production of "Uncle Tom's Cabin".<sup>73</sup>

Although at times it was difficult for WRVA to broadcast every announcement due to the large number of such requests received, it appears that the station tried to accommodate as many as possible. This was indicated in a letter from Bishop to an instructor at Maggie L. Walker High School, in which he said that although it was "difficult to accommodate the large number of requests for announcements, I believe it may be possible to call attention to your Physical Education Demonstration this evening . . . ."<sup>74</sup>

As with its religious programming, WRVA did not charge for educational broadcasts. President Jarman of Mary Baldwin College wrote Walter Bishop in 1942 requesting that the college's centennial exercises be broadcast.<sup>75</sup> Bishop's reply indicated the station's enthusiasm to handle such events: "We have been looking forward for several years to participating in this event, and I hope that it will be possible to clear a satisfactory time . . . ."<sup>76</sup> Further correspondence indicated that WRVA was able to

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<sup>72</sup>Henry D. Carpenter, Jr., Principal, Bruton Heights School, Williamsburg, VA, to WRVA, TLS, Apr. 9, 1942, Box 52, "Schools and Colleges - 1942" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>73</sup>Hazel Rock, Advertising Director, Farnham High School, Farnham, VA, to WRVA, TLS, Feb. 14, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>74</sup>Bishop to Miss Eleanora W. Ward, c/o Maggie L. Walker High School, Richmond, VA, TLS, May 28, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>75</sup>President Jarman, Mary Baldwin College, to Bishop, TLS, May 7, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>76</sup>Bishop to Jarman, TLS, Apr. 30, 1942, *ibid.*

broadcast the exercises in spite of the Federal government's war-related demands on the station's broadcasting schedule.<sup>77</sup>

Joseph E. Nettles of the Alumni Office of the University of Richmond wrote Bishop thanking WRVA for its assistance in broadcasting their annual Homecoming in 1941.<sup>78</sup> A grateful public relations director at Hampton Institute wrote Abeloff to thank him for his excellent cooperation in publicity efforts over the years: "For close to two years you've made my job at Hampton Institute the pleasantest [sic] and most encouraging any public relations man could hope to have."<sup>79</sup>

WRVA broadcast eight "finals" dances in the summer of 1939 and gave exclusive coverage to the Centennial for Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia, including the "Garrison Reviews and Artillery stuff, etc."<sup>80</sup> Other examples of education-related broadcasting over WRVA were listed in the station's response to the *Variety* questionnaire, which stated, "Whatever may be of interest to the public--from an educational, musical, informative, religious, or entertainment point of view, so long as it is in good taste--is of interest to WRVA . . . ." <sup>81</sup>

WRVA maintained a permanent remote installation at John Marshall High School in Richmond to broadcast programs from the auditorium,

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<sup>77</sup>Bishop to Jarman, TLS, June 6, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>78</sup>Joseph E. Nettles, Publicity Director, Alumni Office, University of Richmond, Richmond, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Oct. 24, 1941, Box 107, "Appreciation - 1941" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>79</sup>David Apter, Director of Public Relations, Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, June 22, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>80</sup>Barron Howard to Abeloff, Typed memo, Nov. 24, 1939, Box 1, "1939-41 Memos to Abeloff" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Variety* questionnaire, p. 7, Box 64, "Public Service Records" folder, *ibid.*

stadium or any other part of the school. The "Monacle Review," was a semi-monthly series presented by the John Marshall students. Three other programs were aired during Education Week of 1938, including a pick-up of a high school orchestra and chorus. WRVA also broadcast weekly spelling bees between Virginia high school seniors competing for a \$150 scholarship prize from John Marshall.<sup>82</sup>

WRVA broadcast many programs arranged by the forty-five area colleges. Unsponsored programs from schools which WRVA inaugurated early and broadcast through the years included: Dr. F. W. Boatwright, the Glee Club, the orchestra, debate teams and players from the University of Richmond carried for ten years from March, 1926, to April, 1936; soloists, carols, games, Masquers, the violin quartet, and Indian Trio from the College of William and Mary for twelve years from November, 1925 to December, 1937; and, the orchestra, many speakers, and boys' club from the Medical College of Virginia for ten years from March, 1926, to April, 1936.<sup>83</sup>

A book-review program, "Discussions in Print," originated at the University of Virginia. Each week's broadcast included three features: reviews of moderately priced books of current interest, discussions of recent pamphlets, and "some mention of inexpensive reprints of good books."<sup>84</sup> Assistant in adult education at the University of Virginia, Mr. J. N. G. Finley and some of his colleagues designed "Discussions in Print".<sup>85</sup> Finley initially

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>TD, n.d., Hewlett Papers.

<sup>84</sup>J. N. G. Finley, Asst. in Adult Education, UVA, Extension Division, Charlottesville, VA, to Bishop, TLS, October 5, 1938, Box 3, "Discussions in Print - UVA" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

reviewed most of the books he discussed himself, except for an occasional guest reviewer. At some point, however, Finley stopped acting as principal reviewer and used a replacement.<sup>86</sup> The program was carried despite the fact that WRVA had many other demands made for commercial airtime. Abeloff told Dr. George B. Zehmer at the University of Virginia of the show's popularity and that the station received frequent telephone calls commending Mr. Finley's reviews.<sup>87</sup> WRVA broadcast the program once a week for almost four years from 1938 until mid-1942, discontinuing it when necessary to make room for the rapidly increasing use of war-related material.<sup>88</sup>

WRVA also broadcast college graduation addresses by distinguished speakers, Union Theological Seminary's baccalaureate sermon and its 1938-39 opening session, the Medical College of Virginia's centennial exercises, several addresses made at the Virginia Education Association Conference from John Marshall High School, and a Little Tobacco Bowl Football Program between the Richmond all-star team and Fork Union Military Academy.<sup>89</sup> In March, 1941, the Virginia Board of Education enthusiastically approved a WRVA broadcast on citizenship by Edwin C. Hill of "The Human Side of the News," a program on the CBS network <sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Abeloff to Finley, TLS, February 27, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>87</sup>Abeloff to Dr. George B. Zehmer, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, TLS, Feb. 2, 1939, *ibid.*

<sup>88</sup>Abeloff to Finley, TLS, Aug. 20, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup>Abeloff to J. G. Gude, CBS, New York, NY, TLS, Mar. 4, 1941, Box 3, "CBS" folder, *ibid.*

Sometimes WRVA would "plug" local talent to the national network companies. Abeloff mentioned to CBS that Hampton Institute was one of the "leading negro institutes of higher learning in the country," that NBC carried the Hampton Institute Choir "for many years," and offered to supply a transcribed audition if CBS would like to use this group on the network.<sup>91</sup>

In addition to strictly educational programming, WRVA offered at least one program that was more along the lines of entertainment. "Joe Brown and his Radio Gang," a Saturday morning musical show put on by children from three to nineteen years of age, followed the criteria for children's programs of the NAB's revised Code. The Code, in part, specified "that these programs should reflect respect for parents, adult authority, law and order, clean living, high morals, fair play and honorable behavior." The Code also stated that programs "must not contain horror or torture or use of the supernatural or superstitious or any other material which might . . . overstimulate the child."<sup>92</sup>

"Joe Brown and his Radio Gang," supervised by WRVA staff member Joe Brown, was for the benefit of Richmond and Norfolk children and their mothers, as well as servicemen in the Norfolk area. The full-hour show originated alternately from Richmond and from Norfolk's USO Recreation Center. The program was similar to other Saturday morning children's shows at the time; WRVA gave prizes from the community to those in attendance.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Abeloff to Gude, TLS, Dec. 2, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>92</sup>NAB Code (Revised, 1941), Box 5, "NAB - 1939-41" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>93</sup>WRVA, Richmond, VA, to Gerald Maulsby, CBS, New York, NY, Telegram, Mar. 10, 1942, Box 3, "CBS" folder, *ibid.*

Many WRVA listeners wrote a letters of commendation to Joe Brown one of whom praised him for three programs, "Radio Gang," "Helping Hand" and "Okay America."<sup>94</sup> "Okay America" gained so in popularity that CBS made it a network program. WRVA and CBS continued its broadcast from 1942 until 1946 when the radio audience and program needs changed after World War II.<sup>95</sup>

### Agricultural Programming

Although the USDA provided much programming aimed at the American farmer during the war years, WRVA had recognized the importance of agricultural public service programming throughout its history. Larus's strong agricultural ties to tobacco farming and ownership of WRVA made programming to the rural communities an easy and natural choice.

From the first month the station began operation, farmer and "homespun philosopher" H. C. Cline became an integral part of each day's broadcast, continuing through the war years. With information from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, WRVA presented the Market Reports, a popular series in great part because of Cline, "The Farmer's Friend." He joked in one broadcast, "This rain of the last 24 hours will be worth more to the farmers than any relief from Congress."<sup>96</sup> After Mr. Cline's death, Mr. E. V. Coville

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<sup>94</sup>Mrs. Curtis E. Dowdy, Corapeake, N. C., to Joe Brown, WRVA, Richmond, VA, ALS, March 2, 1941, Box 8, "Okay America" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>95</sup>Miss Bertha Hewlett, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, June 15, 1989.

<sup>96</sup>35 YEARS: WRVA Radio, WRVA, Richmond, VA, n.d., Hewlett Papers.



gave the daily farm report. When Mr. Coville had to serve in the Army during World War II, Mrs. Coville, who was determined to carry the Market Reports to farmers, broadcast them over WRVA herself.<sup>97</sup> One Caroline County farmer wrote that he received double the sale price of a calf because he had listened to the latest market report on WRVA.<sup>98</sup> "Aunt Sammy," a program that had begun in 1926, continued until 1931. Miss Bertha Hewlett still played "Aunt Sammy," "Uncle Sam's" wife and continued to share farm news and household hints for homemakers with her audience.<sup>99</sup>

During wartime, WRVA broadcast a number of other programs and series written by the Department of Agriculture, as well as public service announcements for war-related needs, from such diverse topics as increased peanut acreage<sup>100</sup> to rubber collection. Lucy, WRVA's general manager, was state radio chairman for the "general salvage movement."<sup>101</sup>

Announcements made over the Virginia Farm and Home Hour also included those for "Victory Food Specials." The purpose of the Victory Food Special Drives was to "conserve food supplies" . . . in abundance, broaden market outlets for producers, and pass along savings to consumers which a

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<sup>97</sup>Ibid.

<sup>98</sup>35 YEARS: WRVA Radio, Richmond, VA, n.d., Box 104, "WRVA 35th Anniversary" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>99</sup>Miss Bertha Hewlett, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, June 15, 1989.

<sup>100</sup>Bishop to Wallace L. Kadderly, Chief of Radio Service, USDA, Washington, D.C., TLS, Feb. 20, 1942, Box 100, "U.S. Govt." folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>101</sup>Bishop to Kadderly, TLS, June 13, 1942, *ibid*.

heavily stocked market holds for them.<sup>102</sup> Abeloff asked John Tansey to use one of these specials "each week on the Farm and Home Hour, if convenient."<sup>103</sup>

Another element of the Virginia Farm and Home Hour included the airing of five-minute scripts, such as "Hunger Doesn't Stop With School."<sup>104</sup> Another USDA-sponsored program was "Land of the Free," an entertainment program described best in a letter to Abeloff from E. B. Reid, director of information and extension at the USDA Farm Credit Administration. The letter well illustrated how the USDA viewed the role of agriculture in winning the war. "Food will win the war and write the peace," Reid quoted the Secretary of Agriculture in his letter, and the task of each American farm was to "produce enough of the right sort of food to assure Victory . . . ." This could only be achieved, said Reid, by educating each region's farmers as to what crops to grow and how to raise them most efficiently. For that purpose, the USDA prepared a series of twelve fifteen-minute transcriptions called "Land of the Free." Presented in a "sprightly and entertaining style," the tapes were "produced in Radio City with the best talent and music available."<sup>105</sup>

WRVA also broadcast regularly several other series produced by the Farm Credit Administration, including "The Drama of Food," "Stockmen's

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<sup>102</sup>"Radio Spot Announcements," Regional Information Service, Distribution Branch, Agricultural Marketing Administration, USDA, Dallas, TX, Typed release, Aug. 14 to Aug. 29, 1942, *ibid*.

<sup>103</sup>Abeloff to John Tansey, Production Department, WRVA, Richmond, VA, Typed memo, Dec. 24, 1941, Box 3, "Department of Agriculture" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>104</sup>Bishop to Clarke, TLS, June 25, 1942, Box 100, "U.S. Govt." folder, *ibid*.

<sup>105</sup>E. B. Reid, Director of Information and Extension, Farm Credit Administration, USDA, Washington, D.C., to Abeloff, TLS, Mar. 2, 1942, Box 3, "Dept. of Agriculture" folder, *ibid*.

Trails," "Dairy Dramas," "Life and the Land," and "Homes on the Land." The Farm Credit Administration explained that most of the "Diary Dramas" dealt "directly with the problems of defense and Food For Freedom which dairy cooperatives from coast to coast are girding themselves to meet."<sup>106</sup> "Dairy Dramas" were quarter-hour programs intended to be educational as well as entertaining. Some sample broadcasts included "Romance and Butterfat," "Milk and Life" and "March of the Milk Co-ops."<sup>107</sup> "Stockman's Trails" was a weekly series. Six fifteen-minute "human interest-packed plays" produced by CBS "in Radio City" dramatized the story of the American livestock industry.<sup>108</sup>

Two other programs from "The Drama of Food" were dramatically described in another Reid letter to Abeloff: "Potato Progress" was a "truly dramatic and astounding tale of the development of the Mercer potato, the first distinctive American variety developed by a seedsman in this country." "Citrus Crisis" told how the citrus growers' cooperatives in California "saved themselves from the ruin which might have been caused by the exorbitant prices asked for lumber immediately following the San Francisco fire."<sup>109</sup>

"Farming for Victory" was a documentary to support the Department's "Food for Freedom" campaign. It, too, concerned the potential contributions to be made by the American farmer for the war effort. Designed for "the average radio audience" and produced under the "best professional direction," the fourteen-minute tapes explained why the war caused "certain

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<sup>106</sup>Reid to Abeloff, TLS, Dec. 10, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>107</sup>Reid to Abeloff, TLS, Apr. 7, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>108</sup>Reid to Abeloff, TLS, Feb. 5, 1941, Box 3, "Farm Credit Administration" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>109</sup>Reid to Abeloff, TLS, June 21, 1940, *ibid.*

increases" in farm products "to be necessary, stated new goals for 1942 farm production, anticipated problems the farmer might have and shared information for "increasing production."<sup>110</sup>

Another recording from the "Food for Freedom" campaign, "Farm and Home Gardens" discouraged needless actions by citizens like those of World War I in which "patriotic folks plowed up flower beds, city parks, front yards and golf courses to turn them into gardens to grow a lot of vegetables that went to waste," stressing "efficiency of production and conservation of seed, fertilizers, and spray materials instead."<sup>111</sup>

"This Land We Defend," was a "program of soil defense" which the United States Department of Agriculture claimed to be as important for the nation's survival "as battleships or armies . . . ." <sup>112</sup> According to Leon Sisk of the USDA Soil Conservation Service. "This Land We Defend," like other USDA wartime series, was entertaining as well as informative, being produced with the assistance of professional actors, musicians and sound technicians. Said Sisk, "I believe they ought to be aimed at your general audience, since the shows will be of interest to everyone - farmers, educators, hillbillies, and business men [sic]."<sup>113</sup> Other programs under this

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<sup>110</sup>"Synopsis of USDA Transcriptions Series on Food for Freedom," Agricultural Adjustment Administration, USDA, Washington, D.C., TDS, Mar. 2, 1942, Box 3, "Dept. of Agriculture" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>111</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>112</sup>Leon J. Sisk, Current Information Section, Regional Division of Information, Soil Conservation Service, USDA, Regional Office, Spartanburg, S.C., to Abeloff, TLS, Sept. 25, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid*.

series included "The Saga of the Forest," "America's Vanishing Soil," "Democracy at Work on the Land," "Floods" and "Dust Storms."<sup>114</sup>

The Forest Service, a branch of the Department of Agriculture, made transcriptions for a Wartime Forest Fire Prevention campaign. The campaign described thousands of forest and farm woodland fires started by careless Americans, warned of the current potential for "saboteurs and incendiary bombs" to start fires, and reminded Americans that forest fires tied up urgently needed labor required to produce food, planes, tanks, guns and ships. "Radio can be such a potent factor in spreading the message 'Careless Matches Aid the Axis.'"<sup>115</sup> The Department of Agriculture presented a certificate of appreciation in 1942 to WRVA for the station's support of the campaign.

Four Agriculture Department scripts gave further information and insight into the role of food and agriculture during World War II. R. M. Evans, Administrator of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration narrated the "Reports of an Official Observer in the War of Food." Typical scripts included "Does Great Britain Need American Food?" "How are the British Using American Food?," "What Does the Food Situation in Great Britain Mean to the United States?," and "What Can America Do Now About the Outcome of the War of Food?" Evans based his reports on his "recent trip to Great Britain as a representative of the United States Government."<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup>Larus & Brother Co., Receiving report, on tapes from USDA, Washington, D.C., "This Land We Defend," TD, Oct. 29, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>115</sup>Kadderly, Office of Information, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., to Abeloff, TLS, July 22, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>116</sup>Division of Information, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, "Reports of an Official Observer in the War of Food," Typed script, Oct. 30, 1941, *ibid.*

Prior to the Second World War, radio stations in the United States had become an urban medium with an urban focus. Virginia was basically a rural state with a few urban centers from 1925 through 1945. WRVA with its strong signal, was both urban and rural in focus. Farm families as well as city folks experienced WRVA radio's benefits throughout the years. With sustaining farm and home shows like the Market Reports, weather reports, "Aunt Sammy," and the Virginia Farm and Home Hour, WRVA not only reached rural listeners, WRVA's programs helped the sales of radio receivers, too. Radio information was new, free and effective. American farmers, like American citizens in general, were asked to play a supportive role during World War II in making victory possible. WRVA, through regular broadcasting of agriculture-related announcements and programs throughout the war, enthusiastically played its part in defending "the land of the free." Providing public service broadcasts led to WRVA's becoming an integral part of the community in Richmond and the surrounding listening areas. WRVA news and public service broadcasts, important for their contents, would become increasingly significant to Virginians during World War II.

## CHAPTER THREE

### WAR-RELATED PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMMING

"Tobacco was king in Richmond."<sup>1</sup> Larus and Brother Company, the profitable Richmond tobacco manufacturer, had grown accustomed to WRVA's being first. The company had financial resources, power, and influence; and it owned WRVA. It would not yield the position it's station held in Virginia since it had been established in 1925. For the station to remain a leader in broadcasting, however, Larus and WRVA would have to keep pace with changes in technology.

In 1938 Larus and Brother Company purchased a 50,000-watt transmitter and with it, WRVA continued to influence Virginians during the Second World, a critical time in broadcasting history.<sup>2</sup> WRVA continued its

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<sup>1</sup>WRVA Radio: 50th Anniversary. Recorded by WRVA Radio, Richmond, VA, n.d., audio recording in possession of the author.

<sup>2</sup>Walter R. Bishop, "Radio and Religion, WRVA's Director of Public Relations Explains Why Broadcasting of Religious Programs Benefits Both Religion and the Radio Industry," *Richmond Christian Advocate*, April 27, 1939, p.13, Box 105, "Clippings" folder, WRVA Papers.

commitment to public service while Larus and Brother Company continued to serve Virginia and extend its position of power and leadership as a prosperous corporation in the state. WRVA attained maximum power when their 50,000-watt transmitter, near Varina on the James River, was dedicated on March 17, 1939.<sup>3</sup> It remained not only the most powerful radio station in Virginia but also one of only four 50,000-watt stations in the U.S. in 1939.<sup>4</sup> While WRVA's position in public communication would be limited when the challenger, television, would appear, it would maintain its broadcasting superiority in Virginia throughout the Second World War.

In order to serve and represent all sections of Virginia, the 1939 dedication ceremony of the 50,000-watt transmitter was a seven-hour program. All Virginia radio stations and all sections of connecting facilities in Virginia joined with 1,500 miles of telephone lines for originations in twenty-six locations. Five hundred entertainers and government and civic leaders participated, as did CBS with a salute to the new station.<sup>5</sup> Also in 1939, and equally significant, WRVA preferred public service programming for national defense.<sup>6</sup> The station gave priority to war-related broadcasts

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>4</sup>WRVA Radio: 35 YEARS, WRVA anniversary publication, Richmond, VA, Box 104, "WRVA 35th Anniversary" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



and began a twenty-four-hour daily schedule. This was done to "avoid a Fifth-column Nazi attack in our area."<sup>7</sup>

### War-Related Announcements

On December 20, 1939, after World War II had begun in Europe but about two years before the United States entered the conflict, WRVA broadcast a program called "Navy Plays Santa Claus." It publicized a service by Y-women, who volunteered to shop for, wrap and mail Christmas gifts for local servicemen at sea during Christmas. The program, which originated in the Navy YMCA lobby in Norfolk, was a cooperative effort of the Mutual Broadcasting System and the Navy and Army YMCA's. Program broadcasts featured interviews with U.S. sailors in port and recruits from Norfolk's Naval Training Station, who were on hand to have Christmas presents wrapped and sent home.<sup>8</sup>

In late 1940, Irvin G. Abeloff, WRVA program service manager, wrote the commanding officer of the Naval Air Station in Norfolk, Virginia, proposing a stage show using radio performers and Air Station personnel: "We believe this program will entertain your men and will encourage them

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<sup>7</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>8</sup>National Council YMCA, TD, Dec. 17, 1939, Box 7, "Norfolk Operations" folder, *ibid.*

in their pursuits. No part of the cost of this project is to be charged to the Air Station. WRVA will pay all expenses . . . ."<sup>9</sup>

On October 17, 1940, Registration Day for America's first peacetime draft, WRVA ladies manned the microphones while the staff's men took their first steps in the Selective Service Program. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, most of the men on WRVA's staff changed into uniforms and women were employed to fill staff positions.<sup>7</sup> Also after the shock of the December 7, 1941, Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, WRVA broadcast on-the-hour news summaries throughout the night. Between newscasts the loud ticking of a Big Ben alarm clock placed before the WRVA microphone could be heard by listeners from midnight to dawn. Abeloff informed WRVA listeners that, should an emergency or news of great importance develop, the alarm would sound to awaken them. Listeners kept their receivers tuned to WRVA, and the Big Ben alarm clock became a nationally known emblem of constant vigil.<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps WRVA's biggest contribution to the war effort came in the form of war-related public service announcements and programs.

In October, 1941, WRVA aired over sixty live spots seeking applicants for Army aviation cadets, students and enlisted specialists; eighty-two for Navy

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<sup>9</sup>Irvin G. Abeloff, WRVA Program Service Manager, Richmond, VA, to Commanding Officer, Naval Air Station, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, VA, TLS, Dec. 10, 1940, Box 7, "Norfolk Operations" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>7</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," *ibid*.

<sup>11</sup>Abeloff to R. Dohm, Warsaw, Wis., TLS, Jan. 6, 1942, Box 4, "Midnite [*sic*] News" folder, *ibid*.

aviation cadets, reserves and general enlistments; twenty-six for the U.S. Marine Corps; twenty-six for the U.S. Civil Service Commission, and seventy-eight for the U.S. Treasury. Also in October, 1941, the station broadcast four five-minute and other fifteen-minute entertainment spots for various government branches.<sup>12</sup> In a letter from the War Department, Major General E. S. Adams thanked the station for its willingness to broadcast announcements which would "aid materially in the intensive War Department campaign to procure 120,000 applicants for Flying Cadet training in the Army Air Corps."<sup>13</sup>

In early 1941, WRVA broadcast a thirteen-week series on democracy, produced by CBS. Written by "America's top-flight dramatists" and enacted by "Hollywood's best-known performers," the purpose of the series was to "re-state in as moving and vigorous terms as possible the blessings of democracy . . . ." said a letter to Lucy from W. B. Lewis, a CBS vice-president.<sup>14</sup> Replying for Lucy, Abeloff wrote, "This sounds like something in which we may all be proud to have a part, so you may be sure of our enthusiastic cooperation."<sup>15</sup> WRVA broadcast another CBS program entitled

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<sup>12</sup>WRVA, "October 1941 National Defense Broadcast Report for WRVA," to Arthur Stringer, NAB, Washington, D.C., TD, Box 6, "National Defense Announcements - 1940-43" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>13</sup>E. S. Adams, Major General, The Adjutant General's Office, War Department, Washington, D.C., to Lucy, TLS, n.d., *ibid*.

<sup>14</sup>W. B. Lewis, Vice President in Charge of Broadcasts, CBS, New York, NY, to Lucy, TLS, Jan. 22, 1941, Box 3, "CBS" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>15</sup>Abeloff to Lewis, TLS, Jan. 31, 1941, *ibid*.

"Free Speech" in early 1942. This program, a half-hour transcription, dealt with "one of the cornerstones of democracy," as Douglas Coulter of CBS called this first amendment freedom.<sup>16</sup>

Of the hundreds of public service announcements broadcast by WRVA during wartime, some dealt with the military's need for volunteers with particular training, such as laborers for the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard and tabulating machine operators for Washington.<sup>17</sup> Others promoted forthcoming training courses for servicemen, including announcements on technician training<sup>18</sup> and a spot announcement from the National Association of Broadcasters "to promote the training of radio operators and technicians for the defense program . . . ."<sup>19</sup>

Other public service "spot" broadcasts announced servicemen assignments, such as one for the Army Air Forces Advanced Flying School announcing the assignment of local (Richmond) aviation cadets to their

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<sup>16</sup>Douglas Coulter, CBS, New York, NY, to Lucy, TLS, Jan. 21, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup>Bishop to L. E. Vaughan, Civil Service Commission, Washington, D.C., TLS, May 7, 1942, Box 100, "U.S. Government" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>"Technician Training Announcement," WRVA Typed script, n.d., Box 10, "Technician Training" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>A. J. Fletcher, National Defense Committee, NAB, Washington, D.C., to Managers of all U.S. radio stations, TLS, Dec. 23, 1941, Box 5, "NAB 1939-41" folder, *ibid.*

bases,<sup>20</sup> and those announcing alien registration.<sup>21</sup> The station also used radio spot announcements for the Civilian Blood Bank in Norfolk,<sup>22</sup> announcements publicizing Richmond's first test blackout,<sup>23</sup> and announcements aiding in the distribution of a citizens' handbook.<sup>24</sup>

A public relations officer of the U.S. Marine Corps Marine Barracks in Portsmouth, Virginia, wrote WRVA in 1941 thanking the station for its excellent cooperation in broadcasting announcements for enlistment, to which he attributed the Corps' outstanding rise in enlistments of nearly one-thousand percent.<sup>25</sup> WRVA also broadcast announcements for "block

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<sup>20</sup>Army Air Forces Advanced Flying School to WRVA, Typed news release, Aug. 15, 1942, Box 2, "Army Miscellaneous" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>Barron Howard, WRVA Business Manager, Richmond, VA, to Sterling Hutcheson, U.S. Attorney, Richmond, VA, TLS, Feb. 18, 1942, Box 100, "U.S. Government" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>Lucas to Abeloff, "Norfolk O.C.D.," Typed memo, Apr. 13, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>E. Brill, Director of Publicity, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Feb. 10, 1942, Box 3, "Chamber of Commerce - 1940-41" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>24</sup>J. H. Wyse, OCD, Washington, D.C., to WRVA, TLS, Oct. 22, 1942, Box 7, "Office of Civilian Defense" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>Lee C. Baggett, II, Public Relations Dept., NNYd., Portsmouth, VA, to Program Director, WRVA, TLS, Nov. 21, 1941, Box 107, "Appreciation - 1941" folder, *ibid.*

leaders,<sup>26</sup> registration of rooms for servicemen and their wives,<sup>27</sup> and the "Richmond Fights Inflation" campaign of 1942.<sup>28</sup> The Navy Mother's Club<sup>29</sup> and the Navy Relief Society also received publicity.<sup>30</sup>

A letter from the Office of Civilian Defense requesting publicity for the Richmond Drive for Scrap suggested that WRVA use such statements in the broadcast as "Have You Called Your Junk Man Today," "How Much Scrap Have You Contributed Today to Make Our Soldiers Bullets," and "Are you Searching for Scrap in Your Cellar, Yard and Attic."<sup>31</sup> WRVA made announcements requesting 10,000 coat hangers for Camp Pickett,<sup>32</sup> binoculars for the

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<sup>26</sup>"Spot Announcement for Block Leaders," Typed OCD script, n.d., Box 7, "Office of Civilian Defense" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup>G. Flippen, Sec. of Publicity, Richmond OCD, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Mar. 8, 1943, *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>Abeloff to Mrs. E. G. Trigg, Office of Price Admin., OCD, Washington, D.C., TLS, Sept. 3, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>Howard to Bishop, Typed memo, Feb. 10, 1942, Box 7, "Norfolk Operations" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>Wilson Starbuck, Lieut. Comm., USNR, Pub. Relations Officer, Headquarters Fifth Naval District, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>R. K. Banks, Sec., Information Committee, Richmond OCD, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Sept. 23, 1942, Box 7, "Office of Civilian Defense" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup>Harry Minkoff, USO, Harris Armory, Blackstone, VA, to WRVA Program Director, TLS, June 24, 1942, Box 3, "Camp Pickett" folder, *ibid.*

Navy,<sup>33</sup> and furniture for the dayroom at Camp Lee, a quartermaster and medical corps replacement center near Petersburg, Virginia. The WRVA announcement requesting furniture for Camp Lee resulted in the donation of a piano.<sup>34</sup> WRVA broadcast appeals for scarce materials, such as scrap aluminum.<sup>35</sup> The station ran a War Salvage Board contest called "Funny Money Man" which helped publicize the need for salvage efforts and awarded prize money donated by the War Salvage Board.<sup>36</sup>

During the 1942 Christmas season, WRVA broadcast a program called "Hello Mom" in cooperation with officials at Camp Wheeler, Georgia. A weekly series, "Hello Mom" gave soldiers a chance to say a few words over the air to the folks back home. The program featured seven to ten soldiers on each broadcast, and WRVA paid for the materials needed to produce the program.<sup>37</sup>

A bulletin on the great need for nurses in Tidewater went out over WRVA in January, 1943. The Tidewater Nurses Registry Association wrote,

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<sup>33</sup>Starbuck, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, June 30, 1942, Box 7, "Naval Operating Base" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup>K. C. Swanson, Capt., Q.M.C., Commanding, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, June 3, 1941, Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>35</sup>Announcement by Gov. James H. Price made over WRVA, TD, July 21, no year given, *ibid*.

<sup>36</sup>Howard to Carlson, Typed memo, Sept. 3, 1942, *ibid*.

<sup>37</sup>C. Brooks, Jr., Camp Wheeler, GA, to Abeloff, TLS, Sept. 5, 1942, Box 2, "Army Miscellaneous" folder, *ibid*.

"Within two hours after your broadcast we covered eight cases . . . ."38  
 Later in 1943, WRVA broadcast a party given by the Norfolk Pilot Club for convalescent servicemen.39

WRVA made all of these public service announcements and one-time programs at no charge to the agencies involved. In a letter to Camp Lee, Abeloff expressed the station's feelings about this public service: "We do not want the Army ever to pay WRVA for anything, since we consider our 'public service' duties very seriously and are anxious to cooperate in every way . . . ."40 WRVA broadcast so many public service announcements and programs during wartime that eventually, because of his concern that the station was neglecting its listeners' needs to be entertained, Abeloff wrote to the National Association of Broadcasters for a breakdown of how other stations were running war announcements and programs. He wrote, "Hardly any period during the day may be classified as straight entertainment. We feel that there must be some spots during the day's schedule when our listeners are allowed to relax, briefly at least, and just be entertained."41

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38Tidewater Nurses Registry Association, Tidewater, VA, to WRVA, TLS, Jan. 3, 1943, Box 7, "Norfolk Operations" folder, *ibid*.

39M. Crosby and L. Hale, Norfolk Pilot Club, Norfolk, VA, to Harold Lucas, WRVA, Norfolk, VA, TLS, June 30, 1943, *ibid*.

40Abeloff to Lt. Bruce Conning, Camp Lee, VA, TLS, Dec. 12, 1941, Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid*.

41Abeloff to Arthur Stringer, NAB, Washington, D.C., TLS, Aug. 17, 1942, Box 6, "National Defense Announcements - 1940-43" folder, *ibid*.



The station also broadcast a number of ceremonies that went on at various military bases both before and during the war. In 1941, Abeloff wrote the Rear Admiral of the Naval Operating Base in Norfolk, saying he hoped that "you and your staff will make use of our services. . . . Within the limits of a crowded broadcasting schedule, WRVA is most anxious to cooperate with all military and naval establishments in Virginia . . . ."42

WRVA broadcast a comprehensive Navy Day program called "The Fifth Naval District At War." After gathering interviews with sailors and exciting, on-the-scene naval events that took place over several days' time, the material was transcribed on one disc and broadcast on October 27, 1942. Abeloff wrote *Broadcasting*, a weekly radio industry news magazine, expressing appreciation for the cooperation of the staff in regard to the "Navy Day" broadcast. It was the "largest known single-station Navy Day broadcast to date achieving much in acquainting WRVA listeners with activities of "The Fifth Naval District At War."43

Abeloff described in detail the events recorded and the work involved over the one-week period of making the broadcast, from a disc made of "a really thrilling return from anti-submarine patrol duty" to an all-day recording project of Navy Seabees executing a practice landing on a strip of beach near Norfolk which was "resisted by a defensive force."44 Also a part

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42Abeloff to Rear Admiral Manley H. Simons, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, VA, TLS, June 18, 1941, Box 7, "Naval Operating Base" folder, *ibid*.

43Abeloff to Sol Taishoff, *Broadcasting* [the weekly newsmagazine of radio], Washington, D.C., TLS, Nov. 9, 1942, *ibid*.

44*Ibid*.

of the broadcast was a WRVA interview, at the Norfolk Naval Hospital, of two survivors of the aircraft carrier *Yorktown*; an "interview with Negro Navy Men" at Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia;<sup>45</sup> a pickup from a Navy patrol blimp returning from anti-submarine patrol, and the swearing-in of Navy Day recruits.

Abeloff's letter to *Broadcasting* indicated that the undertaking was a complicated one. "Most of [the] discs were recorded on-the-scene, using portable equipment and generating our own power. . . . [S]ince we were so close to broadcasting time . . . we fed the material by land lines from the Naval Air Station and from the Navy Yard to our recording facilities in the Richmond studios." WRVA next dubbed from the numerous recorded five- and six-minute discs onto fifteen-minute discs. "Our initial recording had been done much as the movies are filmed and our editing resembled, we suppose, the way films are cut . . . ." Abeloff explained that a project of this scope could not have been done "live" because "we could not have spared at one time the large number of men required to handle this program." Also lines were not always available on-site and it would have been nearly impossible to gather together all the Navy personnel at the time of the actual broadcast.<sup>46</sup>

According to Abeloff, WRVA received many comments from listeners who enjoyed the show. Among these complimentary letters was one calling

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<sup>45</sup>Undocumented author, Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA, to Abeloff, TL, Box 7, "Navy Day" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*

the program "exceedingly interesting and marvelously well done,"<sup>47</sup> to which Abeloff replied, ". . . much effort went into the preparation and presentation of this feature and your favorable comment helps us to feel that it was worthwhile."<sup>48</sup> A letter from the publisher of *Broadcasting* said, in part: "That was indeed an amazing job your station did . . . ."<sup>49</sup> Another letter from a lieutenant commander at the Norfolk Naval Operating Base called it "one of the finest and most ambitious programs which any of the Fifth Naval District radio stations has tackled for a long time." He acknowledged that the WRVA staff must have spent "a great deal of time, effort and money to make it the success which it was . . . ."<sup>50</sup> Another listener from the Base called the show "tops," adding that WRVA's "hard work and concerted efforts produced a show which was a credit both to WRVA and the Navy. It was far better than the NBC show of last Sunday . . . ."<sup>51</sup>

On March 27, 1941, WRVA broadcast a "Navy YMCA Annual Dinner" program which was to include entertainment and a speech by Virginia Governor Colgate Darden, who was sick and could not attend. It did include a

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<sup>47</sup>Allen J. Saville, Richmond, VA, to WRVA, Richmond, VA, TLS, Oct. 28, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>48</sup>Abeloff to Saville, TLS, Oct. 29, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup>Martin Codel, *Broadcasting*, to Abeloff, TLS, Nov. 11, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup>Wilson Starbuck, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Oct. 28, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup>Richard A. Velz, Lieut., USNR, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Oct. 28, 1942, *ibid.*

speech by the assistant coordinator of the Federal Security Agency, a Mr. Taft, who spoke on "The Federal Security Agency in the Defense Areas."<sup>52</sup>

The station broadcast a number of public service programs from Camp Pickett, a military base located in Blackstone, Virginia. "Pickett's Quartermaster - 1942," described the new supply quartermaster at the Camp on the air July 6, 1942.<sup>53</sup> A letter from the Camp's quartermaster expressed appreciation for the "splendid interest and cooperation" extended by WRVA in making the broadcast. "We have received many favorable comments on the broadcast," said the letter.<sup>54</sup>

WRVA also carried the dedication ceremony for Camp Pickett on July 3, 1942; the date also marked the 79th anniversary of Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. The program included talks by Virginia Governor Colgate W. Darden Jr. and three commanding officers. Probably because of the eminent individuals present on the program and because many Virginians had died in Pickett's Charge, the issue was still a sensitive one. A WRVA memorandum said, "This entire affair must be handled with extreme caution and best use of judgment. All persons connected with these two broadcasts are urged to be alert and very careful in attention to detail. WRVA is the

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<sup>52</sup>Abeloff to Lucas, "Navy YMCA Annual Dinner," Typed memo, Mar. 20, 1941, Box 4, "Harold Lucas 1941-42" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>53</sup>Capt. John G. Volz, Office of the Quartermaster, Headquarters Third Corps Area, U.S. Army, Baltimore, MD, to Abeloff, TLS, June 27, 1942, Box 3, "Camp Pickett" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>54</sup>Col. D. M. Speed, Office of the Quartermaster, Headquarters Third Corps Area, U.S. Army, Baltimore, MD, to Abeloff, TLS, July 6, 1942, *ibid*.

only station covering the dedicatory exercises at Camp Pickett. Let's do a job."<sup>55</sup>

WRVA's broadcasts from Langley Field, a U.S. Air Force base in Virginia, began before Pearl Harbor and included that of a visit by high-ranking Latin American military officers to the base. Described in the script as a "goodwill tour of this country," the visit was covered by the chief of WRVA's Remote Department, Leonard Whitehorn.<sup>56</sup> Abeloff, in a letter to the Commanding General of Langley Field, said the station had received many favorable comments about the broadcast.<sup>57</sup> Another Langley Field program concerned a United States tour by the B-19, the "world's largest bomber . . . . She's due for a tour of the states with inspection wherever landing fields are large enough."<sup>58</sup> One broadcast covered an award presentation to the Second Bombardment Group on October 31, 1939,<sup>59</sup> and another broadcast in August, 1941, included a show called "Expect Anything" on the 21st Engineer Regiment (AVN).<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Abeloff to Messrs. Adams, Woods and Darlington, "Camp Pickett Broadcasts," Typed memo, n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup>"Langley Field . . . Latin-American Visit," WRVA Typed script, recorded Oct. 28, 1940, Box 4, "Langley Field" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup>Abeloff to Maj. Gen. Delos C. Emmons, Commanding General, GHQ Air Force, Langley Field, VA, TLS, Nov. 5, 1940, *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup>"Second Bombardment Group," Langley Field, VA, WRVA Typed script, n.d., p. 1, *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup>Program of Events, "Presentation of Mackay Trophy to 2nd Bombardment Group," Langley Field, VA, TD, Oct. 31, 1939, *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup>"Expect Anything," 21st Engineer Regiment (AVN), Langley Field, VA, Typed script, Aug. 1, 1941, *ibid.*

WRVA broadcasts from Camp Lee, Virginia, included "The USO Jeep Show." *The Camp Lee Traveller* report said that "The USO Jeep Show" over WRVA was "the very FIRST of its kind" to be recorded "from this side of the big pond" for broadcast later by short wave to men in the Army. The article read, "Expect to hear this 'USO Jeep Show' overseas."<sup>61</sup>

WRVA also provided part of the entertainment for a program put together by Camp Lee in June, 1941. The program, done for the entertainment of the approximately 3,000 men of the 6th Quartermaster Regiment, was a "great success."<sup>62</sup> According to Captain Springer, it went "a long way toward making our life here more cheerful. Your announcer, Joe Brown, works very hard and deserves a lot of credit for the fine way he handles the talent and puts the show on."<sup>63</sup>

One interesting part of a Camp Lee program broadcast over WRVA on "Camp Lee Day," was the "Prettiest Girl Writing To A Soldier at Camp" Contest. The winner, Miss Dorothy Mae Condon, was flown at the expense of General Motors to the Southside Virginia Fairgrounds located in Petersburg for the presentation of her award. The script said, in part: "There's something special going on down at Camp Lee! Yes, the prettiest girl writing

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<sup>61</sup>Sgt. Charles Underwood, "Radio Ramblings," *The Camp Lee Traveller*, Oct. 14, 1942, p. 8, Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>62</sup>Lt. Col. Royal A. Machle, QMC, Commanding, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, June 25, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>63</sup>Capt. Joseph A. Springer, Infantry, Supply Officer, 1303d Service Unit, Recruit Reception Center, Camp Lee, VA, to WRVA, TLS, July 9, 1941, *ibid*.

to a soldier at Camp Lee is - right this minute - making a tour of this huge Army base."<sup>64</sup>

On November 11, 1941, WRVA broadcast a show from Camp Lee, Virginia, commemorating the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I. The show, a play with music, was presented by Camp Lee's military personnel. It drew complimentary mail from at least one individual, who "thought everything about it was grand." She continued, ". . . the message . . . from the Commander . . . was even better than [that] made by the President at Arlington. I was truly proud of WRVA putting on such a swell program."<sup>65</sup> WRVA also broadcast a program in 1941 featuring a talk by Countess Marie Tolstoy of Russia to the soldiers at Camp Lee.<sup>66</sup>

A more comprehensive undertaking was the "Questions for Americans" program, broadcast from Camp Lee in September, 1941. Based on a column by "noted newspaper columnist" Dorothy Thompson,<sup>67</sup> it featured a Camp Lee-written script with an address by Thompson and generated a great deal of interest across the country. Because of the "unusually enthusiastic response elicited by the broadcast,"<sup>68</sup> Camp Lee

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<sup>64</sup>"Camp Lee 'Prettiest Girl,'" WRVA Typed script, Sept. 30, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>65</sup>Virginia Wortham, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Nov. 14, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup>Maj. Edward G. Huey, Infantry, Morale Officer, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Oct. 6, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>67</sup>Stand-by for "Questions for Americans" Program, WRVA Typed script, Sept. 7, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup>Staff Sgt. Brace Conning, DEML, 1326th Service Unit, Asst., Morale Office, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Sept. 6, 1941, *ibid.*

planned future such broadcasts using other celebrities. The script was borrowed for a meeting of the Catholic Women's Club;<sup>69</sup> a copy was requested by one of the San Francisco Public Schools, since "the broadcast as a whole suggested possibilities for adaptation in our school program;"<sup>70</sup> there was a request to repeat the performance in Chicago,<sup>71</sup> and the production was presented at Carnegie Hall in New York.<sup>72</sup>

Another event broadcast by WRVA was the April, 1942, Cape Henry Day Program in Norfolk which celebrated the 1607 landing of the first permanent English settlers at Cape Henry. Virginia Governor Colgate Darden, the mayor of Norfolk, and representatives for the President of the United States and British Minister to the United States were included in the program. Governor Darden proclaimed that in this present crisis it is particularly " . . . fitting [to celebrate] the founding of our liberty and the unity of the English speaking world." Harold Lucas noted in a memorandum to Abeloff that "A concerted effort is being made to get Pres [sic] Roosevelt here or to have him send his talk from Washington via radio . . . . We can expect WTAR and WGH to be there since they were shamed into it after our

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<sup>69</sup>Abeloff to WRVA Reception Desk, Typed memo, Sept. 19, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup>Edith Cochran, Principal, Commodore Float School, San Francisco Public Schools, San Francisco, CA, to Radio Station KFRC, Mutual Broadcasting System, San Francisco, CA, TLS, Sept. 25, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup>Conning, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Nov. 4, 1941, p. 2, *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*



gesture two years ago . . . . Historically this whole thing packs a wallop . . . ."73

Abeloff's return memo to Lucas, indicated the station's willingness to forego potential proceeds from a previously planned commercial:

Okay, pal . . . you're "it" for the Cape Henry show.

We'll kill our CBS commercial, and clear 3:00 to 4:00 pm.

If they can get the president, we'll be glad to buy lines and send up our own crew.

We do not want to feed show to a state network. If WTAR and WGH are interested (fat chance) we'll feed it to them . . . and WSAP, too.

Do not want luncheon.

I am not issuing booking order yet. When you are ready, please let me have necessary details about line and phone, etc.<sup>74</sup>

Harold Lucas, WRVA's Norfolk station manager, wrote to Abeloff in December, 1941: ". . . more and more I hear from city and civic officials, that WRVA is really on its toes; that we are forcing the other stations into public service broadcasts, and that had it not been for WRVA's initiative, many things which Norfolk wishes to accomplish could have not been done."<sup>75</sup> WRVA also provided publicity for various governmental agencies including the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Treasury. For example, in WRVA's February, 1942, *Dialog* the station's monthly

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<sup>73</sup>Lucas to Abeloff, Typed memo, n.d., 2 (page 1 missing), Box 3, "Cape Henry Day - 1943" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>74</sup>Abeloff to Lucas, Typed memo, Feb. 19, 1943, *ibid*.

<sup>75</sup>Harold Lucas, WRVA Norfolk Station Manager, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, Typed memo, Dec. 15, 1941, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder *ibid*.

program of radio broadcasts, the editorial was devoted to the subject of "Defense Stamps and Bonds."<sup>76</sup>

In February, 1942, WRVA donated its facility, personnel and space to the United States Department of the Treasury enabling the Department to make motion picture "shorts" in connection with the Defense Bond Sale.<sup>77</sup> Since the beginning of the war, theaters were among the leading selling agencies for War Bonds. It was well known "that the best place to turn a man's weekly salary into War Bonds was the place he was most apt to be found. . . . A million men and women who never saw the inside of a bank knew their neighborhood theater."<sup>78</sup> On May 13, 1942, Dorothy Lamour was one of the stars who helped sell over a million dollars worth of bonds in a show broadcast over WRVA from Loew's Theater.<sup>79</sup>

The Second War Loan Drive was carried over WRVA in 1943. A telegram from the Secretary of the Treasury said, in part:

The United States Treasury on April 12 will launch the greatest single money raising campaign in the world's history, to be known as the Second

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<sup>76</sup>Bishop to Vincent F. Callahan, Defense Savings Staff, Treasury Department, Washington, D.C., TLS, Feb. 3, 1942, Box 100, "U.S. Government" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup>Bishop to Abeloff, Reception Dept., Control Room and Mr. Darlington, "Use of Studio for Making Pictures," WRVA Typed memorandum, 1942 (exact date unknown), Box 111, "Lucy Messages - 1942" folder *ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Edith Lindeman, "Richmond Bond Sales Advanced by Movies," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, n.d., from papers in possession of Harvey Hudson, Richmond, VA. Documents from this collection are hereafter cited as Hudson Papers.

<sup>79</sup>"WRVA - Twenty-fifth Anniversary Brochure," Richmond, VA, n.d., Hewlett Papers.

War Loan. For a period of approximately three weeks the Treasury will conduct a drive to sell thirteen billion dollars of government securities. In order to start off this gigantic campaign, all four networks will devote the entire day of April 12 to an around-the-clock selling drive on sustaining and commercial programs. . . .<sup>80</sup>

In 1943, film idol and now Marine Private First Class Tyrone Power took orders for war bonds in the Third War Loan Drive broadcast over WRVA microphones.<sup>81</sup> A War Bond campaign occurred about every six months. In January, 1944, WRVA broadcast the kickoff of the Fourth War Loan Campaign in Virginia. The show, which included Virginia Governor Colgate W. Darden, Jr., and "nationally famous" radio announcer Jimmy Wallington as master of ceremonies, was fed to other Virginia radio stations from WRVA.<sup>82</sup> The program elicited several positive letters, including one from a chairman of the Department's War Savings Staff in Norfolk who said the show "far surpassed the National broadcast in my opinion."<sup>83</sup>

Another letter, from the deputy manager of the Treasury Department's War Finance Committee for Virginia, paid high compliment for launching the Fourth War Loan Drive in Virginia: ". . . the best show which

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<sup>80</sup>Henry Morgenthau Jr., Sec. of the Treasury, Washington, D.C., to Lucy, Telegram, Mar. 17, 1943, Box 10, "Treasury Department" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>81</sup>"Twenty-fifth Anniversary, WRVA," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>82</sup>WRVA to Radio Daily, Broadcasting and Variety, Typed news release, n.d., Box 10, "Treasury Department" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>83</sup>Mrs. Robert C. Hale, Chairman Special Events, War Savings Staff, Office of State Administrator, Treasury Department, Norfolk, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Jan. 19, 1944, *ibid.*

the Virginia War Finance Committee has had to date."<sup>84</sup> In June, 1944, WRVA and Larus and Brother Company brought Guy Lombardo and his Orchestra to Richmond for a War Bond Drive at the Mosque. The show was broadcast over WRVA and over three million dollars worth of bonds were sold. Tickets which were on sale at the Miller and Rhoads War Bond window were sold with the purchase of an E Bond.<sup>85</sup>

At Loew's Theater in 1944, "Joe Brown and His Gang," now seven performing years old, presented entertainment with Harvey Hudson announcing the show for a special bond rally broadcast over WRVA. At the same time in 1944, a competing radio station in Richmond, WRNL, was only making its first, although important, effort to encourage bond sales.<sup>86</sup> WMBG was active but did significantly less public service broadcasting than WRVA also.<sup>87</sup> War bond drives did not end with surrender. On February 11, 1946, to promote the sale of war bonds, WRVA brought a helicopter to Richmond for the first time. The helicopter landed on the athletic field at the John Marshall High School.<sup>88</sup> As part of bond drives in addition to bond sales, WRVA followed each Campaign show with the Treasury Department's

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<sup>84</sup>Deputy Manager Ed Brill, Directing Promotion, Publicity, War Finance Committee for Virginia, Office of Executive Manager, Treasury Department, Richmond, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Jan. 19, 1944, *ibid*.

<sup>85</sup>Edith Lindeman, "Richmond Bond Sales Advanced by Movies," Hudson Papers.

<sup>86</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>87</sup>John Tansey, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, August 4, 1989.

<sup>88</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

"Treasury Salutes." As the Department requested of radio stations nationwide, WRVA broadcast a plea for the public to buy war bonds to "pay tribute" to the war dead. "Treasury Roundtable," written by the United States Treasury Department's Secret Service, was broadcast in 1944. The Department officials, "enthusiastic in their praise," thanked WRVA and its staff for their assistance in the broadcast saying, "We could not ask for better cooperation than we received."<sup>89</sup>

In order to broadcast the launching of the U.S.S. Indiana, WRVA canceled two CBS commercial programs.<sup>90</sup> Taking place on November 21, 1941, at the yards of the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in Newport News, Virginia, the broadcast featured presentations by, among others, Virginia Governor James H. Price, Indiana Governor Henry F. Schricker, and The Honorable Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy.<sup>91</sup>

Advertising dollars contributed to WRVA's becoming a big business during the war years. In canceling two commercial programs to broadcast the launching of the U.S.S. Indiana, WRVA made a financial sacrifice. Repeatedly, WRVA demonstrated its commitment to public service broadcasting. In carrying out its commitment to public service, WRVA's efforts helped to move the information industry forward in Virginia.

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<sup>89</sup>Harry Cooper, District Coordinator, Treasury Enforcement Agencies, Treasury Department, U. S. Secret Service, Washington, D.C., to Bishop, TLS, May 29, 1941, Box 107, "Appreciation - 1941" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>90</sup>Abeloff to Jack Albershardt, Director, Indiana Division of State Publicity, Indianapolis, IN, TLS, Nov. 11, 1941, Box 4, "Indiana" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>91</sup>"Tentative Radio Program for Launching of Battleship USS Indiana," WRVA Typed script, Nov. 21, 1941, 2, *ibid*.

### War-Related Programs

In 1945, several of WRVA's ongoing war-related public service programs were summarized in the twentieth anniversary script, "First With Twenty." WRVA received commendations from radio listeners for "Conquer We Must," a broadcast made from Camp Lee; "Cheers from Camp Pickett;" "Builders for Victory" from Camp Peary; "Open House at Fort Eustis;" "Open House at McGuire General [Veterans Hospital]" and "Okay America."<sup>92</sup>

"Conquer We Must," a WRVA program for the entertainment and benefit of "the people of Virginia and its neighbors,"<sup>93</sup> was a one-hour, seven-week series featuring entertainment and descriptions of life at Camp Lee, Virginia. A sample inaugural script of "Conquer We Must" said that the program would " . . . present a picture of Army life at Camp Lee and in surrounding Camps," while featuring "musical selections, interviews, a radio play, United Press news flashes and highlights in Army training . . . ."<sup>94</sup> A December, 1942, issue of *The Camp Lee Traveler* told of the popularity the hour-long show had attained.<sup>95</sup> According to Technical Sergeant Conning, a

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<sup>92</sup>"First With Twenty," WRVA Typed script, Nov. 2, 1945, Box 104, "WRVA Twentieth Anniversary" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>93</sup>"Conquer We Must," WRVA Sample typed script, n.d., Box 2, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup>"Conquer We Must," WRVA Sample typed script, n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>95</sup>Sgt. Charles Underwood, "Radio Ramblings," *The Camp Lee Traveler*, Dec. 9, 1942, *ibid.*

radio time buyer for Mennen's products enjoyed the show and requested a special waxing of a thirty or forty-five minute show to present to his firm.<sup>96</sup>

A show at Camp Pickett utilized the talents of the servicemen on base also. A thirteen-week series, "Camp Pickett Revue" started out as an idea of a Camp Pickett public relations director, who wanted to call the show "Camp Pickett Roll Call." Apparently, the name was later changed to "Camp Pickett Revue."<sup>97</sup> One possible act for the show suggested by this officer was rather amusing: ". . . we have a colored soldier who can operate a typewriter to music, with the result of an almost exact duplication of a tap dancer. This is only one of the inexhaustible variety of talent available . . . ."<sup>98</sup> The "Camp Pickett Revue," a variety show, described the men of Camp Pickett, most of whom would not be there long. "A few short months for most of them, and they'll be off to all the fighting fields of the world . . . ."<sup>99</sup>

"Virginia Goes to War," a program which endeavored to keep citizens posted on events at the war front, was sponsored by the Virginia Office of Civilian Defense and the Information Division of the federal Office for Emergency Management. Written especially for Virginia stations WDBJ,

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<sup>96</sup>Brace Conning, Tech. Sgt., Special Service Office, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Sept. 4, 1942, *ibid*.

<sup>97</sup>Gerald J. Rock, Sgt., Public Relations Office, Camp Pickett, Blackstone, VA, to Program Director, WRVA, TLS, Aug. 13, 1942, Box 3, "Camp Pickett" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>99</sup>"Camp Pickett Revue," WRVA typed script, Nov 2, 1942, *ibid*.

WRVA and WTAR,<sup>100</sup> the intent of the program was to "bring to you official information from Government sources in Washington and Virginia on events transpiring on the Home Front," said an Office for Emergency Management script.<sup>101</sup>

"This Is War," a 1942 series planned by the four nationwide radio networks, was "to serve as a major contribution of the broadcasting industry toward dramatizing and interpreting the wartime resources and activities of the Government to the American people and the entire world," said a National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) bulletin.<sup>102</sup> The series was particularly significant, as it marked the first time in radio history that the combined network facilities were employed simultaneously for a program series. Permission was given by the NAB for the half-hour shows to be broadcast by any non-network station.<sup>103</sup>

The Office of Facts and Figures in Washington, D.C., together with the program's production staff, supplied information for each program, which was then sent by short-wave all over the world in many different

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<sup>100</sup>William C. Bourne, Reg. Info. Officer and Harold Hayes, Asst. Reg. Info. Officer, Office for Emergency Management, Washington, D.C., to Abeloff, TLS, May 10, 1942, Box 11, "Virginia Goes to War" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>101</sup>"Virginia Goes to War," "Opening Announcement," OEM Typed script, Office for Emergency Management, Division of Information, VA, NC, SC Regional Office, Richmond, VA, n.d., *ibid*.

<sup>102</sup>"This is War' Available to All Stations," NAB War Service Bulletin, NAB, Washington, D.C., Feb. 10, 1942, Box 5, "NAB" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid*.



languages.<sup>104</sup> WRVA carried the program and fed "This is War" to other independent stations.<sup>105</sup>

"Clairifying Defense," a program prepared by the Radio Division of the Office of Civilian Defense, dealt with civilian defense issues. It was apparently broadcast every day from at least August 24 through September 10, 1942. One program discussed the attitude of citizens toward test alerts and blackouts " . . . in a few isolated cases, it seems our Wardens have faced disrespect, disregard, even downright personal abuse . . . ." <sup>106</sup> Other programs included "Salvage Can Save Your Nation" and "The Danger of Rumors." Part of the "Rumors" script read: "Enough false rumor could strangle in its bed our War Effort."<sup>107</sup>

"Europe Today," another war-time series, was presented by the University of Virginia's Institute of Public Affairs in 1942. On the program, Laurence Dawson, assistant to the director of the Institute, discussed conditions within the occupied countries of Europe.<sup>108</sup> Broadcasts of "Europe Today" included "Food, Clothing and Disease in Occupied Europe" and

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

<sup>105</sup>Abeloff to Bishop, Howard and Adams, "'This Is War' - CBS - Saturdays, 7:00-7:30 p.m.," Typed memo, Feb. 19, 1942, Box 1, "1942: WRVA Station Activities" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>106</sup>"Clairifying Defense," OCD Typed script, p. 2, Aug. 26, 1942, Box 3, "Clairifying Defense" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>107</sup>"Clairifying Defense," OCD Typed script, Aug. 28, 1942, p. 1, *ibid*.

<sup>108</sup>"Europe Today," Institute of Public Affairs, UVA, Charlottesville, VA, to Abeloff, TD attached to TSD from Laurence Dawson, n.d., Box 3, "Europe Today" folder, *ibid*.

"Guerilla Warfare in Europe Today."<sup>109</sup> The series proved to be popular. Public reaction was good and the series aired for four weeks more.<sup>110</sup>

"Okay America," perhaps the most popular wartime show, was presented twice each week from different military bases in Virginia. With the basic theme being "purely and simply entertainment for men of the service,"<sup>111</sup> the show consisted of live entertainment, provided by a WRVA troupe at the station's expense. The latter forty-five minutes of the show, the only segment which was broadcast, featured performances by the servicemen themselves. The series was begun on December 20, 1940, and ran every Tuesday and Friday evening through 1945 as scheduling permitted. Friday shows originated at a number of military bases, from the Naval Operating Base and the Norfolk Navy Yard in Portsmouth and bases at Langley Field, Camp Pendleton, Fort Story and Fort Monroe to the Marine Hospital.<sup>112</sup>

The Tuesday shows originated at Camp Lee. WRVA staff member Joe Brown, also the emcee of the WRVA children's show "Joe Brown's Gang," was the master of ceremonies for both the Tuesday and Friday shows. After a group of servicemen enjoyed an hour-long advance program that was part of every week's show, dozens of trainees and regulars went before the WRVA microphones to contribute anything from performing a clog dance to taking

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<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>Dawson to Abeloff, TLS, Mar. 5, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>111</sup>WRVA Typed news release, Richmond, VA, TD, n.d., Box 8, "Okay America" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>112</sup>Ibid.

part in a "geography game." Joe Brown led nearly a thousand voices yelling as one, "Okay, America!" Quiet. "Gentlemen, the National Anthem."<sup>113</sup> Movies often preceded the evening's program, with the final part of the show comprised entirely of entertainment by the troops. The applause was vociferous.<sup>114</sup> Each program featured a two-to-five-minute message by one of the base's public relations officers, who gave news about the camp and its men. "In this five minutes we frequently have as many as twenty names mentioned involving reference to twenty different cities, as a rule," said Abeloff in a letter to CBS.<sup>115</sup> Also part of the show was "Pen Pals," a feature by Joe Brown, which resulted in several marriages taking place and in the station receiving mail from forty-two states.<sup>116</sup>

Joe Brown conducted "Okay America" without a script. Joe Brown wrote the introduction and conclusion, but "ad libbed" the rest.<sup>117</sup> Favorable fan mail came from over thirty-eight states with "some . . . unusually enthusiastic in their praise." "Okay America" was a favorite among listeners not only in Virginia but in other states, too. WRVA estimated that by 1942, together with the audience of the "Edgeworth Dance Party," an evening of

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<sup>113</sup>Ibid.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid.

<sup>115</sup>Abeloff to Gerald Maulsby, CBS, TLS, Mar. 18, 1942, Box 3, "CBS" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>WRVA news release, Richmond, VA, TD, n.d., Box 8, "Okay America" folder, *ibid.*

dance music which WRVA provided at no cost to the camps, at least 57,000 men had been "visible guests" at the programs. Mr. Brown traveled several hundred miles each week to be present at each show, and the telephone bill in connection with the show was a "sizeable" one each month.<sup>118</sup>

A number of listeners wrote WRVA about "Okay America," including an officer at the Norfolk Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, who thanked WRVA and gave credit to the "uniqueness of the program and the high caliber of the entertainment" for the large audience in attendance. The writer went on to praise Joe Brown for his hard work and appealing style.<sup>119</sup> An enlisted man from Portsmouth wrote to Joe Brown saying, "We boys hope we can attend quite a few more programs before we are shipped off to some other port."<sup>120</sup> Another listener, a Navy wife, responded favorably also and suggested that "the Navy Women be given a chance to send loved ones a message."<sup>121</sup> "Okay America" did use the talents of the wives and children of servicemen for entertainment, with such shows taking place a number of times on site at Benmorell, "the new Navy residential development on Hampton Boulevard in

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<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>119</sup>E. L. Woods, Capt. (MC) USN, Commanding, Norfolk Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Mar. 24, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>120</sup>Pvt. Howard L. Talbert U.S.M.C.H., Co. D., 23rd Batt., Portsmouth, VA, to Joe Brown, WRVA, Richmond, VA, ALS, Mar. 16, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>121</sup>Unsigned autograph letter, Mar. 21, 1941, *ibid.*

Norfolk, Virginia."<sup>122</sup> The mother of a son in the military expressed that hearing "Okay America" was thrilling for relatives of those in the service.<sup>123</sup>

World War II was WRVA's first opportunity to cover a major war. Reporting the conflict made radio indispensable to Virginians from 1941 to 1945. While Virginia newspapers often provided more detailed reporting, WRVA almost always brought the news to Virginians first from the battlefield and from the military installations.

By 1939, WRVA benefited from the CBS staff in Europe, especially H. V. Kaltenborn in Munich, Edgar Ansel Mowrer in Paris, Edward R. Murrow in London, William L. Shirer in Berlin, and Robert Trout in New York.<sup>124</sup> These reporters and others earned the trust of censors by exhibiting a high degree of professionalism. In demonstrating their abilities to report news without giving away military information, they established both the independent identity and importance of radio journalism and its position in the marketplace. Early on, Virginians felt the impact of World War II largely because WRVA was on the air. In their homes, they hid from bombs with Londoners. They joined those working in factories producing war materials. In June, 1940, they listened when France surrendered to Hitler, and they shuddered in August, 1940, when they heard the German air raids in the Battle of Britain broadcast live over WRVA. The radio audience in Virginia because of WRVA and its public service policy, could no longer remain

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<sup>122</sup>"Okay America," WRVA Typed script, Apr. 17, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>123</sup>Mrs. Lillie A. Shaffer, Cumberland, MD to Joe Brown, ALS, Mar. 4, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>124</sup>Barnouw, 78-79.

isolated from the world or the world at war.

After news programs, audience participation shows gained popularity during the war. Music remained a staple of WRVA programming with Virginia listeners more likely to be women because so many men were away in service. Patriotic songs such as "The N.A.T.T.C. [Naval Air Tactical Technical Corps] Song"<sup>125</sup> were played. Almost all programs during the war included at least a brief reference to the war, with variety programs nearly always building up patriotism. WRVA probably did more remote broadcasts from military installations than stations farther removed from military bases. And, in this way, the military probably influenced the programming of WRVA more than that of other stations farther removed from military bases, too.

WRVA used at least three approaches in its radio programming to deal with war-related issues. Getting most publicity were special programs, usually appeals for scrap materials and sale of war bonds. Often these programs were built around major screen and radio stars. The second and most common approach was to insert war-related material into already existing programming. The third approach was to introduce a new program series devoted to the war or reflecting the impact war made at home. Increased advertising was one of the best things that happened to WRVA and radio generally during World War II. With foreign markets changing and shrinking, advertisers turned their attention to domestic markets and

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<sup>125</sup>Jack J. Scherr and William B. Scott, Jr., "The N.A.T.T.C. Song" through the courtesy of the *NAVY BREEZE*, a gift from the author's mother, Mary H. Roman, in possession of the author.

invested their dollars at home. Of available media radio was advertisers' most popular choice. Profits soared.

The federal government imposed up to a ninety percent excess profits tax on American industry in an attempt to limit wartime profiteering similar to that which had occurred in World War I and previous wars. The tax bill had a provision, however, that allowed excess profits used in advertising to be taxed at only normal rates if at all. Corporations could take dollars earned from excess profits and spend them on radio advertising and increase both their voice and their position in the marketplace with dollars which would otherwise be spent in taxes. Even business directors without imagination soon discovered that they could buy a dollar's worth of advertising for what was, in effect, ten cents.<sup>126</sup>

Cognizant of the advertising value to be purchased with ten-cent dollars, many companies bought advertising time with nothing to sell. Advertising agencies increased, too. Many argued that the advertisers with nothing to sell made taxpayers bear the real cost of radio advertising, because the costs of advertising deducted as business expenses by corporations increased the price government had to pay for war materials. Probably because radio argued that it was inundated with government agencies requesting time for war-related announcements, U.S. Treasury officials said let advertising be "reasonable," but "reasonable" was never defined.<sup>127</sup> The advertisers prevailed purchasing "reasonable" deductible advertising at the taxpayer's expense. Shortages, which led to paper

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<sup>126</sup>Barnouw, The Golden Web, 165.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

rationing and meant smaller newspapers and less advertising space, helped radio prosper, too. "In one day in 1942, the *New York Times* is said to have rejected some fifty pages of advertising."<sup>128</sup>

WRVA's share of advertising dollars increased. During the war years, radio broadcasting surpassed newspapers as a national advertising medium.<sup>129</sup> Larus and Brother Company benefited doubly. In advertising their brands of tobacco over WRVA, Larus and Brother Company benefited since WRVA, a Larus subsidiary, continued to earn profits for Larus. Second, Larus and Brother Company benefited from product advertising on WRVA because of the excess profits tax. It is probable that the increase in radio advertising was not a wartime phenomenon, but rather a function of competition. The high rate of income and profit was a result of war-related legislation. However, thanks to ten-cent dollars and wartime rationing of paper, WRVA prospered as did the whole radio broadcasting industry, while both, the quality of programming and the confidence of listeners in WRVA remained high. Advertisers with no products to sell continued to buy radio time. Hence, radio experienced rich profits but broadcast few commercials. Moreover, sponsors were pleased with prestige programs of less than maximum audience enhancing their images while purchasing these programs with tax deductible ten-cent dollars.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup>Ibid, 167.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid, 165-166.



On CBS and WRVA, with almost no tires to sell to civilians, United States Rubber sponsored the New York Philharmonic. General Motors, with few cars to sell to the public, sponsored the NBC Symphony Orchestra. "Stated bluntly," said *Broadcasting* early in 1942, "business is wonderful."<sup>131</sup> Sam Carey, WRVA program service manager, said that WRVA was the Edgeworth Tobacco Station, but that advertising was looked at reasonably. Knowing that competition within the tobacco industry limited the Company to a fractional share of the market, that too many ads risked provoking negative listener response, and that WRVA's schedule was crowded with war-related material, Larus and Brother Company behaved appropriately. The Company purchased between five and ten advertising spots to be aired daily over WRVA.<sup>132</sup>

Emphasizing National Defense and beginning a twenty-four hour broadcasting schedule in 1939, WRVA gave priority to war-related announcements and programs, broadcasting these announcements and programs at no charge to the agencies involved. This was a tremendous public service effort and probably WRVA's greatest single contribution to listeners and the war effort. The station considered its public service duties very seriously and eagerly cooperated in every way it could. Once a broadcast was scheduled, WRVA spent as much production time as a program required even if the undertaking was complicated, spending as

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<sup>131</sup>Ibid.

<sup>132</sup>Sam Carey, WRVA program service manager, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, August 19, 1989.

much as one week's production time for a single broadcast from a military base. The station also sacrificed proceeds from previously planned commercials if necessary. WRVA donated staff services and studio time to the U.S. Department of the Treasury at significant financial sacrifice. Brooks George submitted copies of a report to Lucy, Howard and Abeloff in July, 1943. Time value of broadcasts over WRVA in the interest of the war effort was \$14,109.26 in April, \$11,879.98 in May and \$10,631.68 in June, 1943. The greater portion of broadcasts were for announcements for war bonds, victory gardens, and the Office of War Information in April, war bonds, black market, Waacs, get ready for winter, and the Office of War Information in May, war bonds, gasoline shortage, civil service, and Office of War Information in June, 1943. Programs broadcast at WRVA's expense included morale builders from various camps, Office of War Information and the Treasury Department.<sup>133</sup> Repeatedly and willingly, WRVA broadcast war-related material in support of public service during World War II.

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<sup>133</sup>Brooks George, "Government Announcements and Programs," TD, July 26, 1943, Box 6, "NAB-1942" folder, WRVA Papers.

**PART III**  
**ACCOMODATIONS IN SUPPORT OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PROBLEMS AND COMPLICATIONS

#### Financial Sacrifices and Shortages of Time, Materials and Manpower

Instances of WRVA's financial sacrifices for the country's war efforts were scattered throughout the station's letters and documents. According to several 1946 internal memoranda, the total monetary value of government announcements and war-related programming broadcasts for the year 1945 came to over \$95,000, mostly for public service announcements and programs. There were 3,371 such announcements and 698 such programs broadcast that year alone. While the Office of War Information furnished the largest number of these, other government agencies provided information on War Bonds, rationing, ceiling prices, employment and other topics.<sup>1</sup>

A breakdown over a three-month period of the broadcasts that made up the greater portion of government announcements and programs showed

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<sup>1</sup>W. Brooks George, Assistant to President and Controller of Larus and Brother Company, Inc., Richmond, VA, to Arthur Carlson, WRVA, Richmond, VA, Typed memo, Jan. 30, 1946, Box 95, #931 "WRVA Miscellaneous" folder, WRVA Papers.

that announcements were made for Navy, Army and Merchant Marine recruiting; Navy Day; victory and war bonds; Civil Service, Red Cross and Civil Service nurses; Office of Price Administration; "Missing Discharge Papers;" Disabled American Veterans; "Know Your Endorser;" and "Auto Repair & Ceiling Prices." Programs included those for the Treasury Department, the War and Community Fund, and "Morale Builders from Various Camps."<sup>2</sup>

WRVA's military-related programs were broadcast at WRVA's expense on location at various bases and other field locations. An Abeloff letter to Lieutenant Bruce Conning at Camp Lee concerning the WRVA program "Questions for Americans" gave some indication of the financial burden such broadcasts could entail: "I had planned to provide you with a set of discs at no cost. It was also my intention to advise you that future recording work should be held at a minimum because of increasing cost."<sup>3</sup> Another expense of on-site military broadcasts was that of long-distance telephone calls. A May, 1941, memorandum from WRVA Norfolk Manager Harold Lucas to Abeloff indicated that the largest part of these costs was for music clearance.<sup>4</sup>

WRVA willingly undertook the tremendous costs of war-related announcements and programs for the sake of good public relations. Not long after WRVA had established its Norfolk station- headquarters on March 1,

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Irving G. Abeloff, WRVA Program Service Manager, to Lt. Bruce Conning, Camp Lee, VA, TDS, Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Harold Lucas, WRVA Norfolk Manager, to Abeloff, "Okay America - NAS," Typed memo signed, May 30, 1941, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder, *ibid.*

1941,<sup>5</sup> the Civilian Defense groups in Norfolk seemed irritated by overzealous Navy personnel who tried to organize everything and everyone in sight, " . . . [thus] creating resentment."<sup>6</sup> Harold Lucas, wanting WRVA to remain fair and unbiased in such potentially difficult situations, said "naturally, we must remain impartial to both."<sup>7</sup>

Problems and considerations of a financial nature constituted only one part of the station's sacrifices to the community, and to the country as a whole, during wartime. Commitments of time to war-related causes often forced WRVA management to turn down or cancel programs of a more entertaining or commercial nature.

Although listeners complained, WRVA's commitment to broadcast government announcements and programs seemed greater than the station's commitment to broadcast entertainment and local public service programming. When Camp Lee requested a "pickup" of the Benny Goodman show at the Country Club of Virginia, the request had to be turned down because of government announcements and programs. Abeloff said: "Although we are greatly interested in Camp Lee activities . . . we find ourselves so heavily committed during the week of May 17-23 that we are unable to schedule the Benny Goodman show . . . ."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>"Twenty-Fifth Anniversary, WRVA, Virginia's Premier Radio Station, 1925-1950, Edgeworth Broadcasting Service," WRVA anniversary brochure, *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>Lucas to Abeloff, Typed memo, Dec. 15, 1941, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>Abeloff to R. H. Morgan, Camp Lee, VA, TLS, Apr. 29, 1942, Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid.*

WRVA gave much radio time to war-related programming because WRVA wanted "to be . . . above the average in the number of such announcements and programs broadcast."<sup>9</sup> A letter to Glen Allen High School from Walter Bishop, WRVA public relations head, discussed the problems with which WRVA contended in scheduling war-related broadcasts, and expressed WRVA's willingness to attempt publicizing the school play, "Grandma Goes Hollywood," in spite of an increasingly war-dominated broadcast agenda.<sup>10</sup>

While many WRVA listeners commended the station for its patriotism and sense of responsibility in broadcasting so much war-related material, one listener - a self-described "country woman" - wrote in April, 1941, to complain about the preponderance of such material over WRVA. She asked, "Why do we have to listen to those women and those crabby men discuss the war? . . . When we country women have finished our work on Saturday we are very tired and would like to listen to something more cheerful. . . . I have turned my radio off rather than listen to that disgraceful argument, of which they do not know any more than I. After mentioning her husband's illness of three years, she wrote, "when the sad stories come on he will sit and cry."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Abeloff to Arthur Stringer, NAB, Washington, D.C., TLS, Aug. 17, 1942, Box 6, "NAB - 1942" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>10</sup>Walter Bishop, WRVA Public Relations Director, to J. Childress, Glen Allen High School, Glen Allen, VA, TLS, Mar. 27, 1942, Box 52, "Schools and Colleges - 1942" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>11</sup>Mrs. W. W. Gill, Claremont, VA, to WRVA, ALS, Apr. 15, 1941, Box 111, "Criticism, etc." folder, *ibid*.

Walter Bishop's courteous and sympathetic reply well exemplified the station's policy to take such audience complaints and comments seriously. Responding that WRVA "always welcomes suggestions and comments from our listeners," Bishop wrote that he, too, "to a large extent shares your views regarding the predominance of war material before the public today." He added: "During the past year and a half, this station has faced the problem of providing news to which the public is entitled, and trying to avoid the unwitting spread of propaganda desiring to draw this nation into the war." While Bishop admitted WRVA was disturbed that the general public seemed to be in favor of more war-related broadcasts, he asked the woman to "bear with us as we face these problems."<sup>12</sup>

Wartime shortages of manpower, equipment and materials such as gasoline and aluminum created problems of their own for the station. Letters revealing such constraints included a July, 1942, note from Abeloff to Major Edward Huey at Camp Lee which said, "Until time availability, technical-personnel availability and gasoline rationing problems are worked out, I wish to hold in abeyance your suggestion regarding the Colored Service Club."<sup>13</sup> Another Abeloff letter to Sergeant Gerald Rock at Camp Pickett, regarding Rock's request that a program be broadcast from the Camp, also illustrated the problems which reduced manpower at WRVA caused. With

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<sup>12</sup>Bishop to Gill, TLS, Apr. 17, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>13</sup>Abeloff to Major Edward G. Huey, Special Service Officer, Camp Lee, VA, TLS, July 16, 1942, Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid*.



sixteen WRVA employees in the service, the station would of necessity look to Camp Pickett for technical and announcing personnel and equipment.<sup>14</sup>

WRVA experienced difficulties resulting from material shortages as early as March, 1941. Since aluminum had been placed on the priority list for defense activities, the shortage of aluminum limited the availability of transcription discs.<sup>15</sup> The station encountered further shortages in 1942. One Lucy memo, entitled "Conservation of Office Materials and Equipment," illustrated the small sacrifices made by many Americans during World War II, and the lengths to which many - at least at WRVA - were willing to go for their country. Shortages of materials like rubber, wire, paper, and lead during wartime required extreme conservation measures. Rubber bands were to be used "only when necessary, and then only one." Only one wire staple per file was allowed, substituting paper clips "whenever possible." Paper clips, too, were considered especially valuable. Lucy told the staff, "Never throw away a paper clip unless it is broken. If one becomes bent, straighten it out. . . . We cannot buy anymore."<sup>16</sup>

Carbon paper was to be used "to the fullest extent," and "under no circumstances" was a standard sheet of paper to be used for scratch paper. "Erasers," wrote Abeloff, "are rubber! Use them down to the last possible erasure. Erase lightly. Use erasers on stubs of pencils." Pencils were to be

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<sup>14</sup>Abeloff to Sgt. Gerald J. Rock, Public Relations Office, Camp Pickett, VA, TLS, Aug. 19, 1942, Box 3, "Camp Pickett" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>15</sup>Lucy to Bishop, Howard, Woods and Abeloff, "Transcriptions Discs," Typed memo, Mar. 4, 1941, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup>Lucy to All Radio Staff, Typed memo, Apr. 2, 1941, Box 111, "1942 Lucy Messages" folder, *ibid*.

cherished. "Where wood [rather than mechanical] pencils are absolutely necessary, exercise special care in sharpening to avoid waste. . . . Use wood pencils down to the last possible stub; then, use the eraser thereon until used up." Typewriter ribbon spools were not to be thrown away; file folders were to be used again and again. As for paper, "one of the most critical items," hundreds of ways could be thought of to conserve it, nearly a dozen of which Abeloff listed, from replying to office memoranda on the bottom of the original to single spacing all material and using narrower margins. Abeloff continued:

Materials when obtainable today cost in some cases twice as much as a year ago. When you waste one unit of such material today, it is equivalent to wasting two in former years.

The foregoing are general suggestions to save materials--each employee must take it as his own personal responsibility to avoid waste. Remember, if we do not conserve materials today, there may not be any to conserve tomorrow.

It required paper to give you this memorandum, but by studying these suggestions you will save critical materials that are costly if at all obtainable. This program is going on all over the country and should result in furnishing more materials for the war effort.

No foolin', and I do mean YOU! Let's WIN this war.<sup>17</sup>

Lucy urged Walter Bishop to "take good care of [his] typewriter. . . . Remember, 'Care Saves Wear,' as the Esso Reporter so frequently reminds us."<sup>18</sup>

Advertising caused radio revenues to increase at unprecedented rates during the war years, but these years were important to broadcasting for

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Lucy to Bishop, Typed memo, Feb. 16, 1942, *ibid.*

other reasons, too. Four networks emerged with ABC a direct result of the Federal Communications Commission's applying the chain broadcasting rules. The 1943 Supreme Court case upholding the FCC's chain broadcasting rules and regulatory functions set a precedent for future FCC regulatory raids into various aspects of the broadcasting industry. The FCC announced a new international radio agreement in 1942, too. It required United States stations to change operating frequencies thirty kilocycles to provide reasonable protection to radio stations primarily in Canada and Mexico.<sup>19</sup> WRVA changed from 1110 kilocycles to 1140 kilocycles. This was costly and necessitated the shortening of WRVA's towers twenty-five feet. WRVA had a "lock on broadcasting CBS in the Norfolk area."<sup>20</sup> But with shortened towers, wrote Lucy in "The Voice of Virginia," "the edge of [WRVA's] selective fading contour [no longer] ran through the heart of Norfolk city; instead, [it ran] several miles beyond where the potential audience was relatively small."<sup>21</sup> There was nothing WRVA could do to continue serving the disappointed Norfolk listeners. The new 1140 kilocycles frequency was "steady in Newport News and Hampton." WRVA continued to publicize its programming there.

By 1945 Congressional hearings concerning allocations had set the stage for television's post-war dominance. A survey made of advertising

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<sup>19</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>20</sup>John Tansey, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, August 4, 1989.

<sup>21</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

agencies revealed "that half already had television departments."<sup>22</sup> To WRVA's listeners, broadcasting probably changed little except to include increased war-related programming and news. During these years, however, radio played its part in three important ways: as a non-broadcasting aid to military tactics and strategy enabling the coordination of air, sea, and ground forces; as a source of information and entertainment; and as a medium for international propaganda. In Virginia, WRVA, operating with 1140 kilocycles, remained available to most of its listeners and served important information and entertainment functions from 1939 through 1945.

WRVA helped bring people and events together, unifying Virginia during the bleak war years of 1942 and 1943, when the United States war machine geared for maximum effort. During the brighter period from 1944 to 1945, when it seemed the enemy had to surrender, WRVA news reported the war at home, delivering more news to more Virginia listeners than any other combination of media. In 1945, WRVA broadcast on the scene reports of "V" Day in Europe and "VJ" Day in Japan.<sup>23</sup>

During the war, WRVA had the only "accredited War Correspondent from Virginia radio stations, overseas in the person of John (Jack) L. Stone, the WRVA Publicity Director who had been furloughed previously for service with the Office of War Information."<sup>24</sup> Stone supplied taped conversations

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<sup>22</sup>Barnouw, The Golden Web, 242-243.

<sup>23</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

with boys from Virginia which were broadcast over WRVA. He reported many events "including the Japanese surrender ceremonies aboard the battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay, September 2, 1945." WRVA's unique impact came from its mixture of normal programming, as in the pre-war years, combined with greatly increased news, news features and commentary. "At WRVA," Lucy wrote, "we participated in every broadcast of any consequence frequently whether from the network [for example, Edward R. Murrow or H. V. Kaltenborn] or local and felt that we had contributed immensely toward the outcome in many ways."<sup>25</sup>

WRVA benefited especially from the return of Sanford Terry, Jr. to its staff after the war because Terry would apply newly learned skills at WRVA. Serving under General MacArthur in the Pacific, Terry supervised in 1945 "the construction of a floating radio city, the 'Spindle Eye' which was to have been used in the invasion of Japan in the fall." The "Spindle Eye" included "two complete transmitters, towers, two studios, two control rooms and facilities for sending radio photographs from Asia back to the United States together with other high speed communications and recording equipment."<sup>26</sup>

Although the Second World War constricted radio in respect to personnel and material supplies, these were some of radio's best years in respect to economic success and public esteem. Radio's wartime news role was critical. Broadcasting, with the low number of radio stations held nearly constant because of a halt in construction, became an eldorado industry

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

sharing huge profits, while other media suffered from paper shortages. With competition from FM and television delayed by the war, the AM network-dominated radio establishment and WRVA reached its zenith - success and service were one. WRVA could entertain and inform, serving Virginians faster and better than any other media, and it did.

### Defense and Emergency Precautions

WRVA, as cautioned by the Federal government, carried out numerous defense precautions in light of the possibility of subversive activities during wartime. Lucy wrote in 1941, "In obedience to instructions from the United States War Department, WRVA was required to take extensive security measures."<sup>27</sup> The broadcasting property was securely fenced and WRVA employed watchmen around the clock.<sup>28</sup> A Lucy memorandum in March of 1941 instructed the staff to avoid the employment of aliens as well as to take "any steps deemed necessary" to avoid "sabotage and subversive activities" in the Larus and Brother organization or on company property. Lucy wrote:

In a conference on this subject it was pointed out to me that they [the Board of Directors] consider our radio station the most vulnerable piece of property in this respect that they own, and I am directed to caution our division and sub-division heads to be constantly on the alert for suspicious visitors or any actions on the part of temporary

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

employees or contractors who may have ulterior motives in apparently innocent actions.<sup>29</sup>

Lucy continued saying that since it was true that in America there were several million aliens "who, upon the proper signal from abroad will engage in sabotage and subversive activities," the staff should be "constantly on the alert." Lucy also requested that any potential employees interviewed in the future be asked whether they were an American citizen.<sup>30</sup>

Another precaution dealt with visitors to WRVA. In a June 9, 1941, memorandum to Bishop, Abeloff relayed instructions regarding locked doors. "The door leading to the reception desk is to be locked at all times when there is no receptionist on duty. This means all the time -- with no exception . . . ." Also the door leading to the hall of WRVA's administrative offices must remain locked. The transmitter was no longer to be open to visitors, and future visitors' tours of the station were to be limited, with no visitors allowed in the Control Room or the announcer's booth. Abeloff added that it was his "understanding that the foregoing is in line with the general precautions now being taken in all vital defense and communications industries against possible sabotage."<sup>31</sup>

In a September, 1941, memo, Lucy showed his concern for possible sabotage or enemy infiltration. "None but WRVA employees . . . or duly identified City, State and Federal agents shall be admitted to the Control

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<sup>29</sup>C. T. Lucy to Bishop, Abeloff and Woods, "Aliens," Typed signed memo, Mar. 11, 1941, Box 99, "Lucy Messages" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Abeloff to Bishop, "Visitors and Front Doors," Typed memo, June 9, 1941, p. 1, Box 111, "1942 Lucy Messages" folder, *ibid.*

Room, Announcer's Booth or Production Offices." Even visits by workmen and repairmen had to be approved by the department manager and then "properly escorted" to their destination.<sup>32</sup>

On November 11, 1941, Lucy stated the "whys and wherefores" of the defense precautions. He explained that, in a speech by a War Department representative to a district meeting of broadcasters, radio men were warned to "constantly be on the alert for subversive activities . . . as foreign agents are very active in this country . . . ." He added, "We should be constantly alert for fake stories and news items, some of which have been used by foreign agents to an alarming extent in other localities." Lucy elaborated:

A recent experience in the North related to an epidemic at one of the camps which was supposed to have reached such proportions as to contend that our soldiers were dying like flies. This story was deliberately planted in a certain locality and handled in such a way as to produce effective results until checked and exploded by the FBI and War Department. A similar hoax was perpetrated in another training area by circulation of a tank-explosion story. In both instances radio stations in the area did not exercise proper precautions in checking and double-checking the story before putting it on the air.<sup>33</sup>

The War Department, said Lucy, would hold radio stations "strictly accountable" for similarly unchecked and unreliable broadcasts, and ". . . under no circumstances should we broadcast any information in connection with a military establishment without first taking proper precautions to check on its authenticity, even if we have to telephone the

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<sup>32</sup>Lucy to All WRVA Employees, "Defense Precautions," Typed memo, Sept. 18, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>Lucy to Bishop, Howard, Abeloff, Woods and Mackey, "Defense Precautions," Typed memo, Nov. 11, 1941, *ibid.*



camp or other location to obtain corroboration." Lucy further instructed that every employee read and initial his memorandum on the subject.<sup>34</sup>

Only days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the War Department advised further defense precautions:

With our country now formally at war, we are no longer temporizing with the question of possible damage to our radio equipment and personnel. The time for giving anybody the benefit of the doubt is passed [sic].

Effective immediately, no persons are to be admitted to the Control Room unless a member of the Control Room staff can come to the Reception Desk, examine their credentials, and personally escort them.

Extreme care will be exercised by the Reception Department in identifying visitors and properly directing them to the persons they desire to see.

PLEASE CAUTION EVERY MEMBER OF YOUR DEPARTMENT ACCORDINGLY<sup>35</sup>

Several days after the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor, WRVA made arrangements for the use of a hotel room by staff members which could be used around the clock in the event of an emergency. Barron Howard, WRVA's business manager, believed the room's availability would solve problems associated with transportation in case of an emergency or bad weather, while ensuring the presence of announcers and other crucial staff under such conditions.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Lucy to Messrs. Barron Howard, Abeloff, Bishop, and Joe Mackey, Typed memo, Dec. 9, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup>Barron Howard, WRVA Business Manager, to Lucy, Typed memo, Jan. 27, 1942, Box 1, "1942 Station Activities" folder, *ibid.*

WRVA also took steps to prepare for the possibility of having to go off the air due to a national emergency. Several memoranda in early December, 1941, exhibited the urgency and caution with which this possibility was handled by the station, and the intricate planning necessary in such a situation. The War Department required that all stations, in the event they were told to go off the air, broadcast an explanation to their listeners without causing "undue alarm." Abeloff went into great detail describing the exact procedure and chain of command to be followed should such an order occur.<sup>37</sup>

Abeloff indicated to Harold Lucas, WRVA's Norfolk manager, the next day, December 11, 1941, the extreme conscientiousness with which such a potential emergency was to be handled. Headed "UTMOST IMPORTANCE!," Abeloff wrote: "We must prepare for the time when SOMEONE will call us and tell us to go off the air . . . ." Such an order, wrote Abeloff, would come from the First Interceptor Command or the Federal Communications Commission Inspector for whom Abeloff requested full names, home and office addresses and telephone numbers. "Ask [them] to telephone me, so that I may familiarize myself with [their] voice[s]. . . . Our instructions are to call back and verify any order to go off the air. . . . Please act as fast as you can . . . ." <sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Abeloff to Lucy, Woods, Davis, Howard, Bishop, Adams, Typed memo, Dec. 10, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup>Abeloff to Harold Lucas, WRVA Norfolk Station Manager, "SPECIAL DELIVERY - UTMOST IMPORTANCE!," Typed memo, Dec. 11, 1941, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder, *ibid.*

In April, 1942, Howard further instructed the staff to remove any automobile stickers or lapel pins or buttons identifying them with WRVA.<sup>39</sup> At that time, Lucy also considered a suggestion from Howard to make arrangements with local utilities so that WRVA could have first option to use their facilities in case of interference caused by war conditions.<sup>40</sup> WRVA's response to the possibility of having to broadcast in time of attack or emergency was precaution and preparedness. By taking security measures early, WRVA fostered staff alertness and constructed alternatives for the station's defense in case of an enemy attack. Taking these defense precautions, WRVA protected the station and broadcasting for Virginia. Although uncelebrated, these very carefully considered actions may have been one of WRVA's greatest public service efforts.

#### Problems and Expenses Associated With On-Site Broadcasting

WRVA's on-site broadcasting of war-related programs was accompanied by the proverbial red tape characteristic of government or military involvement. Other problems and complications were often a matter of course when broadcasting from a military base, as well. Details to be worked out for such shows - the coordination and cooperation necessary between station and base personnel, and, sometimes, authorities in Washington, not to mention the sheer number of participants involved in

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<sup>39</sup>Howard to Bulletin Board, Lucas and Woods, Typed memo, Apr. 14, 1942, Box 1, "1942: Station Activities" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>40</sup>Howard to Lucy, Typed memo, April, 1942, *ibid.*

such shows as "Okay America" and "Our Boys at Fort Meade" - were difficult in 1941.

Because of the national and ongoing controversy between the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) and radio broadcasters, WRVA staff members had to determine the publisher of every copyright of every song used in every broadcast, and to obtain music clearance from Abeloff and Lucy for every song used in each broadcast. The ASCAP controversy was a constant complication. John Tansey said that, on one occasion, he could not go on the air at the Hotel Richmond until someone of the Hotel Richmond staff persuaded a big, influential, portly, drunken Richmond banker to stop playing the "Beer Barrel Polka" on the piano. WRVA could not broadcast the "Beer Barrel Polka" as background music because the "Polka" was ASCAP.<sup>41</sup>

In 1941, WRVA wanted to start a new program from Fort Meade, Maryland, for the benefit of soldiers there. In mid-1941, the station wrote to the War Department in Washington, D.C., concerning the possibility of broadcasting a weekly sponsored program called "Our Boys at Fort Meade."<sup>42</sup> When it became necessary to utilize Army personnel in musical and other performances for the entertainment of others stationed at Fort Meade, WRVA encountered some problems. Because of an agreement between the American Federation of Musicians and the War Department which disallowed

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<sup>41</sup>John Tansey, Oral interview, August 4, 1989.

<sup>42</sup>Abeloff to Director, Bureau of Public Relations, War Department, Washington, D.C., TLS, June 20, 1941, Box 4, "Fort George Meade, MD" folder, *ibid.*

the use of Army personnel if it prevented the employment of civilians, such programming was usually not sanctioned by the War Department. In this case, however, the Department was willing to consider such a program if it were done on a strictly amateur basis without disrupting troop training. Correspondence between Abeloff and the War Department described the considerations, complications and regulations often involved in creating such a program, even if it were for the benefit of the soldiers themselves. WRVA broadcast the show on a non-commercial basis at WRVA's expense.<sup>43</sup>

Other problems associated with on-site broadcasting, and with the Fort Meade program in particular, included coordinating WRVA scheduling of these shows with times when the servicemen wouldn't be out on maneuvers or otherwise unavailable.<sup>44</sup> The complications associated with using ASCAP music or other music which had to be approved also made things more difficult. Abeloff sent Barron Howard an estimate "for commercial prospects" of the total costs for taping the show, which came to ninety-six dollars, and recommended that "due to the nature of this program and its desirability as far as our schedule is concerned, the management may feel like absorbing some of the items listed above."<sup>45</sup> In a letter to Fort Meade, Abeloff wrote that "this is rather an expensive venture to be undertaken by us on a non-

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Private A. G. Anderson, Twenty-Ninth Division, Fort Meade, MD, to Abeloff, TLS, July 7, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup>Abeloff to Howard, "Fort Meade," Typed memo, July 9, 1941, *ibid.*

commercial basis . . . ." Then Abeloff expressed his desire to secure a sponsor.<sup>46</sup>

As early as May, 1941, WRVA's new Norfolk office began encountering difficulties with personnel at the Naval Air Station concerning WRVA's entertainment broadcasting. Competition between WRVA's shows and those put on by the "Trouper's Club Units" at the Navy YMCA was causing problems. Wrote Lucas:

The Naval Air Station situation seems to get worse rather than to improve . . . as late as Wednesday of this week I understand that there was a near decision to call the pgm [sic] off on the part of the Morale Office, and I learned indirectly that the only reason it was not thrown out was the fear that the 'Edgeworth Dance Party' might be withdrawn if they did not cooperate with us on OK America [sic] . . . Chief Cogland and Lt. Powell (who killed the vaude show [sic] for tonight when passing through the other day) seem to be the dissatisfied parties. This apparently goes back to a personal dislike for Joe Browne and an attempt to shelter the Trouper's Club Units that originate at the Navy Y here. Having personally seen some of these units perform I can readily see that Joe Brown's Gang would put on a far better show and I believe that the knowledge of this is the cause for the gang not being used. It develops then that personal feelings and private ends are preventing the servicemen from having entertainment that we are providing.<sup>47</sup>

Lucas went on to recommend that "Okay America" and the "Edgeworth Dance Party" be discontinued at the Naval Air Station. He thought that these

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<sup>46</sup>Abeloff to Anderson, TLS, July 11, 1941, *ibid*.

<sup>47</sup>Harold Lucas to Abeloff, "Okay America - NAS," Typed memo signed, May 30, 1941, *ibid*.

programs should be moved to Fort Story and Camp Pendleton, where troops would be "much more appreciative of our efforts to help in entertainment."<sup>48</sup>

Harold Lucas had to do some quick legwork in order to find another location for the next few shows. His efforts also demonstrated the many details to be considered in such on-site broadcasting. Lucas visited Langley Field and arranged for "Okay America" to be broadcast there June 13, 1941. He then talked to Fort Monroe concerning the next week's show, June 20, but the base couldn't handle the show on that date. Lucas then visited Fort Story, which could do the show on June 27 "pending War Dept. approval of cancelling movies and use of theatre."<sup>49</sup>

Next, "still being stuck for the 20th," Lucas visited Camp Pendleton, where he finally was able to set up for the June 20 broadcast of "Okay America" for a "one-time shot so that we are not committed to continue," pending approval to use their theatre. Lucas also learned at that time that another radio station, WTAR, was installing a line for a Sunday night show, "the first Pendleton origination they have made . . . . Apparently, we're becoming very effective."<sup>50</sup> This left the July 4th show, which Lucas advised against carrying at the Naval Air Station. "I believe we had better swing to some other spot. . . . I don't believe we will get any closer to clearing up the anti-Joe Brown situation there."<sup>51</sup> In July, 1942, Lucas wrote Lucy and

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Lucas to Abeloff, "Fort Story Big Guns; OK America," Typed memo signed, June 6, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

Abeloff regarding problems he had encountered with "Joe Brown's Gang" and "Okay America" at Fort Monroe. His lengthy memorandum revealed a sense of frustration with the technical difficulties and human errors that could occur with such on-site broadcasting. "I am now charged with the responsibility of production on shows in this area, yet have not complete control over small things that can occur to upset quality," he wrote.<sup>52</sup> A new staff member accidentally "clipped" the Joe Brown's Gang show too early, losing sixty seconds of the program. Lucas explained the "poor balance" problem on the young man's inexperience and resultant inability to anticipate "rough spots," on the "Okay America" show at Fort Monroe. Lucas said that speaker stands allowing speakers to be placed at any height, and an amplifier with mixing controls, were needed to correct "the very poor quality" sound reproduction of the "Okay America" shows. The mixing feature on the amplifier was needed "to make [the system] more adaptable to the different pick-ups" at the time of broadcast. Lucas also reported problems with the telephone company in his memorandum to Abeloff. When a "bad line hum" was reported, the phone company did nothing about it. In addition, the staff "encounter[ed] many difficulties in placing toll calls to Richmond for cues." Lucas reported getting wrong information from the control room regarding program starting times and complained that a remote operator coming from Richmond arrived an hour and a half late.<sup>53</sup>

Not especially sympathetic regarding the problems with the new man, Abeloff wrote: ". . . you'd better remember this incident in which sixty

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<sup>52</sup>Lucas to Abeloff, "General," Typed memo signed, July 11, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*



seconds of 'Joe Brown's Gang' was cut, and next time you have a new man, be sure YOU check all details."<sup>54</sup> As for the poor balance on the Fort Monroe show because of Allison's not anticipating the "rough spots this type of show always has," Abeloff wrote, "You disturb me. Did you caution Allison about the rough spots?" Abeloff did allow that Lucas was "undoubtedly right in anticipating trouble with the phone company." However, he said, the line hum had not been fixed simply because the phone company's equipment had been tied up with heavy service calls that day. He added that he was "working up a set of procedures to cover various remote-program situations."<sup>55</sup>

A frustrated Abeloff apparently sent Lucas' reply to Lucy, who expressed his sympathy for Lucas to Abeloff by writing in pencil at the bottom of the memorandum: "He's [Lucas] on the right track. Only by trying to solve these things big and small will we attain the degree of efficiency we so much desire. Encourage him!"<sup>56</sup> Lucas was pretty much a one man operation with assistants as needed. His job was not an easy one.<sup>57</sup>

In August, 1942, Lucas wrote to Abeloff suggesting that he cancel the "Okay America" broadcasts from USO Clubs at Hampton and Virginia Beach. He said that the Clubs had not provided acceptable talent, were critical of WRVA's prebroadcast entertainment, did little toward audience

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<sup>54</sup>Abeloff to Lucas, Typed memo, July 11, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup>John Tansey, president, WRVA, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, June 11, 1989.

development, and lacked appreciation.<sup>58</sup> Concerning the telephone line problems, Abeloff said a man at the telephone company suggested WRVA use its regular broadcast line "from remote point through to Richmond control room for two way conversations by the use of a magneto-phone and by patching in the control room . . . ." Lucas added that this method of handling "should mean a great deal to us in cueing programs and would certainly save money . . . ." <sup>59</sup>

In October, 1942, Lucy wrote to Abeloff and Woods on Norfolk operations and voiced his concern over the "changing attitude in that section toward WRVA." Lucy asked the Norfolk station management to impress on its staff the importance of WRVA's image and operations in Norfolk and the surrounding area. "Without the good will of the listeners in the Tidewater area to an extent where every survey will show a sizeable portion of them listening to WRVA, we would indeed be in a difficult position selling our station to national advertisers." With a 50,000 watt transmitter, WRVA was not a "strictly Richmond Station."<sup>60</sup> Certainly manufacturers found WRVA most attractive for advertising products because of both the 50,000 watt transmitter and WRVA's urban listeners from Charlottesville to Hampton Roads.

WRVA still had to correct some problems with the phone company. In September, 1941, "the best arranged and best timed church program WRVA

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<sup>58</sup>Lucas to Abeloff, Typed memo signed, Aug. 22, 1942, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Lucy to Abeloff and Woods, "Norfolk Operations," Typed memo signed, Oct. 7, 1942, Box 7, "Norfolk Information" folder, *ibid.*

ever attempted to broadcast from Camp Lee,"<sup>61</sup> was not received over WRVA because of some technical difficulties with the telephone company. Abeloff wrote that the defect "was a failure on the part of the telephone company and not one caused by members of the WRVA staff. It was a matter over which we had absolutely no control."<sup>62</sup>

Other problems were encountered by WRVA earlier in 1941 with the Camp Lee show featuring Miss Dorothy May Condon. This was a situation which involved misunderstandings and poor communication among certain Camp Lee staff members and a WRVA staffer unfamiliar with the details of the on-site production when the program was broadcast. The "red tape" involved in broadcasting was the culprit this time. According to Bishop, the Camp Lee show almost failed to be broadcast because someone [at Camp Lee] "slipped in not contacting the man in charge of the building. . . . Since you are familiar with military 'red tape' - as well as jealousies - you will know what to do . . . ."<sup>63</sup> In apology, a public relations officer at Camp Lee wrote Abeloff saying that ". . . if there was an error connected with the Miss Condon broadcast it was our error. . . . WRVA [has] gone out of its way to cooperate with Camp Lee and [has] extended us every courtesy."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Henry N. Blanchard, Camp Chaplain, Camp Lee, VA, to Commanding General, Camp Lee, VA, Typed memo, Sep. 19, 1941, Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>62</sup>Abeloff to Blanchard, TLS, Sep. 24, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup>Bishop to Abeloff, "A Dorothy May Condon Program incident," Typed memo signed, n.d., Box 3, "Camp Lee" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup>Victor L. Cary, 2nd Lt., QMC, Public Relations Officer, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Oct. 14, 1941, *ibid.*

Government regulations at times created other complications. Camp Lee's Major Edward G. Huey wrote to Abeloff, "As you know, we can no longer transport civilians in Camp government vehicles. General Edmonds has given his approval of having Countess Marie Tolstoy appear at the Camp on October 20, [1941]."<sup>65</sup> Abeloff replied: "Thank you for your letter regarding Countess Marie Tolstoy. . . . As for transportation, rather than put you to expense, I am planning to drive over and will have the Countess with me. . . ." <sup>66</sup>

While the WRVA public service broadcasts did entertain the general audience, on at least one occasion WRVA felt "slighted" by the lack of recognition for its public service efforts in the entertainment of servicemen at military bases. Although Abeloff wrote to Miss Claire McCarthy in late 1941 congratulating her and her colleagues for an article apparently written about the Richmond Community Fund in the *New York Sunday News*, he also mentioned his concern over WRVA's lack of recognition for its many efforts in behalf of Virginia servicemen. He cited as an example an Edgeworth Dance Party held recently at the Camp Lee service club at which the hostess didn't realize the loudspeaker system was being loaned by WRVA. He added, "It's a trivial thing, but it makes me think that perhaps we should 'toot our horn' a bit more. Unless I am mistaken, WRVA contributes more to the entertainment of servicemen throughout Virginia than does any other single organization which is a private organization . . . . The prestige and

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<sup>65</sup>Edward G. Huey, Major, Infantry, Morale Officer, Camp Lee, VA, to Abeloff, TLS, Oct. 6, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup>Abeloff to Huey, TLS, Oct. 8, 1941, *ibid.*

popularity of a radio station are built largely on the goodwill that station achieves by its public service. Making certain that our public service efforts are known to our listeners is an important part of establishing and maintaining this good will."<sup>67</sup>

WRVA continuously overcame on-site broadcasting problems and related complications. During the World War II, repeatedly and creatively, WRVA made public service broadcasting to its listeners a success.

### Controversial Issues

In 1939, Frank Gannett, president of The Gannett Newspapers and owner of several radio stations, made an appeal to radio broadcasters across the country to recognize the potential for governmental abuse of its power over the media. Sending a statement on this issue to the members of Congress, Gannett mailed a copy of the statement, together with a form letter, to an undetermined number of radio broadcasters.<sup>68</sup> He also sent Walter Bishop a personal letter attached to the material, on which WRVA General Manager C. T. Lucy wrote: "Walter - A hot one!! Well worth reading."<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Abeloff to Miss Claire McCarthy, Richmond Community Fund, Richmond, VA, TLS, Dec. 1, 1941, Box 8, "OK America" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>68</sup>Frank Gannett, President, The Gannett Newspapers, Rochester, NY, TLS to "Editors," Oct. 14, 1939, Box 95, #933 folder, *ibid*.

<sup>69</sup>Lucy to Bishop, Autograph memo signed, n.d., *ibid*.

Gannett believed that the "time" had come for radio to "fight for its right of free speech" . . . because of . . . "the menace of steadily increasing government control [that] threatens all of us. . . . [T]he idea that radio is a creation of government and subject to government control" must be broken. Gannett also enclosed a summary of the Presidential powers and a copy of his "letter to editors."<sup>70</sup> Gannett, owner of both newspapers and radio stations with his fear of government regulation insisted that the Federal Communications Commission must adapt. Lucy was right; this issue was a "hot one".

In 1939, A Lucy memorandum concerning WRVA's broadcasting of "WPA talks" was sent to WRVA Business Manager Barron Howard in September, 1939.<sup>71</sup> A number of Richmond businessmen had called Walter Bishop "protesting vigorously" WRVA's broadcast of the material. Wrote Lucy:

We have been taken to task by the station owners for failure to exercise the proper supervision of political propaganda in the shape of WPA talks and perhaps others by reason of the fact that last night Deputy Commissioner Hunter of WPA delivered on our station a 15-minute talk criticizing severely Congress, the National Association of Manufacturers, and at the same time placing a halo over WPA and absolving the President and Administration of all blame for any of the recent legislation and impending difficulties.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Gannett to Bishop, TLS, Oct. 16, 1939, *ibid*.

<sup>71</sup>Lucy to Howard, "Political Propaganda," Typed memo, Sept. 7, 1939, Box 1, "1939-41 Memos to Abeloff from Staff" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid*.

Lucy wrote that he had been under the impression that any public relations material, including propaganda, was to be "scrutinized" by Mr. Bishop before being broadcast. "I am sure had Mr. Bishop heard this transcription first, he would have raised the question about its propriety on our station, and I could have asked the station owners for a ruling on the situation," added Lucy.<sup>73</sup> Barron Howard replied in another memorandum that all WPA programs WRVA used did "contain some Government propaganda" but that the hundreds used thus far had been "okay." "It so happened that the propaganda in this one program 'bit.' All are equally bad on other fronts," wrote Howard.<sup>74</sup> The offensive propaganda probably included criticism of the National Association of Manufacturers and praise for legislation that was not supported by Virginians in Congress. The board of directors at Larus and Brother Company, other listeners who were merchant-capitalists, and the Chamber of Commerce would continue to influence WRVA's policy on controversial issues. Larus supported the view that Virginia, a commonwealth with a poll tax and right to work laws, should guard its traditional outlook.

WRVA management refused to air the advertisement of alcoholic beverages. Miss Bertha Hewlett commented that both Mr. and Mrs. Lucy were instrumental in determining this policy at WRVA.<sup>75</sup> To Lucy, who was

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Howard to Lucy, "Political Propaganda," Typed memo, Sept. 8, 1939, *ibid.*

<sup>75</sup>Miss Bertha Hewlett, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, June 22, 1989.

a "teetotaler," the decision to advertise alcohol was a key issue which further motivated him to organize the Virginia Association of Broadcasters.<sup>76</sup>

In 1943, because network operations were of great concern to many in both radio and government, CBS set up an Affiliates Advisory Board. CBS divided the United States into nine districts, with each district holding elections by mail to choose its representative. The radio affiliates in the district composed of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia and the District of Columbia elected Lucy to represent them on the CBS board. Adding to WRVA public service record, in March, 1943, Lucy's "colleagues" elected him to serve as the first Chairman of the CBS Advisory Board.<sup>77</sup>

Concerning Winston Churchill in January, 1940, Abeloff agreed with Bishop that Churchill's broadcasts should not be used:

Upon deliberation, although I agree with you in your attitude toward Winston Churchill, I feel that keeping his broadcasts off WRVA is a great responsibility.

According to your advice, I have not booked the two past broadcasts. I am wondering if this should be discussed at our Wednesday meeting and will appreciate your reactions.<sup>78</sup>

Churchill had just succeeded Neville Chamberlain as Prime Minister of Great Britain in the spring of 1940. From London, Edward R. Murrow said Churchill had "the advantage of being the best broadcaster in this country

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<sup>76</sup>John Tansey, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, August 4, 1989.

<sup>77</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>78</sup>Abeloff to Bishop, "Winston Churchill," Typed memo, Jan. 29, 1940, Box 99, "#962 Lucy Memos" folder, WRVA Papers.



[Great Britain],” and, although he could build confidence, he could also “preach a doctrine of hate that is acceptable to the majority of [the British].”<sup>79</sup> Murrow’s task as broadcaster “permitted no note of hate or even of persuasion.” Americans wanted no part of war and anyone attempting to involve them “would be attacked.”<sup>80</sup> WRVA management respected and, therefore, tried to avoid the controversy and contention that broadcasting Churchill might stir. Later, during the war and in the months following, American attitudes changed and WRVA did broadcast several Churchill transcriptions and one live broadcast when Churchill addressed the Virginia General Assembly.<sup>81</sup>

In another memorandum, Lucy wrote, “Walter: We should consider very carefully the advisability of carrying any more Lindberg [sic] material of any description. Watch your step!”<sup>82</sup> A newspaper article on Lindbergh titled “Advertising Space Denied to Lindbergh” reported that the Philadelphia Transportation System, as well as two Philadelphia radio stations, had denied advertising space for a Lindbergh address at the Arena in Philadelphia because the subject was considered “too controversial.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Barnouw, The Golden Web, 141.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Index to WRVA Radio Station Papers, 1, WRVA Papers.

<sup>82</sup>Lucy to Bishop, Autograph memo signed, n.d., Box 99, “Lucy Messages” folder, *ibid*.

<sup>83</sup>“Advertising Space Denied To Lindbergh,” unidentified newspaper found in WRVA files, n.d., *ibid*.

With world events in flux, Virginians focused their attention on radio news. Again, American isolationists were fearful of the United States becoming involved in another global conflict. In 1927, WRVA had broadcast Colonel Lindbergh's speech at Richmond's old Fairgrounds during his transcontinental tour after his solo flight across the Atlantic<sup>84</sup>. Lucy served as the announcer for the "tumultuous reception . . . with a street parade."<sup>85</sup> Later, however, as his ideas stirred American public opinion, WRVA did not give airplay to Lindbergh, who was a member of the American First Committee.<sup>86</sup>

Station management considered its role a serious one when it came to granting air time to politicians during political campaigns. WRVA took great care to be fair and objective in determining broadcasts' personalities and contents. In August, 1940, Lucy wrote to executives of the Edgeworth Tobacco Company, a section of Larus and Brother Company, regarding "political speeches":

. . . may I respectfully remind you to guard against any personal approaches or commitments on the subject of using our facilities. The Federal Law as it now stands is most strict on this subject, requiring us to keep a detailed written record of every inquiry and of quotations as to rates and periods. The basis of the Law is to require that every candidate for public office is treated exactly alike by a radio broadcast station . . . .

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<sup>84</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Lucy to Bishop, Autograph memo signed, n.d., Box 99, "Lucy Messages" folder, WRVA Papers.

. . . Our present policy is to make everyone pay after executing an indemnifying bond protecting us from liability for libel suits as a result of statements made.<sup>87</sup>

In 1938, the National Association of Broadcasters began the final draft of a voluntary radio code which would "ban religious and racial hatred, 'hidden propaganda' and dramatization of political campaigns from the air."<sup>88</sup> The NAB revised the Code in 1941, urging every broadcaster "to carefully consider the provisions of this Code, especially those relating to controversial public issues."<sup>89</sup> Under the subheading "Controversial Public Issues," the Code said:

As part of their public service, networks and stations shall provide time for the presentation of public questions including those of a controversial nature. Such time shall be allotted with due regard to all the other elements of balanced program schedules and to the degree of public interest in the questions to be presented. Broadcasters shall use their best efforts to allot such time with fairness to all elements in a given controversy.

Time for the presentation of controversial issues shall not be sold, except for political broadcasts . . . .<sup>90</sup>

The NAB code not only stated "three fundamental reasons" for refusing to sell time, but also providing it at no charge for the following issues: (1) It was the "public duty" of broadcasters to bring discussions of public issues

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<sup>87</sup>Lucy to P. L. Reed, W. T. Reed, Jr., et al., Larus and Brothers Co., Richmond, VA, "Political Speeches," Typed memo, Aug. 5, 1940, *ibid.*

<sup>88</sup>NAB telegram to "Editors," n.d., Box 5, "#50" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>89</sup>Neville Miller, Office of the President, NAB, Washington, D.C., to All NAB Members, TLS, June 19, 1941, Box 5, "NAB - 1939-41" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>90</sup>Revised NAB Code, NAB, Washington, D.C., TD, n.d., *ibid.*

before their audience "regardless of the willingness of others to pay for it;" (2) If such time were sold, to be fair it would have to be sold to all with the ability and desire to buy it at any given time; and, "most important," (3) The public would, unfairly, likely be most swayed by the opinions of those with the greater means to buy the time.<sup>91</sup>

In the early 1940's, former Congressman John O'Connor wrote the Columbia Broadcasting System criticizing CBS for giving air time to the Communist Party. While CBS didn't particularly want to grant the air time, the network wrote a letter to both radio and city editors saying that CBS was ". . . compelled . . . to treat all candidates for public office alike,"<sup>92</sup> It was for this reason, the letter said, that CBS recommended changing the law ". . . so that no broadcaster is compelled to give time to candidates of any political party if it is proven to be subservient to a foreign power."<sup>93</sup>

The Federal Communications Act required all licensees to give equal opportunities for broadcasting to all candidates for any public office, providing that "such licensee shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast under the provisions of this section."<sup>94</sup> WRVA complied with this law in airing the CBS talk in 1940, as shown in a letter from an Indiana listener, a member of the "Indiana Federation of Clubs," who was

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

<sup>92</sup>CBS to Radio and City Editors, TD, May 31, 1940, Box 96, "1940 Presidential Campaign" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.

<sup>94</sup>Louis Ruppel, CBS, New York, NY, to Editors, TD, May 31, 1940, *ibid*.

indignant that the station would air Earl Browder, the Communist Party's candidate for the presidency:

I tuned in on the finish of Earl Browder's speech over your station this evening and regardless of your excuses you gave for the broadcast just delivered I will always think your station very un-American and anything you broadcast will still be tainted from such a speech as you allowed to be broadcasted [sic] this evening. There are so many beautiful thoughts, lessons, music etc. to be given to the youths of "our America" without the program you released. I shall use this above in my club work here and I sincerely hope every mother in America writes you.<sup>95</sup>

In 1942, WRVA did *not* grant air time to the Communist Party of Virginia for a talk, which was requested in the following letter to WRVA from the Party:

We are hereby requesting time on your station, as part of your public service feature, for a talk on the pertinent Indian situation.

We feel that this is a very urgent matter which greatly affects our war efforts against the Axis, and is a matter which must have the fullest discussion for a complete understanding of the question . . . .<sup>96</sup>

WRVA's response blamed guidelines given by the Office of War Information for "priority allocation on radio time," because of the war, as the reason the station couldn't carry the talk, adding, "We might suggest that inasmuch as this is a matter of international moment, Mrs. Burke's talk

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<sup>95</sup>Mrs. Ada Sears, Elnora, IN, to Manager, WRVA, ALS, Oct. 4, 1940, *ibid*.

<sup>96</sup>Edwin P. Randolph, For the State Committee, Communist Party of Virginia, Richmond, VA, to Program Chairman, WRVA, TLS, Aug. 11, 1942, Box 79, "#733 Political Miscellaneous" folder, *ibid*.

would seem more adapted to network broadcasting than for presentation over an individual station."<sup>97</sup>

After WRVA aired a different talk by Alice Burke, an undated postcard sent to "Miss Alice Burke, Communist Party, c/o Station WRVA" from a WRVA listener stated in no uncertain terms the listener's opinion of the broadcast:

Alice Burke  
 U. Dumb Cluck -  
 Heard your Sun. eve. spasm  
 1st - Master the English Language  
 2nd - Get a little bit of American ideals U. Russian RAT  
 3rd - Oh Just Drop DEAD<sup>98</sup>

The postcard may have been referring to a Fourth of July address mentioned in a June, 1942, letter from the Communist Party, which requested air time for the speech; it is unclear whether this particular address, however, was ever aired. The letter said, in part: "The purpose of the forthcoming address is to further extend and cement the fight against Hitlerism in the light of our glorious fighting traditions. Mrs. Alice Burke, State Secretary, will be the speaker."<sup>99</sup> In 1946, WRVA sold air time to the Communist Party in connection with the general elections to be held that November.<sup>100</sup> Barron

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<sup>97</sup>Bishop to Randolph, TLS, Aug. 17, 1942, *ibid*.

<sup>98</sup>Unidentified WRVA listener to Alice Burke, Communist Party, c/o Station WRVA, Richmond, VA, AC, n.d., *ibid*.

<sup>99</sup>Randolph to WRVA, TLS, June 24, 1942, *ibid*.

<sup>100</sup>Mary S. Kalb, Richmond, VA, to Barron Howard, TLS, Sep. 10, 1946, Box 89, "#872 Political - 1946" folder, *ibid*.

Howard's reply offering air time to Alice Burke had been written in October, a month earlier.<sup>101</sup>

In granting "equal opportunities" for air time to political candidates, WRVA appeared to be especially responsive in making such time available to all parties. In 1945, however, the station did not grant such time to John Locke Green, Treasurer of Arlington County, Virginia, who requested to give a "political talk" of an unspecified nature. Because of NAB rules and station policy requiring radio stations to grant equal time to all sides of an issue, WRVA could not grant Green the air time because Green would not divulge the topic on which he wished to speak. Howard wrote Green that a radio station "is compelled to handle [political broadcasting] in such a manner . . . that both sides are permitted equal facilities."<sup>102</sup> Time availability, wrote Howard, was another problem, as WRVA's policy was to confine political broadcasting to periods not already committed for commercial purposes; but that when demands for political time didn't allow room for all applicants, the station would cancel commercial commitments to make room:

I go into this so that you will understand that the choice of time available will depend entirely on the number of similar requests we receive . . . If there are no other requests, you will be asked to make your choice from time already available.<sup>103</sup>

Added Howard.

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<sup>101</sup>Howard to Alice Burke, TLS, Oct. 4, 1946, *ibid*.

<sup>102</sup>Howard to Green, TLS, Mar. 21, 1945, Box 37, "Political - 1946-52" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid*.

We are very sorry that such a simple thing is being made to seem so complicated. You may be assured, however, that once a definite date is set we shall do everything within the limits of good broadcasting procedure to make available to you exactly what you wish. The time rate is \$80.00 for fifteen minutes.<sup>104</sup>

Many letters went back and forth between Green and Howard, with Green steadfastly continuing to refuse to reveal the nature of his talk and Howard, ever courteous, continuing to deny air time until Green divulged his topic. Green finally accused WRVA of favoritism toward Senator Byrd:

Your extreme courtesy is appreciated in connection with my application for radio time.

I have been informed that my application would be of no avail, and it appears that I was correctly advised. To be frank with you, I was told that WRVA discourages any discussion which might be contrary to the political fortunes of Senator Byrd and his organization.

As I advised you on March 26, the Constitutional Convention convenes on April 30 and that being the case, I wanted to make arrangements for radio time the night before. It is, therefore, clear that the nature of my speech will be political.

Since it appears obvious that I will not succeed in getting any time, I am too busy to prepare a brief outline of what I expect to say.<sup>105</sup>

Howard, in his reply, took great pains to explain WRVA's policy on granting air time for political talks, and the fact that WRVA used no such favoritism, as Green had accused:

Thank you so much for your frankness in passing along what, in this business, is a very serious charge indeed. It is only when such things are said openly that we in public service are able to explain our policies

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<sup>104</sup>ibid.

<sup>105</sup>John Locke Green, Treasurer, Arlington Co., VA, to Howard, TLS, Apr. 2, 1945, *ibid.*



and make proper defense against misunderstandings that arise from time to time.

First: let me assure you that your inquiry has to date been handled in purely routine form. Unflattering as it may appear, I assure you that prior to your letter of April 2 I had no idea at all of your political persuasions or interests. Had I known that our policies were on trial, I should have explained things in more detail.<sup>106</sup>

Howard's letter then went on to document, in lengthy detail, WRVA's policies, lack of favoritism, some typical problems "which arise in the day-to-day operations of an important radio station," and to ask "that you give a correct picture to those who make rather general and uninformed charges and observations . . . ." Explaining the statutes requiring equal time for political candidates, Howard wrote that "the laws and regulations on these points are so explicit and the penalties so severe that no intelligent operator would dare show favoritism, even were he so disposed . . . ." Howard also cited the law forbidding censorship of speakers, as well as the law holding a station responsible for any libel aired. "We may not censor, yet we are responsible," Howard continued. To protect themselves, he said, WRVA required an advance manuscript whenever possible. Finally, offering to discuss the matter in person at greater length, Howard ended the letter by saying:

If you will continue to be frank with me and tell me exactly what you have in mind, I will return the courtesy and be equally frank with you in either scheduling it or refusing it and giving you my reasons therefore in light of the above.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>Howard to Greene, TLS, Apr. 6, 1945, *ibid.*

<sup>107</sup>*Ibid.*

Larus, WRVA, and Senator Byrd were friends. But Green, angry, decided not to pursue the matter, basing WRVA's denial on his own need to believe that WRVA was influenced by Senator Byrd, rather, than his unwillingness to define his subject:

Dear Mr. Howard:

"They argued in, and argued out,  
and left the matter still in doubt  
Whether or not the snake had made the track  
Was going East or coming back."

Your correspondence seems to fit the above.

My conclusion is that your letters support the information relative to Senator Byrd contained in my letter of April 2, to you, and justify my belief that Senator Byrd's influence reaches down into WRVA.<sup>108</sup>

A handwritten note by Howard written on the above letter, which was intended for Lucy, said: "I'm glad he has a sense of humor!" Lucy's response, written at the bottom of Green's letter, said: "Yeah? It reminds me more of: 'Convince a "fool" against his will, He's of the same opinion still.'"<sup>109</sup>

An exchange between the station and The American Council for Judaism, Inc. revealed WRVA's perspective on another controversial issue. The Council requested that WRVA notify them should radio time be granted to the Zionist Organization of America so they could have equal time to respond:

We are informed that the Zionist Organization of America or one of its affiliates has approached or is approaching your radio station for a series of broadcasts dealing with Zionism.

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<sup>108</sup>Green to Howard, TLS, Apr. 12, 1945, *ibid.*

<sup>109</sup>*Ibid.*

No doubt you know that this subject is a political issue on which there is considerable controversy. Our organization, composed of Americans of Jewish faith, is opposed to the Zionist program. There are countless Americans of Christian faith who are similarly opposed.

We are confident of your desire to maintain your station in the public interest; and are accordingly requesting you to please notify us if you are providing time for this broadcast, and to accord us an equal amount of free time to present the other side.<sup>110</sup>

Lucy indicated his feelings on the subject by commenting, "Let's stay entirely away from this one."<sup>111</sup> Lucy did not want WRVA caught in this controversy.

WRVA did *not*, according to Abeloff, carry a CBS broadcast later that year consisting of a talk by Lessing Rosenwald, a representative of the American Council on Judaism.<sup>112</sup> WRVA received a number of telegrams protesting Rosenwald's "point of view." One, from congregation Beth El of Norfolk composed of over 550 Jewish families, requested "that a similar period of time be given over the same broadcasting facilities to a leader of American Zionism, one who has a right to speak in the name of the Jews of America."<sup>113</sup>

The Jewish communities in Norfolk and Richmond wished to limit the effectiveness of Rosenwald's pro-Zionist stand. On the assumption that

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<sup>110</sup>Rabbi Elmer Berger, The American Council for Judaism, Inc., Philadelphia, PA, to P. L. Reed, WRVA, Richmond, VA, TLS, Aug. 29, 1944, Box 35, "Controversial - 1944-57" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>111</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>112</sup>Abeloff to Howard, Typed signed memo, Nov. 29, 1944, *ibid*.

<sup>113</sup>Julius Myers, President, Congregation Beth El, Norfolk, VA, to WRVA, Western Union telegram, Nov. 28, 1944, *ibid*.

WRVA had broadcast the network program, they sent a telegram three days after the network airing asking WRVA for equal time. WRVA had not aired the talk because Zionism was a controversial issue. In Richmond, a majority of the Jewish community favored a non-Zionist point of view.<sup>114</sup> The Virginia General Assembly discussed a pro-Zionist resolution in February, 1944; however, support for the measure did not come from the Jewish community at large in Virginia, but from "a few devoted Zionists in other Virginia cities and in Richmond."<sup>115</sup>

The principles in the measure were approved by Richmond's representative in Congress, David E. Satterfield, Jr., and Senator Harry F. Byrd, also of Virginia. Byrd was "among seventy-seven senators endorsing the Taft-Wagner Resolution which would commit the United States to use its 'good offices to reconstitute Palestine as a Jewish commonwealth,'" despite Virginia Jewry's anti-Zionist position. The resolution was "'laid aside' because of the intervention of the Roosevelt administration on grounds of 'military necessity.'"<sup>116</sup>

Rabbi Nathan Calisch worked unceasingly until his death in 1946, believing that Judaism was "not an exotic plant that can flourish in only one soil." Because of his belief in the "universalistic mission of Judaism . . ." and ". . . unfaltering devotion to interreligious cooperation, certain insights

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<sup>114</sup>Myron Berman, "Rabbi Edward Nathan Calisch and the Debate Over Zionism in Richmond, Virginia," American Jewish Historical Quarterly, LXII, no. 3, (March 1973): 302-305.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., 302.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid., 303.

emerge as to the attitudes of a "Southern Jewish community. . . . Richmond Jewry developed in relative isolation from the mainstream of Jewish activity. . . . The influence of the more Zionistically and traditional-oriented East European Jew evolved rather slowly [in Richmond]."<sup>117</sup> WRVA management both respected the anti-Zionist philosophy and avoided controversy at the same time.

Morality provided another category of controversial issues. The issue of profanity on radio was brought up in a Federal Communications Commission telegram sent in October, 1938, to editors across the country. The telegram, describing an investigation by the FCC of a Eugene O'Neill play which "used the Lord's name in vain," said, in part:

. . . The inquiry grew out of a complaint the Commission received against Station WTCN, Minneapolis, a station which carried the broadcast July 28 [1938]. The complaint charged that the play [Beyond the Horizon by Eugene O'Neill] violated federal statutes governing decency in broadcast by taking the name of the Lord in vain . . . .<sup>118</sup>

Lucy was aware of the potential for controversy in this matter, as indicated in a handwritten note to Abeloff Lucy jotted at the top of the FCC telegram, which said: "WATCH OUR STEPS!"<sup>119</sup>

As the following letters reveal, WRVA management took a strong stand on the use of profanity and other issues of morality in broadcasts. The first is from the Iowa Broadcasting Company, whose manager

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<sup>117</sup>Ibid., 304-305.

<sup>118</sup>NBC to Editors, Telegram, Oct. 3, 1938, Box 1, "1939-41 Memos to Abeloff From Staff" folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid.

complimented WRVA on a letter Howard wrote in *Variety* on the attitude of "general laxity" which he felt many stations were guilty of in broadcasting certain programs:

Congratulations to you on the letter which you wrote to *Variety* regarding the trend toward profanity, double entendre and the general laxity now being exhibited by many programs on the air.

I have felt this myself and, in fact, to such an extent that I wrote to Herb Akerberg only about ten days ago regarding the Camel Caravan.<sup>120</sup>

Howard's response:

Thanks for your nice note. Mr. Lucy had previously written Mr. Paley personally on the same subject, and had drawn a brush-off. We finally decided to wash our linen in public and it is my hope that this thing will snowball into something.<sup>121</sup>

WRVA continued its policy prohibiting the broadcasting of alcoholic beverage advertisements. Although the NAB Code, revised in 1941, contained a resolution advising against the use of such advertising, stations were not required to follow the Code; it was strictly voluntary. WRVA, however, having established its own policy prior to the issuance of the revised Code, continued to follow it. Many listeners - including parishioners and ministers of different faiths - wrote to congratulate WRVA for refusing to air such advertising. In 1939, a church publication published a letter to Bishop from William J. Crowder, secretary-treasurer of the Richmond Baptist Ministers' Conference. In the letter, Crowder explained that the Conference participants had instructed him to write WRVA "commending you in

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<sup>120</sup>Craig Lawrence, General Manager, Iowa Broadcasting Co., Des Moines, IA, TLS, Dec. 29, 1942, Box 4, "Barron Howard - Radio Station File" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>121</sup>Howard to Lawrence, TLS, Jan. 4, 1943, *ibid*.

refraining from using liquor, wine and beer advertisements over your station."<sup>122</sup> Crowder also expressed the Conference's opinion that WRVA, in adhering to their no-liquor-ads policy, was " . . . doubtless passing up opportunities for financial profit."<sup>123</sup> Bishop acknowledged that Crowder was correct in stating that it was a financial sacrifice, "but the owners of WRVA make no apology for maintaining this policy . . . ." <sup>124</sup>

One WRVA listener wrote to the station: "We appreciate the fine spirit of cooperation that your station has always given the ministers and churches and especially the stand that it has taken with reference to advertising alcoholic beverages."<sup>125</sup> The superintendent of The County School Board of Hanover County, Virginia, wrote to Bishop: "Let me again thank you and the owners of WRVA for the high-type programmes [sic] which you carry and again thank you for the omission of beer and wine and alcoholic beverages from your advertising . . . ." <sup>126</sup> Another individual wrote: "Allow me to commend you for your policy in not advertising liquor and beer. Is it still maintained? We usually keep our radio on WRVA, and hear a good deal of

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<sup>122</sup>Unidentified Baptist church publication, "Alcoholic Beverages Not Advertised Over WRVA," Mar. 23, 1939, Box 105, "Clippings" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>123</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup>Floyd Witt Putney, Minister, First Baptist Church, Newport News, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Mar. 21, 1941, Box 107, "Appreciation Letters - 1941" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>126</sup>Supt. J. Walton Hall, Clerk to the County School Board of Hanover County, VA, Ashland, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Nov. 20, 1941, *ibid.*

it."<sup>127</sup> The minister of the Hanover Avenue Christian Church called WRVA "courageous."<sup>128</sup>

A letter from a Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Flippo, who wrote in appreciation of WRVA's refusal to advertise alcoholic beverages, commended the station for its stand on the ASCAP problem, saying, "We get a lot of new pieces and lots of old ones that are so pretty this way . . . ."<sup>129</sup> Bishop's reply revealed WRVA station management's own feelings on the ASCAP issue which complicated WRVA's broadcasts generally:

We believe that the majority of our listeners share your opinion regarding the copyright situation. While we desire to make as much music as possible available to our listeners, the exorbitant demands of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) has made impossible presenting music controlled by that organization.<sup>130</sup>

ASCAP was organized in 1914 to collect fees for the performance of music written and published by its members. The ASCAP controversy began when radio stations were no longer willing to pay ASCAP a "blanket" fee for broadcast music regardless of how much music they elected to use. The fee consisted of a flat annual sustaining fee plus five percent of all proceeds from the sale of time, whether the time was used for music or not. The problem came when ASCAP became such a controlling monopoly that "practically no music except that in its catalogue was performed for the

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<sup>127</sup>James C. Richardson, Quinton, VA, to WRVA, TLS, Dec. 5, 1941, *ibid.*

<sup>128</sup>Leonard W. Boynton, Resident Minister, Hanover Avenue Christian Church, Richmond, VA, to Bishop, TLS, Feb. 11, 1942, *ibid.*

<sup>129</sup>Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Flippo, Woodford, VA, to Lucy, WRVA, n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>130</sup>Bishop to Mr. and Mrs. Flippo, TLS, Feb. 14, 1941, *ibid.*



public."<sup>131</sup> The creation of Broadcasters Music, Incorporated, gave radio broadcasters a way to get around ASCAP requirements.

In a December, 1940, memorandum on the ASCAP issue, Lucy warned WRVA employees:

Don't let it happen here. Effective at midnight, December 31, 1940, no ASCAP music can be broadcast over WRVA accidentally or otherwise, without costing us a penalty of \$250 for each tune played. WRVA along with over 600 stations has refused to purchase a Blanket ASCAP Performance License because of the exorbitant rates demanded. Until a reasonable solution is developed, WRVA MUST NOT BROADCAST ASCAP MUSIC!

. . . Woe to the employee whose negligence or willful disregard of our warnings results in a violation, and especially should you be on guard during emergencies, when in the excitement ASCAP music might get on the air.

. . . Remember, when in doubt, DON'T PLAY IT. There is plenty of music without ASCAP . . . .

Show 'em that WRVA can operate without ASCAP infringements. LET'S GO!<sup>132</sup>

The restrictions and complications for radio stations caused by the ASCAP controversy included those for "live music," which was explained in a December, 1940, Abeloff memorandum entitled "Music Clearance":

Live music . . . is being checked from the actual printed copy or manuscript.

No original compositions will be allowed, unless checked by BMI first.

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<sup>131</sup>"There's New Music in the Air," BMI brochure, n.d., Box 2, "#12 Broadcast Music, Inc. (General)" file, *ibid*.

<sup>132</sup>Lucy to All Employees of WRVA, Typed memo signed, Dec. 31, 1940, Box 99, "Lucy Messages" folder, *ibid*.

All music okayed by us must be contained in the BMI Index of approved music, or be contained in a catalogue of a publisher or performing rights society with whom we hold license.<sup>133</sup>

Abeloff also wrote that for public domain songs, such as "hillbillies" and spirituals for which a performer wished to use his own arrangement, law required a signed release from the performer giving WRVA the right to air the arrangement. "All performers must be warned in the most emphatic manner against deviating IN ANY MANNER from the music we have okayed. They must be cautioned especially about interpolations and about 'ad lib' choruses . . ." Abeloff said. "We must be able to trace each number back to some work in the BMI Index or catalogue of a publisher or performing rights society with whom we hold license."<sup>134</sup>

The ASCAP controversy appeared to be almost over in early 1941, when Barron Howard wrote that "Radio has just won a sweeping victory over ASCAP with the signing of a Consent Decree between Broadcast Music, Inc. and the Department of Justice . . ." The memorandum continued:

(4) What Did ASCAP Control? 80% of the music played on the radio was ASCAP-controlled . . . What the public did not know is that the greater portion of this music, though licensed through ASCAP, could also be made available through other licensing sources, or through public domain. In this single fact lies the reason for the victory we are achieving . . .

The tremendous success of BMI and all its claims is gloriously proved by the current issue of *Variety*. Of the ten current best sheet music sellers, the first nine are owned, or controlled, by Broadcast Music,

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<sup>133</sup>Abeloff to Lucy, Howard, et al., "Music Clearance," Typed memo, Dec. 30, 1940, *ibid*.

<sup>134</sup>*ibid*.

Inc. Of the ten most popular current tunes on coin machines, five are owned, or controlled, by Broadcast Music, Inc.<sup>135</sup>

Bishop described the Consent Decree, just signed between BMI and the Department of Justice. The decree stipulated that BMI would "continue on its present basis" until ASCAP adopted the same principles of operation as stipulated for BMI. "In other words, BMI was founded to make a fight and to establish certain principles in the licensing of music . . . recognized as fair by the Department of Justice . . . . Either ASCAP will accept these principles or will face criminal charges."<sup>136</sup>

However, two pieces of correspondence indicate that the ASCAP controversy was not yet over. The first, a February 28, 1942, memorandum from Harold Lucas to Abeloff on the subject of a Granby High School music festival, said: "The 'grapevine' tells me that we may have a per program ASCAP license effective March 1st. We are bound to run into ASCAP music on this festival . . . ." <sup>137</sup>

Another letter, from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures to Lucy in May 1941, said:

"Now that the ASCAP controversy has been settled and ASCAP music is returning to Mutual affiliated stations, we believe you will be

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<sup>135</sup>Howard to Miss Brinson, Typed memo, Feb. 3, 1941, Box 99, "Music" folder, *ibid*.

<sup>136</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>137</sup>Lucas to Abeloff, Typed memo signed, Feb. 28, 1942, Box 4, "Harold Lucas" folder, *ibid*.

interested in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's HOLLYWOOD RADIO REPORTER recorded programs . . . ."138

In the margin, Lucy circled "has been settled" and wrote, "Oh yeah?" Indeed, the controversy was not resolved until sometime in the fifties. At that time, WRVA, under John Tansey's direction, finally paid a fee of \$5,000 to ASCAP and obtained a blanket license to play ASCAP music.<sup>139</sup>

Even when faced with controversy and ASCAP complications, WRVA still made many accommodations in support of public service. With consistent efforts, and in keeping with the station's spirit of commitment to its listening public, WRVA dealt with a number of controversial issues from 1925 through 1945. These included political, religious, and moral controversies. Controversial issues ranged from fair representation of all parties in pre-election broadcasts to the use of material considered to be propaganda and the issue of government censorship.

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<sup>138</sup>Harry Loud, Air Trailer Division, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures, Culver City, CA, TLS, May 14, 1941, Box 5, "Misc. - Transcriptions" folder, *ibid.*

<sup>139</sup>John Tansey, Oral interview, June 11, 1989.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### WRVA IN PERSPECTIVE

In December, 1939, WRVA received an "Award of Merit" from *Variety* which was inscribed: "WRVA Richmond, a many sided and alert organization, spread out competitively in 1939 and seemed on the whole a good example of showmanship behavior under the happy auspices of non-radio ownership." Other awards from *Variety* followed: a plaque in 1942 for "Contributions to the Military Civilian Understanding" and in 1943 for "Making Radio A Vital Cog in Civic Enterprise."<sup>1</sup> At the successful conclusion of World War II, WRVA continued to be of service in all types of civic and governmental activity.

In 1941, thirty-two of the WRVA staff had enlisted for military service. In 1945, the station welcomed the return of all but one, William Henderson, who had been the studio porter. Also at this time, Sam Carey, who had joined WRVA in 1942, replaced Program Service Manager Irvin G. Abeloff. Abeloff resigned in order to become general manager of WLEE, another

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<sup>1</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

Richmond station.<sup>2</sup>

In March, 1946, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a policy statement entitled "Public Service Responsibility of Broadcast Licensees."<sup>3</sup> The report had a bright blue cover, hence, broadcasters and bureaucrats alike called it "The Blue Book." This was the first major report to consolidate FCC considerations of broadcast programming policy. Although issued after the war, the policy titled "The Public Service Responsibility of Broadcast Licensees" developed from many of the same circumstances of history as did WRVA, and over the same period of time, 1925 to 1945. Although a bold effort to give meaning to public service, "The Blue Book" failed. With the emergence of network dominance, disk-jockey programming styles, and television in the post-war years, "the emphasis placed on sustaining programs" . . . began "to lose its meaning."<sup>4</sup>

Upon reviewing WRVA's programming through 1945, five public service factors emerged. It was significant to discover that the pre-blue book public service factors guiding WRVA in fulfilling its commitment to public service were the same as those responsibilities outlined by the FCC in part three of "The Blue Book." As the FCC outlined, WRVA carried sustaining programs, programs not sponsored by commercial advertisers and often produced by WRVA at the station's expense, (1) to provide a balance to advertiser-supported material, (2) to offer programs whose nature would make them unsponsorable, (3) to serve minority taste and interests, (4) to

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Barnouw, The Golden Web, 229.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 234.

cater to the needs of nonprofit organizations and (5) to allow experimentation with new types of programs. WRVA's performance matched its motto, "Service."

Before the war, the FCC had required WRVA to obtain license renewal every six months. After World War II began, the FCC, for the first time, issued WRVA a license for three years. As an efficiency measure the FCC probably needed to curtail paperwork, but it was WRVA's consistent public service programming that greatly influenced the FCC's decision.<sup>5</sup> WRVA continued to affirm its commitment to public service during World War II. With reasonable provision for local self-expression, an essential function of a radio station's operation, WRVA's broadcasting during World War II featured many local live programs. WRVA produced and bore the expense of these programs and most were aired without sponsors. When obtained, often the sponsor was Larus and Brother Company. For example, consider the "Edgeworth Dance Party." WRVA, because of its commitment to public service, paid the production costs and arranged for the remote broadcast, while Larus, with ten-cent advertising dollars, used the "Edgeworth Dance Party" to entertain the servicemen and to advertise Edgeworth Tobacco at military installations throughout Virginia. The band played on.

WRVA produced many programs as a public service which carried no mention of Larus, too. With special attention given to ensure that these programs and others would not be crowded out of the best listening hours, WRVA's efforts with local programming achieved a record of outstanding public service during the war.

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<sup>5</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

At Larus and Brother Company, executives interested in practical accomplishments did things in a profitable manner. Larus' staff was comprised of businessmen interested in getting results. Established, well-connected and successful, Larus was probably more in sympathy with the pragmatism of the New Deal than not. Having power and a strong sense of *noblesse oblige*, the traditions of their place, one of which was service, bound Larus and Brother Company. It is safe to say that Larus' executives were among the social elite in Virginia which was indistinguishable from its political leadership.

Larus' leadership supported the Byrd Organization in Virginia. Although the tradition of the Organization featured a humane paternalism which grew out of the Virginia antebellum society and plantation economy, the security of those in charge rested on the insecurity of everyone else. However, unfair, there was a positive side. The Organization achieved results by joining purpose and compassion. This was the Virginia way. V. O. Key stated that "Virginia's white citizens in and out of the machine have determined a relatively acute sense of responsibility toward the Negro- an attitude that may account for the fact that its race relations are perhaps the most harmonious in the South."<sup>6</sup>

Established in 1877, Larus embraced the traditions of the day including that of service. Larus and Brother Company was aware of its politics and position. Service became the WRVA imperative quite naturally, and WRVA became the place of public service broadcasting in the Larus and Brother Company. WRVA assured the Byrd Organization a voice in Virginia, while the Organization maintained the status quo and defined the electorate.

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<sup>6</sup>V. O. Key, Jr. Southern Politics. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), 32.



Key also commented that in 1945, a "smaller proportion of Virginia's potential electorate votes for governor than does that of any other state of the South."<sup>7</sup> Larus' leadership probably favored this restricted electorate which was an important part of WRVA's listening audience.

Public service broadcasting had economic benefits. In an effort to foster industrial citizenship and participation, Larus used personal recognition to encourage employees,<sup>8</sup> many of whom performed on WRVA. In fact, the Dixie Spiritual Singers, comprised of Larus' employees and others, were the first radio network program sponsored by Edgeworth Tobacco in 1930.<sup>9</sup> Radio sponsorship was an efficient way for Larus to maintain a positive corporate image and generate profits as well. While the black artists were aired sometimes internationally, they always presented an acceptable message of cooperation with the likemindedness of Larus and the Byrd Organization. Robert Wilder, father of the present governor of Virginia, Douglas Wilder, sang in the Sabbath Glee Club, a twenty-five voice a cappella group regularly aired on WRVA through the years.<sup>10</sup> "When the British Radio Corporation recorded the choir's most popular spirituals for an album, . . . British prime minister David Lloyd George called it 'One of the best male choruses I have heard, I'm almost certain it was the best.'"<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>8</sup>"Adventures in Industrial Citizenship," The Reader's Digest, March, 1940, 38, WRVA Papers.

<sup>9</sup>75 Years: Larus and Brother Company, Inc., Hewlett Papers.

<sup>10</sup>Donald P. Baker, WILDER, Hold Fast to Dreams, (Cabin John, Maryland: Seven Locks Press, 1989), 8.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 10.

Virginians in charge of business and government alike were proud of their positions and control. "In Richmond during the 1930's, nearly everything came in pairs, separate and unequal facilities and laws for blacks and whites."<sup>12</sup> "The relationship between whites and blacks was 'almost gentle.'"<sup>13</sup> "Integration came slowly to Richmond, and in stages."<sup>14</sup> After World War II in 1947, the main public library was integrated, while the first black police officer was not hired until 1953.<sup>15</sup> No apology was necessary for the Byrd Organization, a patronage system which centered on the circuit judge, or the cozy alliance of Larus' business interests with government or that in many instances the leadership was the same for both. Lucy referred to himself as an "unreconstructed rebel."<sup>16</sup>

While serving as governor of Virginia from 1926 to 1930, Byrd appointed William T. Reed of Larus and Brother to serve on the Commission on the Simplification of Government in Virginia, probably Byrd's most significant reform. Byrd consolidated nearly one hundred bureaus, boards, and departments, previously independent of the governor, into fourteen departments directly subject to the governor's control.<sup>17</sup> "When the New

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 17.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 18.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>John Tansey, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, June 18, 1989.

<sup>17</sup>Hemphill et al., 426-427; Byrd, "Address to General Assembly on Subject of Simplification of Government in Virginia," February 3, 1926, Richmond VA, 1926.

York Bureau of Municipal Research published its survey, 'County Government in Virginia, in January, 1927, Mr. William T. Reed, Richmond business leader and a Byrd backer, screened the New York report at Byrd's request. The General Assembly and a citizens' committee reinforced Reed's endeavors."<sup>18</sup>

With The International Tobacco Company manufacturing and packing Domino cigarettes in Manila, the Philippine Islands; the A. E. Hickman Company, a long-time distributor of Larus products in St. Johns, Newfoundland; John Stuart in Toronto, Canada; and billboards advertising Larus' products that reached consumers in Hong Kong, Tangier, North Africa, Morocco, and Mexico, Larus was a global company.<sup>19</sup> The Larus Sales Division was of considerable size with ten regional sales managers, one for each of the following regions: the Great Lakes, the Pacific Coast, New England, Virginia, New York - New Jersey, the North Central, the Southwest, the Middle Atlantic, and the Southern Regions of the United States. The sales division also included a market and sales research department, an advertising manager, and a special brands manager. Considering Larus' markets worldwide and the instability created in them by World War II, many of the Company's economic ties were swinging in the balance. It is easy to understand that Larus would have many reasons to sponsor the sale of War Bonds. But having cause does not guarantee action nor public service. It is to the credit of Larus' tradition that in its position it defined WRVA's purpose to be one of public service, many times at a financial sacrifice.

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<sup>18</sup>Edmunds, Virginians Out Front, 433.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

Larus' Special Brands Manager V. Newton Miller had global assignments evaluating, negotiating and purchasing tobaccos.<sup>20</sup> He often purchased the Macedonian leaf tobacco in Argentina, native leaf from Peru, some from Turkey, and more from Kentucky. Larus used these products to manufacture Domino cigarettes, Holiday Pipe Mixture, Edgeworth Ready-Rubbed, Roll Rite Turkish and Domestic Cigarette Tobacco, Qboid Pipe Tobacco, Hi-Plane Tobacco, Union Jack Tobacco, Nob Hill Pipe Mixture, Sensible Sliced Plug, Guide Pipe and Cigarette Tobacco and Edgeworth Extra High Grade Sliced Pipe Tobacco.<sup>21</sup> It was natural for Larus and Brother Company to advertise products over WRVA.

Larus, along with supporting the Byrd Organization and favoring its maintaining the status quo in Virginia, embraced Secretary of State John Adams' ideas of the "realpolitic," that is, for those in power to stay in power. Assisting in an Allied victory in every way possible helped Larus maintain its position in the marketplace. Most certainly, encouraging WRVA's emphasis on public service broadcasting was in Larus and Brother Company's best interest. Larus' advertising sometimes included spots reminding radio listeners that Edgeworth Tobacco was the favorite pipe tobacco of an Allied leader. The leader was Joseph Stalin, whose tobacco Larus kept in full supply.<sup>22</sup> Socrates Onassis said, "Governments must do

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>75 Years: Larus and Brother Company, Inc., Hewlett Papers.

<sup>22</sup>Sam Carey, former WRVA production manager, former WRVA program service manager, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, August 20, 1989.

business with whoever is the boss."<sup>23</sup> Larus and Brother Company did likewise.

One aspect of broadcast operations that WRVA and the Federal Communications Commission had always considered to be in the public interest was the carrying of sustaining programs, that is, those programs not sponsored by commercial advertisers. WRVA broadcast sustaining programs maintaining an overall program balance with sponsored shows from the network by producing many local live programs at its own expense. WRVA also provided time for programs inappropriate for sponsorship, for programs geared particularly for minority tastes and interests, and for non-profit organizations and interests of a religious, civic, educational and political nature. In the pioneer days of broadcasting, WRVA had begun as a community station drawing its talent from cities, towns and communities in Virginia. The federal government did not place a tax on radio receivers. Therefore, the public sector did not subsidize programming. Even so, no time was sold for over two years "when a policy of semi-commercialism was adopted culminating in an affiliation with the National Broadcasting Company," which continued for ten years.<sup>24</sup>

WRVA demonstrated a reasonable ratio of advertisements to programs, too. But, at a sacrifice, WRVA denied advertising time when necessary to serve the public interest more efficiently. WRVA also recognized the crucial need for discussion programs early on, and demonstrated that recognition admirably during World War II, with its

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<sup>23</sup>Evans, Ari. The Life and Times of Aristotle Onassis, (New York: Summit Books, 1986), 34.

<sup>24</sup>"RADIO STATION WRVA," TD, Hewlett Papers.

programs devoted to the discussion of public issues. One in particular began on January 16, 1936, and continued through World War II was the "Virginia Legislative Forum."<sup>25</sup>

The variety and the duration of WRVA's sustaining programs validated that WRVA acted on its commitment to serve Virginia in the public interest through the Second World War. Highlights from the WRVA *Dialog* a monthly program schedule distributed by the station, included many public service programs as well as network shows. There is an issue from June, 1943, and other program information included in the Appendix.

The attitude of C. T. Lucy, a prepared, alert and effective leader made sure that public service, a Larus tradition, was first in WRVA's broadcasting policy. Lucy made certain that his staff used programs enhancing the station's image. As he enlarged WRVA's staff, he encouraged each member to endure and produce while always remembering that "Service" was WRVA's motto and purpose. Lucy, who was a warden of St. Mark's Episcopal Church,<sup>26</sup> loved God and kept this love a priority in his relationships. He made himself available to his WRVA family. Lucy used verbal clarity, certainty of command, and follow-through to define objectives and make clear what he wanted done.

Larus and Brother Company acted as the conductor who provided Lucy with the opportunity to set WRVA in motion. Throughout his career as general manager, WRVA benefited mightily from Lucy's leadership. WRVA provided public service programming which included music from classical to jazz, extensive news commentary, original American drama, documentaries

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>"WRVA: 25th Anniversary Brochure," Hewlett Papers.

and programming in science, the arts, public education, and religion at its own expense.

There can be little doubt that WRVA's concept of public service and benevolent paternalism was influenced by prevailing Virginia attitudes. These rarely challenged the Byrd Organization between Byrd's governorship and World War II. However, Lucy's call for excellence in WRVA's programming was not a retreat to an elitism centered on the preoccupations of a privileged class. Rather, WRVA brought to its listeners accomplished performers of rich diversity. Rather than pursuing program conformity defined by advertiser's tastes, the station's program guide, *Dialog*, lists broadcasts focused on the diversity and richness of life within Virginia, the United States, and the world at large. Although WRVA's public service was restricted and defined by many who supported the Virginia establishment, WRVA still offered programming from a creative staff whose objectives were to provide service, reward excellence, and stimulate achievement.

WRVA brought together people who might otherwise never meet in daily life. During World War II, WRVA radio made efforts to harmonize Virginians' local concerns and bind them together in national matters through War Bond Drives, remote broadcasts from military installations, and market reports. Although advertising was very important, WRVA's greater purpose was to enhance the lifestyles of Virginians through public service, and it did. Virginians needed a sense of understanding that would be impossible to have unless they removed the walls around themselves within the corner of society that they found safe, appealing, and comfortable. The United States was coming out of "isolationism." Lucy knew that unless Virginians grasped the means to broaden their conversations to include diverse interests of the larger society in ways that would shed light on

differences while distilling mutual hopes, more would be lost than a broadcast.

Larus and Lucy called on WRVA to serve public understanding and enlightenment. Shunning vulgarity and violence, WRVA transmitted hope and access to a better life. Listener response indicated a positive and appreciative audience that encouraged WRVA to foster inventiveness and imagination and to be first in new forms of radio journalism and mass entertainment. Listeners were policy-makers for WRVA. The geographical distribution of applause letters received by WRVA on its Fourth Anniversary Program, November 2, 1929, represented thirty-eight states, the District of Columbia and five provinces in Canada.<sup>27</sup>

WRVA strengthened its mechanisms for more public participation in program planning. Miss Bertha Hewlett commented that one of Burt Repine's assignments was signing her signature on membership cards for "The Corn Cob Pipe Club." This required more than forty hours of Repine's time each week, but membership in "The Corn Cob Pipe Club" encouraged listener response.<sup>28</sup> "The Corn Cob Pipe Club" was the second nation-wide radio network program sponsored by Edgeworth.<sup>29</sup>

Although WRVA concentrated on programming to meet human needs instead of those of the advertiser, it was a commercial station. A variety of sources ensured WRVA, the radio section of Larus and Brother Company, financial support, but the station was fatally dependent on none of them. Lucy managed WRVA effectively and the station was financially profitable.

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<sup>27</sup>"RADIO STATION WRVA," Attached list. Hewlett Papers.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>75 Years: Larus and Brother Company, Inc., *ibid.*



With leadership committed to public service, a stable source of funding, and little to threaten its programming independence, Larus and Lucy marshaled the power of WRVA in the interest of human development. In providing "Service," WRVA educated, informed, entertained and delighted.

Lucy, in an address to dignitaries visiting Virginia on June 21, 1940, said that in 1925 the WRVA five-member staff broadcast "two nights a week from 9:00 to midnight," . . . [and] now with a staff of sixty-five, we broadcast 127 hours a week." He emphasized WRVA's dedication "to render the utmost service" and "please what we honestly feel is the desire of the majority of our listeners."<sup>30</sup>

The war years appeared to be a time of networks and government working together. Rooted in denial and productivity, however, this relationship hid the growing power struggle between the two; it was a fraudulent friendship at best. Broadcasters, fought for an interest in music publishing, feared censorship and disliked regulation by the FCC. "Network leaders, responding to the war crisis, had one more incentive to make the response spectacular: [their] crisis in their relations with government."<sup>31</sup> James Lawrence Fly became the chairman of the FCC and favored the anti-trust position of the second New Deal.<sup>32</sup> As a result, four major networks emerged: NBC, ABC, CBS, and MBS. NBC was forced to divest itself of its red network which became ABC.

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<sup>30</sup>C. T. Lucy, Speech to dignitaries visiting Virginia, TD, June 21, 1940, Box 105, #1016 folder, WRVA Papers.

<sup>31</sup>Barnouw, The Golden Web, 168.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

From October, 1944, through February, 1945, C. E. Hooper's staff in Richmond measured the popularity of WRVA; of the first twenty programs listened to most in Richmond, fourteen were broadcast by WRVA. The Hooperatings Survey reported that WRVA was "Richmond's Favorite Radio Station" and "Richmond's Most Popular Radio Station," and that "Richmond Listens Most to WRVA." Examples of programs that Hooper reported and WRVA produced included Harvey Hudson's daytime variety program, "Juke Box," a platter and chatter show; "Sunshine Sue," country singer; and "H. B. Kenny," news.<sup>33</sup>

In 1933, "Amos an' Andy" came to WRVA to broadcast their show. Amos, Freeman Gosden, was a native Richmonder who had once been employed as a tobacco salesman.<sup>34</sup> Nationally, network programs edged out black, but not black-faced, entertainment. The advertisers called the shots. WRVA, however, broadcast black musical groups throughout the station's history. While the United States still marched with a segregated army, WRVA conducted surveys to determine Negro listening habits. At the end of World War II, WRVA's programming would become more commercial. The station would discontinue its war-related announcements and programs also.

From the station's inception, Larus and Brother Company showed initiative and exercised responsibility in support of WRVA. People began to listen to WRVA for its broadcasting content instead of its novelty when WRVA had its 1000 watt transmitter. By the time too many stations on a limited band created reception problems, WRVA broadcast programs to Virginians with its 5000 watt transmitter. As diplomatic tensions increased

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<sup>33</sup>"WRVA *Dialog*," May, 1945; August, 1945. Hudson Papers.

<sup>34</sup>Hewlett, Oral interview, June 15, 1989.

in the thirties, WRVA obtained its 50,000 watt transmitter. While Franklin Delano Roosevelt occupied the White House, WRVA broadcast twenty-eight fireside chats, eight in each of FDR's first two terms, and twelve in his third wartime term.<sup>35</sup>

The major assignments for WRVA during the war were to report wartime news and progress several times each broadcasting day. "Service," WRVA's motto, continued to be its dominant purpose. The station committed itself to a very high level of community service throughout its history but especially during World War II. Anytime there appeared to be a movement or event in which WRVA could participate to further the war effort, WRVA tried to assist in some way. From weekly performances at Camp Lee in Petersburg, Virginia, and weekly performances from the Norfolk Naval Operating Base to performances at Camp Pickett in Blackstone, Virginia, WRVA performed public service. WRVA was earning steady profits, and the station saw building goodwill as good business. But WRVA dug deep into its pockets and paid for public service programming because it was a station with a heart.

As casualties started coming back to the hospitals, WRVA was there at Camp Lee and Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Hospital broadcasting weekly live performances. In preparation for these broadcasts, WRVA held auditions at the station for entertainers who competed for the privilege of performing for the wounded. WRVA often arranged for lip-sync performers to sing with Charley Wakefield, a blind musician with almost perfect pitch. Without having to go through calculations, Charley heard three notes and knew the key. Someone called the station to ask Charley please not to play

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<sup>35</sup>WRVA Index. WRVA Papers.

"I'll Never Smile Again," saying "Every time it is played, I hurt." Charley never played the song for broadcast again. WRVA paid heed to listener's comments. Joe Brown, from lower east side New York, was a glib ad-libber who worked endurance record hours as host for WRVA's weekly camp shows. So many times he visited the "plumbing beds" as the orthopedic bed was called, and entertained the soldier who had a "skin tube" in place grafting tissue from his back to his face. WRVA was a station that really cared enough to employ staff who cared, too. As the war cranked down, a need for these programs lessened. As 1945 came to an end, WRVA gradually closed the broadcasts.<sup>36</sup>

An orchestra of Seabees from the Little Creek Amphibious Base, Virginia, came to the WRVA studios in the Hotel Richmond. The arranger was extraordinarily talented; so skilled was he that he would have the orchestra perform something popular and add classical themes to the playing of it. During one performance, the orchestra added trills from Wagner's *The Valkyrie (Die Walkure)*; it seemed the studio would come apart, it was so beautiful. These productions were unsponsored and produced at WRVA's expense.<sup>37</sup> Why did WRVA emphasize public service with such dedication? From 1925, Larus and Reed made WRVA's motto, "Service." Larus and Brother Company honored that commitment and WRVA took the commitment seriously. WRVA had remote gear from the day it went on the

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<sup>36</sup>Sam Carey, former WRVA production manager, former WRVA program service manager, Oral interview by author, Richmond, VA, August 20, 1989.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

air and the station had remote operations somewhere all the time. Management not only understood kindness; it demonstrated it.<sup>38</sup>

Thinking about WRVA's commitment to public service, Sam Carey recalled that no broadcast of election returns was made in Virginia until WRVA thought of the idea and did it, again, at the station's expense. This effort required more staff time and fewer dollars than some. Miss Bertha Hewlett and her friend, Edna James coordinated this campaign. Edna James worked as a secretary and reporter for the ABC Board. She knew every sheriff in Virginia on a first name basis. Edna made personal calls to every sheriff's office asking in each office if someone would help WRVA record election returns. Communities loved the station and the sheriffs cooperated.

When the election returns were in the offices to be turned over to election board the day following the election, a WRVA secretary called the sheriff requesting the count. There were one hundred counties in Virginia and many cities in addition. Setting up to report the returns took all the space in the WRVA newsroom and in the production office. C. T. Lucy called his brother Lee, general accounting manager at Larus, requesting help. Lee sent three or four old Burroughs accounting machines to WRVA. Each carried twenty-five to thirty columns. Larus staff tallied statewide races on one and Congressional races on the others. Bertha Hewlett and Edna James were keys in getting the tabulated results ready for broadcast. "WRVA scooped election returns in Virginia for years. Later, after the war, the Associated Press(AP) reported returns, but WRVA drove the AP to it. If a staff member had a creative service idea, Larus said, 'Go to it'".<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

WRVA was the Edgeworth Tobacco Station. Since competition limited Larus to a fractional share of the total market and overdoing radio advertising might create a negative public response, Larus advertised no more than five to ten spot announcements during the broadcasting day.<sup>40</sup>

During World War II, Thalhimer's, a Richmond department store, had not yet built on Seventh Street; the cleared site was a parking lot. At WRVA's request, Thalhimer's agreed to open the parking lot as a canteen. WRVA broadcast the "Parking Lot Canteen" a weekly program of live dance music throughout the war. Tyrone Power, Dorothy Lamour and many other celebrities occupied Sixth Street between Miller and Rhoads and Thalhimer's. Admiral Halsey of the United States Navy came to Sixth Street. WRVA broadcast all manner of things there to aid in the sale of War Bonds.<sup>41</sup>

The U. S. Navy brought an art exhibit to Richmond, too. Artists in combat did not stop drawing and painting because they were in danger. Governor Darden hosted the exhibit at Capital Square. WRVA broadcast the event featuring two hundred stark, clear and beautiful paintings of the South Pacific. The United States forces had not landed in the Philippines. But in the art exhibit the United States Navy brought the black as coal mud of Moresby, New Guinea, a Pacific port, to the Ninth Street side of Virginia's capital and to every home in every village and town where radio receivers operated because of WRVA's faithful broadcasts at the station's expense.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

This thesis, an analysis of WRVA's public service broadcasting from 1925 through 1945, sets to record, perhaps for the first time, the story of Virginia's Premier Broadcaster from the station's inception through World War II. Before the war, WRVA's broadcasting had helped end the isolation of ideas caused by physical barriers in Virginia. By the end of World War II, the station had assisted in expanding the horizons of its listeners forever.

Since its dedication in 1925 with radio towers on the Larus and Brother Tobacco Company roof, broadcasting operations had expanded from three hour segments two evenings each week to twenty-four hour vigils during World War II. Later, in describing station activities during 1945, C. T. Lucy "felt that we had contributed immensely toward the victorious outcome in many ways."<sup>1</sup> Many details in the station's papers reinforced Larus' and Lucy's committment to "Service," of which the owners, Richmond, and Virginia could be proud.

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<sup>1</sup>Lucy, "The Voice of Virginia," Hewlett Papers.

Virginia was basically a rural state with a few urban centers from 1925 through 1945. Unlike many urban radio stations, WRVA with its strong signal, was both urban and rural in focus. Farm families as well as city folks experienced WRVA's benefits throughout the years. With sustaining farm and home shows like the Market Reports, weather reports, "Aunt Sammy," and the Virginia Farm and Home Hour, WRVA not only reached rural listeners, WRVA's broadcast of live sustaining programs probably helped the sales of radio receivers, too.

Radio information was new, free and effective in the early non-commercial years of WRVA's history. Advertising and networks increasingly influenced the station's broadcasting in the years before World War II. The station regularly broadcast political and legislative, community service, educational, religious and agricultural public service announcements and programs in support of the war effort. During the conflict, WRVA asked Virginia citizens to play supportive roles in making victory possible, too.

The station's management and owners were an extension of the Virginia establishment influenced by segregation, tobacco and manufacturing interests, the Byrd Organization and the Virginia way of life. William T. Reed was Byrd's "confidant."<sup>2</sup> Both WRVA and the Byrd Organization developed at the same time in Virginia between 1925 and 1945. Although the station's public service broadcasting was good business, WRVA was a station with a heart. When there was little call to do so, in spite of broadcasting difficulties and increasing costs, war-related shortages, mounting tensions, and a glut of war-related messages, the station

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<sup>2</sup>Dabney, *Virginia: The New Dominion*, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc.), 482.



broadcast daily and repeatedly in the public interest. WRVA's commitment to "Service" was great. It's performance probably cannot be overrated.

## **APPENDIX 1**

**"The N.A.T.T.C. [Naval Air Tactical Technical Corps] Song"**

# The NAT.T.C. Song



WRITTEN BY { JACK J. SCHERR SEA 1/C... }  
 { WILLIAM B. SCOTT JR. C. P. O. }

THROUGH THE COURTESY OF THE  
 "NAVY BREEZE"

# THE N.A.T.T.C. SONG

SING! TO THE DAYS AT THE N. A. T. T. C.!

GLOR-I-OUS PRAISE TO THE N. A. T. T. C. WH

EV - ERY SAI - LOR, WAVE AND MA - RINE, IS

PART OF THE GREAT - EST FIGHT - ING MA - CHINE

PAGE TWO

SING! TO THE WINGS WE HAVE MAS-TERED IN THE SKY!

The first system of music features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower two staves. The lyrics are "SING! TO THE WINGS WE HAVE MAS-TERED IN THE SKY!". The music is in a key with two flats and a 4/4 time signature.

SING! OF THE THINGS THAT WILL KEEP OLD GLO-RY HIGH. - LET'S

The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "SING! OF THE THINGS THAT WILL KEEP OLD GLO-RY HIGH. - LET'S". The piano accompaniment includes some complex chordal textures.

MARCH THRU THE ARCH OF VIC - TO - RY, WITH ALL THE

The third system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "MARCH THRU THE ARCH OF VIC - TO - RY, WITH ALL THE". The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line.

MEN OF THE N. A. T. T. C.!!

The fourth system concludes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "MEN OF THE N. A. T. T. C.!!". The piano accompaniment ends with a final chord and a fermata over the vocal line.

**APPENDIX 2**

**WRVA Radio Program Guides**

WAVE LENGTH 254 METERS

## RADIO BROADCASTING STATION

POWER 1000 WATTS

W - R - V - A

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, U. S. A.

1926

Monday, November 23

8 to 11 p. m. EASTERN STANDARD TIME

- 8:00 - Station Announcements.
- 8:05 - Boulevard Quartette.
- 8:15 - Instrumental.
- 8:25 - Baritone, Thomas Bullock.
- 8:35 - Violin, Mrs. Walter R. Dodson.
- 8:40 - Soprano, Mrs. E. L. Kidd.
- 8:50 - Duet, Woodward and Bullock.
- 9:00 - Cello, Mrs. Helen S. Durant.
- 9:05 - Contralto Solo, Mrs. Ross Puette.
- 9:15 - Tenor Solo, Claude Woodward.
- 9:25 - Quartette.
- 9:30 - Travelogue.
- 9:35 - Melodian Orchestra.
- 10:00 - Songs.
- 10:10 - Melodian Orchestra.
- 10:30 - Violin.
- 10:35 - Songs.
- 10:40 - Melodian Orchestra.
- 10:50 - Piano Solo.
- 10:55 - Melodian Orchestra.
- 11:00 - Carry Me Back to Old Virginny.

Monday, November 30

7:30 to 11 p. m. EASTERN STANDARD TIME

- 7:30 - Childrens Dream.
- 8:00 - Station Announcements.
- 8:00 - String Quartette from R. E. Lee Camp Confederate Old Soldiers Home.
- 8:10 - Old Time Camp Songs.
- 8:20 - String Quartette,  
R. E. Lee Camp Soldiers.
- 8:30 - Old Time Camp Songs.
- 8:35 - Talk, on General Robert E. Lee.
- 8:45 - String Quartette,  
R. E. Lee Camp Soldiers.
- 8:55 - Old Time Camp Songs.
- 9:00 - Station Announcements.
- 9:05 - Piano, Miss Mary Patteson.
- 9:10 - Tenor Solos, Ollin Rogers.
- 9:20 - Violin Solos, Miss Katherine Ledford.
- 9:30 - Tenor Solos, Ollin Rogers.
- 9:40 - Violin Solos, Miss Katherine Ledford.
- 9:50 - Tenor Solo, Violin obligato,  
Rogers - Ledford - Patteson.
- 9:55 - Travelogue on Richmond.
- 10:00 - Arions Orchestra.
- 10:20 - Songs.
- 10:25 - Arions Orchestra.
- 10:40 - Songs.
- 10:45 - Arions Orchestra.
- 10:55 - Last Minute News Flashes.
- 11:00 - Carry Me Back to Old Virginny.

Thursday, November 26

8 to 11 p. m. EASTERN STANDARD TIME

- 8:00 - Station Announcements.
- 8:05 - Soprano Solo, Miss Eleanor Parrish.
- 8:15 - Piano, Louise Boyd.
- 8:25 - Soprano Solo, Miss Eleanor Parrish.
- 8:30 - Piano, Miss Louise Boyd.
- 8:35 - Mrs. H. H. Lang, in  
Indian Songs, Bertha Hewlett  
at the Piano.
- 8:45 - "An Evening in Old Virginia"  
Character Readings -  
Southern Melodies.  
Ruby Vaughan Bigger (Author "My  
Miss Nancy"), - Reader  
and Intrepeter, assisted by  
Sabbath Negro Glee Club.
- 10:00 - Orchestra, Virginia Troubadours.
- 10:30 - Songs, Mr. Mancino.
- 10:40 - Orchestra, Virginia Troubadours.
- 10:50 - Station Announcements.
- 10:55 - Banjo, Virginia Troubadours.
- 11:00 - Carry Me Back to Old Virginny.

Thursday, December 3

8 to 11 p. m. EASTERN STANDARD TIME

- 8:00 - Station Announcements.
- 8:05 - Veranda String Quartette.
- 8:20 - Songs, Arthur Perkins - Ukelele.
- 8:30 - Veranda String Quartette.
- 8:40 - Songs, Arthur Perkins - Ukelele.
- 8:45 - Veranda String Quartette.
- 8:55 - Songs, Arthur Perkins - Ukelele.
- 9:00 - Station Announcements.
- 9:05 - Police Square Glee Club.
- 9:15 - Piano, Jazzbo Holland.
- 9:25 - Soprano Solo, Miss Frances Watkins.
- 9:30 - Police Square Glee Club.
- 9:40 - Piano, Jazzbo Holland.
- 9:45 - Harmonica, Oscar Tyler.
- 9:50 - Acca Temple Shrine Band.
- 10:00 - Station and Travelogue on  
Richmond.
- 10:05 - Acca Temple Shrine Band.
- 10:15 - Starlight Jazz Quartette.
- 10:25 - Acca Temple Shrine Band.
- 10:35 - Starlight Jazz Quartette.
- 10:45 - Acca Temple Shrine Band.
- 10:55 - Starlight Jazz Quartette.
- 11:00 - Last Minute News Flashes.
- 11:00 - Carry Me Back to Old Virginny.

PAGE 5

VIRGINIA'S PREMIER  
RADIO STATION

**WRVA**

*Dialog*

OF DAILY RADIO

U



JUNE 1943



## "YOUR HOME FRONT REPORTER"

WE want to tell you more about the new program, which began Monday, May 10, and which you have been hearing at 4:00 P. M. daily Mondays through Fridays, "Your Home Front Reporter," Fletcher Wiley. To millions of people the voice of Fletcher Wiley is that of a loved and trusted advisor. Women, and men too, unburden themselves to him in a tremendous volume of fan mail. Why? He creates the illusion that he is in the same room with his listeners, and when he talks to women on all the complex problems that arise in their war-time homes, his manner is informal and easy and always in good taste. One of the best informed men in the country, Mr. Wiley will bring to you, men and women alike, what you need most today, practical advice on how to economize in war-time menus, how to budget your income so that you may continue to buy war bonds, how you should meet the problem of the young son or daughter of high school age who, eager to get out and work for Uncle Sam, begs to be allowed to leave school before he or she has graduated. These and scores of other pertinent questions will be answered, and discussed with you when your "Home Front Reporter" steps into your home via the air, every afternoon at 4:00 o'clock, Mondays through Fridays.

In addition to hearing this "oracle of the home," you will have the extraordinary pleasure of hearing, interspersed throughout the program, beautiful music—the voices of Eleanor Steber, the lovely Metropolitan Opera star, familiar to most of you, and of Frank Parker, tenor of great popularity. David Broekman, violinist, conducts the orchestra.

We could go on and on about the sumptuous variety of fare this new program offers our listeners. However, your own judgment will tell you that this is a program for listening, learning and relaxing. So, we heartily recommend "Your Home Front Reporter," Mondays through Fridays at 4:00 P. M.

### WRVA HONOR ROLL

#### *Serving Our Country in the Military Forces*

Olin B. Adams	John Tansey
Edward Harrell	Walter E. Bishop
Cecil K. Spicer	Emily Trevillian (WAAC)
William F. Lyon	Claude Reeves
*William Henderson, Jr.	Allen D. Wooten
Scott Jarrett	Sam Woodall, Jr.
Hardy Sydner	George Sadler
Sanford T. Terry, Jr.	Nancy Price (WAVE)
James D. Clark, Jr.	Wilson Yarbrough
William L. Willis	Donald Meyer
Robert L. Webster	Raymond L. Kennedy
Walter H. Wells	

\*Missing in action.

"Buy U. S. War Bonds and Stamps"



FLETCHER WILEY, "Your Home Front Reporter," Mondays through Fridays, 4 P. M.

### CONCERT PROGRAMS

Sun., 3:00 P. M.—New York Philharmonic Orchestra.  
Tues., 7:30 P. M.—American Melody Hour.

### DRAMATIC PROGRAMS

\*10:30 A. M.—Amanda of Honeymoon Hill.  
\*10:45 A. M.—Bachelor Children.  
\*11:15 A. M.—Second Husband.  
\*11:30 A. M.—Bright Horizons.  
\*11:45 A. M.—Aunt Jenny.  
\*12:15 P. M.—Big Sister.  
\*12:45 P. M.—Snow Village.  
\*1:00 P. M.—Life Can Be Beautiful.  
\*1:15 P. M.—Ma Perkins.  
\*1:30 P. M.—Vic and Wade.  
\*2:00 P. M.—Young Dr. Malone.  
\*2:15 P. M.—Joyce Jordan.  
\*2:30 P. M.—We Love and Learn.  
\*2:45 P. M.—Pepp'r Young's Family.  
\*5:30 P. M.—The Goldbergs.  
\*7:00 P. M.—I Love a Mystery.  
Sun., 6:15 P. M.—Dear John.  
Sun., 7:00 P. M.—Commandos.  
Sun., 7:30 P. M.—We, the People.  
Sun., 8:30 P. M.—Crime Doctor.  
Sun., 10:30 P. M.—Man Behind the Gun.  
Mon., 7:15 P. M.—Calling Unlimited.  
Mon., 7:30 P. M.—Blondie.  
Mon., 9:00 P. M.—Lux Radio Theatre.  
Mon., 10:00 P. M.—Screen Guild Players.  
Mon., 10:30 P. M.—The Shadow.  
Tues., 8:00 P. M.—Lights Out.  
Wed., Thurs., Fri., 7:30 P. M.—Easy Aces.  
Wed., Thurs., Fri., 7:45 P. M.—Tracer of Lost Persons.  
Wed., 8:30 P. M.—Dr. Christian.  
Wed., 9:00 P. M.—Mayor of the Town.  
Thurs., 8:00 P. M.—Conquer We Must.  
Thurs., 8:30 P. M.—Death Valley Days.  
Thurs., 9:30 P. M.—Stage Door Canteen.  
Thurs., 10:00 P. M.—The First Line.  
Fri., 8:30 P. M.—Adventures of the Thin Man.  
Fri., 9:00 P. M.—Philip Morris Playhouse.  
Fri., 9:30 P. M.—That Brewster Boy.  
Sat., 12:00 noon—Armstrong Theatre of Today.  
Sat., 8:00 P. M.—Crumit and Sanderson.  
Sat., 8:30 P. M.—Hobby Lobby.  
Sat., 10:15 P. M.—Soldiers of the Press.

\*Daily except Saturday and Sunday.

"Buy U. S. War Bonds and Stamps"



IRVIN G. ABELOFF, W. T. REED, JR., C. T. LUCY, L. G. LARUS, admire Variety, recently awarded WRVA for outstanding wartime service.

### CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Sat., 10:30 A. M.—Joe Brown's Radio Gang.

### COMEDY PROGRAMS

\*3:45 P. M.—Funny Money Man.  
Sun., 1:45 P. M.—Stooperoo.  
Sun., 9:30 P. M.—Texaco Star Theatre.  
Mon., 8:30 P. M.—"Gay Nineties."  
Tues., 9:00 P. M.—Burns and Allen.  
Wed., 9:30 P. M.—Milton Berle.  
Fri., 9:30 P. M.—That Brewster Boy.

### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

\*4:45 P. M.—Uncle Sam.  
\*11:10 P. M.—Jos. C. Harsch, "Meaning of the News."  
Sun., 2:30 P. M.—World News Today.  
Sun., 9:00 P. M.—Radio Readers Digest.  
Sun., 10:00 P. M.—Take It Or Leave It.  
Mon., 3:20 P. M.—WRVA forum.  
Mon., 8:00 P. M.—Vox Pop.  
Thurs., 8:00 P. M.—Conquer We Must.  
Fri., 7:15 P. M.—Our Secret Weapon.  
Sat., 8:00 P. M.—Crumit and Sanderson.  
Sat., 8:30 P. M.—Hobby Lobby.  
Sat. and Sun., 11:10 P. M.—CBS News Analysis.

### NEWS BROADCASTS

†6:00 A. M., 6:55 A. M., 8:30 A. M., 9:00 A. M., 3:15 P. M.,  
\*7:55 A. M., 12:00 Noon, 6:00 P. M.—Esso Reporter.  
8:00 A. M.—News of the World (Daily).  
\*6:05 P. M.—Spotlight on Sports.  
8:55 P. M.—War News (Daily).  
11:00 P. M.—Esso News.  
\*11:10 P. M.—Jos. C. Harsch, "Meaning of the News."  
Sun., 9:00 A. M.—News of the World.  
Sun., 12:00 Noon—Transatlantic Call.  
Sun., 12:30 P. M.—Esso Reporter.  
Sun., 2:30 P. M.—World News Today.  
Sun., 5:45 P. M.—William L. Shirer.  
Tues., 6:15 P. M.—E. C. Hill, "Human Side of News."  
Tues. & Thurs., 6:30 P. M.—John B. Kennedy.  
Fri., 10:45 P. M.—Elmer Davis, Director O. W. I.  
Sat., 12:30 P. M.—Esso Reporter.  
Sat., 7:00 P. M.—Report to the Nation.  
\*4:25 P. M.—Esso News.

\*Daily except Saturday and Sunday.  
†Daily except Sunday.

"Buy U. S. War Bonds and Stamps"



TYRONE POWER takes War Bond purchases over a dozen phones, and charms thousands of listeners, while admiring assistants look on. HARVEY HUDSON, one of our "Money Memory Men," holds the mike while SAM CARY, not shown, is busy elsewhere in the studio.

### LIGHT MUSIC

Tues. & Thurs., 3:30 P. M.—Treasury Star Parade.  
†6:40 A. M.—Strike Up the Band.  
†8:15 A. M.—Juke Box.  
\*3:00 P. M.—Singing Sweethearts.  
\*3:20 P. M.—Contrasts in Melody.  
\*5:45 P. M.—Keep the Home Fires Burning.  
Sun., 8:30 A. M.—Musical Masterpieces.  
Sun., 9:45 A. M.—English Melodies.  
Sun., 12:45 P. M.—Waltz Time.  
Sun., 4:30 P. M.—Pause That Refreshes.  
Sun., 6:00 P. M.—Kitty Breese, Songs.  
Sun., 6:30 P. M.—Sgt. Gene Autry.  
Sun., 9:30 P. M.—Texaco Star Theatre.  
Mon., 11:00 A. M.—Little Show.  
Mon., 4:30 P. M.; Wed., 4:00 P. M.—Music Time.  
Mon., Tues., 5:15 P. M.—Spotlight on Rhythm.  
Mon. and Fri., 6:30 P. M.—Wilson Angel, Songs.  
Mon., 8:30 P. M.—"Gay Nineties."  
Tues., Wed., Thurs., 7:15 P. M.—Harry James and His Music Makers.  
Tues., 8:30 P. M.—Al Jolson.  
Tues. and Thurs., 3:30 P. M.—Treasury Star Parade.  
Wed., 5:15 P. M.—Frankie Masters' Orchestra.  
Wed., 6:15 P. M.—Mary Small, Songs.  
Wed., 8:00 P. M.—Sammy Kaye's Orchestra.  
Thurs., 6:15 P. M.—Supportive Swing.  
Fri., 5:15 P. M.—Bob Chester's Orchestra.  
Fri., 6:15 P. M.—All Star Dance Parade.  
Sat., 10:00 A. M.—Szath-Myri Presents.  
Sat., 6:45 P. M.—All Star Dance Parade.  
Sat., 9:00 P. M.—Your Hit Parade.  
Sat., 9:45 P. M.—Saturday Night Serenade.

### FARM and HOME PROGRAMS

\*1:45 P. M.—Market Reports by E. V. Coville.  
Tues. and Thurs., 11:00 A. M.—Mary Lee Taylor.  
Sat., 9:30 A. M.—The Garden Gate.  
Sat., 1:00 P. M.—Country Journal.  
Sat., 1:30 P. M.—Virginia Farm and Home Hour.

\*Daily except Saturday and Sunday.  
†Daily except Sunday.

A musical feast is in store for you—twenty-eight concerts and twenty-four summer concerts by the **New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra**, brought to you every Sunday afternoon from 3:00 to 4:30. The opening concert was heard May 23. United States Rubber, Inc., is sponsoring these broadcasts.

"Buy U. S. War Bonds and Stamps"







REV. ERNEST W. AARON

**PARK VIEW METHODIST CHURCH**, Portsmouth, is celebrating its Fiftieth Anniversary, and WRVA is happy to broadcast during the month of June its morning services. Organized in 1893, it is situated near the Norfolk Naval Hospital, has a membership of 700, and has provided outstanding service to the community for these fifty years. The first pastor was the Rev. W. B. Beauchamp, a graduate of Vanderbilt University in 1893. Succeeding him have been such prominent Virginia Methodists as Dr. J. N. Latham, Dr. W. A. Smart, Dr.

Daniel Merritt, and Dr. A. B. Clark.

A new church building was constructed in 1925 under the pastorate of Rev. J. T. Green; this was razed to make way for the present modern Church School Building under the pastorate of Rev. A. B. Clark—this structure was completed under the present pastorate of Rev. Aaron.

The Church is engaged in many activities, carrying out the complete program of the Methodist denomination, and during the present War emergency its Social Rooms and three Class Rooms have been turned over to the Medical Department of the Portsmouth Civilian Defense. The space is considered one of the best equipped emergency hospitals on the Atlantic Coast; it consists of seventy-five beds and an operating room. Red Cross Training Classes are being conducted continuously in Child Welfare, Home Nursing, and First Aid.

Ernest W. Aaron is a native of Roanoke, Virginia. He was educated at Emory and Henry College, entered the Methodist Ministry in 1914, and has served churches in West Virginia, Maryland, and Virginia. Mr. Aaron has always been interested in Social Service groups of the State; has served in various official capacities in Alexandria, Portsmouth, and Rockbridge County. He is a member of the Methodist Board where he has served faithfully and well in various capacities for twenty years or more.

Exceptionally fine music may be heard from the splendid Church Choir under the leadership of Mr. Herbert Stewart. Born in Petersburg, Virginia, he became organist at Park View Methodist Church in 1925 at an early age while his Father directed the choir. In 1929 Mr. Stewart became director as well as organist of the choir, while the elder Stewart still remains as bass soloist. A member of the American Guild of Organists, he is also co-organizer with Alice Stewart of the Stewart School of Music, one of the largest private music schools in Virginia. Mr. Stewart is also president of the Portsmouth Cooperative Concert Association, has written several song and organ compositions, and contributes generously of his musical ability to civic, military, and other local organizations.

It is a pleasure to welcome the splendid music and services of this outstanding Portsmouth Church to our long list of religious programs broadcast by WRVA.

### RELIGIOUS PROGRAMS

Sun., 11:00 A. M.—**Parkview Methodist Church, Portsmouth, Va.**  
 7:05 A. M.—**Morning Hymnal.**  
 Sun., 8:45 A. M.—**Sons of Melody.**  
 Sun., 9:15 A. M.—**Voice of Prophecy.**  
 Sun., 10:00 A. M. and 1:00 P. M.—**Church of the Air.**  
 Sun., 10:30 A. M.—**Wings Over Jordan.**  
 Mon., Wed., Fri., 3:30 P. M.—**Sunshine Hour.**  
 Thurs., 10:45 P. M.—**Christian Four.**  
 Sat., 5:00 P. M.—**Business Men's Bible Class.**

†Daily except Sunday.

"Buy U. S. War Bonds and Stamps"



### U.S. NAVY RECRUITING STATION

Joe Brown receives American War Mothers Medal for outstanding service in entertaining men of the armed forces from Mrs. A. W. JENNINGS, President of the Richmond Chapter. Joe emcees the popular "Okay America" programs Tuesdays at 9:30 P. M.—Saturdays at 10:00 P. M.

### ORGAN PROGRAMS

\*10:00 A. M.—**Eddie Weaver, Organist.**  
 Thurs., 5:15 P. M.—**Organ Reveries.**

### VARIETY PROGRAMS

\*3:00 P. M.—**Crumit and Sanderson.**  
 \*4:00 P. M.—**Home Front Reporter.**  
 \*5:45 P. M.—**Keep the Home Fires Burning.**  
 Sun., 1:45 P. M.—**Stooperoos.**  
 Sun., 5:00 P. M.—**Family Hour.**  
 Sun., 6:30 P. M.—**Sgt. Gene Autry.**  
 Sun., 9:30 P. M.—**Texaco Star Theatre.**  
 Mon., 6:15 P. M.—**Camp Pickett Revue.**  
 Tues. and Thurs., 4:30 P. M.—**Victory Mothers.**  
 Tues., Wed., Fri., 6:45 P. M.—**Korn Kobbler.**  
 Tues., 8:30 P. M.—**Al Jolson.**  
 Tues., 9:30 P. M.—**Okay America.**  
 Wed., 9:30 P. M.—**Milton Berle.**  
 Wed., 10:30 P. M.—**Fort Eustis Open House.**  
 Thurs., 8:00 P. M.—**Conquer We Must.**  
 Thurs., 9:00 P. M.—**Major Bowes' Amateur Hour.**  
 Fri., 8:00 P. M.—**Kate Smith Hour.**  
 Fri., 10:00 P. M.—**Camel Caravan.**  
 Sat., 11:30 A. M.—**Fashions for Nations.**  
 Sat., 4:30 P. M.—**Cash Peary.**  
 Sat., 6:05 P. M.—**Navy Smoker.**  
 Sat., 7:30 P. M.—**Thanks to the Yanks.**  
 Sat., 8:30 P. M.—**Hobby Lobby.**  
 Sat., 10:30 P. M.—**Okay America.**

### OLD TIME MUSIC

†6:20 A. M.—**Sally's Montana Plainsmen.**  
 \*12:30 P. M.—**Sally's Montana Plainsmen.**  
 Sun., 1:30 P. M.—**Ranger Joe.**  
 Wed., 4:30 P. M.—**Cross Roads Symphony.**  
 Sat., 9:15 A. M.—**Sally's Montana Plainsmen.**  
 Sat., 1:30 P. M.—**The Saylor Sisters in the Farm and Home Hour.**  
 Sat., 1:30 P. M.—**Cross Roads Symphony in the Farm and Home Hour.**

### QUIZ PROGRAMS

Sun., 10:00 P. M.—**Take It Or Leave It.**  
 Mon., 8:00 P. M.—**"Vox Pop."**  
 Sat., 7:30 P. M.—**Thanks to the Yanks.**  
 Sat., 8:00 P. M.—**Crumit and Sanderson.**

### SPORTS

\*6:05 P. M.—**Spotlight on Sports.**

\*Daily except Saturday and Sunday.  
 †Daily except Sunday.

"Buy U. S. War Bonds and Stamps"

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Photographs**



# OFFICERS



**WILLIAM THOMAS REED, JR.**  
*President*



**LEWIS GRIFFIN LARUS**  
*Vice-President*



**ARTHUR THOMAS WEBSTER**  
*Secretary-Treasurer*



**HARRY HAMLETT HUNT, JR.**  
*Vice-President*



**HERMAN AUBREY FORD**  
*Vice-President*



**WILLIAM BROOKS GEORGE**  
*Assistant to President and Controller*



**CALVIN TOMPKINS LUCY**  
*General Manager Radio Section*

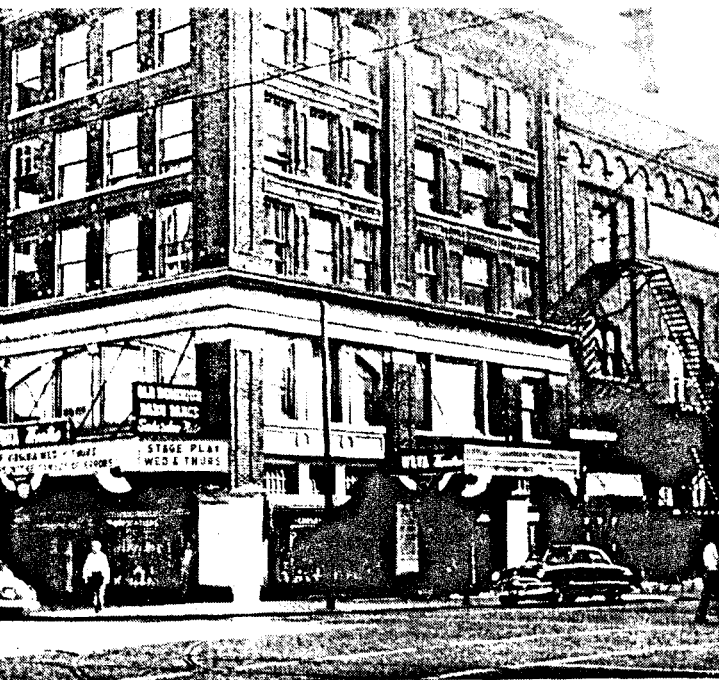
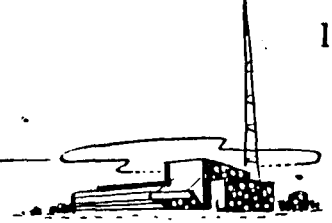
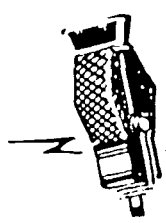


**DAVID CURRIE KENNEDY, JR.**  
*General Production Manager*



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** (left to right): M. WALLACE MONCURE, JR., Attorney, Moncure & Cabell; BUFORD SCOTT, Investment Banker and Broker, Scott & Stringfellow; ALFRED C. THOMPSON, General Manager, Miller & Rhoads, Inc.; C. HANCOCK REED, President, Williams & Reed, Inc.; WILLIAM T. REED, JR., President; LEWIS G. LARUS, Vice-President; P. LARUS REED, II, Vice-President, Wilson Paper Box Co.; ROBERT S. PRESTON, JR., Director; SAMUEL M. BEMISS, Vice-President, D. D. Fitzgerald & Co., Inc.; CHARLES D. LARUS, III, Director; ARTHUR T. WEBSTER, Secretary-Treasurer.

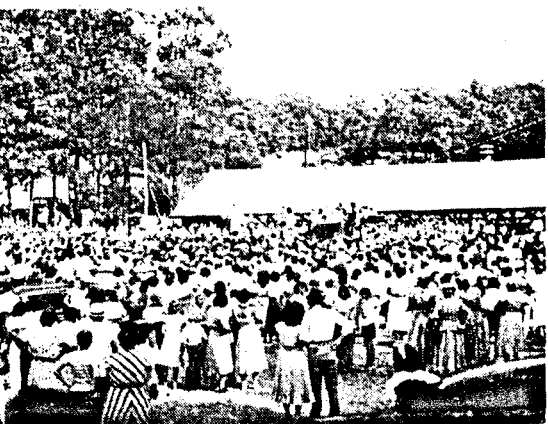
# RADIO



WRVA THEATRE — Only legitimate theatre in Richmond



"SUNSHINE SOUL" — "Femece" of the famous Old Dominion Barn Dance every Saturday night at the WRVA Theatre



SCENE FROM THE ANNUAL WRVA LISTENER'S PICNIC



A portion of the audience for WRVA's "CALLING ALL COOKS" program — WRVA Theatre each Saturday morning



PRESIDENT TRUMAN before WRVA microphones



Britain's Prime Minister, WINSTON CHURCHILL, speaking before the Virginia General Assembly



GENERAL EISENHOWER addresses the radio audience through WRVA

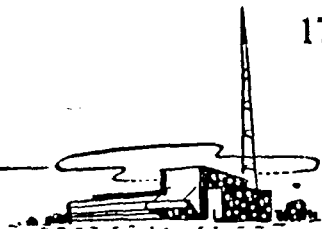


SENATOR ROBERT TAFT speaks to a huge audience through WRVA





# RADIO



**WALTER R. BISHOP**  
Director of Public Relations - WRVA



**BARTON HOWARD**  
Business Manager - WRVA



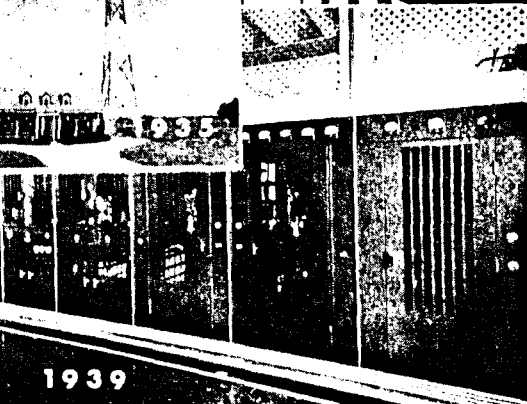
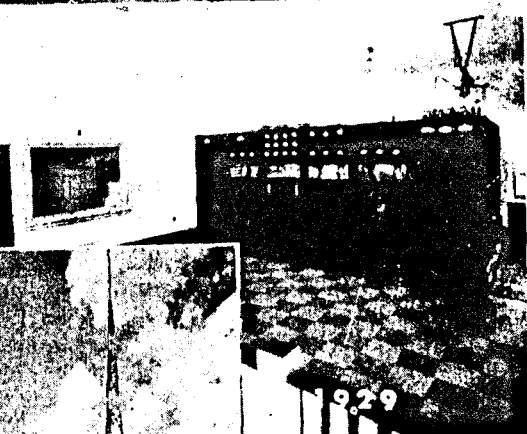
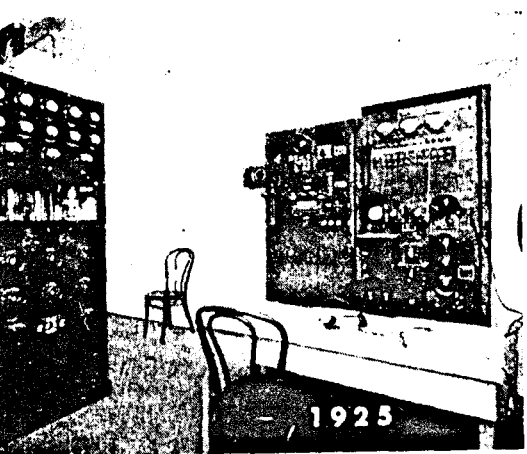
**DAVID C. WOODS**  
Chief Engineer - WRVA



**JOHN L. STONE**  
Director of Promotion and Publicity - WRVA

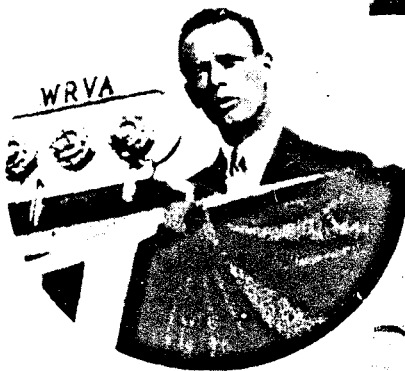


**SAM S. CAREY**  
Program Service Manager - WRVA



1939

**DIXIE SPIRITUAL SINGERS**  
First radio network program sponsored by Edgeworth Tobacco, 1930



**CHAS. A. LINDBERGH** in Richmond during his country-wide tour following his epochal solo flight across the Atlantic.

**THE CORN COB PIPE CLUB**  
Second nation wide radio network program sponsored by Edgeworth

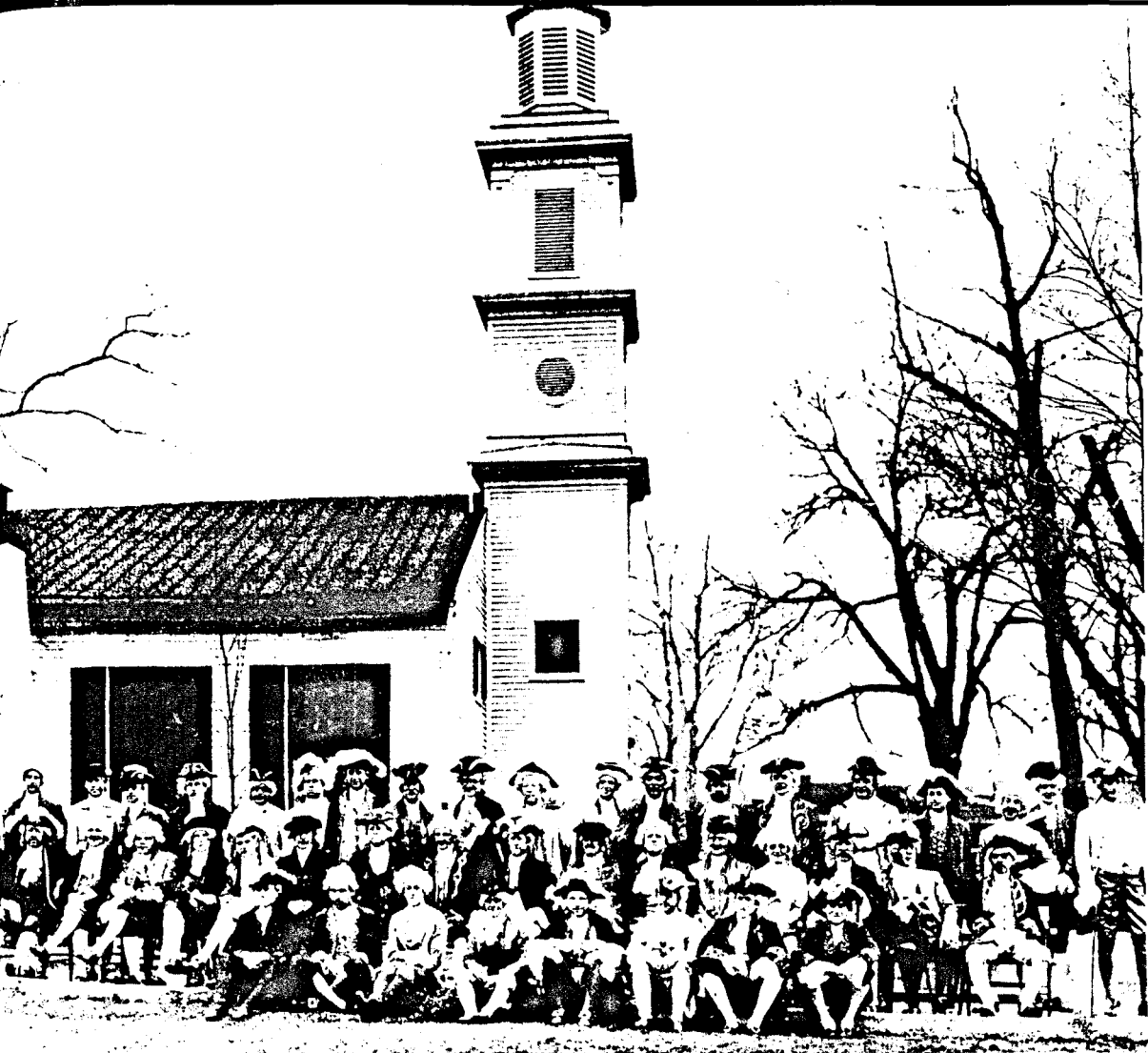


1925 - WRVA'S FIRST TRANSMITTER, 1,000 WATTS

1929 - WRVA'S SECOND TRANSMITTER, 5,000 WATTS

1935 - WRVA'S SECOND TRANSMITTER BUILDING and first all-wood self-supporting radio tower in North America

1939 - WRVA'S THIRD TRANSMITTER, 50,000 WATTS



1927—Famed Virginia Convention of 1775 re-enacted by descendants at St. John's Church and broadcast by WRVA



"Amos 'n Andy,"  
Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll



1926  
Governor Harry F. Byrd



1927  
Charles A. Lindbergh



Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman,  
noted historian and author—WRVA favorite for many years.



Opening night program, Nov. 2, 1925. On the left—Arion's Orchestra. Standing: C. T. Lucey, F. G. Hoelzle, L. G. Larus, C. D. Larus, Jr., John H. Reed, George Marchmont (Western Elec. Co.) Seated: W. T. Reed, Sr., P. L. Reed.

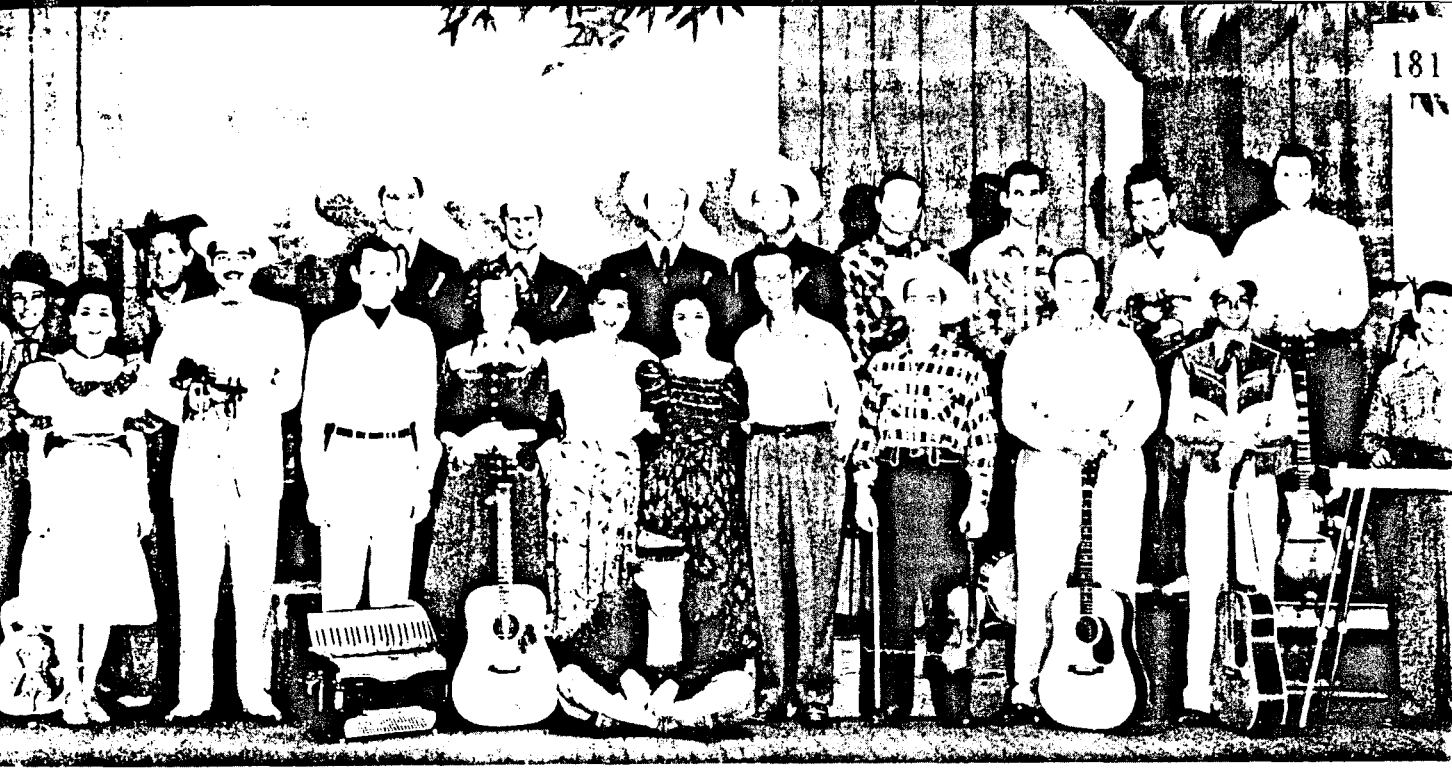


RIGHT—Pat Binford, M. C. Corn Cob Pipe Club

FAR RIGHT—Anthony Ende, President, Corn Cob Pipe Club

Corn Cob Pipe Club





*Sunshine Sue and other stars of the Old Dominion Barn Dance broadcast from the WRVA Theatre*

*Smokey and Pokey, popular comics of the Barn Dance*



*The Dixie Spiritual Singers on the first network program originating from Richmond*



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## VITA

Mary Julianne Roman-Daffron was born on August 7, 1943, in Richmond, Virginia. Growing up in Chester, Virginia, Julie attended Chesterfield County public schools and graduated from Thomas Dale High School in 1961. She attended Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Virginia, and Westhampton College, Richmond, Virginia, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1965. Having specialized in history, political science and music: piano applied and composition, Julie began teaching Social Studies in Chesterfield in 1965. She had begun her study of piano at age three, performed on radio station WHAP at age five, and qualified for the Juilliard Conservatory of Music at age thirteen. She continued her study with faculty of the Juilliard School, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, and the University of Richmond. Julie is a composer and a teacher. She has performed as a symphony pianist locally and as a soloist in Italy, New York, Virginia and Washington, D.C. Presently, she serves as a minister of music and organist, teaches piano, and sells real estate. Julie resides in Richmond with her twelve year-old son, Philip Valentine Daffron, Jr. They, too, listen to WRVA. Julie will receive her Master of Arts Degree in history from the Graduate School of the University of Richmond in August, 1990.