

# Peacock North

## FALL, 1996



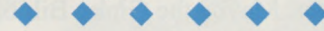
Volume 5 Edition 3



The photo below came from the July, 1953 *NBC CHIMES* magazine. Over 1000 employees and guests attended the affair at the

Roosevelt Hotel. Stars that put on a two hour show included Milton Berle, Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca, dance team Mata & Hari, Marguerite Piazza and Jack Russell. Except for Berle, the cast was from "Your Show of

Shows". The master of ceremonies for the Gala, was our fellow PN-er **Ed Herlihy**.



At our last La Maganette bash in June, **Roger Muir**, Howdy Doody's producer, and **Bob Rippen**, Howdy Doody's director, gave us an insight as to who was working the show those days and how they have become very big in the biz. Not to leave anyone out of that historic time, the foto on the address page captured the Howdy engineering floor crew in 3H (now 3K).

*(Continued on next page.)*



*The biggest and best dance in NBC New York's history, which was held June 5, 1953 at the Hotel Roosevelt. Were you there?*

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Whoever said, "Time accelerates with age" was sure right about this summer. However, except for the leaves changing color, I would have taken **today** for — maybe June 21st. Perhaps time *is* going backwards. Is our galaxy reversing direction? Has the earth's axis changed? Was it Velikovski or Arne Proner who predicted that due to the extreme weight of the snow at the South Pole, which has accumulated over the centuries, would change the rotation? Snow at the current North Pole does melt for it is surrounded by water, warming in the summer, and melting it. In the Antarctic, there is a land mass, and the melting is less than the wet North Polar region. Could that be the reason I didn't get much use of the boat this year — yup, lots of lousy weather. Maybe the Ginko Biloba is working too hard on the brain. But there *is* something nice about being on the water, (ask Bill Miller); especially in the fall, when the traffic quiets down. Wonder if the ski-doo drivers have ever heard about water rules?

(OK, it's too long an intro to "People," but operas need an overture to begin also, I had to start with something to get moving.)

Anyway, I'm really glad I don't berth the boat in Wilmington, North Carolina, but **ROGER AND PAT TUTTLE** do live there and Hurricane FRAN sure messed up their town. Besides losing electricity and phones, they had some branches and a lot of slosh on the lawn — they managed OK, but the beaches, waterfront homes, rivers, light poles etc. really got scattered all the way into Virginia. I saw a TV news correspondent doing his schtik next to a huge sailboat in the street — *with its dock still attached!*

Roger's aircraft is also in NC and hopefully before long it may take its maiden flight. Rog and Pat have sold their horse farm up nawth and are practicing their drawl again.

**THANK YOU** all who responded to my post card for "News," since we didn't pass any yellow tablets at the La Mag Bash. I'm now getting inundated and letters are quite lengthy. One card it produced was from **MURIEL** and **JOHN MACPHERSON**, from Aberdeen, Scotland. They had been over to see Princess Diana, but she's quite busy these days running away from the paparazzi and the Queen Mother so Muriel had to be content to check out their family history instead — yup, at the **MacPherson Museum**. What would a Scottish trip be without eating Haggis, watching the Highland Fling, even trying to dance it after a wee nip, as well as enjoying the sounds of the pipes. Not to mention being awed by the incredibly beautiful scenery. Well they did it all and have returned safe and sound.

Who is Ms. MacPherson? Think back to the early 1950's, I mean 5am early, for she was the original Weather Lady on the **TODAY SHOW**.

[My Hawaiian son and his three Hawaiian kids, (8, 12, & 15), my San Fran daughter and son (13) and their Scotland-born mom spent 3 weeks visiting many relatives and touring some 2500 miles in Scotland in a VW bus. Kids came home with a surprised revelation that "folks there are the same as folks over here." Maybe Saddam Hussein should take a world trip. HJ]

Do you recognize this lovely young lady?

Later on I'll reveal who she is and why she appears in the Newsletter.



**AUDREY MARSHALL** points out that we left out **Ann Kramer's** name under the cover photo of the last newsletter (far right on the back row). Also in Ear Benders, Audrey says we should have said - The next voice you will hear will be "Pipe Popus" and not what we wrote, as the way the Pope was introduced in the Christmas Eve first transatlantic radio hookup. AND she feels it was not **Milton Cross**, but the older **John Gambing** or even **Jack Costello** — but Jack thinks it was **Graham McNamee**. Her grandson thinks it was **Uncle Don**. So folks, you thought *your* memory was failing!

But Audrey, I'm kidding. Audrey used to be a proof-reader for TV Net Sales when Pipe Popus made that historic broadcast. Before I forget, we do apologize to **Ann Kramer** for the oversight, so to show you we didn't do it on purpose, I'm going to put her name on each page of the People column somewhere.

Getting back to Audrey, she is up to her ears in letter-writing, phoning, etc. trying to get former classmates together for a BIG 50th year reunion in October. The late **Telly Savalas** was in her class of 1946, and she thinks he was the only one who became famous from her class at SEWANHAKA HIGH SCHOOL, Floral Park, NY. We all think *you* are actually the famous one, cause I hear you plan to sing "Those Were The Days" which Edith Bunker copied after you made it famous.

**ROBERT BADER**, scenic artist extraordinaire attended, I believe, his first PN Bash at La Mag. He's enjoying his retirement and trying to do everything he's wanted to, like painting, writing, landscaping etc. Says he's travelled enough so he'd rather do, and is doing, the things he couldn't do while working. Bob sent in the photo below taken at the NBC 25 year affair in 1991.





From L to R

*Cliff Steigelbauer (Scenic art, design and construction), Norman Davidson (Scenic Designer), Robert Bader, Al Gallo, Louis Ellis (who passed away in July), Charley Amend and Clem Bernardo (all Scenic Artists).*

Not in the pix, is **Joe Konopka**, not yet retired and the last staff scenic artist who is still painting now for the "Conan O'Brien Show".

**Lou Ellis**, Bob said, had painted all the Apollo space shots and many more. A wonderful guy and a terrific artist.

**MAUREEN KAYE (TELLER)**, came in from Scottsdale, AZ to work on the first few shows of the new Cosby series with the audio group. While here she stayed with mom and visited former work chums. Am told that she's actually getting used to the 100 plus temperatures one finds in the southwest.

Since **ARIANE MAUTNER** retired, she has embarked on an entirely new career. She has taken up law. Yep, she has just finished her fifth court appearance, serving on her FIFTH case — as a juror. Ariane enclosed this photo.



*Julian Goodman, Arianne Mautner, Ed Newman taken at Phil Falcone's retirement party in February 1978. (Is that Ann Kramer in the b.g. ? ?)*

**ARTHUR KENT** sent me a card from The New York Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences that NATAS will celebrate its 40th Anniversary by



honoring *Mr. Television* — **MILTON BERLE**, with its Lifetime Achievement Award on Monday Oct.28 at the Waldorf Astoria.

**STEWART MACGREGORY** apologizes for not attending the last La Mag Luncheon. He explains that he did get another Deacon to take his place for the 10am Eucharist, but he had to be at another church in Putnam Valley for the Confirmation service for his older grandson (Craig, age 14), who was last seen in Radio City crawling around at Stu's retirement party.

He wants to send his greetings to all the NBC-ites and "God willing, I'll be there next year."

In January, he attended the consecration of a new bishop at the Cathedral of St. John The Divine. As he sat, the man in the next seat turned — Stu had sat right next to **MARVIN EINHORN**. Small Voild!

**LEE JONES** sent us this real-life, "typically corporate" snippet.

Many years ago, before the elevators were automated, live elevator operators were on duty for incoming passengers. An order was given that no musical instruments would be allowed on the elevators. One day this distinguished gentleman appeared with his violin. He was told that no musical instruments were allowed in the passenger elevators, and that he must use the stage elevator just around the corner. The violinist insisted he had to be at a rehearsal right away. The operator repeated his "No instrument" order, adding "I don't care if you're Rubinioff, you have to use the stage elevator!" The violinist was *Jascha Heifitz* heading for a Toscanini broadcast.

Remember **EDWARD F. DYAS**, from Middletown,

*Continued on next page.*



NJ? Well, I talked to Ed a short while ago. He was hired by "Moose" Daniels in Dec. '64, as a clerk in Video Tape. Six months later, Tom Smiley, (whose TD career began with Howdy Doody) hired him as a TOPS clerk. Ed says he spent a pleasant year there, especially since he got to become friendly with so many nice people. While there, he married his "wonderful" wife, **Diane**.

Later he was hired as a Unit Manager, had two daughters Christina and Jacqueline, was transferred to London ('70) in News, where 11 months later his son Edward was born.

At one point, he became a paraplegic. At 44 years of age, he accepted a buy-out and left on Dec 31, 1987 — many think he was "eased out" — he hasn't worked since.

*Ed's phone is 908-671-2865. I'm sure he'd like to hear from his old friends. H.)*

**HOWIE ATLAS:** I thought his letter might help someone so here it is in its entirety.

*I had a double heart bypass operation on July 12th. at St. Francis hospital, Long Island.*

*As late as a month prior to the operation, I was not aware I had any problem. In June, during a routine checkup, I mentioned to my cardiologist that often, when I took my fast walk, I felt some pressure below my breastbone. I thought it was just gas because it seemed to go away if I burped. The cardiologist said that it could be angina.*

*After the thallium stress test and angiogram, it turned out that it was angina. I had three blocked arteries. — I was out of the hospital one week later on July 19th. So far the recovery appears to be going well.*

*The good news — I was allowed to start driving only two weeks after leaving the hospital.*

*The bad news — I won't be allowed to play golf for at least another month.*

*One aspect of the whole procedure amazed me. It was literally "walk-in" open heart surgery. After some pre-op testing a few days earlier, I walked into the hospital the morning of the operation. I never imagined that you walked in the day of the open heart surgery — but it appears that you do now. — Come to think of it, I guess what is really more important, is that I "walked-out" after the operation!" (Don't forget to mention Ann Kramer)*

*Howie*

Wanderlust, or is it free airline tickets? Neither, says **DAN GRABEL**, referring to the travelling he and his wife **PATRICIA** have done this year. The venues (hey! it's an Olympic year, everything is venues) included Barbados, Arizona, New Hampshire, China, Utah, two trips to England and a four day reccky of Ireland.

On one of the British trips, they took in two family weddings, one with a reception at the House of Lords and the other with dinner on the grounds of Hampton Court Palace. Dan's memory of Eire is four days that each included some rain and views of a lot of 11th and 12th century ruins of castles and forts.

One highlight was a walk through Trinity College in Dublin where a brilliant guide turned a possibly dull visit into an absorbing tour-de-force lecture. Dan is happy to have spent the rest of the summer in his garden where a bubbling waterfall quickly puts him into the arms of Morpheus moments after he lands on the chaise. ZZ ZZ ZZ

ZZ ZZ- - - - Pleasant dreams Dan!

**MILTON WYATT** has been spending much time in New Hampshire this year at his son's house, having a great time with granddaughters aged 9 and 11. However he can't stay put for long. For ex: Oct 8th, — see "friends" in Paris. Motor then to Cannes with "a friend who owns a villa.." Oct 16: fly from Nice to London, then without hesitating for even a spot of tea, zooms to West Sussex to visit "dear friends" this time. Not right away but soon, to Dorset to visit "more friends". (I noticed these weren't "dear" friends tho.) Finally to Liverpool, again to see "very good" friends. Hopefully there might be a visit to Wales to visit "just a friend." —

By October 31st Milt figures he'll run out of friends, so he'll fly back from Manchester. *(When one is retired, it sure is great to have friends — any kind of friends. Have a nice trip Milt — Pardon me for toying with your letter. Blame it on too much Chateau Neuf de Pape, and the late hour and thanks for replying to my card. H.)*

**ENID ROTH:** "A few days after the lunch at La Maganette, I went on an Elderhostel bike tour of Denmark with a college friend. We rode an average of 34 miles a day (one day we actually rode 45 miles). We biked and pastried our way through the Danish islands of Sjaelland, Fyn, Aero, Langeland, Lolland, Falster and Mon — *(did you make up*



*L to R: Jeanne Miller and Enid Roth taking "Five," on their bike trip.*



those names Enid? I'm going to ask Ann Kramer.) — going through small towns, farmlands and beaches and wound up on Sjaelland in Copenhagen. It didn't seem to matter in which direction we rode, we always seemed to be riding into the wind. On the next to the last day, we spent a couple of hours biking into the teeth of a 40mph wind from Siberia, which pelted us with rain and sleet. I still find it hard to believe that I made it all the way through, but it was such a wonderful fun trip that most of us are going to try to get together next year for a bike ride through Bordeaux — no wind, no hills, just toodling along from vineyard to vineyard, to vineyard, to vineyard, to vineyard.....

Just a few weeks ago, Mary Regan McDonough came to New York from her home in Chevy Chase for a wonderful visit. Mary and I met at NBC and shared our first apartment in the Big Apple more than 40 years ago and have remained good friends ever since. We had a wonderful time revisiting all our old haunts and stopped in at 30 Rock to visit old friends Ann Keeley-Kavanagh in Switching Central (or whatever they call it nowadays) and to the TODAY offices to see Nancy Fields whose career has taken her from Howdy Doody to Willard Scott. I showed Mary a copy of the wonderful Peacock North, which she enjoyed very much. I hope she and her husband Don McDonough, former NBV TV Director, will join up. I hope to persuade them to come up from Chevy Chase for next year's luncheon.

Had a terrific day in the Hamptons around Lois Marino's pool with David and Cynthia Handler, Gene and Debbie Waldstein and Jodi Greenberg Dresch. Am looking forward to two weeks in Russia at the end of September... Gee, this is really better than getting up at 3 am to go to work! *The best, Enid*



Back Row: David & Cynthia Handler, Deborah & Gene Waldstein. Front Row: Enid Roth, Lois Marino, and Jodie Greenberg Dresch

**GENE WALDSTEIN** sends us the above foto taken at the pool of Lois Marino's palatial East Hampton estate. Lois, says Gene, who at one time had a catering business, cooked a sensational meal. What was an early afternoon

party, stretched out till 10pm because no one wanted to leave.

Lois had just returned from the Atlanta Olympics, where she freelanced as the unit manager/production manager for the boxing venue. Coincidentally Jodie was freelancing as a camera person, which is how she ended up at Lois' party. Otherwise there ain't no news. *Love, Gene*

**LOIS MARINO** writes: The La Maganette luncheon was fabulous! Thanks for the opportunity to speak. Am looking forward already to next year's luncheon!

If you are interested in obtaining more information about Long Term Care Insurance for asset protection as discussed by Lois Marino in her June 2 speech, Please contact LTC agent KAREN RAUS at: 1-800-733-5523 ext 1335, or 1- 516-287-7056.

**ULRICH CARO** read Ray Lafferty's fascinating report on his visit to O.B. Hanson's house, and adds this anecdote about O.B. (For those who don't remember him, O.B. was the V.P. for Engineering in the post WW II period.) In 1957, Rick wrote, When I was a member of the Audio-Video Engineering group, I occasionally ran into O.B. and Chester Rackey (the Director of our group) on the way to Grand Central after work. One evening I mentioned in passing that my wife and I were trying to get a mortgage on a modern house that we were planning to build in Westchester. I must have also said something to the effect that it was difficult to get a mortgage on a "modern" house.

Totally unbeknown to me was the fact that O.B. was on the board of a small savings and loan association in Staten Island (no doubt long since merged again and again into some banking giant). .....O.B. mentioned he might be of some help. Help he did. In a short time, not only did we have a mortgage at a very favorable rate, but the closing costs were waived as well. Naturally we were very happy at this, and wanted to do something to show our gratitude. However we were totally unsuccessful in inviting him to our new "palace" or show our appreciation in other ways. We will never forget how kind and helpful, in this quiet way, this senior executive was to one of his very junior staff member.

*(I got to know O.B. quite well, cause Al Protzman lived at O.B.'s house in Westport. Protz introduced me to the Big Chief and many times I bumped into him in the studio or hall etc. We (NBC) have an engineering area phone system called T.O.&E.; one can call a studio by dialing it - for ex, 8-H. I always was polite and businesslike on the fone. Being a young twerp, and having heard the "big guys" answer "Joe's pool parlor" for ex, one day I answered in a*

*Continued on next page.*



smirk voice, "Hurley's Bar and Grill." A voice answered, "This is O.B. Hanson!" I died at age 20 right there. He didn't fire me but when the fone rang, a very businesslike kid answered politely for the next four decades. H.)

**IRVING AND DOLLY MESSING** celebrated their Golden (50th) Wedding Anniversary — (June 23, 1946.) "Instead of a dinner party, we are visiting relatives who live at a distance; prolonging this celebration by visiting



*Dolly and Irving Messing*

throughout the year. Wisconsin, Texas and California are some of the locations — Florida too! ..... Was asked to do the 'Country Music Ass'n. Awards' with Billy Klages in October. This will be my 28th year with this show that started at NBC as 'Kraft Music Hall.' Remember?" (Another fond memory, how could I forget? Even Ann Kramer remembers the Kraft Music Hall; she was there. H.)

Irv still golfs twice a week if the weather permits and they enjoy their volunteer work with his little old ladies that need help.

**FRANK AND LOIS VIERLING**, (our Publisher par excellence, etc.) writes from Maine:

For the past 12 years, in retirement, Lois and I have been able to enjoy our lakeside home in Maine for the entire summer. Some ten years ago, neighbors invited us to attend a local summer chapel. Sunday attendance numbers 25 to 35. About one third are local residents and the rest are summer people from "away."

It is a small church and the congregation is aging along with the 106 year building. Through death and age, the choir was disbanded this year. A 90 year old with gnarled arthritic fingers accompanies the psalm singing. (She still gives piano and violin lessons and at one time was a member of the Portland Symphony Orchestra's string section.)

Following service there is a "coffee hour," in reality it is a "coffee *and* hour." Week to week the variety of items might include strawberry shortcake, mince mint squares, cream-cheese-nut-bread sandwiches, melon balls, doughnut holes, coffee buns, cookies, coffee, juice etc. Each week I bring egg salad sandwiches.

One of the "away" couples is from the west coast and usually make one service each summer. On the coast, they

are members of one of those big churches with every type of service imaginable.

At one of their services their minister was extolling all the virtues of "his" church. "We have everything," he said. Our friend raised his hand. "You have something to add?," asked the startled minister. "Yes," our friend said, "We don't have *everything!* We don't have egg salad sandwiches!"

**IRV SOBEL** wants to thank all who help make the newsletter great! (*Look out, we're all taking bows. Thanks Irv.*) He is recuperating from a heart attack — exercising, dieting etc. Now, he says — for the good news. Their youngest daughter got married and is attending Law School in New York. The Sobels are still spending 6 months in Florida and 6 months in the Catskill Mountains of NY. They send regards to all.

(Here's something you-all might be interested in, about a local fellow who had arteries in both legs clogged:

He went to a heart surgeon in Edison, NJ. The Doc also found that his heart arteries were almost all clogged. The surgeon told this patient he was in need of open heart surgery. But, he continued, instead, he was going to give this patient chelation treatments of EDTA-drips, each lasting several hours, first maybe several hours a day, and after a while, lessening it to once a week etc. In addition he was to be given vitamins and minerals to replace those that were leached out by the process.

I saw the patient a while ago, and he had regained the pink color to his face, both legs were completely free of clogged arteries, and the heart arteries were totally cleared. No radical surgery, trauma or pain.

Some people aren't in physical shape to undergo a bypass operation. This patient had no hospital stay, and went to work every day during all this! H.)

**RAY & HELEN DIPRIMA** note that the "pleasant" has outweighed the "unpleasant." In May, Helen said they experienced the joy of being part of their granddaughter Amy's beautiful wedding.

In August, daughter Laurie Corey was promoted to full professorship at Westchester College. And to top it off, in September they're celebrating again, this time their 55th anniversary with a two-week tour in Europe. Last but not least, they're looking forward to — yup, the next Peacock North get together. (*May it always be so terrific. H.*)

**BOB AND DIANE JUNCOSA** answered my card in Spanish. T'was a great pleasure to visit with our companeros at the PN reunion, before going to the Caribbean for a sailing cruise. Then he saved me from my dictionary by continuing in English.... Says — pity that these affairs always break up too soon.

Bob and Diane have been wintering in Yuma, Az. As you all know, they do a lot of square dancing, rent an RV and have fun with their California friends who like to do the same thing. In Feb Bob returned home to Foresthill for



some shoulder surgery before seeing you all at the LaMag bash, and visiting friends in NJ. Needless to say, says he, their first Peacock North Luncheon was a highlight. ... *(This next part brings many fond memories to me as well.)* ... They flew to St. Thomas, chartered a 51 foot sloop for eleven days of sailing the British Virgin Islands. The



*The Skipper and his Lady anchored in Caneel Bay, USVI, celebrating Captain's Night*

weather was excellent, snorkeling fabulous, winds usually reliable, *(Except when I did it once. We snuk around to the east/northeast, and the wind made most of the anchorages worrisome for us — H.)* Everywhere one looks, there is another view more beautiful and picturesque. Bob remarks that being the skipper is a little better than being the TD. *(No wonder this TD ran off some 14 times to that area to be a skipper. H.)*

Their daughter's wedding brings Bob and Diane back to the East (Boston area), then, as Bob says, his wife/Unit Manager, is browsing over a desktop full of brochures, and they'll be off to Beijing, a cruise down the Yangtze, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

**JERRY & NANCY CUDLIPP** kept busy all summer with family visiting, and the usual things around the hacienda that make time fly. Jerry ordered a bunch of logs, read some instructions and some time later stepped back and took a look. Lo and behold it had become a log cabin in his yard. (I wasn't quite sure whether it was for kiddies to play in or store garden tools. But I did remember him saying that this fall Nancy and he, and a group of retirees that he keeps together, would be taking a cruise around Greece. Worth waiting for I'll bet! *How about it Ann Kramer?*)

**BUDDY SHADEL AND HIS BRIDE DOTTIE** are thankful that their daughter married the fellow she did. Son-in-Law is a Captain of a naval vessel. Now the ship is stationed in Japan. So guesss what - you're right. Whenever the ship relocates, Buddy and Dottie also have a reason to visit the kids and they did (last year, Hawaii). This year they spent 3 weeks enjoying Tokyo. They didn't make it to Sapporo, where Buddy was part of the NBC Winter Olympics team in 1972, led by Dick Auerback and for

Engineering led by Robert Galvin.

Speaking of Olympics, **BETSEY (CONNEY) TEMPLE**, who was a very involved Unit Manager at the Summer Olympics in Seoul, Korea, is putting her expertise to good use with a group making an audition video a la musical Capt. Kangaroo.

**DEE GOETZ, BILLY'S WIFE**, called. They moved to West Bloomfield, Mich. in January, 1996. On August 1, while taking a short walk, Bill felt a strange feeling in his chest. They went to the emergency room where the docs discovered he had a mild heart attack. In the operating room, he was being given his second by-pass when he suffered a stroke.

He is now in Royal Oak rehab center. His paralysis is on his left side but he can speak. **He would like to hear from his friends. Send notes to Bill at 6692 Stilwell, West Bloomfield, Mich. 48322. His new phone is 801-788-0653.** *(I called the number and got Bill, — on the answer machine. H.)*

**CARL ROHRER** Par Avion-s a card from Merry Olde London, where he vacationed through the British Museum, The National Gallery and Buckingham Palace. Laments "the Queen wasn't home — Oh well."..... Theaterwise, he gave a "Hurrah, Hurrah" for "Jolson."

As per a letter from **Arthur Kent**, current Pres of NATAS (TV Academy), congratulations are in order for none other than — *hit the fanfare, — announce, —* **GLORIA CLYNE**. She has been selected to be inducted into the NATAS 1990 "Silver Circle" on Monday eve, November 11th in Manhattan. The award is "for those who have made significant contribution to television for 25 years or more - with outstanding careers that have had a major impact on the communication industry in New York."— She's in great company; some previous recipients: Walter Cronkite, Betty Furness, Gabe Pressman, Bill Butel, Arnold Diaz and Arthur Kent. Arthur was the first "behind the scene person" to be so recognized.

**GEO HEINEMAN** memorial services were held on the U.S.S. Intrepid, the aircraft carrier berthed at West 46th Street and 12th Ave, in NYC on September 30th. Internment services were held at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D.C. on the second of October at one o'clock in the afternoon with Full Military Honors.

**FRED WAGNER** writes that there were seven retirees, residing in his area. Sadly, in Forked River, NJ, they lost one recently, **Harry Musselman**. Other NBC neighbors are **Paul Roeder** and **Vince Genzardi** from Forked River. **Lee Pliskin** retired to Beach Haven, **Bob Higgins** and Fred to Manahawkin, and **John Rice** spends summers in Cape May.

Doctor's orders caused Fred to shed 35 pounds. — He does a Newsletter for the Organ Club as well as being its

*Continued on next page.*



Prexy. Higgy and Freddy are both on the internet and Fred says he's fortunate that Bob H. is around since he is good at translating the manuals. *(Most computer buffs have run into this problem, for the writers seem to want to be cute and never call anything by its real name.)* Fred is still on the Ham bands and besides all his activities, he spent three weeks vacationing via Amtrack from Atlantic City,



*Fred Wagner riding the choo choo across America.*

touching Chicago, Los Alamos, NM, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon. Even managed to find relatives in Los Alamos, Portland, Port Townsend, Wash. His big complaint? "I never seem to have enough time to do what I want to do." *(Sure gets around for a 79 year old fellow! Keep it up Freddy!)*

**LOIS AND FRANK VIERLING** celebrated their 48th wedding anniversary, August 21, by hosting a picnic lunch for their summer friends at their summer home on Panther Pond, Raymond, Maine.

While in Maine, Frank received notification that his \$200,000 grant proposal to the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the restoration of Oradell's historic railroad station had been granted. Frank is Oradell's historian and recently finished his town history book.

You old timers surely remember **Art Holub**. They live in Paris Hill (Maine) and the Vierlings and Holubs traded lunches at each other's homes during the summer. Art celebrated a birthday around the end of August. Paris Hill, by the way, is where President Lincoln's Vice President Hannibal Hamlin lived. *(Only a historian would know that.)* Frank also reports that just before leaving Maine for NJ he heard that Art had a stroke.

**PETER TINTLE** remembers how as a boy in Demarest, NJ, in the 1920s, he would sit on the bank of the Tenakill Brook, feed the ducks, and count the rare autos that crossed the Hardenburgh bridge.

Today the bridge is still in use and appears little changed by time. There is a community effort afoot to keep it that way. It's a symbol of the town and a great reminder



*Peter Tintle and his bridge.*

Beth Balberz/The Record

of what a small town was all about.

Peter serves his town as a member of the Planning Board.

**JOHN TRAUTWEIN** writes "You people are doing a wonderful thing for us all." John is ranger at the Arrowwood golf course in Rye Brook, NY. Ed Sarnoff, David's son, plays golf there. John can't wait to show the "back cover" picture of Sarnoff and Marconi to Ed. *(You never know who's eyes will gaze at the P.N. Newsletter.)*



**From the 1953 Chimes magazine**

*Ed Herlihy announcing the 1953 Miss NBC, RUTH JOHNSON, our mystery photo on page two. The four finalists, L to R are: Sandra Reisenberg, Noreen Conlon, Joyce Harvey, and Maria Niles.*

**BILL HOWARD** writes that he has presented the Smithsonian Institute with his book "A Pictorial History of NBC Engineering," containing 170 photographs, and his two part "NBC Engineering — A Fifty Year History," which we have presented in our pages in condensed form.

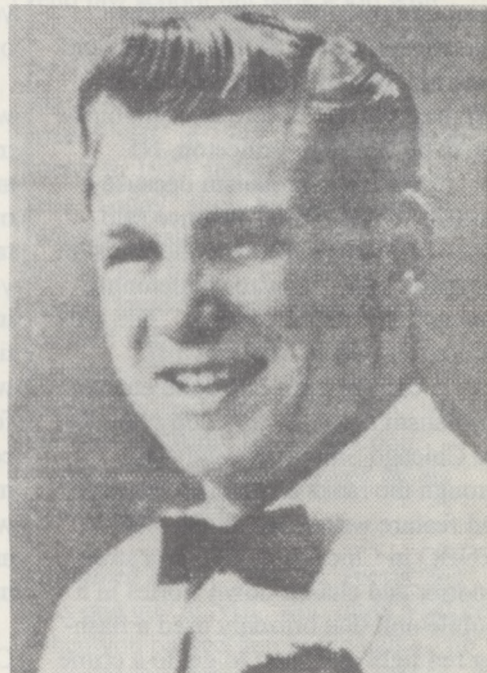




Young Tom Smiley ON THE AIR at the TD console in 3K during Howdy Doody, from a 1953 CHIMES cover.



1953 CHIMES: In their "mind reading" routine, Perry Cross is in the audience, he holds up objects for blindfolded Jim Fox to identify — with the help of Ed Hugh hidden under a table!



This is a photo of young David Wilson, copied from his NBC Guest Relations Guide ident badge. Year? 1950.

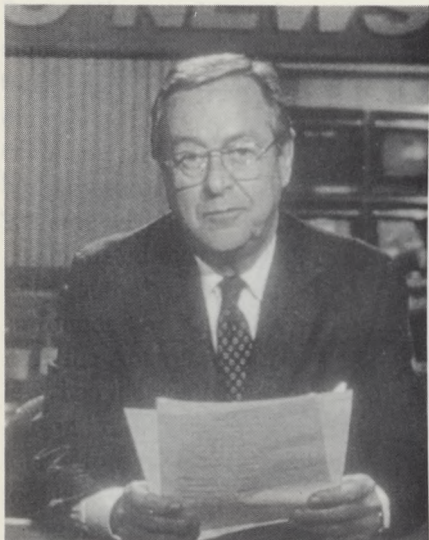


Also from 1953 CHIMES: Ed Hugh (L) and Perry Cross, (R) doing one of their many routines where Perry hypnotizes Ed into various celebrities in benefits for orphanages and other charities .

The caricature of me (H. Ripp) on page one was drawn by Peter Ustinov.

Well, I've run out of space.  
 Herb Polak, Doc Potter, Milt Wyatt, Bill Shortridge, Kathy Vuokovich and Don Luftig sent in material which would have over-run these 9 pages, so apologies for not being able to get it in this time. See you next issue. And, did you find Ann Kramer on each page? □  
 Heino





EVERETT COLLECTION

**John Chancellor**, newsman. Call him “Jack!” (as we did in the 1950s) or John, or CHAN-cell-er, or Chance-cell-LORE (the latter being his preference), the owl-faced correspondent who was part of tv as it developed and grew up, died of stomach cancer in July just one day before his 69th birthday at his home in Princeton, NJ.

“I got into journalism because I thought I’d have fun,” he once said. When his parents heard of the decision, his father said, “You’re condemning yourself to a life of poverty.” The prediction, of course, was way off.

A college drop-out, John entered journalism at age 20 as a copy boy for the Chicago Sun-Times and rose through the ranks as reporter, re-write, and feature writer. He joined NBC’s WNBQ in Chicago in 1950 as a street reporter and chased down stories in a mobile unit that brazenly used a flashing red light and siren to get to a crime scene. In 1957 he was in Little Rock covering that torrid school desegregation story. A year later he became a foreign correspondent, first covering the revolt in Algeria and then moving on to Moscow and London. John was a panelist during the crucial 1960 presidential campaign debates between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon.

In ’61 he returned home to replace Dave Garroway as “Today” show host, along with Ed Newman. A year later he was back in Europe and then became White House correspondent.

That got him to the 1964 Republican National Convention where, apparently, he blocked an aisle and security guards ejected him. With a live mike on as he was being carried out of the hall, John said, “I’ve been promised bail by my office. This is John Chancellor somewhere in custody.”

He became “Nightly News” anchor in 1970, (for some time with David Brinkley and also with Frank Magee) until 1982 when he became a 3-times-a-week commentator on the show. He retired in 1993 but occasionally he returned to the microphone, as in 1994 when he narrated the nine-part Ken Burns epic titled “Baseball.”

In 1964 he left NBC for two years to become director of the Voice of America.

The AP said he brought Midwestern forthrightness and a reassuring manner to reporting, anchoring and commentary. On CBS’ morning magazine show, “Sunday,” commentator Anthony Mason said “For 40 years .... he was calm, thoughtful, and intelligent. .... A couple of generations could turn the television on and when they saw John Chancellor they found a quiet place where thoughts could be collected, no matter how much howling there might be elsewhere. .... He was a lesson in clarity and sympathy.” He is survived by his wife Barbara.

In those 40 years Jack/John Chancellor/Chancellor reported from more than 50 foreign countries. Yes, as he expected back in 1950, he had fun. (DG)



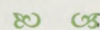
**William “Bill” Bales**, 79, NBC producer, writer, documentary maker, covered news for radio and television during more than 32 years. He died June 6 at his home in Locust Valley, NY of prostate cancer.

Bill retired in 1982 as a writer for NBC’s “Nightly News.” Since joining the news staff in 1950 he covered every Presidential election until

1980, and he produced or directed radio documentaries on the Roosevelt-Truman years and in celebration of Winston Churchill’s 80th birthday. He worked as writer, editor and field producer for the “Weekend,” and “Sunday” programs.

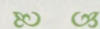
Bill was a native of Louisville, KY, and graduated from Columbia College in 1946. After serving in Army counter intelligence in World War II he authored “Tiger in the Streets,” a history of Boss Tweed’s Tammany Hall and the New York newspapermen who fought political corruption.

He is survived by his wife, Sydney Holmes Bales.



**Marjorie Gross**, Toronto born writer and producer of the television series “Seinfeld,” who also wrote a humorous article about her ovarian cancer in The New Yorker in April, died of the illness on June 7 in Los Angeles. She was 40.

Marjorie broke into television as a writer in 1981 and appeared on “Late Night with David Letterman.” She joined Jerry Seinfeld and Larry David, as a writer for “Seinfeld,” in 1994.



**Jack Reynolds**, 62, a broadcast journalist with NBC television for more than 30 years, died of colon cancer, said his wife, Judy.

Born in Brooklyn he attended Fordham where he worked for its radio station and as a page at NBC. After earning a bachelor’s degree in economics in 1955 and serving with the Marine Corps in the Far East, he held a variety of sales and executive positions with NBC and public television.

In 1961, he became public-affairs manager for NBC’s New York affiliate, for which he also produced documentaries, and in 1967 he joined the network as manager of Asian operations for NBC News.

Jack produced and reported on the conflicts in Vietnam, Cambodia, El Salvador and Lebanon, as well as on economics in Japan and Korea. He was one of the first correspondents to visit the People’s Republic of China, cover-



ing the visit of the United States Ping-Pong team and later, President Nixon's trip to China in 1972.

In 1983, he became NBC's Pentagon correspondent. After retiring in 1987, he founded Jack Reynolds Communications, a media consulting and production company.



**Stan Bashen**, 71, of leukemia, June 17, 1996. Stan was one of NBC's video tape operators in New York. He is survived by his wife Wanda.



**John B. Rogers**, 74, at his residence in Vero Beach, Florida. John was a TD on many of the big shows in the 1950's. Moving into management he headed up Studio Field Operations and later Video Tape Operations. He left engineering with a move into the Labor Relations Department.



**Harry Musselman**, 86, Electronic Maintenance. Harry retired 20 years ago after 29 years with NBC. He was living in Toms River, NJ, with his wife, Imelda.



**Bernhard (Buddy) Fleck**, 75, Video Tape Operations. Buddy suffered a stroke last January. He retired in 1981 and lived with his wife Vivian in Garnerville, NY.



**Bill Hanrahan**, 77, a pioneer network staff announcer with NBC radio and television, began his career with NBC in 1949 when the network had 50 staff announcers in New York, compared to only three today.

Before joining NBC he had worked for radio stations WELI and WNHC

Bill was the announcer for the "First Tuesday" program, the Apollo space program broadcasts and the national conventions of both parties. He was the Huntley-Brinkley announcer from the beginning. His voice was familiar in connection with documentaries, industrials and commercials.

While serving with the U.S. Army at Winchester, England during World War II, he met his wife-to-be, Ruth Parris, a Wren in the British Navy and

a native of Harrow-on-the-Hill. They were married in 1946 in this country.

"Bill was one of the most outstanding announcers in the television business," said William Wheatley, vice president of NBC News. "His deep baritone voice was widely recognized and whenever it was heard over the air it lent substance to whatever we were broadcasting."

"He was a gifted man and a very gentle man with great humor and great wavy hair," said his colleague Mel Brandt. (Also see Dick Dudley's *Ear Benders* column on page 34)



**Jack Van Buskirk**, Press Department. Jack had the perfect personality for a public relations man — exceptionally friendly, laid back, and personable — died of cancer after a short illness in July at age 68. He once published his own New Jersey weekly newspaper. He spent 20 years with NBC. He is survived by his wife Barbara. (DG)

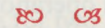


**George Heineman**, producer. George won 7 Peabody awards during a broadcast career that began in 1941 at CBS, and perhaps was best-known for creating Ding Dong School and "Shari Lewis and Lamb Chop," died of a heart attack at 78 at his home at Canaan, New York, in August.

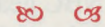
After he returned from duty with the Naval Air Service in the South Pacific during World War II, George joined NBC's Chicago station in 1948, creating children's programming and the first course for college credit to be offered by a commercial tv station. In 1956, he moved to WRCA in New York, creating "Hi Mom," "The Go Show," and "Dr. Joyce Brothers," among others. From 1957 on he garnered more titles and higher titles, becoming director of program planning and development for the net and eventually, manager, then director for public affairs.

In '68 he got a vice presidential stripe and headed children's programming. Among others, he developed

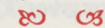
"Update," "Children's Theatre," "The World of Stuart Little," and "Tut: the Boy King." After retirement from NBC, Heineman taught at NYU's Tisch School of Art, supervised intern programs for NBC and directed student scholarship awards for the King Foundation. (DG)



**Matty Kroniak**, stagehand, in August.



**Jim Fleming**, newsman. Jim, who was the first newsman on the original Garroway "Today" show, died in August at the age of 81 at his home in Princeton, NJ. Beginning in radio, Fleming eventually worked for all three major tv networks and produced many award-winning docs. After graduating college he moved to New York intending to attend law school but took a job with CBS as an announcer and eventually became a foreign correspondent working in the middle east and Moscow. He joined NBC in 1949, became news director in 1952 and joined the innovative "Today" show the same year Pat Weaver created it. Ten years later he moved to Channel 5, working with producer David Suskind. Later still he worked with Ed Murrow on a CBS series titled "Women," for which he won a Peabody, and then joined ABC where he won an Emmy for a 1967 doc, "Africa." Fleming is survived by his wife Mary. (DG)



**Sigmund Bajak**, News & Sports. Sig was one guy at NBC who rated a salute when you passed him in the hall — he was a Naval Reserve rear admiral in addition to his various duties at 30 Rock. He died in June at the age of 71.

He served as a carrier flight pilot in the South Pacific during World War II, was on Washington, D.C. duty with the Navy Photo Center during the Korean War, commanded an anti submarine squadron in Guantanamo Bay, and headed a combat camera group in Vietnam. He ended his military career as commander of all Naval Reserve forces in the northeast. When he retired from the navy in 1984, he ended 42

(Continued on next page)



years of military service

Sig's simultaneous career at NBC began in 1955 as a page. He served as a unit manager on the Camel News Caravan with John Cameron Swayze and worked as a production manager for Max Liebman and Steve Allen. He later directed domestic and international film operations for 2 decades (when he wasn't back in uniform), and when NBC geared up for that ill fated Olympics in Moscow in 1980, he was named production director for NBC Sports Coverage in Russia.

He graduated from Miami University of Ohio, received a master's degree from the Yale Drama School, and in 1985, after retiring from NBC, he pursued studies in Polish military history at the University of Warsaw while working as a doctoral candidate.

He lived in Scarsdale and is survived by his wife Dorothy, among others. (DG)



**Ken Shea**, EJ Editor

Ken died suddenly and unexpectedly of a heart attack at home in August. He was 55 and a bachelor. He had taken a company buy-out last year after he was assigned to engineering field operations and was less than happy about being switched from his more creative editing work, where he first started as a film editor. Ken had worked at NBC for over 33 years. He was an amateur cameraman, shooting with a 16mm Bolex, and loved the arts. As a playwright, he enjoyed the success of having some of his work produced Off-Broadway. He was an opera and movie buff, and some say he attended more old movies than Woody Allen. (DG)



**Robert B. Temple**, newsman. Bob was truly a veteran New York newspaperman. He died in Altamonte Springs, Florida, after a long illness. He was 73. In a career that spanned 40 years, he worked for 8 of the 9 newspapers published in New York in the 1940s and 50s. To make it a total package, he worked one shift at the NYPost so he

could say he practiced journalism at all 9 city dailies.

During the newspaper strike in 1964 he took a part-time job at NBC News and remained for 21 years. He worked primarily in net radio news but also did a stint on the "Today" show in the era of Hugh Downs and Barbara Walters. A World War II Army veteran, Bob served in France. His son John is the assistant Sports Editor of The News. (DG)



**Mel Allen**, sportscaster.

The mellow-voiced broadcaster from Birmingham, Alabama, who spent nearly six decades reporting baseball and other sports, died at his Greenwich, CT home in June at the age of 81. Mel was the voice of the New York Yankees from 1939 to 1964, broadcasting 20 World Series. Who can forget his quizzical, "How about that?" — an oft-asked question to which he did not expect a reply. (DG)



**Tom Priestly**, cameraman/producer.

Tom was a newsreel cameraman dating back to the days when there was a lot more glamour to the job, a time when Americans were more impressionable, less blasé. Ironically, he died at age 75 while enroute to his physician's office in Manhattan.

His television career covered many years with NBC and ABC in which he worked on more than 300 news and cultural programs, nine of which won Emmys. He was especially active at NBC in the 1950s and 60s when the News Department ground out specials at a time when there was more regard for covering important stories and less regard for the bottom line. His credit as cameraman or director or producer appeared on such noted documentaries as "The Louvre," "John Steinbeck's Amer-

ica," "Sahara," "Venice be Damned," and "The Killing Ground," (not Vietnam, this one was about toxic waste).

Priestly started his career as a newsreel cameraman at Universal Pictures during World War II, he was a pool photographer assigned to General George Patton in Europe — he of the pearl handled pistols and the headline-making derring-do. Tom filmed the liberation of Buchenwald concentration camp, and at war's end he was sent to Japan to document the Japanese surrender on the deck of the battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay. He is survived by his fiancée, Ann Garfield Black, to whom he was to be married the weekend of his death. (DG)



**Helcn Kushnick**, producer.

Ms. Kushnick was Jay Leno's manager from his days as a small-time comic to his stardom on "Tonight." She was the show's executive producer for the first 4 months after Leno succeeded Johnny Carson. NBC bounced her when she demanded that Leno's guests not appear on rival talk shows. At one time she was also David Letterman's manager. Kushnick, age 51, died of cancer in August. She started her entertainment career as a secretary at International Creative Management and worked up to agent.



**William F. Storke**, producer.

Storke started at NBC as a page in 1948 and rose to produce some of the company's most prestigious tv drama movies in the era when the made-for-tv movie was a fresh idea. He died of cancer, in New York, at age 73. He supervised production of such acclaimed programs as "Search for the Nile," Arthur Miller's "Price," Tennessee Williams' "Cat On a Hot Tin Roof." He won 2 Peabody awards at NBC and rose to the title of Vice President for Programming Administration, and then Vice President for Special Programming in 1968. Once called the "king of culture," Storke eventually headed his own tv production company and start-



ing in 1982 produced "Oliver Twist," "A Christmas Carol," "The Old Man and the Sea," and "The Last Days of Patton." He is survived by his wife Georgette Mackenzie. (DG)



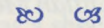
**Ken Bernstein**, newswriter

Ken, a veteran newsman and travel writer who had been a staffer in the 1950s-60s, died in July at his home in Switzerland. He was 67 year old and suffered a long illness.

Working primarily in radio, Ken was, I believe, the second correspondent to be assigned to South America (the first being Wilson Hall) in the 1950s when News President Bill McAndrew decided that part of the world might provide some news. He spent 4 years as a correspondent in Moscow in the 1960s, and also covered stories in Africa and Asia, and briefly in Vietnam during the war.

Ken also wrote 2 political thriller novels: "Intercept," 1971, about a US spy plane crash in Soviet territory during the cold war (sounds like Gary Powers) and "The Senator's Ransom," 1972, about kidnapping foreign dignitaries by Brazilian revolutionaries.

Ken settled in Switzerland in 1985 where he wrote for two travel publications. (DG)



(Continued on next page.)

## 300 Attend "Scotty" Connal Memorial

A moving memorial to celebrate the life of Allan Bruce "Scotty" Connal was held on a beautiful August afternoon in the garden of the Connal home in Old Greenwich, CT. "Scotty," aged 68, died of a heart attack in Atlanta during the Olympics where he was working for NBC as a temporary producer on special assignment for feeds to foreign markets. Stricken on a Sunday, he died 2 days later.

The memorial service was attended by more than 300 people. The scene of the service was a bucolic and restful place with a river running just beyond the Connal property. Friends and colleagues from NBC and ESPN, which he helped create in 1979, and family members, gathered under a tent as a mournful melody skirled out of a bagpipe. Sitting in the first 2 rows were "Scotty's" widow Mathilde, his 93 year old mother, Catherine Connal, 8 children and 11 grandchildren and his brother Peter.

The Reverend Bob Rieth, a pastor the family had first met in Atlanta, provided the benedictions and the opening remarks. Tributes were expressed by his brother Peter, his oldest friend Jim Schaefer, NBC director Ted Nathanson, Hall of Famer Ted Lindsay, Brian McFarlane, three of his grandchildren and other friends from Old Greenwich.

Other colleagues in attendance included Dick Auerbach, Ginny Seipt, Larry Grillo, Carla Engleman, and this reporter.

In nearly 5 decades of television production, "Scotty" was involved in some of its most famous moments. He played a part in the NBC "Heidi" football game when the net switched from the final moments of an exciting Jets-Raiders game to a kids' movie. "Scotty," then manager of sport programs, phoned from home trying to delay the start of "Heidi" as the game was about to run past the scheduled time. However, the call was too

late to halt the pre-scheduled on-time switch which zapped the game. The Raiders won, and the NBC telephone switchboard lit up like — shall we say, a Christmas tree? — and the "Heidi" tale passed into television history as a situation never to be repeated.

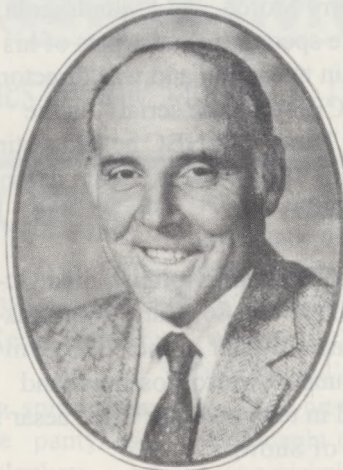
Rest well, "Scotty." □ (Roy Silver)

"Scotty" joined NBC as a page in 1947, worked as a stage manager on the Perry Como show, Milton Berle, and Sid Caesar's "Show of Shows." He had a brief military hiatus in 1951 when the Army reserve activated the NBC Broadcast unit and shipped him and wife Mathilde off to Germany for a year. He got into NBC Sports in 1964 and moved up the ladder until he was Vice President for Sports Programming and Operations. He was involved in network coverage of the Super Bowl, World Series, college bowl games and the winter Olympics at Sapporo, Japan in 1972.

He earned a reputation as an innovator by putting a mike in the cup at golf matches and creating the line of demarcation on the boards in hockey, which was one of his lifetime sports, even in recent years. He was involved in other innovations too: the isolation camera, roaming hand-held cameras, enhancing sound with stereo, and he coined the phrase, "instant replay."

In 1979 he joined the newly created ESPN and quickly became Executive Vice President for Production and Programming. In 1982 he became CEO. In 1987 he established his own production company, ConCom, Inc. He was a true pioneer in the industry.

In his home community he was constantly involved in organizing teams and the building of a local hockey rink. Scotty attended Columbia University and the University of Heidelberg. □ (Dan Grabel)





## Silent Microphones

**Marion Stephenson**, had the distinction of being the first woman vice president of NBC Radio and RCA. She started working at NBC in 1944 and retired in 1981. Marion made her home in Winter Haven, Florida, for the past 15 years. She had suffered a stroke and was confined to a nursing home where she died on October 4. (This information was forwarded to us by Lillian McNaughton from information she received from Evelyn Shoemaker. — It is through connections such as this that we can keep our membership informed. — Thanks.)



**Wilbur (Bill) L. Hildreth**, a native of Sagaponack, L.I., died on Sunday, October 6, following a fall at his home.



*Wilbur, soft spoken, always a smile.*

Bill worked for NBC for 37 years. Starting as a cameraman he soon advanced to technical di-

rector. He was the technical director of a wide variety of shows, from game shows to soaps.

He served in the Navy during World War II, assigned to a special technical unit developing television technologies for the military.

After the war he studied at a technical school in New York. He later moved to Hollywood, where he was one of the first 50 engineers to work on commercial television.

He was married to his wife, Louise, in 1948.

Most of his career was worked in Manhattan. In 1983, he retired and returned to his native Sagaponack.

"He was a farmer at heart," said his wife. "He loved Sagaponack, and he always wanted to come back."

"What everyone knew about Wilbur is that he was always there to

help people," said Louise. "He loved to talk to people and help them out."

Besides his wife, he leaves a daughter, Joy Hildreth Henry; two sons, Leland M. and Wilbur G., two sisters, Elizabeth Thayer and Mary Lou Leonard, a brother, Merrall, and a grandson, Leland M. Hildreth, 2d. (Ted Seiter sent us this information.)



**Paul Lammers**, Theater and Television Director, died on July 16 at his home in Washington, Conn. The cause was cancer, said his companion, Dr. Leo Altschul.

Paul was born in Sacramento, CA. He graduated from Northwestern University, where he earned a master's degree in speech and theater. He began his theatrical career in summer stock. Working Off Broadway, he staged "The Shoestring Revue," with Dody Goodman, "The Littlest Revue," with Tammy Grimes, Joel Grey and Larry Storch, and "Mandragola."

He spent the greater part of his career in television and was director of the CBS daytime serial "As the World Turns." At NBC he had a stint directing "The Doctors" soap, among other shows.



**Harry Glickman**, violinist, died October 6. He was 86. Harry was assistant concertmaster of the NBC Symphony under Arturo Toscanini and worked in television for Sid Caesar's "Show of Shows."

He is survived by his wife, Beatrice, among others. □



**Arthur (Art) Holub**, engineer. Art was one of the early NBC audio engineers. At the time of his retirement, some 29 years ago, he was a supervisor in audio transmission servicing both radio and tv.

Art suffered a stroke in early October and died October 16. He was 89. He lived in Paris Hill, Maine, with his wife, Dot.



**Morey Amsterdam**, broke into vaudeville in his teens as straight-man for his piano playing brother. He wrote jokes for Will Rogers and Fanny Brice. His stock in trade was the one-liner and an encyclopedic mind that could recall a joke on any subject at a moments notice. He was an



accomplished cellist and would play serious music, interrupted every few bars by one-liner jokes.

From radio, he broke into tv in 1948 on the show "Stop Me If You've Heard This One." That same year he hosted his own variety show which ran two years and then appeared on Broadway Open House. He was a co-star on "Keep Talking" from '57 to '59. Many PNers remember the laughs they had while working with Morey.

His career was renewed when he joined the cast of the Dick Van Dyke Show which ran from 1961 to 1966 on CBS. He quipped, "I moved from Yonkers to Hollywood to such an exclusive neighborhood even the police had an unlisted phone number.

In the 70s he appeared on Hollywood Squares. He continued working clubs in Vegas and Atlantic City and had just completed a two week East Coast cabaret tour.

Morey is survived by his wife, Kay, a son and a daughter. His age? — listed as either 81 or 87. □

### NEW MEMBERS

*While we mourn the loss of our old friends, we must welcome our new Peacock North members.*

Ed Dyas, Middletown, NJ  
 Arthur Finkelstein, Yonkers, NY  
 Bill Freeh, Jr., North Bergen, NJ  
 Rhoda Grady, Noank, CT  
 Letty Hudak, Westfield, NJ  
 Helen O'Neill, New Canaan, CT  
 Estelle Parsons, New York, NY



## Fire Empties 30 Rock

**NBC** was the news and not the reporter of the news on Thursday, October 10th, when an electrical fire in a junction box on the 10th floor touched off a 5 alarm fire that brought 300 firemen to Rockefeller Plaza at 4 o'clock in the morning. An estimated 100 people were in the building, mostly "lobster" trick employees — tape editors, writers, producers — preparing material for "Today" and the local cutins and they said no alarms sounded. The entire 70 floors were evacuated as firemen went through floor to floor searching for overnight employees and any sign of spreading fire.

One report said 13 people suffered smoke inhalation. Another put the figure at 18. But there were no serious injuries.

The "Today" show and the local "Today in New York" used 49th street

as their studio as the building was unsafe and, of course, there was no power to light studios. Remote cameras, generally used for high street shots during "Today" got a good view of the scene. Firemen and behind-the-scenes NBC employees, like editor Vito Colalucci, were stars of the morning, retelling their experience in the smoky building. Damage seemed to be confined to the 10th floor and the 5th floor, although water damage was reported in studio 8H and the 6th floor studios used by local news and Conan O'Brien's show.

NBC's local evening shows came out of the CNBC studios in Ft. Lee, New Jersey, and Tom Brokaw was sent to Washington to use WRC facilities. □ DG



Dues are due January 1, 1997

## 57th Street Massacre

**THE** "Massacre on 57th Street," in which 7 high profile WCBS anchors and reporters were fired in one fell swoop by General Manager Bud Carey (formerly of WNBC), was a shocker early in October. The victims: John Johnson (reportedly getting one million a year), Michelle Marsh (\$900,000), sportscaster Bernie Smilovitz (a mere \$875,00), Roseanne Coletti, and 3 exWNBC-ers: Tony Guida, Reggie Harris, and Magee Hickey.

Carey said, in effect, that WCBS's ratings were so horrible that piecemeal corrections would not do, so he bit the bullet and dumped most of the stars. Weatherman Ira Joe Fisher was among the survivors.

Ah, but there's good news tonight. Johnson and Marsh were quickly hired by WNBC. Hey, when you're getting that kind of pay check, unemployment is serious! □ DG

## • WE ARE SURVIVORS •

**W**e retirees were born before television, before penicillin, before polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, plastic, contact lenses, frisbees and the PILL.

We were born before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams, and ball point pens, before pantyhose, dishwashers, clothes dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip dry clothes and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first and then lived together. How quaint can you be? In our time, closets were for clothes, not for "coming out of", bunnies were small rabbits and rabbits were not Volkswagons. Designer jeans were scheming girls named Jean, and having a meaningful relationship meant getting along well with your cousins. We thought fast food was what you ate during Lent, and Outer Space was the back of the Rialto Theatre.

We were before house-husband, gay rights, computer dating, dual careers and computer marriages. We were before day-care centers, group therapy and nursing homes. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, artificial hearts, word processors, yogurt, and guys wearing earrings.

For us, time-sharing meant togetherness — not computers or condominiums. A "chip" meant a piece of wood, hardware meant hardware and software wasn't even a word!

In 1940 "made in Japan" meant junk and the term "making out" referred to how you did on your exam. Pizzas, MacDonald's, and instant coffee were unheard of.

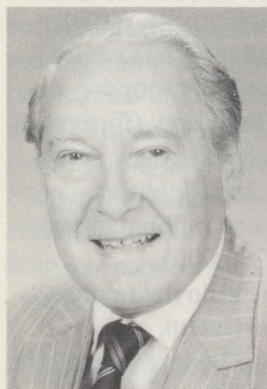
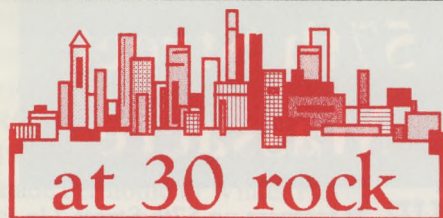
We hit the scene when there were 5 & 10¢ stores where you bought things for five and ten cents. An ice cream cone cost a nickel or a dime. For one nickel you could ride a bus, make a telephone call, buy a Pepsi or enough stamps to mail a letter and two post cards. You could buy a new Chevy coupe for \$600, but who could afford one: a pity too, because gas was 11¢ a gallon.

In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, GRASS was mowed, coke was a cold drink, and POT was something you cooked in. ROCK MUSIC was Grandma's lullaby and AIDS were helpers in the Principal's office. We were certainly not before the difference between the sexes was discovered but we were surely before sex change: we made do with what we had. And we were the last generation so dumb to think you needed a husband or a wife to have a baby!

No wonder we are so confused and there is such a generation gap today! □

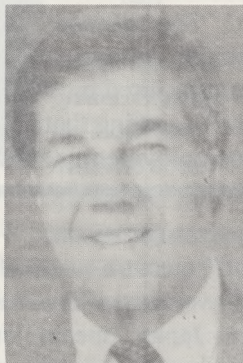
— WE ARE SURVIVORS —





By  
Dan  
Grabel

It was a round trip and a climb up the ladder for **Denny Swanson** when he returned to NBC in June as president and general manager of WNBC. We first worked with Denny in the late 1960s when he provided sports stories for News Program Service, where I was a producer along with **Jimmy Aldrich**. Denny was an excellent reporter and churned out the stuff on deadline from his office in Chicago.



Denny Swanson

Swanson comes to the news job with 35 years of experience in the business — real know-how, real accomplishment. He spent the past 20 years at ABC-tv — and as president of Sports from 1986 to 1996. During part of that period he was also president of Daytime and Children's Programming. Still earlier, Swanson was vice-president and GM of WLS in Chicago where he created "The Oprah Winfrey Show," the most successful daytime talk show in tv history. He won a Peabody award while at KABC in LA for coverage of the police department and prior to that he was with NBC's

WMAQ in Chicago and also the network staff there starting in 1968. Currently, "Monday Night Football" at ABC also has zoomed to the top 10 under Denny's regime.

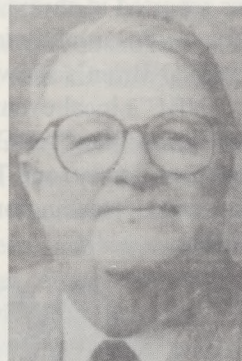
In his first conversation with the WNBC crew he shook them up with a thought that there would be some changes. Among other things, and this is good news for NABET hands, he doesn't want any more daily hires, as has been the recent policy under **Bill Bolster**. You get economy with daily hires, but no true allegiance. The same guys/gals could be working for NBC Monday and ABC Tuesday. He pointed out, too, that they could carry important company secrets out the door with them. Hooray, Denny! (At one time we heard that management had a goal of 67 percent daily hires on the job.)

Why did he leave ABC? Swanson said he was never really part of the ABC plans after Disney bought it in April.

He had other offers but was financially set so he didn't make his move until he got something he wanted. Realistically, and in words we could all agree on in this business, Denny said, "I had a great 20 year run."

**Bob Wright** described his new employee in these words — "His record of successful programming and proven management are unparalleled."

Bill Bolster, who was Swanson's predecessor, and simultaneously held the title president of CNBC, will now concentrate on the latter job which has global operations in Asia, Europe and Latin America. He had a successful career at Channel 4, leading it to the number one spot in the NY market and added 9½ hours a week of local news.

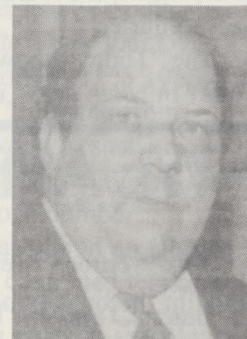


Bill Bolster

Other Bolster accomplishments: a revamped news studio, a new master control room, and consolidation of staff from 4 floors to 2.

One thing Bolster probably didn't like was the lengthy criticism from a viewer — one Linda Z. Miller. She faxed Channel 4 News 4 pages of steaming opinions on what, she said, was wrong with the operation. For example, one blizzardy day reporter **Carolyn Gusoff** was out covering a Mary Tyler Moore story and wearing what appeared to be a fur-trimmed coat. Moore, who is anti-fur, (but probably wears leather belts and leather shoes, and who knows, she might even ride a horse on occasion) lashed out in a tirade about the wardrobe. Management didn't support Gusoff and Miller called them "wimps" and added, "No wonder so many NBC reporters have gone to work for **Jerry Nachman** at WCBS!"

Miller proceeded to critique much of the staff. **Sue Keenan**: "She has a speech problem, doesn't open her mouth and it sounds like 'Long Island Lockjaw' — the affected speech of old line society who summured at their Hamptons estates. **Don**



Jerry Nachman

**William**: "He speaks so slowly he puts me to sleep. When he's live, he loses concentration when the director says something into his earpiece." **Andrea Hall**: "She can't read her teleprompter and as weekend anchor she's just plain NG. **Janice Huff**: "She's bright, she's articulate, but she needs a speech therapist." **Asa Aarons** "I won't mention his looks because we can't all be beautiful, (But Linda, you just did mention his looks) but most of his consumer reporting is merely top-lining of 'Consumer Reports' studies (NBC buys 12 CU reports a month for Asa) He does so little hard, consumer cov-



erage that it seems more like lip service." Miller winds up on the reporters with "They would probably all play well in Cedar Rapids, but in New York, we know who's good."

On WNBC handling the news, says viewer Linda Miller, "Your teasers are sensationalistic and border on misrepresentation!" Example: Waldbaum's roof collapses and your promo says 'Dozens of ambulances on the scene' when less than a dozen shoppers were injured, and none seriously." Also, "Increasingly, your news of movie stars, tv stars and celebrities, are merely personalities pushing their next show, their next book, their next cause. This is not news — put it on the magazine shows."

### ◀ How Sweet It Is ▶

WNBC management let employees have their cake and eat it too when the late Spring sweeps figures came in and showed that the station was 'king of the hill' again. A buffet of luscious desserts was offered up at the Station Break Cafe on the 6th floor. In addition, a rolling ice cream parlor, with fudge sundaes, etc. was sent through the entire office for an afternoon delight. Even the Long Island and Jersey bureaus were sent goodies!

### ◀ Acquisitions ▶

Remember the days when nets were entitled to own 5 stations and no more? Not so today. NBC has purchased its 10th and 11th stations — KNSD in San Diego and WVTM in Birmingham. The net's coverage can now reach 25 percent of the tv households in America. **Bob Wright**, CEO, told the shop that "We believe the cornerstone of our core broadcasting business will remain a strong and competitive station group." San Diego is the nation's 27th largest market and Birmingham ranks 51.

### ◀ Honors ▶

The New York chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, (now headed by **Arthur Kent**, the former NABET local 11 president and a great cable puller in his

day), is honoring 3 NBC-ers. Unfortunately 2 of the awards will go posthumously. The Academy will honor **Gloria Clyne** by induction into its "Silver Circle" on November 11th "for her significant contribution to television for 25 or more years — an outstanding career that had a major impact on the communications industry in New York." The posthumous honors will go to **George Heineman** and to **Jack McCarthy**, who worked at NBC in the early 40s before his long career at WPIX (where we knew that professional Irishman very well and enjoyed many a remote with him at the mike). They are in good company.



Jack McCarthy

Earlier recipients include **Walter Cronkite**, **Betty Furness**, **Gabe Pressman**, **Bill Beutel**, etc..

### ◀ MSNBC ▶

NBC teamed up with Microsoft in June to create MSNBC, a 24-hour cable news chain and a page on the Internet with inter-active possibilities. One of the objectives: build a new audience from the personal computer crowd, many of whom have drifted away from the television set. On opening day in July it had a potential audience in 21 million homes. **Andy Lack**, the NBC News president commented on the opening:

"The greatest single change in our lives was not television, but the personal computer." **Bob Wright** was responsible for the move into cable when NBC created CNBC, the business news



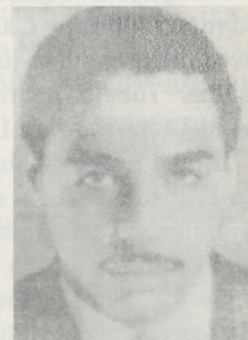
Andy Lack

channel now available in 56-million homes. Of course, one must always wonder, how many people are tuning

into cable, and how many to the Internet. NBC has a lot of other irons in the communications fire: Super Channel in Asia, Europe and South America, and a 25 percent to 50 percent stake in such entities as the Arts & Entertainment network, American Movie Classics, Bravo, Court TV, the History Channel and 7 regional sports channels.

Wright says such expansion will continue and one of the reasons is the insulation it provides in the increasingly volatile traditional tv broadcasting industry. MSNBC will have to reach 40-million subscribers to become profitable. To make that happen NBC is slotting its big guns into the operation — with **Brian Williams** anchoring the big evening news show opposite CNN's **Larry King**. Other hosts will include **Tom Brokaw**, **Katie Couric**, **Bryant Gumble**, **Bill Moyers**, **Jane Pauley**, **Matt Lauer**, and **Ed Gordon**, among others. Gordon is

the reporter from the Black Entertainment Network who got an exclusive interview with O.J. Simpson after the murder trial verdict came in. Gordon will also work for "Dateline" and "Today." Can this be a "grooming?" Lest we forget, shock jock **Don Imus** is also on that talent list. MSNBC will simulcast the first 3 hours of his show, starting at 6am. Can he be caustic for a whole three hours? I'll bet we'll see a cutback there after the first Neilsons are in.



Ed Gordon



Don Imus

What a change in thinking. Remember **Bob Mulholland**?, once the News prexy. When he headed News in

(Continued on next page)



1981 he was told "stick to the core business." That's now an era of ancient history in this business.

#### < Slaughterhouse Approach >

As we've noted, MSNBC is a 24 hour a day gig and that takes a lot of programming. Fourteen hours will be business fare and talk shows. That leaves 10 more to fill. If they present schlock, it could mean just Bob Wright and the producers are watching the tube on that cable station. NBC hopes to solve part of that problem by going to the news archives. Remember how they used to say the Chicago slaughterhouses butchered a pig and used everything but the squeal? Or as a headline in the NYPost put it one day, "What's old is new on MSNBC." **Bruno Cohen**, the programming chief, and **Don Ohlmeyer**, the West Coast president, have both suggested that idea. Recycling, they call it, and possibly include **Tom Snyder's** "Tomorrow" show, and maybe **Johnny Carson**, who I believe may own the re-run rights to his material. The rich get richer. Also **David Letterman's** "Late Night."

**Jane Pauley** will host "Time and Again," using archival stuff to reprise major news events of the 20th century. I recall some years ago when Fox Movietone, News of the Day and other newsreels went out of business and it was a tough job selling the archives. Who wanted yesterday's news? Well, now, yesterday's news seems like tomorrow's programming. You can rationalize that today's generation didn't see the Von Hindenburg zeppelin explode, or the Normandie catch fire at a dock in New York, or that mournful train carrying FDR from Warm Springs, Georgia, to Hyde Park, New York. (Hey, I saw those the first time around!)

#### < Olympic Look >

It was interesting to see broadcasts of the Atlanta Olympics on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean — in London, and in Scarsdale. I visit one, live in the other. In Britain, the feed comes in with lots of action — sometimes too much, when you see an hour of

women's hurling or did they call it field hockey? They got a lot of live coverage. Anyway, at home it was constant tales of "human drama," the NBC mini-docs on many of the athletes, and often, taped highlights. **David Neal**, the coordinating producer explained it this way, "Once these Olympic games are over we want to be known as storytellers. "That's the way it came out on the many "Up Close & Personal" profiles. Neal said the net had to find a balance in satisfying the taste of the hard-core sports addict and the "Olympics-only" sports viewer who needs perspective and the human story behind each competitor. NBC came to that conclusion after quizzing 10,000 people in focus groups. **Dwight Stones**, the high jumper turned commentator, said "This is the Roone Arledge theory of how to televise an Olympics, and it works." Neal finalized it with a comparison. NBC transmitted a humongous amount of live coverage in the Seoul, Korea, Olympics in 1988 and got shockingly low ratings.

#### < HDTV >

Better get used to that abbreviation — high definite television. NBC's Washington O&O, WRC, will be the first fully operational HDTV station. Some \$6-million will be spent over the next 3 years testing and evaluating HDTV equipment in this all-industry project. WRC will send out encoded digital tv signals designed to aid electronics manufacturers in the development of the new equipment. There also will be demonstrations for viewers.

#### < Proud as a >

The net had a very good year 95-96, ending up number one in all key adult demographics — its first such victory with the 18-to-49 crowd since the 1989-90 season. The top six shows in that group were NBC's "ER," "Seinfeld," "Friends," "Caroline in the City," "The Single Guy," and "Boston Common."

- The net had a 29 week winning streak among 18-49ers, the longest streak in tv history.

- The net showed growth on 5 of the 7 nights of the week.
- Jay Leno is having his highest-rated full season.
- Conan O'Brien ditto.
- And the daytime sked is showing among all nets the largest year-to-year growth

#### < TV People — NBCers >

**Jeff Zucker**, the "Today" show executive producer, didn't have too far to search for his new bride. She's **Caryn Nathanson** who works as a rights and clearance supervisor on "Saturday Night Live." That's one way to get tickets to the hot Saturday night show ..... **Neil Shapiro**, ex producer of "Dateline" must be very popular with his staff. He took 75 of them to a Yankee ball game ..... The NYPost informs us that WNBC launched itself onto the Internet's World Wide Web in August. However, the tabloid did not include the Internet address. I guess that's why the Post is a tabloid. Brevity, my boy, brevity..... WNBC anchor **Perri Peltz** who was on maternity leave and had



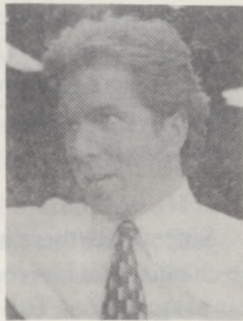
Perri Peltz

her baby — a son, her second child has moved from the local station to MSNBC. She also fills in on the weekend "Today in New York." ..... Forty-nine year old News president **Andy Lack**

will be around into the next century. He's just signed a contract taking him through 2002, meaning he will be in that job longer than **Bill McAndrew** if Lack completes the contract term ..... **Dick Ebersol**, the president of NBC Sports, will be around even longer, until 2004, under his new 8 year contract. Ebersol suffered a heart attack early in the year but says he's okay now. He was responsible for that long term Olympics deal to which NBC committed \$1.25 billion. That's with a "B." .... Sportscaster **Bob Costa** has signed a 6



year deal and will take a 6-month sabbatical next March to enjoy his family and a little relaxation ..... How much is it worth if they suddenly boot a guy out of the job of David Letterman's executive producer? The News says that firing was worth \$3-million to **Robert Morton**, who promptly took the dough and whisked away his girlfriend to the Tuscany hills of Italy ..... Is there a career problem for young **Andria Hall**? The channel 4 weekend anchor was taken off the 11 pm weekend news gig. One thing about being on-air talent, everybody has a chance to comment on your career, your style, your dress, etc. Us?, we're not commenting, we're only reporting what others say ..... **Judy Smith**, NBC's senior vice president for corporate communications is departing after 3 years on the job to — as they usually say — “pursue other opportunities.” Now, that can mean other offers or a job search ..... Former NBC program development exec **Jamie Tarses** has taken over as president of ABC's entertainment division — first woman in the job. With a little chutzpah, the attractive 32 year old Tarses quit her NBC job in February for a holiday in Tuscany and what turned out to be a 4-month negotiation for the new job ..... Here's the route the new WNBC weekend anchor, **Jim Watkins** took to get to 30 Rock:



*Jim Watkins*

Kingsport, TN, Nashville, Boston, LA, Cincy, Philly and then NY ..... NBC Pages, past and present, staged a party in Central park and 20 of them showed up. Two thousand people a year apply for the 50 jobs which pay \$10 an hour, provide no benefits, and last about 10 months. **Michael Eisner** of Disney fame is among the successful who have held the job ..... NBC's most senior correspondent, **John Dancy**, retired

from NBC September first. He's now a fellow at the Shorenstein Center of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard ..... The word from **Ed McMahon** is that **Johnny Carson** has become a recluse out there in Malibu and never goes anywhere. But that report seems contradictory since in the next mouthful McMahon said he went to a 3-hour lunch with Carson at Shatzi's restaurant in Santa Monica ....



*Marvelous Marv.*

**Marv Albert**, who's looking younger than ever with his new hair-do, has signed on for 5 more years as Madison Square Garden's voice of the NY Knicks. In his spare time he also does the Rangers, and for NBC he covers football and basketball. A real stay-at-home guy. Marv has been doing the Rangers for 31 years. Now that's a steady job! .... That crazy who killed NBC stagehand **Theron Montgomery** in 1994 is finally being put away on a plea bargaining deal that will run for 12½ to 25 years. William Tager's second degree murder charge was reduced to manslaughter. Court-appointed psychiatrists said he was unfit to stand trial.

#### ◀ TV People — Elsewhere ▶

**Linda Ellerbee** is still producing for the Nickelodeon network. Her last piece was “The Body Trap,” — on the over-emphasis on beautiful people on the tube. Linda also is heading up Lifetime network's “Go Vote '96” campaign. When industry people went to

the White House in July to press for more quality kids programming on tv, Linda ended up in a photo with President Clinton and **Bill Cosby** .... Here's one for the Wrinklies set (that's what they call senior citizens in Britain). **Arthur Tracy**, known as the Street Singer on 1930s radio (he was as ‘big’ as **Bing Crosby** at that time), is alive and well and 97. He lives in Manhattan and observed his birthday in August. “Marta, Rambling Rose of the Wildwood” was Tracy's monumental number. He was a CBS star, but hey, legends are legends ..... The Infomercial Marketing Report says that the O.J. Simpson 2-hour tape telling his side of the murder story has sold only 40,000 copies and that the producers are in a big hole because they paid him \$3-million for the gig. The Report says the Weather Channel's tape of live shots of tornadoes and such has sold 100,000 copies to storm buffs. So I guess the big wind is a bigger attraction than hot air ..... **Mike Taibbi** who left NBC for CBS asked his boss **Jerry**

**Nachman** for a contract release so he could move over to “Dateline.” No deal, said Nachman, stay put ..... Well, Taibbi has, but Nachman hasn't. The exec who has worked for the NYPost and NBC 4 was bounced as Channel 2's News Director because he could not improve the ratings. The station won a Peabody and an Ed Murrow award during his 2-year tenure. New job — developing programming for CBS' Eyemark Entertainment syndication ..... CBS' Morning Show has revamped itself. **Paula Zahn** and **Harry Smith** are out. **Jane Robelot** and **Jose Diaz-Balart** are in. And now call it “Channel 2 This Morning.” ..... **John Corporon** has retired from WPIX after 25 years as news director. That's got to be a record. Most last about 2 years in that



*Mike Taibbi*

*(Continued on next page.)*



job, as Nachman will testify ..... The **Povichs** will finally be one — on the air — when **Connie Chung** and spouse



Connie

**Maury Povich** will be co-anchors of a news and information program produced by Dreamworks Television in 1998. It will be an analysis of the day's biggest story. Good

idea, **Ted Koppel** will like that .....

**Arthur Kent**, one of several A.K.s we all know — the Scud — is now a foreign correspondent for CNN, headquartered in NY ..... After 53 years in broadcasting **David Brinkley** is going to bow out of his Sunday show, "This Week with David Brinkley" later this year. The 76 year old vet will focus on other projects at ABC ..... After all that brou-ha-ha about **Kathie Lee Gifford** and the sweatshops, TV Guide took a poll and 58 percent of the respondents said she should quit her morning show. This was one of those call-in polls, so viewers had to spend 99 cents to get their voices heard. The NYPost quipped that 99 cents is 3 hours wages if you're sewing Kathie's duds in Central America. Last November 40 percent of the respondents to another poll said she should get a face lift. Frankly, she looks pretty good to me, and I think her pluses outweigh the bad publicity. One article I saw said Gifford earns \$11-million a year from the rag trade sideline.

#### ◀ All About Channel 4 ▶

The station has added 7 new Sky-cam locations, bringing the total to 19 strategically positioned cameras for traffic reports and hopefully other news coverage. Two more will be set up by year's end. Its a lot cheaper than sending out 21 crews! .... ABC has done likewise, setting up 2 cameras atop the Empire State Building with the capability of a 360 degree view of the city, Of course, buildings some-

times get in the way of the street level shot, but there's always those great sunsets looking west. ABC has out-done NBC on news copters. It has 2, NBC has one. While flying over New Jersey, the NBC copter spotted a field of marijuana which was not viewable from the ground and reported it to police. The property is owned by ABC-tv and I believe the remote spot was near a transmitting tower.

#### ◀ GO 4 IT ▶

The proud peacock is really strutting its feathers this fall with the introduction of 7 new shows — 3 dramas, 4 comedies — in the prime time schedule so it will be interesting to see how well the programming mavens make out. Here's the fare:

*Monday:* "Mr. Rhodes"  
*Tuesday:* "Something So Right"  
*Wednesday:* "Men Behaving Badly"  
*Thursday:* "Suddenly Susan,"  
*Saturday:* "Dark Skies" and "The Pretender"

#### ◀ Hope for Hope ▶

Old soldiers never die they just fade away, as Doug MacArthur put it.

But old performers are always ready to hop back on the boards.



Still golfs each day.

The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences honored **Bob Hope** on his 50th anny in the business in June. The 93 year old comic only did a drop-in, said a few words at the Hollywood award, but he did thank his 7 comedy writers.

Bob's first NBC special in 2 years scheduled to air in August will air instead on November 23. Tony Danza is Bob's co-host.

Bob has been with NBC since the 30s — almost as long as Nipper. Longer than Gloria. He is now fading from the NBC scene by announcing

that he has severed all his connection with the company after some 60 years.

#### ◀ Memories of Another Golden Girl ▶

When we read NYPost tv critic Michelle Gréppi's revelations about **Kristin Jeannette-Meyers**, the perky blonde lawyer/reporter who zoomed to overnight fame on Court TV during the Simpson trial and then worked on a spin-off show (syndicated "Inside America's Courts" seen on WNBC), we were reminded of NBC's Golden Girl of a few years ago.



Jeanette-Meyers

Kristin seems to have outdone our GG. When she got an offer from CBS to head its Morning show, Kristin asked out from her Court TV contract, and Greppi said CBS paid Court TV's Steve Brill \$25,000. He turned right around and doled out \$15,000 of that, about \$750 each to 20 of Kristin's old colleagues, explaining it was compensation for "pain and suffering" working with Jeannette-Meyers. She reportedly threw tantrums, walked off the set, held up production while getting made up, and demanding a stool that would make her appear as tall as co-host **Gregg Jarrett!** Ahhh stardom. The CBS Morning job? That went to **Jane Robolet**. NBC's other Golden Girl was the late **Jessica Savitch**.

#### ◀ History Channel Rockets ▶

Since 1989 there hasn't been a cable channel that has rocketed to success as quickly as The History Channel, says NBC's **Thomas Rogers**, president of NBC Cable. (We have mentioned in PN that HC was owned by Hearst and Disney, but NBC has a 25 percent stake) The 24 hour a day service attracts an audience similar to A&E — older, more educated, more affluent and is strongest among male viewers aged 35 to 64.



### ◀ Piece of the Rock ▶

GE, which has its name in lights atop 30 Rock, has bought the 1.6 million square feet it occupies in the building. The company, which apparently wanted to stay in New York anyway, is getting a \$7-million sales tax exemption from the city as an extension of the deal it made with City Hall in 1987 to stay put until 2002. The NBC headquarters employs 2,250 people and now has guaranteed to remain at Rockefeller Center until the year 2010.

### ◀ TV Business Potpourri ▶ Net Expansion

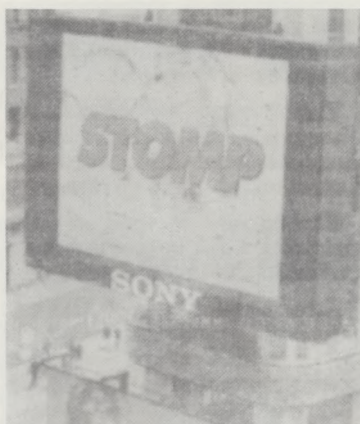
Remember a few years back, not long after GE bought RCA and NBC, there was talk of GE dumping television and getting into real, money-making industries?

TV stations are now considered the hottest properties in the media world, sez the NYTimes, partially because of the government's new position on ownership which no longer limits it to just 5 stations. NBC is now up to 11. And Fox, taking over New World Communications, added 10 more stations to its covey. Next, The Tribune Company paid \$1.13 billion for 10 stations.

Previously, the government limited corporate ownership so that the tv coverage of any single operator was limited to 25 percent of the American viewing market. That has been upped to 35 percent. NBC's new lineup has increased its coverage to 25 percent so there is still room for acquisitions.

### ◀ Jumbotron ▶

That's what they call the big Sony screen in Times Square which NBC has rented for 10 years according to columnist Cindy Adams at a price tag of nearly \$20-million. (When I see those kinds of figures for purchases and salaries and such I immediately divide it in half.) The Sony name is off and NBC is on the 42 foot by 23 foot Jumbotron on the old New York Times building just above the news ribbon. Cindy points out that the Square is always full of tourists so the sign is a



Times Square's JUMBOTRON.

good spot for national promotions and don't forget New Year's eve when the ball comes down. When Adams quoted Bob Wright on this acquisition, we were reminded of Charlie Wilson of General Motors fame many years ago when he said "What's good for General Motors is good for America." Now, Bob Wright has said, "NBC is America. New York is the front door of America. And Times Square is its porch. I think this is what our parents would have wanted us to do."

### ◀ Scan ▶

CNBC and IBM had joined forces to present a weekly half-hour on the global influences of information technology to be titled "Scan." That should now be changed to "Scram," since the idea has been scrapped — because some considered it to be just another infomercial. IBM was to own the show and have final say over its content, said one source. However, NBC said it has editorial control over what goes out over its network and, of course, that has always been the policy.

"Scan" sounded like a good idea since it was to present features such as Vatican priests digitizing ancient manuscripts for the Internet and science students tracking butterfly migrations. The producers already have 45 stories in the can so the material is sure to turn up somewhere, and IBM has said its name is never mentioned in the Vatican project. Hmmm? well why was "Scan" scrapped? You'd

think it would take more than unfounded criticism to push IBM around.

### ◀ Cross Promotion Static ▶

When NBC invited viewers of the NBA finals to switch to cable after the basketball on the regular channel, many affiliates complained because they did not want to lose viewers. For NBC's part it is in both camps — traditional tv and many cable operations, and an essential part of its business plan is to promote MSNBC, so this is not going to go away. The issue should provide some testy moments at the next affiliates meeting. Hey, not too many local stations want to desert the net that is bringing in the biggest audiences.

### ◀ History Channel ▶

Here's a reprise of the item above. The Hearst/Disney History Channel which had planned to produce a series of tv profiles of American corporations titled "The Spirit of Enterprise," has dropped the project. Each subject company would have underwritten production costs, bought advertising time on the show, and have editorial control over content! Daniel Davids of History Channel explained "There was concern suggesting the appearance of lack of objectivity." Boy, where has he been all these years, *suggestion of lack of objectivity?*

### ◀ Insurance ▶

GE Capital Corporation has announced plans to buy First Colony Insurance for \$1.8 billion. Upon the announcement, FC's stock shot up from \$25 to \$35. It has been described as a "Tiffany property." Strangely, to me, GE's share price dropped 25 cents.

### ◀ Fly Boys ▶

We all know GE still makes refrigerators, but every time you look around you discover another area of interest for the giant. GE Capital owns one out of every 12 commercial airplanes worldwide — and it is getting bigger. It recently ordered \$4 billion dollars worth of Boeing jets. Few airlines own the planes they fly, and at

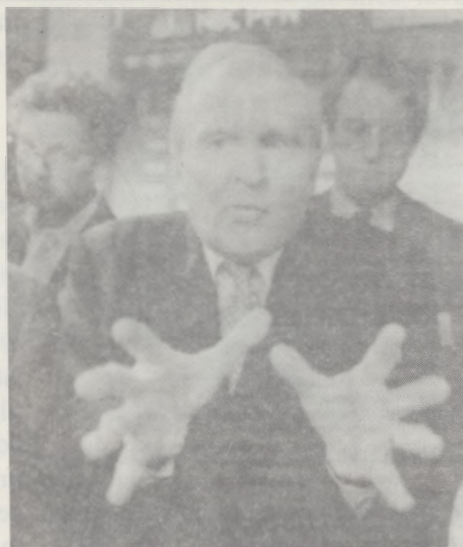
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least half of all aircraft are leased from corporations like GE.

### ◀ Words from Welch ▶

When **Jack Welch** of GE speaks, it is like wisdom coming down from Sinai, the mountain, not the hospital, so the wise should take heed. Before Welch took over GE it was capitalized at \$12-billion. Today, it is capitalized at \$142-billion. Shall we continue today's class in economic philosophy? (His pay last year was \$13-million and he owns \$37-million in stock. Retirement pay when he quits - \$2.3-million).



NYPost: Luiz Ribeiro

Jack Welch: "Keep it simple!"

Welch's tips for success:

- ◆ Build self confidence.
- ◆ Keep things simple.
- ◆ Set impossible goals for yourself.
- ◆ Encourage passion among your staff.
- ◆ Act quickly.
- ◆ Dominate your market.
- ◆ Slash bureaucracy.

There's more Welch philosophy, but we'll let you digest that for today.



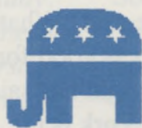
*Dan Grabel is a retired NBC NY newswriter. He and wife Pat live in Scarsdale, NY.*

## VIEWERS NIX POLS'



**PITCH**

by Dan Grabel



The GOP Elephant and the Democratic Donkey laid an egg this summer, and while you might think this is difficult, anxious politicians proved that they may be good talkers, but they *ain't* good show producers.

"Borrrring," was Ted Koppel's description and he picked up his mike and pancake makeup and departed the Republicans in San Diego. "More infomercial than a news event," said Ted. The Niensens proved him right.

For instance: Robert Dole's acceptance speech — it should have been the highlight of the week. It ranged from a puny 5.6 on NBC to just 3.5 on CBS. (For comparison, "Sixty Minutes" earns a 9.0.)

Day by day the Dems beat the Republicans, except when Nancy Reagan and Colin Powell were the biggies, and the first convention day was fresh, new programming for tv buffs. Hillary, Gore and Bill Clinton bested their Republican opposition on successive nights — that would be Governor Christine Whitman and Susan Molinari, then Elizabeth Dole, and finally the ticket — Dole-Kemp.

I think the Dems pulled a fast one on the tv producers. Hillary, who, I believe, originally was supposed to speak later in the evening, was switched, with no announcement, to the period when the nets would be covering the Chicago show and she got her net exposure. (If I'm wrong, send letters of complaint to Pete, the **PN** CEO.)

On all 3 major nets and PBS, the viewing audience was down compared with the 1992 conventions. CNN had slightly bigger audiences on 3 of the 8 nights, but how many viewers in Afghanistan and Zanzibar vote in the

November election?

So what's ahead for the year 2000? — (one year before the next millennium). One view is that the nets will only carry Thursday night's acceptance speeches. CNN, PBS and C-Span probably will give the pols more airtime. But Tom Brokaw says, "We're headed for cable. That audience is almost as large as the broadcast networks." For NBC the outlets are CNBC and MSNBC.

Jeff Geenfield, the ABC media analyst, said "The conventions used to give the voters a chance to evaluate the candidates, but with a scripted convention that is no longer true." Also, the conventions used to be the place where the outcome of the nominating races culminated. There was real suspense and real excitement, and real races. ("Mister Chairman. Allllllabarma casts 37 votes for Underwood.")

The 48 year tradition of live coverage began in Philadelphia in 1948. We were in Philly with a WPIX news operation at both conventions — a big deal for a local station that had just gone on the air. But WPIX was also feeding the Tribune station in Chicago, and packaging Telepix newsreel coverage (John Tillman, Ed Thorgeson) for other independent stations. Summer 1948, Truman and Dewey. Gosh, I remember all the excitement at the Bellevue-Stratford hotel where the important pols resided, the expense accounts dinners at Lou Tendler's restaurant, and Ted Lewis and his orchestra was the big attraction at Palumbo's night club. It was a time a young newsman could even bring his mother down to convention city and get her a coveted ticket to experience the excitement right there in convention hall. The beginning of television's golden era.

Finally, these words about the 1996 Chicago affair from a NYTimes report. The CBS Chicago affil ran a promo of the high points of its convention coverage and a reporter breathlessly announced, "The Democrats have a standing ovation planned" □



# NBC Happy With Olympics *By Dan Grabel*



The Centennial Olympics in Atlanta. That is the big story for NBC in 1996 and there were plenty of pros and cons on the coverage — hey, that's better than being ignored.

We're going to get views from both sides before we get into the depth of this one. The Nielsen figures showed that NBC averaged a 22.7 rating / 42 share over 17 nights — a 25 percent increase over the 1992 Summer games in Barcelona and the highest rated Olympics since ABC's LA coverage in 1984 — 23.2/44. For comparison, the popular CBS "60 Minutes" garners a 9.0/18.

All the figures were up — daytime, late night, the closing weekend, and it all spilled over to the local stations. Even female viewing, up 25 percent.

Now the brickbats. Michael Starr of the NYPost: Too much emphasis on American athletes, syrupy feature stories, and failure to alert viewers that they were watching delayed tape of events. At The News: Dave Bianculli called the coverage "jingoistic." He was livid about NBC pressure to get runner Carl Lewis on the 100 meter relay team. He didn't make it. Bianculli did like the unusual camera angles in swimming and running events. (Underwater cameras followed the synchronized swimmers while a robotic camera kept pace with the runners.)

Letters to the editor complaints: NBC usually showed only the US athlete on the winner's block, How many times

do we have to see Kerri Strug's ankle?, Too much pro-US hype. Jumping from event to event was confusing. Live or tape, we didn't know. Said one lady — "The women commentators shrieked." And finally: Almost every commentator, with the exception of Bob Costas, has been poor.

The defense, from Dick Ebersson in a NYTimes Op-ed letter: "The games have not only been the most widely viewed Olympic telecasts ever, but also the most watched event of any kind in television history. ♦♦♦Nightly research polls have shown that viewers have given our coverage a 97

percent approval rating, unprecedented in NBC research history. ♦♦♦ We aired personal profiles on 45 foreign athletes, representing almost half of the total number of profiles televised. In addition, significant portions of our coverage focused on foreign competitors."

Neal Pilson, formerly president of CBS Sports, said "On balance, I think they did a credible job. I would have labeled the live coverage to build the dramatic element. But I would not have labeled the taped portions."

FYI, during NBC's coverage of the year 2000 games in Australia, many events will be televised on CNBC and MSNBC, in addition to the regular tv net.

The bottom line: a 30 second spot went for \$500,000 and revenue — exceeded \$650-million — nearly 20 percent over projections. At the Barcelona games in '92, NBC lost \$100-million. The games cost the Atlanta organizers an astounding \$1.7 billion. They expected to end with a slim profit. □



*Kerri and trainer Bela.*

## BRAIN TEASERS

If you own a ball point pen, or even just a lead pencil, you're a writer. Your PN newspaper need contributors. You say you're not a writer? Well, if you're reading us, you have memories, and there's where you'll find your contribution. Do you remember tag lines, or gestures, or bits of business old performers, talent, once used? We can make a regular feature out of information from several writers, oops, several contributors.

Here's what we mean. Identify the personality associated with the following:

### *Who said?*

"Goodnight, Mrs. Calabash."

"Yowza, yowza, this is the old maestro."

"You heard it here."

"Goodnight, Gracie."

"Peace."

"Good evening Mister and Missus America and all the ships at sea."

No prizes will be awarded, just dunce caps! Send your contributions to Pete Peterson. □

*Dan Grabel*



# NBC Engineering -- a fifty-year history (1927-1977)

Part Two - conclusion — by W. A. Howard

*Ed Note: Excerpts from the 1977 RCA ENGINEER. Bill Howard joined NBC Engineering Development in 1946. After working on the development of live and film television cameras, he became involved with the engineering and installation of the original television plant for NBC in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1948-49. He managed technical operations for NBC stations in Cleveland and Philadelphia until 1960, when he returned to the NBC Engineering Development group in New York, where he served as a Senior Engineer. Bill retired in 1979.*

*The pictures of the Cadillac (pg 28) and Sal Benza (pg 29) were not in Bill's original published article.*

## Commercial TV comes of age.

1948 marked the beginning of a period of substantial progress for commercial television in the United States, with 19 stations on the air at the beginning of the year and 47 by the end. The number of home television sets increased from 175,000 to over one million during the same year. This progress directly affected the NBC Engineering Departments. Four major television plants were scheduled to be engineered and constructed in that year: three live studios and a large film studio and master control in the old RKO movie studios at 106th Street, New York. Complete television plants, including live and film studios, master controls, and transmitter plants, were to be completed in Cleveland, Chicago, and Hollywood. These



*Studio 8G control room. L to R: Robert (Doc) Shelby, Dudley Goodale, Vernon Duke, O.B. Hanson and TD Carl Cabison at the video console.*

studios were to be equipped with RCA's first postwar television cameras, the TK-10 image orthicon live cameras and the TK-20 iconoscope film cameras. The stations were to use the new RCA TT-5 television transmitters and the RCA super turnstile television antenna.

Two engineers were assigned to each location. WNKB Cleveland, and WNBQ Chicago went on the air late in 1948. KNBH followed in early 1949 with studios in Hollywood and transmitter facilities on Mt. Wilson.

With the heavy demand for additional television studios, studio 6B was the second large studio in Radio City to be converted to television. When completed in 1949, it became the home for "Mr. TV" himself, Milton Berle.

Even the famous radio studio 8H gave way to television in 1950.

The demand for audience participation shows required expansion outside Radio City. During 1950 several large theater installations were completed.

These included the 3000-seat Center Theatre in Rockefeller Center, where shows such as the Saturday Night Review starring Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca originated. The International Theatre, the historic Hudson Theatre, and the Balasco Theatre were also completed in that year.

Other studio conversions followed, including radio studios 6A, 3A, and 3B in 1951 and 1952. In 1954 the Century Theatre was converted to television and a large film facility at 57th Street, New York, was added.

## More technical developments from the NBC Laboratories.

In these early years of television, many new developments came out of the NBC Laboratories, which played an important role in the acceptance of television as an advertising medium. Many of these developments are still in use today.

The time differential among the eastern, midwestern, and western states has always been a major problem for network broadcasting. NBC development engineers began



*Studio 8G B&W Camera developed by NY Engineering department.*



experimenting with sound recording in the laboratory for delayed broadcast in the early days of radio. The "Orthacoustic" disc recording system was developed as an outgrowth of this research and the Scully record and playback disc machines were used for many years at NBC New York, Chicago, and Hollywood for delayed broadcasts in the radio network. Audio magnetic tape, a development that came out of World War II, replaced the disc recorders in the late 1940s. On September 13, 1947, in cooperation with Eastman Kodak Company, NBC demonstrated a special camera to photograph television images directly from a kinescope picture tube. Kinescope recording paved the way for delayed television broadcasts on 16- and 35-mm motion-picture film. This development stayed in the laboratory until 1947, when NBC engineers completed a large six-camera kinescope recording studio on the seventh floor at Radio City. This facility was in constant use until it was replaced by a smaller and modern color facility in 1973. Robert Frazier and Edward Bertero in Engineering Development made major contributions in the development of kinescope recording.

In 1948 the "split screen," a video effect developed in the NBC Laboratories, was placed in operation. This was the beginning of a large number of video effects developed by NBC engineers that are included in all special effect packages in studio switchers today, including chroma key, wipes, lap dissolves, and many others. In 1950, NBC also initiated rear-screen projection capable of integrating and synchronizing filmed backgrounds and live foregrounds.

### **The beginnings of color television.**

Work on color television began as early as 1930 in the RCA Laboratories. As in the development of black-and-white television, there was a very close working relationship between NBC and RCA engineers, since NBC studios and transmitting facilities were the proving grounds for color television.

As early as 1940, RCA demonstrated the first color television system to the FCC, and on March 20, 1941, NBC used a field-sequential mechanical system to broadcast the first color signals from the Empire State Building. This system required a rotating color disc on both

the camera and receiver.

### **Compatible color replaced the mechanical system.**

Color television developed very slowly during the war years, but in 1946 RCA Laboratories presented the first public demonstration of an all-electronic color television system. The following year, members of the FCC witnessed a demonstration of "compatible color," a color picture that could be received not only on a color receiver, but also on any standard black-and-white set. Compatibility was very important to the success of color television, since so many homes already had black-and-white receivers.

In 1951, NBC and RCA engineers began an intensive schedule for field-testing all-electronic, compatible color television. NBC engineers had developed and installed a complete color facility at the Colonial Theatre, New York, using the most modern lighting, switching, and technical developments available at that time. This installation was America's first large-scale color television production studio and became the proving ground for the country's present color television system.

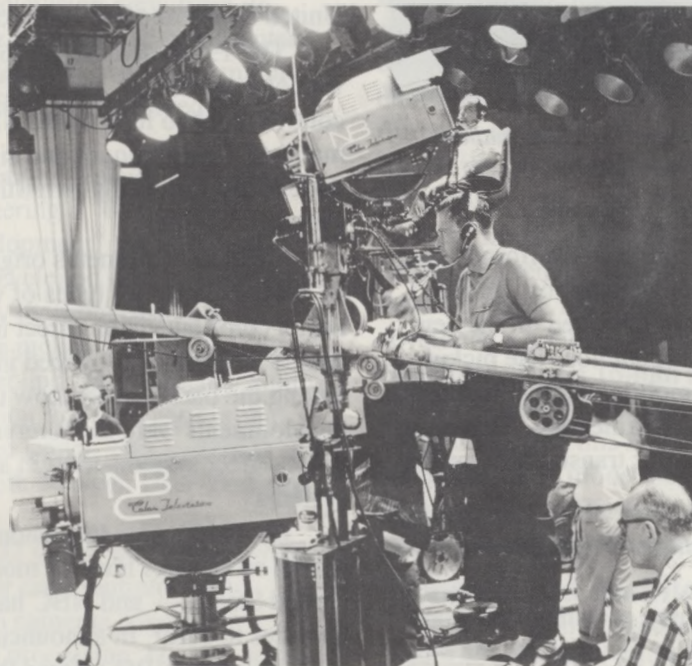
Again, the NTSC was called upon to formulate standards for a new television system in the United States. The NTSC worked from January 1950 to July 1953, undertaking the

most comprehensive examination ever made into the principles and practice of a color television system. NBC engineers played an important role on this committee, with representation on all of its task forces. The final report totaled 18 volumes, 4100 pages.

Early in 1953, an NBC/RCA Liaison Committee was formed to get ready to meet the demands for color equipment that were certain to arise after the approval of the proposed NTSC standards. On June 25, 1953, NBC and RCA engineers petitioned the FCC to adopt these standards.

On December 17, 1953, the FCC gave its long-awaited approval to compatible color television standards and authorized NBC use of them. On the day of the FCC approval, NBC broadcast compatible color programs to its entire television network.

This historic event in television was followed



*TK-41 Color Cameras, Colonial Theater, NYC.*





*The NBC Color mobile unit outside the Today studio in the RCA Exhibition Hall.*

immediately by many color firsts for NBC. The Tournament of Roses Parade, in Pasadena, California, was carried by the entire NBC television network on January 1, 1954, making it the first major event televised on the new standards from a location outside the studios. The pickup was made with a new NBC color mobile unit that had been engineered and fabricated by NBC Engineering. This event also marked the first west-to-east color transmission on the new color standards.

***Color television meant major changes in equipment, studios, and techniques.***

The year 1954 saw the beginning of a major program for NBC Engineering to supply color facilities for the NBC network and owned stations. Studios, transmitters, and switching systems, and all distribution equipment had to be colorized. New techniques had to be developed for testing transmission facilities, including the NBC network.

The first large color studio completed was the Brooklyn I studio in New York, which provided approximately 15,000 square feet of staging area. This was followed in 1955 with the Center Theatre, Ambassador Theatre, and large studios on 67th Street, New York. The Ziegfield and Hudson Theatres were added in 1956. For color film, the Radio City 4G/4J film studio complex, with six RCA TK-26 color film cameras, went on the air in 1954. The 5H film facilities, with six additional cameras, were added in 1955.

"Color City," in Burbank, California, a \$7 million project, went on the air on March 27, 1955, completing a major project by NBC engineers. This scored another first for NBC, as Color City was the first studio facility in the United States built from the ground up for color television. The most modern and finest color facility in existence at

that time, it originated many of NBC's early color shows and earned a reputation in the industry as the ultimate in technical quality.

The year of 1955 marked many milestones in color broadcasting. A full Broadway production of Peter Pan was done in color with the original stars, Mary Martin and Cyril Ritchard. This show attracted a then-record audience estimated at 65 million viewers. The first color broadcast of a President — Eisenhower's commencement address at West Point — was telecast. The first color coverage of a World Series (Yankees vs. Dodgers) was distributed to the entire NBC network. Another first for our engineers was on April 15, 1956, when WMAQ in Chicago went on the air with its all color facilities, making it the first station in the United States to offer 100% color programming.

The 1950s and early 1960s were years of pioneering for color television, and NBC Engineering made important contributions to its growth. NBC Laboratories developed many of the techniques and signals that are used industry-wide today for testing amplifiers, switching systems, and network facilities.

Other developments originating in the NBC Labs prior to 1960 included all types of video effects such as chroma key, a color television effect in which a foreground scene can be electronically placed in a background scene without having the background show through the foreground. These developments were the forerunners of the highly specialized video-effect systems used in all modern-day switching systems.

By 1965, color television had mushroomed to an annual retail sales level of more than \$3 billion in the United States, — and NBC had converted a major part of its facilities to color. In announcing their 1965-66 programming, NBC offered 95.8% of its schedule in color, thus making NBC the first "Full Color Network."

**Engineering leaders at NBC**

O.B. Hanson, an outstanding engineer and administrator, served as Chief Engineer of NBC from its formation in 1926 until 1954, a span encompassing major technological developments in both radio and television. Robert E. Shelby followed Hanson as Vice-President of Engineering and Operations until his death in 1955. Andrew L. Hammerschmidt then held that position until 1961, and was followed by William H. Trevarthen, who served until his retirement in 1973. John R. Kennedy then became Vice-President, Operations and Engineering, a post that he presently holds. Frank L. Flemming has been Vice-President, Engineering, NBC Television Network, since 1969.



## Contributions by NBC engineers

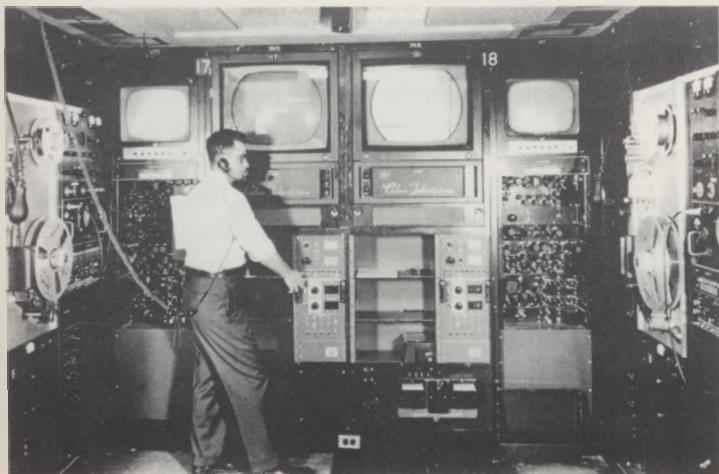
In viewing the many contributions made by NBC engineers over the past 50 years in the broadcast field, it is evident that the rapid expansion of technology has made many of them now obsolete. However, at the time of their development, these contributions served important functions to NBC and the broadcasting industry. It is impossible in this article to name all of the engineers who made major contributions; however, there are a few whose accomplishments have been extremely important to the growth and development of NBC.

One such engineer, Lew Hathaway, served in the NBC Engineering Department from 1929 to 1972, a span of 43 years, during which radio and television grew from its infancy to a multi-billion dollar industry. He was granted 37 U.S. patents in radio and television, won three major awards from professional societies, and received two Emmy nominations.

In 1972 the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences awarded NBC Engineering a "Citation for Outstanding Engineering Development" for the "hum bucket," a video transformer developed by Mr. Hathaway that is used industry-wide today by broadcasters and telephone companies on remote pickups. Another of his developments was interleaved sound, an emergency audio transmission facility for television that uses gaps in the frequency spectrum of the video signal. This system is still in use today on the NBC network between New York and Burbank.

Vernon Duke, a veteran of 37 years, was granted over 20 U.S. patents and made major contributions to the development of studio and film cameras, kinescope recording, video tape, and film processing. He also served on many industry committees and authored several industry standards in the area of television film.

The first quadruplex video-tape recorder was demonstrated to American broadcasters in March of 1956. This system of recording and playing back television



Charles (Bud) Schadel operating one of the first RCA color video tape recorders,

signals became universally accepted by the broadcast industry; using tape as a method of delayed broadcast and show syndication revolutionized television.

However, the first quadruplex tape recorders could not record and play back color signals. NBC was well on its way to becoming all-color, so color tape was necessary. NBC and RCA engineers developed a color heterodyne system for recording color on magnetic tape, and the following year (1957), NBC began the first delayed broadcast of color shows out of its Hollywood studios. A year later the operation was transferred to the new NBC Burbank studio, where eight color recorders served the entire NBC network. By 1961 there were sixteen recorders in Burbank, twenty in New York, and all the owned stations were using color video-tape machines.



Color Chimes, 50s to 60s

NBC made other contributions to video tape by developing remote start-stop and mode selection for all of their recorders. By 1960, the NBC Burbank engineers had developed a double system for recording and editing with video tape using a 16-mm magnetic sound recorder and a 16-mm kinescope recorder. A number of the NBC specials were edited with this system. Today, large video tape complexes with modern electronic editing systems have been installed in Burbank and New York, with approximately 30 color tape recorders at each location.

## Remotes and mobile units

Over the span of radio and television broadcasting, a large part of NBC's programs have originated from "remotes," or locations outside the studios. In order to have the best coverage for sports, news, and entertainment originating at these "remote" locations, NBC Engineering has been responsible for engineering custom mobile units providing the same production facilities as the fixed studios.

The network's inaugural radio program on the evening of November 15, 1926 was a remote originating from the Grand Ballroom of the old Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on 5th Avenue, the present site of the Empire State Building. A four-hour program featuring some of the finest talent available originated from this remote and was transmitted by telephone lines to the NBC control room at the AT&T Building for distribution to the network's 21 radio stations.

## Mobile units date back to the early days of radio.

In the early years of radio, NBC's large fleet of mobile units using rf microphones and radio relay equipment covered many historic events, including the Hindenburg tragedy at Lakehurst, New Jersey in 1937. NBC engineers

(Continued on next page)



NBC's first radio mobile unit used balloon-hoisted antenna. Milton Kitchen is the engineer and the announcer appears through a hole in the roof.



May 9, 1937, Courtney Snell (on left) was the remote engineer the fateful day of the Hindenburg disaster. NBC announcer and airport official describing the tragedy.



also used shortwave radio to bring news from outside the United States. A good example was the 1938 Munich crisis. Atmospheric conditions cut off the American broadcasters from immediate access to the event in Munich, Germany, so NBC engineers set up a shortwave circuit by way of Africa and South America to New York. Thus, on NBC exclusively, Americans heard the words of Prime Minister Chamberlain telling how Hitler would "come half way to meet me" in Munich.

Television's first mobile unit, engineered and designed by NBC, appeared on the New York streets on December 12, 1937. This unit was used for experimenting and field testing black-and-white television. When television was introduced to the American public in 1940, it was also via a remote, this time originating from the New York World's Fair. And when NBC transmitted the first major network

program on the newly adopted NTSC color standards, a remote of the 1954 Tournament of Roses Parade, it was done with new NBC color mobile units.

NBC Engineering also pioneered with "crash" television units equipped to operate on their own power while in motion, maintaining continuity of sound and picture. On July 12, 1952, the first crash unit appeared on the streets of Chicago with its own power generator and microwave transmitter, transmitting sound and pictures back to the studio. In order to meet the requirements for participating in the presidential inaugural parade that year, a Cadillac limousine was outfitted to follow the full length of



NBC's famous Cadillac — 1953 Presidential Inauguration.

the parade without losing picture or sound. These units were the predecessors of the more modern units now used daily in today's "electronic journalism" operations.

**Mobile television vans eventually became as well-equipped as the studios.**

The first of the large multi-van remote units were

designed and constructed by NBC Engineering and began operating in 1966 for sporting events. These units are also used for the Apollo launchings and pickups and the Miss America pageant. The first NBC unit of this type consisted of three forty-foot trailers—one each for camera equipment, production, and carryall.



Radio mobile unit 2 and the Hindenburg a year before the tragedy.



The technical equipment supplied with these trailers was the same as supplied with any of NBC's fixed studios in New York or Burbank. It consisted of up to six color cameras, solid-state switching and effects equipment, quadruplex video tape recorders, instant replay and "slo-mo" equipment, and an audio console providing at least 30 microphone inputs. The units have been updated periodically to include newly developed equipment, such as character generators and slide storage equipment.

The mobile units designed later used more modern and compact equipment and so reduced the size and number of vans, but still provided the same production facilities. NBC today operates four of these large units out of New York and Burbank, with several smaller units at the owned stations in Chicago, Washington and Cleveland.

### Portable cameras and electronic journalism.

From the "walkie-talkie" to the "walkie-lookie," NBC has been a pioneer and leader in developing and use of wireless or rf microphones over a period of many years. The first use of an rf microphone system was in the 1936 Easter Parade on 5th Avenue, New York, with the transmitter and antenna concealed in a top hat. This was followed by later developments in the laboratory — in 1937, NBC's "beer mug" miniature transmitter operated in the 30-37 MHz band with a transmitter power output of 0.15 watt. The following year, a 2-watt uhf backpack transmitter was developed. These units, which were used extensively by the NBC news and sports departments for many years, were the predecessors of the complex systems used today that have two-way communication provided by a cue channel and a high quality program channel. NBC's coverage of political conventions by radio began in 1928. The rf microphones used in these conventions were developed in the NBC Laboratories and soon became



1952 — Sal Benza and the "Creepie-Peepie."



1960 to 1976.

famous as "walkie-talkies."

NBC's television coverage of political conventions began on an experimental basis in 1940. At the 1952 political conventions in Chicago, NBC unveiled a portable rf-connected camera developed by NBC and RCA engineers. It was soon labeled the "walkie-lookie," as a companion to the "walkie-talkie." [*"walkie-lookie" never took hold and it was soon (unofficially) christened, "Creepie-Peepie." ED.*] At that convention, NBC engineers also introduced the "crash truck," a tv newsroom on wheels, equipped with self-powered electronic and film cameras and its own darkroom. It was capable of preparing film for projection on the air in less than 10 minutes.

The 1956 and 1960 conventions saw increasing use of portable black-and-white cameras. Although the cameras themselves were small and lightweight, the control packs, microwave transmitters, and antennas were still heavy and bulky for maneuvering on the crowded convention floor. There were also problems with rf interference in the crowded 7-GHz microwave bands.

Two developments from the NBC Laboratories were used for the first time at the 1964 conventions. The first, the "black-beam" sound system, used a transmitter that sent out voice-modulated ultraviolet light. A receiver picked up the light, amplified it, and converted it to a standard audio signal. This system was used extensively from the convention floor and required no FCC license. The other new introduction was the electronic long-lens system developed by Fred Himelfarb. This system could increase the effective focal length of the standard camera lens electronically up to twice its normal magnifying power.



1964 — NY Engineer John Crampton and the "walking tv station."

### Portable cameras became truly portable with the "walking tv station."

At the 1964 conventions in Atlantic City and San Francisco, NBC introduced a new rf-connected portable camera developed by NBC and RCA engineers expressly for these conventions. Soon labeled the "walking tv station," the system used camera and control units that were smaller and much lighter than for previous camera systems.

(Continued on next page)





*NY Development Engineers Sherman Atwood (on camera) and Bob Mousler (on microwave) check out the "Crash" unit. It was first used in 1964.*

For the first time, the camera's microwave equipment operated in the 13-GHz band, eliminating most of the noise and interference that had plagued previous microwave-link cameras. The complete package weighed less than 50 pounds and could be carried by one man.

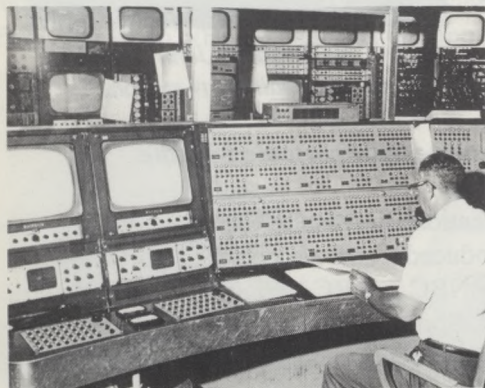
A new "crash" unit developed by NBC engineers was also introduced at these conventions. It was entirely self-contained, using a 5-kW gasoline generator to supply the power to operate all its equipment — two portable cameras, (walking tv stations), a portable video-tape recorder, microwave transmitting and receiving equipment, a video switching unit, and the necessary audio and communications equipment. While the vehicle was traveling at speeds up to 40 miles per hour, pictures taken by a camera on the roof could be transmitted via microwave to the main control center.

Between the 1964 and 1968 conventions, NBC and RCA Astro-Electronics engineers developed a portable color back-pack camera. This camera was used at the 1968 Miami convention for the first time.

## Automation.

### *Early automation used relay logic and steppers.*

NBC pioneered the automation of radio and television operations. As the television facilities at Radio City and



*NY Television Master Control used from the early 50s to 1974.*

Television Master Control expanded in the 1950s, a form of automation using relay logic and steppers timed from precision clocks was installed in network switching, so that six channels could be

individually preset and switched on a real time basis to eliminate human error. Later this was expanded to the studio 5H control room, which controlled the local television station and provided network break-in. In this system, a complete station break could be preset and switched along with automatic roll-on film projectors and video tape machines.

In April of 1958, NBC Burbank went on the air with 12 color video tape recorders, which recorded programs from the eastern NBC network and played them back to the Central Time network one hour later, and the Pacific Coast network three hours later. This automated system used relay logic and sequence-stepping switches electrically pulsed from precision clock impulses. It permitted preset recorders to record or play from specific recordings or playback lines at particular times and for particular intervals. Automatic rewind and cue-up were provided. For further automation, automatic gain control (AGC) amplifiers were used in both the audio and video program path. The color video AGC amplifiers had just recently been developed in the NBC Laboratories.

The first completely automatic station to be engineered by NBC was WBUF-TV in Buffalo, NBC's experimental uhf station, which went on the air in 1956. A paper-tape system controlled the switching and pre-roll of film equipment and tape recorders. A full day's operation could be made up on punched tape and operators were needed only to load film and slide projectors. In 1959, WRC in Washington moved into a new television plant that was also completely automated.

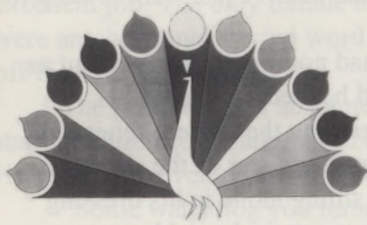
### *Computer control became a reality in the mid-sixties.*

In the spring of 1962, a new switching central was placed in operation in Burbank, controlling KNBC and the Pacific network. The output switching at that time was done manually by loading information for each channel into preset relays, then putting the preset event on the air by using an enable pulse. The system anticipated, however, the eventual use of a computer for these functions, including storage of a full day's operation. The design of such a



*Development Engineer Bob Post and Operations Engineer Bob Waring check out NY's computerized Master control.*





Full color network peacock used until 1976.

Daystrom Model 636 computer, which has a self-contained core memory of 20,480 words, stores, retrieves, and processes program information for switching three television channels. The programs for each day are fed from a variety of sources, including live studios, film chains, and video-tape recorders. Computer control for NBC Burbank has been in use for over eleven years and has been a very successful operation.

In 1969, the NBC Engineering Department began the automation and computer control of the entire NBC network in New York, a seven and one half million dollar project supervised by Frank L. Flemming, Vice-President of Engineering, NBC Network. After many planning sessions with operating personnel and extensive software contributions by the RCA Laboratories, the complex system began to take form. Many features of the system had to be developed, including



The new "N" used first on Jan. 1, 1976.

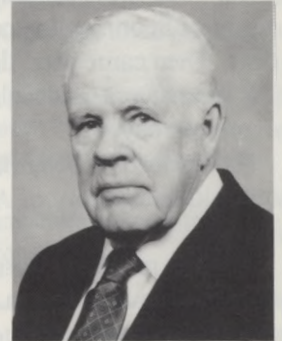
system, which was NBC Engineering's first experience with a computerized television system, was already underway. In March of 1966, the computer controlled switching system was placed in operation in Burbank. A

machine control, a large routing switcher, and video source identification. The system was put into operation in October 1974, on a limited schedule, since this new system of operations involved changes in many NBC departments. By gradually increasing use of the system, it reached full-time operation (24 hours/day, 7 days a week) during July 1975.

### Conclusion.

The 50 years of NBC Engineering has spanned a period of major technological developments in communications that has permitted the nation's 620 low-powered radio stations in 1926 to expand into a multi-billion dollar annual business with over 700 television and 6000 radio stations. NBC engineers have made a major contribution to this development and expansion.

The challenge for NBC engineers in the future is equally as great as it was 50 years ago, with new technological applications and demands now on the horizon — digital television, microprocessors, image sensors, lasers and fiber-optics transmission, and the urgent need for a transparent international interchange system for television. □



Bill Howard and his wife Opal live in Austin, Texas.

## Black-Beam Video

by Frank Vierling

I was involved with Lew Hathaway's black-beam audio tests. I was the TD with the Creepie-Peepie and Lew (father of the Creepie) was my management guru. He was a great guy to work with. We worked many political conventions and golf matches together. Anyway, the black-beam tests were done while we set up for the John F. Kennedy nominating convention in Los Angeles. The tests were a great success. But, it was feared that balloons and placards might block the light beam, which would cut off the signal. I don't know how much black-beam audio, if any, was actually used "on air." (*How about it?, Phil Falcone.*)

A Burbank man assigned to the Creepie group (I've forgotten his name) mounted a lens on a small metal box with a rod topped with an argon lamp. He attached a makeshift eye piece for a viewfinder, and a few switches. A headset (*to nowhere*) finished his creation. He took his contraption onto the convention floor during one of our engineering rehearsals. We of course manned the receiver

and tracked him about the convention floor. He soon had a crowd of interested onlookers.

Our rival networks had seen and heard the black-beam audio tests and were now easily convinced that NBC had also come up with a mini video camera using the same transmitting principle. All the while our man gave a running commentary into his "dead" PL about how well the automatic iris was working — and the electronic zoom, "WOW!" "I can't believe it! I can zoom into that guy at the other end of the arena and read his lapel button!" "The auto focus tracking is slightly off, but we can fix that with a screwdriver when I come into the control room" — and other comments along the those lines. There were pleas to look into the viewfinder, but our man maintained the whole thing was "top secret." He added, "I hope the lab can get the finished working unit here in time for the convention. This is a fantastic camera!"

He had them going and a few calls were made to CBS and ABC back in NY before they caught on to the scam. □

*A sidelight on the black-beam audio system. (See Bill Howard's reference on page 29.)*



Through the years I have often been asked the same question. Of all the shows that I have worked on, which was my all time favorite. Which single show stands out in my mind as the most unique and unusual of them all. It may surprise you to learn that it wasn't any of the countless situation comedies I did in Hollywood for Norman Lear or the musical Special I did in Hawaii with Elvis Presley. No, when I think of my favorite show, I think of a live TV Special I did at NBC in the early sixties called AMERICA'S MUSIC. The program was quite an ambitious production. It was a large musical documentary which set out to trace the evolution of what is generally known as the "Music of America." The show started with the music of Scott Joplin and Ragtime. Then came jazz, the Paul Whiteman era, and right on up to the present day.

A potpourri of beautiful music set against the background and history of America's trend in popular music.

The star picked to host this program was indeed an excellent choice. He was an accomplished songwriter/composer and had lately made a name for himself as an actor in a new motion picture. He was perfectly suited for the role he was playing this day. Perfect, that is, except for one minor flaw. He had a bit of a drinking problem. Not that it seriously affected his work, mind you, but a problem all the same. Since this was to be a live broadcast, the producer was understandably taking no chances.

On the day before the live telecast, I was called to the scheduling office and told that I was being added to the show. The program already had two stage managers assigned to it - but my job was to be something special.

On the morning of the show, I was summoned to a brief meeting in the producer's office. He explained that I was to have nothing whatsoever to do with the running of the show. My responsibility rested solely with the host of the show. I listened attentively while the producer gave me my instructions.

"I don't want that man near anything that even remotely resembles liquor in any way, shape, or form. You are not to let him out of your sight for even a minute until we're off the air tonight." He continued, "Do you think you can handle it?"

"No problem," I said quietly.

"He's a wonderful guy," said the producer, "and

he's doing a helluva job on the show. I just want to keep it that way."

I assured him that he had nothing to worry about as I hurriedly left the office and headed for Studio 8H.

The show was just beginning the camera-rehearsal when I arrived. I found the host and star of the show sitting alone in his dressing room and quickly introduced myself. I told him I would be hanging around all day as the show's liaison and to feel free to call on me for anything at all. We never touched on the real reason I was there but I somehow felt he knew. The two of us spent most of the morning talking and watching the rehearsal on the television monitor in his dressing room. Whenever he was needed on the set,

I would accompany him to the stage where I would turn him over to one of the other stage managers. If he had to visit the men's room, I was right there at the next cubical. I followed him around so closely that day we were beginning to cast the same shadow.

Somewhere in the back of my mind, I remembered reading about some of the exploits used by the legendary comedian W.C. Fields to keep himself supplied with liquor on the movie set. Using a long hypodermic needle he would inject large amounts of pure gin into oranges. When lunch time arrived, he would sit in full view of the entire company gently squeezing "orange juice" into his upturned mouth.

I was determined that nothing like that was going to happen here.

The rehearsal progressed nicely right up to dinner time when some food was brought in for both of us. (No fruit of any kind for our host.) As the evening wore on and we rapidly approached air time I suddenly became very pleased with myself. Almost twelve hours had elapsed since I first arrived in the studio and our host had not been out of my sight for even one second. I was doing a thankless but necessary job. Therefore I was not at all prepared for what happened next.

When we were finally ready to go on the air, I noticed that something was wrong. My worst fears were realized. With mounting horror I now suddenly came to the realization that the star of our show was drunk as a skunk. But how? How could this happen? The man had not been out of my sight for an instant all day.

## My Most Unusual Show

by Hal Alexander



In spite of his condition, he went on to do an excellent job. The only telltale clues to his condition were an occasional slurred word and his constant sliding off his stool as he spoke.

The producer was absolutely furious. Not with our star but with me. No amount of explaining did any good. He refused to even discuss it with me.

"Some watchdog you turned out to be. You just ruined my show," he uttered as he passed me in the studio after the show.

I have no idea to this day how or where he got the booze that night. The entire incident stands as a living tribute to our host's talent and resourcefulness.

The final blow, however, came as I was leaving the

studio. One of the cameramen sidled up to me and whispered, "Hal, I'm going out of town next week - I wonder if you'd mind keeping an eye on my wife for me?" □



*Hal is a retired NY stage manager and lives in Woodland Hills, California, with his wife Pat.*

## Who's watching the Tube. .... By Dan Grabel

The viewership of net evening news programs among Americans of all ages is down from 47 percent to 42 percent in the past year according to the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. For those under age 30, only 22 percent watch these shows. CNN is suffering a similar drop — 36 percent of adults watched last year and now that figure is 26 percent.

Local news, despite the schlock, is viewed more than the net shows, but that too is down — from 72 percent to 65 percent among adults.

Net officials acknowledge that cable viewership has eaten into the net audience and news is merely following that pattern. One young analyst thinks the problem is that the net news shows do not address issues that concern the under-30 generation.

Richard Wald, once news president of NBC and now at ABC, says the problem may be that fewer adults are at home when the evening news shows are on, because, said Wald, early morning news viewership is up.

The Pew report, which sampled the opinions of 1,751 people, also said people who use personal computers at home more than 3 days a week watch less tv news than those without computers. Radio news listenership continues constant. □

## YOTTABYTES are a LOTTA BYTES

Now that kilo-, mega- and even gigabytes of computer memory look like small beer, and computer clock speeds begin to feel pokey, it's time to learn the next set of exponential prefixes destined to enter the modern vocabulary. Brace yourself for the coming world of computers with yottabyte memories and zeptosecond clock speeds (and Government deficits measured in petabucks).

### Really Small Numbers

Prefix	Power of 10	Units	Number
milli-	-3	one thousandth	0.001
micro-	-6	one millionth	0.000001
nano-	-9	one billionth	0.000000001
pico-	-12	one trillionth	0.000000000001
femto-	-15	one quadrillionth	0.000000000000001
atto-	-18	one quintillionth	0.000000000000000001
zepto-	-21	one sextillionth	0.000000000000000000001
yacto-	-24	one septillionth	0.000000000000000000000001

### Really Big Numbers

Prefix	Power of 10	Units	Number
kilo-	3	thousands	1,000
mega	6	millions	1,000,000
giga-	9	billions	1,000,000,000
tera-	12	trillions	1,000,000,000,000
peta-	15	quadrillion	1,000,000,000,000,000
exa-	18	quintillion	1,000,000,000,000,000,000
zetta	21	sextillion	1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000
yotta	24	septillion	1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000

How long would it take someone to download a one yottabyte file using a 28.8 baud modem?

**11 trillion years!**

How long does it take light to pass over a simple atom?

**300 zeptoseconds!**

A really, really big number - Googl: A number followed by 100 zeros and expressed as  $10^{100}$ . □

*Jim Sunder sent us this bit of numero trivia for you computer types to ponder.*



# THE EAR BENDERS



By Dick Dudley

## Bill Hanrahan

The silent microphone page is becoming my wailing wall. I suppose that as we grow older we must expect the passing of those we love, but the death of Bill Hanrahan was a shock. I had no idea of the severity of his illness, even though he and I kept in close touch. Never once did he hint that his lungs were in danger. He stressed only his heart.

It was a noble heart, loyal and kind. In spite of his sometime show of gruffness, his soft heart made his curmudgeon act a bad performance. He did know what he liked and made no bones about it.

Bill was a lover of perfect things; the best of music, literature and performers. He found humor in life. The NY Times Sunday Society Party Page was most amusing to him and he found joy in the obscure show tunes of Gershwin, etc. They were manna for him especially when performed by a gifted jazz pianist. He was partial to the pianoforte and even studied the instrument, for a while, with Sandford Gold. Nothing much came of that effort except a better understanding of the piano's intricacy and a deeper appreciation of those who have mastered it.

Bill was somewhat of an Anglophile and I think he would have enjoyed being knighted by the Queen and living in an English country cottage in Kent or Sussex where the Pub was 400 years old and the Publican called him "Sir William". Not from egotism, but because of the mythical peace of the idea. Instead,

he resided with his loving wife, Ruth, in South Norwalk, Connecticut on a road with the un-Anglo Saxon title of "Juhasz". Nothing simple like Rte. 1 or Maple Lane for Bill.

When his mike was live, you heard his voice on the "Nightly News" with John Chancellor and Tom Brokaw, and you may have caught his cameo appearance in Robert DeNiro's movie "Raging Bull" in which he appeared as the Boxing Commissioner.

He was a great fellow and will be missed, not only by Ruth and his family, but by all who knew him. Unfortunately, his heart was too soft to save him for those of us who loved him — and so he dropped back into the immense design of things.

*"Goodnight sweet prince."*



Bill and Ruth Hanrahan. They enjoyed the Peacock North reunions.

*No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; ... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.*

John Donne

Dick Dudley writes to us from  
2 Breezy Knoll Road, Willow Street,  
Pennsylvania 17584.



## KEN'S

## CORNER



by  
Ken Arber

### DID BYRD FLY SOUTH TOO EARLY? — DIARY DISPUTES NORTH POLE VISIT.

Famed American explorer may have turned back just 2 hours short of his goal. *Story from the Washington Post.*

Richard E. Byrd, the famed American explorer who claimed in 1926 to have been the first person to fly over the North Pole, may actually have turned back two hours and 150 miles short of his goal.

The clues are in Byrd's long lost diary of the expedition, which was recently found in a mislabeled box of Byrd's memorabilia at Ohio State University's Byrd Polar Research Institute. The diary contains navigational notes that Dennis Rawlins, a Baltimore navigation expert and historian of polar expeditions, has interpreted to mean that Byrd failed in his attempt at the pole though he claimed to have reached it. One incriminating finding: The diary contains an erased—but still readable—sextant reading that put Byrd about 165 miles south of where he would later claim, in his official text to have been at that moment toward the end of the flight north. If confirmed, Byrd's disqualification would hand the title of "First person to reach the North Pole" to Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer who traveled over the pole in a dirigible three days after Byrd's airplane expedition—arriving there May 12, 1926. Byrd failed to drop the hundreds of American Flags he carried, causing some to doubt him even in his day.

The reason I am writing about this is the next short story I wanted to recall.

In the late 1930s, I frequently would go to local restaurants at lunch time. One day I decided to try a "Farm Food" restaurant on 49th street. I found it to be very nice, and one day I came in and all the tables were taken. The waitress asked if I would mind eating at a table occupied by a single gentleman, and when I said it was all right with me,

she asked the gentleman, and he also agreed. So I was seated and proceeded to order.

I was surprised to find out that no meat was served and all the meals seemed to be made up of all types of vegetables and soy beans. Some were called vegetable hamburger, vegetable veal cutlets, and they all tasted great. However, the first meal I ordered was "Borscht", a cold beet soup with a dollop of sour cream and a hot boiled potato. The other gentleman finished his meal before me and proceeded to leave. After he left the waitress came over to me, and asked if I knew who he was, of course I did not, but did say his face was familiar. She told me he was Richard E. Byrd, the famous explorer, and that he comes in quite frequently. I was surprised, and the next time I came into "Farm Food", sure enough I saw him but, as I did the first time, I did not have enough courage to strike up a conversation with him.



From time to time, I have mentioned where I had worked before coming to NBC; it did not indicate my having any personal knowledge of the Broadcasting Business, other than my first introduction about radio, from my uncle Robert Hartman, who worked with David Sarnoff, rather General Sarnoff, those days. My uncle and Mr. Sarnoff both worked at the Wanamakers' Office in NYC, where there were about five or six "Radio Operators" working at one long desk. They were amateur operators; my Uncle's call was, I believe, just "2FY", the prefix "W" had not been issued at that time.

One day, in about 1950, while speaking with the General, at the Chicago Convention, I asked him if he remembered working with Bob Hartman at Wanamaker's, and he put his arm around me and said he would like to have said he did, but he did not remember him. I responded I could understand that, as it would be easier for Bob to remember him, the president of RCA, and the hero of the Titanic Disaster, than for the General to remember Bob.

When I was a little boy about five or six years of age,

*(Continued on next page.)*



*The young David Sarnoff—wireless operator at Siasconset wireless station, Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, in 1908.*



I was visiting my Uncle Bob at his amateur radio station in New York. He put me on the air with some very famous people in the radio business, and I talked with Dr. Lee DeForest, and another famous engineer, Edwin Armstrong, the inventor of the Super Hetrodyne Circuit as well as FM radio, both major contributions to radio communications.

At one time, while speaking with Dr. DeForest, he was playing a music record. This was before the playing of music on amateur radio stations was forbidden, and it sounded like someone was tap dancing along with the music. Dr. DeForest asked me what that sound was, and I responded that I thought someone was dancing, and he corrected me by saying it was his tapping two pencils on the desk, and there was no one dancing. This all took place in the year 1916, on my uncle's station "W2BZY." So much for my introduction to the "business of radio".

Now about my starting to work in the "Building Trade." I first worked for the North Jersey Refrigerating Company, a subsidiary of "Frigidaire," where I worked on the installation of the ice cube refrigerator at Ben Marden's, "Riviera Restaurant," just over the George Washington Bridge in New Jersey.

After working for the North Jersey Refrigerating Company, I applied for a job with the "Fokker Aircraft" manufacturing company, located at Teterboro, New Jersey, where I was hired as mechanic helping to build the famous Fokker Airplanes. However my contact there, the foreman of the wing manufacturing section, got in a discussion about moving to Virginia and left the company, which then eliminated my being hired. I then applied for a position with another Teterboro Airplane Company, known as "The Voice of the Sky." They did loud speaker announcements, or commercials, from the plane. The owner made it clear that he would not pay, but would give me free training in flying if I would "Cedar Mop" the fuselage, and in my spare time dig drainage ditches in the air field. Of course at this point I gave up looking for a position in the airplane industry, and began to look into the "Building Trade," with the help of my father.

The first building I worked on was the Barclay Apartment Hotel on 49th St. and Lexington Avenue, across from the Hotel Shelton, where the Music Director was Paul Whiteman, and his orchestra. This was in 1930, when I was graduated from High School.

That year Harry Houdini, the famous escape artist, had himself sealed in a metal coffin and submerged in the hotel pool for many hours, with only a phone connection so he could call for help if anything went wrong, and they would raise him out of the pool. He was very successful and it never became necessary to raise him until he had completed his act.

I might add at this time in 1996, the Barclay is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Helmsly. She is affectionately known as "The Queen of Mean," after her stay in prison.

The next building I worked on was the "Bonwit Teller" Building located at 57th Street and 5th Avenue, across the street from the former NBC studios at 711 Fifth Avenue before the company moved to Rockefeller Center. In those days I never thought I would eventually be employed by NBC for over 42 years.

After that I worked on the New York Bank and Trust Company on 57th Street and Fifth Avenue just a block north of the Bonwit Teller Building.

I then worked on Number One Beekman Place on the East River. It had many floors of apartments. Each apartment had two floors. One floor had the entrance and a living room, kitchen and dining room and an exquisite view of the East River. A flight of stairs led to the second floor where there were three bedrooms and baths, just like a regular one family home. In later years I learned that Dr. Handler's widow lived about a block north of this fabulous apartment building.

For a while I worked on the construction of the Graybar building located at 44th Street and Lexington Avenue. Strangely enough, I later attended a dry rehearsal at the same building with the director of the Kraft commercials in Studio 3K/3H. That was about 1970, almost 40 years after working on the construction of the Graybar building.

My next job was located in the financial district of New York, near Wall Street. It was the "Cities Service Building" located on Pearl, Pine and Cedar Streets. This was the last building I worked on before starting to work at Rockefeller Center. I found the Cities Service Building to be the most innovative of all the buildings I worked on, and will try and explain why.

The Cities Service Building consisted of many innovations at the time, such as double-deck elevators, one cab on the top of another. It was designed so that people getting on the elevator for the even numbered floors, such as two, four, six and so forth up to 40 would get on at the second floor, and those who were going to get off on odd floors, like one, three, five and so forth up to the 40th floor would get on the elevator on the first floor. I never got to see the operation of these double deck elevators, as before they were put into operation, I was assigned to another job uptown. During the construction of the building, we all used the temporary workers elevators.

Another innovation was the use of what was then known as "air cooling." I don't think air conditioning as we know it now was developed at that time. The system designed for the Cities Service Building consisted of radiators under the windows heated by hot water. Fans in back of them blew air through the radiators for heating. Cold water would circulate through the radiators for summer cooling.

The next innovation was a central Vacuum Cleaning System that had hose outlets throughout the building, and a



large room in the basement in place of a "dust-bag." It is similar to the private home systems in many homes known as the "Bud System" with a large collecting canister located in the garage.

Another interesting feature was an apartment on the most upper floor, where the President of Cities Service would have a beautiful suite of rooms with a wonderful view of all of lower Manhattan. The most interesting feature was a bed on wheels on tracks that could be moved from inside the building through French windows that opened onto a "set-back." With no other building being higher, he could bask in the sunlight, out of other people's view.

Lastly, a rather unique flag pole was installed on the roof of the building. As I remember it, the pole was about forty feet tall, and about four feet wide at the bottom. It had an electric elevator inside so a mechanic could replace the red airplane warning light on top of the pole, when the bulb burned out.

Now you can see why I was unhappy not to have stayed on the job to see if all these things were going to work as they had been designed! Remember this all was in the 1930s.

### MARIO BRAGGIOTTI —

Mario Braggiotti died recently in West Palm Beach, at the age of 90, after a long illness.

This may not interest too many of our readers, except those like myself, who have played the piano all their adult life, and others who had heard his half of one of the first

piano duos of the 1930s and a radio personality a decade later.

He and fellow pianist, Jacques Frey, formed Frey and Braggiotti in the 1930s, and were one of the first duos to introduce popular music into the classical music circuit.

In the late 30s and the early 40s, the duo played three nights a week on the Kraft Music Hall and Radio City Music Hall national radio programs.

Mr. Braggiotti was inducted into the Big Band Hall of Fame last year and he gave a concert at the Colony Hotel in Palm Beach.

Born in Florence, Italy, of American parents, he earned a scholarship in the New Conservatory and later accompanied Maurice Chevalier on a world tour. In Paris he met composer George Gershwin.

He is survived by two sisters, Francesca of Spain and Gloria Etting of Palm Beach, and a brother, Chad Braggiotti of Stuart, Florida.

When I was a new Radio Engineer at NBC in New York, I would stop in at Studio 3G, where the two men, seated at two grand pianos, would rehearse after Irving Miller had completed his rehearsal of the NBC house orchestra. That is the studio where I first met Dinah Shore while she was waiting for Irving Miller. I believe the studio engineer was Ed "Buda" Whittaker, who was kind enough to permit me to stay in the control room, knowing I played the piano and would enjoy seeing and hearing "Frey and Braggiotti." □



## Congratulations Ken and Jaye



Ken and Jaye Arber

**Ken and Jaye Arber** of Boynton Beach, FL and Lavelette, NJ, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary at a party given by their daughter, Karen, at her home in Boca Raton. Karen is the wife of Dr. Joseph C. Walsh.

After their marriage in St. Anastasia's Catholic Church in Teaneck, NJ they made their home in Bogota, NJ, later moving to Upper Saddle River, NJ. In 1993 they moved to Boynton Beach.

Ken, a TD, retired in 1974 after 41 years with NBC. He is a 65 year member of the William F. Burk Lodge # 230 of Bogota. He served during WW II in Psychological Warfare in North Africa.

Jaye is a registered nurse, a graduate of the Hackensack Hospital School of Nursing, Hackensack, NJ.

Beside hospital work she did private duty and industrial nursing for the Bendix Corporation of Hackensack. Before WW II she joined American Airlines as a stewardess and flew DC-2s and DC-3s, until her marriage in 1946. While a stewardess she traveled extensively throughout the United States to select and interview potential stewardesses. In those days a stewardess had to be a registered nurse.

In addition to their daughter Karen, they have two married sons, Kenneth, Jr., of Woodland Hills, CA and Glenn of Chestnut Ridge, NJ. They are the grandparents of Karen's three children, Ryan, Blair, and Kailey.

Ken recently celebrated his 85th birthday. □



## We Get Letters —

### Bob Asman writes to Peter Peterson:

While it is still June, let me thank you for getting off to a wonderful start with the La Maganette lunch! I know you and Peg worked hard to get it all together and my only two regrets are that — A) my dear wife Nan wasn't able to be with me and — B) that I missed the previous lunches. It was a real treat.

You were very kind to let me have some time at the microphone. As you so correctly said, when you stand there and look out over the faces of the people who really were broadcast pioneers, it is truly humbling. And we *are* family.

Having been TV pool producer for so many special events over the past 30 years, I have noted that the three pioneer TV networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) all have personalities which have remained pretty constant over the years. CBS was always the tough, flinty, all business, no-nonsense network (not exactly a fun place to work), ABC was always a bit off-center and sort of kooky (until Roone Arledge came along and helped them establish a very fine Sports Division), but NBC was always in the David Sarnoff tradition of dedicated broadcasters who cared about each other, who were total professionals and who were truly family.

Anyhow, since you ran that photo of me holding the 1948 NBC Chimes which Nan (my wife) had thoughtfully tucked in my bag as I left for New York and since many of the folks at the lunch expressed interest in the pages about the old Guest Relations Department, where so many of us got our start at NBC and in broadcasting, I made a photocopy which I enclose. Perhaps it will reproduce well enough for some future edition of **Peacock North**.

Again, thanks and congratulations for a wonderful lunch and reunion and, God willing, we'll see you at the next one. Again, thanks and congratulations for a wonderful lunch.

Sincerely, *Bob*

### And from Ray Weiss:

I'm sure you hear this from many people who write to you but, I must say it is always a great pleasure to receive a new copy of the Peacock North News. **MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS.**

A few notes based on the current reading. I see you have started PNers on the Internet with the list I provided. Since sending the list I have moved my residency to AOL at: rweiss9191@aol.com.

On Page 7 Dan Grabel asks about a few names listed in the 1968 NABET directory. Most seem to be from radio. Here are some I am aware of: Theodore (Ted) Kruse was a Radio Network transmission engineer when I transferred to radio in 1956. Mel Lewis also started in radio and, I believe, became a TV audio engineer (when you could find him). George Vose was also a radio network engineer,

retired and last seen in Florida. Lewis (Lou) West retired from the model shop and Herman (Hank) Folkerts was one of our premier TD's now retired in Florida where he is treasurer and computer expert for the NBCFR Retirees.

Seeing the picture of Lee Jones on Page 9 brought back many wonderful memories of our association at WNBC radio. Lee and I were the recipients of gold watches given to us by the general manager, Perry Bascom. Perry had found them in his office when he took over and gave one to Lee when he retired and the other to me when I moved to the Radio Network with the start of the 24 hour News and Information Service.

I was part of the WNBT-67th Street-nighttime crew that greeted Steve Allen back in the 50's. Ken Arber writes about his recollections, which I heartily confirm. Here is more. Our normal weekday schedule required us to rehearse John K.M. McCaffery's ten minute 11:00 PM newscast for First National City Bank and the five minute Tex Antoine (with Uncle Weathby) Con Edison weather show prior to bringing in an audience for the Steve Allen



*"67th Street Ray"  
back in the early 50's*

Show sponsored by Knickerbocker Beer. The audience was split between a bleacher section opposite his desk and a balcony strung across the second floor of the studio. As with any comic performer, Steve wanted to be able to hear the P.A. coming back at him. This was a very difficult task in this unsophisticated audio environment. Steve had come off an unsuccessful afternoon show at CBS before being hired by NBC for a nighttime gig. Whenever he had trouble hearing the P.A., or the audience response to his dialogue, he would refer to his previous show with on-air comments such as "I didn't have this problem at CBS." This only proceeded to inflame the P.A. operator. Some would cause the system to "ring", others might lower it to the point where it was barely audible. Not a happy situation. It took a few weeks to convince him that silence was golden. A signal was agreed upon. He would tug at his ear if he was unhappy with what he was hearing. I think he carried this action with him as he continued through his broadcast career.

I went to William Howard Taft High School in the Bronx about one year behind Eydie Gorme. Though I had met her and we had many friends in common, I did not get to know her (or another Taft alumnus, Stanley Kubrick). When Bill Harbach, producer of the Steve Allen Show, chose Eydie to replace Helene Diken it was "old home week" for the Taft alumni. Eydie had been with the Taft Swing Band and went on to a singing career after



graduation. When Bill found her she was returning to singing after spending a few years as a secretary. She came into the studio on her first night, saw me and asked if I was married. When I said yes she seemed disappointed and proceeded to turn her attention on the then 19 year old Steve Lawrence. She was about twenty-six at the time. "The rest is history."

After not seeing Steve Allen for about thirty years I worked with him at the NBC Radio Network studios at 1700 Broadway. It had been sold by GE/NBC to Westwood One along with other assets. He was doing a radio show from California, for Westwood, that was broadcast on WNEW in New York. On a visit to New York we had to provide studio space for his show. Steve would interview guests, talk and play the piano. Being primarily a

news and talk show operation we had no studios capable of accommodating a piano. A small 66 key upright piano was rented and placed in one of our control rooms along with three reel-to-reel tape machines, a producer and an engineer. This didn't leave much room for moving about. I told some stories of the first meeting with Steve Allen some thirty years ago and predicted that he would have many comments about the situation he was being placed in for his broadcasts from New York. I was right, the complaints spewed forth. It's difficult to teach an old performer new ideas.

Keep those Peacock North editions coming. They are great.

Regards to all, Ray

Along with his letter, Ray sent these two photos.



June 28, 1979 at the retirement of John (JP) Powers. L to R - Bud Prather, John Powers, Mrs. Powers and Ray Weiss.



March 31, 1981 at the retirement of Louise Malcolm. L to R - Buddy Young, Louise Malcolm and Ray Weiss.

Keep those letters coming - we love 'em. It's nice to know the staff's efforts are appreciated. Thanx.

Some 1950s 67th Street crew members — photos by PNER Roz Bigelow



Dave Lalicata



Lee Carlton



Gene Martin



Fred Smith



Vic Bary





# THE CITY AT MIDNIGHT

by Frank Vierling

*Live drama on the streets of New York.*

NBC experimented with live dramatic shows on location in the early 1950s. I remember there were at least five shows that I worked on: Rivington Street, the Baltic Street docks (Brooklyn), The Two Deuces Club on 52nd Street (or was it Aces), a WMCA show, and a taxi cab war in Long Island City.

Rivington Street concerned the Israeli hero, Colonel Marcus, and his life on Rivington Street. The Baltic docks dealt with dope smuggling on the river front. The life of jazz guitarist Eddie Condon was the story line for the Two whatever. I don't recall the theme of the WMCA show, but it had an interesting (off-air) bit. And we did a show about a taxi cab war using our Long Island City mobile unit garage as our control studio.

### *RIVINGTON STREET.*

The first show was on Rivington Street and introduced me to the miserable conditions one too often encounters in the field. A steady rain fell all day. We set up before daylight and soon were soaked to the skin. The rain caused a gigantic problem keeping the equipment dry and working. Lighting was a particularly scary proposition. Studio floor scoops, or should that be "street scoops" and floods made up the bulk of the outside lighting. Herb Reidel was the lighting director. (Herb left NBC for ABC where he moved into their engineering management.) I was his assistant controlling the lights on the street. To insulate yourself from the ground, to prevent electrocution, you had to jump up in the air to hit the "on/off" switches. Even at that, a few jolts were experienced throughout the day.

Three cameras were used - the standard complement of our mobile units. Jack Durkin was on Camera One mounted on the roof of a station wagon. It "trucked" up and down the street between a synagogue and delicatessen. Maybe Frank Merklein was inside on the deli camera. Memory fails on that as well as who had the camera in the synagogue. At least they kept dry most of the day.

At this late date, I'm not up on the story line, but a couple of things stick in my mind about the production of the show. One was a fist fight in the deli. Camera One had relief shots through the store window. This gave the deli camera time to change lenses — 4 lens turrets were standard in those early days, but I think Camera One had the original

Bach zoom.

One of the "actors" in the deli cast was a makeup artist. He had various shades of makeup on each of his fingers. During the fight scene, with his back to the camera, and masked by other actors, he would "finger paint" a little of the Colonel's face each time he was knocked down. Each time Marcus struggled to his feet, he showed increased signs of the beating he was taking. A bruise here, a blood trickle there - it looked great on the "live" air show.

Camera One was also used in the synagogue — that is, it appeared so. Jack provided relief shots, as in the deli scenes, so the synagogue camera could change lenses. Camera One had a succession of shots of men and women who stood in a darkened street doorway, apparently intent on the Rabbi's sermon. There would be a dissolve to these "parishioners" as though they were in the synagogue. Fortunately the rain subsided a bit during air time, but a close look would reveal it was raining in the temple.

The shows were called City At Midnight because they were aired after the normal NBC sign-off. They couldn't be accurately timed, so they were open ended. They went on after the 11 O'clock News and "off" whenever the script ended. The striking of equipment was early the following morning.

The picture signal was transmitted back to Master Control, via the RCA roof microwave receiver. Our microwave transmitter was atop an apartment building. The transmitter and gear went up by elevator, but the 4 foot parabolic antenna ("dish" as we called it) wouldn't fit. So it was taken up 10 or so stories via an open stair that circled the interior of the building. The stair rail was steel pipe. Of course, when the dish went up, the clang of the dish against the railing went unnoticed. It was a different story at 2am on the descent. Doors popped open on every floor as we clanged our way to the street. I know no Yiddish, but I'm sure we weren't being blessed.

The late Alfie Jackson was our TD. At that time, the TD had no operating function. He was the equivalent of today's Technical Supervisor. Two video men were assigned to a crew and one switched the show.

Alfie was a natty dresser. He wore a Chesterfield coat (remember those coats with the black velvet collar?) and a Homburg hat. He looked more like a funeral director than a tv engineer. TD's did the show surveys and were on hand to



answer our technical and setup questions.

Whether on show business or to keep out of the rain Alfie often went into the synagogue. To gain entry, he was given a yarmulke made of black crepe-paper. Traveling back and forth, the rain soaked the paper and the black dye soon started to run down Alfie's face in craggy black rivulets. No one said a word about it!

Alfie wasn't concerned with helping with the equipment breakdown, so when the show was over he donned his Chesterfield and Homburg and headed for the subway and home north of the city. He was a sight! — nattily dressed, with his face streaked in black. We always wondered what he thought when he saw himself. He never said a word, and I don't know if anyone else did.

#### *The Baltic Street Docks.*

Our director was Doug Rogers. Naturally everyone called him Buck. He was a wild young fellow who was always asking the impossible. He usually got it.

Much of the action took place on a tugboat. I remember little of the show except the difficulty we had in hiding the monstrously large microphones of the day — in a light fixture over a table, or hidden in a coil of rope on deck. Getting good audio was a major problem in those early location shows.

One of the scenes was of a tugboat, mid river, against the background of Manhattan's skyscrapers. Buck spent a lot of rehearsal time (in daylight) getting that boat (communication via two way radio) into an exact position. On the air the tug was nowhere near the rehearsed spot. Buck went ballistic! Of course by air time it was pitch black. You could hardly make out the tug and the city was nowhere to be seen. After the show the Captain explained that the tide was at flood and he could not get to, or hold, the planned upstream position. But the show was successful enough to continue the series.

#### *The Two Deuces — or was it Aces?*

Again the rains came. Fortunately, most of the action was inside the club. There were several scenes at Nedicks on the corner of 6th Avenue. The late John Norell was the boom operator and had to walk back and forth between the club and Nedicks where he operated a fish-pole (boom) mike. By the time we were off the air John was wet to the skin. "If it wasn't for the glamour of television, I'd quit right now!" he exclaimed. He was quoted many times through the years under similar conditions.

#### *The YMCA show.*

Set up inside the "Y", we all stayed dry. (It probably didn't rain that day either.) The only chance of getting wet was in the swimming pool scene.

TV Field was studio's poor relation. We got the castoff orthicons (camera pickup tubes) that were judged unfit for studio use. The camera in the pool scene had a reject tube that "burned," that is, if it was held on a fixed scene, it would retain the image until it was "burned off." When we

broke for lunch that camera was tilted down toward the white tile floor and defocused. This in fact would "burn in" the defocused floor and "burn off" the old retained image.

I was "fire watch" while the rest of the crew went to lunch. The early tv equipment was subject to all kinds of failures, so while it was in operation someone was always in attendance. We never had any big flames, but that old tube equipment often smoked a bit.

At the pool, it was swim time for the "Y" members. The sight of a tv camera was an unexpected novelty for the swimmers. Each one wanted to examine this curiosity closely. TV itself was a novelty — a tv camera was even more so. Each examiner approached from the camera's working end. Sans swim suits they walked into focused closeups of their "naughty bits!" Unfortunately this camera happened to be "on line" so the picture was seen in Master Control in Radio City to the great amusement of a studio tour outside the control room picture window.

#### *The Long Island City Taxi War.*

Next door to the old Long Island City mobile unit garage on Jackson Avenue was a taxi company. We used their office and cab lot and the Long Island City streets as our set and our garage as our studio.

The story line was a war between two competing cab companies. Again the details of the story escape me — but, two things stick in my mind.

I was playing records. The turntables were little more than home units adapted for our use. One of my worst fears happened. There were records at different speeds and I forgot to change from 78 to 33 on one of them. Worse yet the hand that stopped the record was quicker than the one that closed the fader. (I hated record jobs the rest of my days at NBC.)

The second thing was the climactic scene of a head-on crash between two rival cabs. Visualize two cabs racing at each other. Visualize fast switching between the two racing cabs, each succeeding picture getting closer until the cabs' radiator grills filled the tv screen. Then visualize a switch to a white screen and sound effect of crashing cars and then a switch to a burning taxi. It was a great illusion — in rehearsal. It all went as planned on the air except the flaming cab. A derelict cab had been placed in a vacant lot and soaked with gasoline. On cue it was to burst into flame climaxing the crash. Unfortunately when it was switched to "air" there stood a cab driver trying to light a match to set off the blaze!

Well, that was "live television," warts and all. When tape came along it was hard to understand how we ever did a live show.

Maybe Jack Durkin, Frank Merklein, or Bob Waring can add to my recollections. They are the only ones left of the field crew that might have worked these shows. □

*Frank Vierling spent 18 of his 34 years at NBC with the mobile units. He and his wife Lois live in Oradell, NJ.*



*A Message From**Pete Peterson . . . . .*

This newsletter continues in the excellence of production by Frank and in content by contributing writers Rippy, Danny, Ken, Hal, Roy, and all of our wonderful members who sent in news and stories.

Our Silent Microphone column is always sadness exemplified. We have many personal friends that have

departed; one such was Scotty Connal. During his active and accomplished life, Scotty was a leader and inspiration to all who knew him. He enjoyed a rich and rewarding existence, blessed with a wonderful family. He was the father of eight children and the husband of a dedicated and loving wife (and business helper), Til. Scotty was a champion both in business and personal virtues, he loved sports and was a natural to be a leader in televisions history. Scotty loved PEACOCK NORTH. His attendance at our get-togethers was excellent. When he couldn't make a meeting he would call and apologize and promise to come to the next affair. He and Til brought some of their children (now adults), to our affairs. His unexpected passing is a reminder to us all of the pain of sudden departure from what we expect to be the natural season of life.

NBC has been honoring its own history by using the NBC PEACOCK symbol on the air, and ringing CHIMES on some of its special programming. The company is referring to these items as a recognized tribute to its own long time past. It would be nice to honor its "old time" employees who helped make some of this great success possible by reinventing their retirees into the fold at the 25 Year Club awards ceremonies.

The "We Are Survivors" article (pg.15) helps point out the changes our group has witnessed. Today is a far cry from the past. We have weathered the changes well. The soul of America has been hurt by all kinds of events and the actions of some prominent personalities. To list some of the most tragic shocks are the rudeness and crudeness of things, like the baseball player spitting on an umpire, a white house politico dallying with a prostitute (from which a book to be written will make millions for the offender). Turn on the TV and there's an insolent kid, in his skin or in cartoons, making snide remarks toward his parents or teachers. Sports fans throwing snowballs at players at Giants stadium, or a fan throws a transistor radio at a baseball player. Rudeness is "in," so it seems. A beer has been named "Bad Frog." A frog is pictured on the label "flipping the bird" and the beer makers slogan is "An amphibian with an attitude. He just

doesn't care." To look to our political leaders for relief is a hunt in vain. All sides seem to be tainted. Just some stories to think about, news on: Bob Packwood, Mel Reynolds, Dan Rostenkowski, Marion Berry, and Dick Morris. President Clinton is vulnerable too. Not only has he admitted cheating on his wife, but he's the first president to face a sexual harassment suit. Howard Stern mooning his audience, boooo! And N.J. Governor Christy Whitman named a rest room on a NJ highway in Stern's honor. The O.J. fiasco; these events have turned our group cold. Where are we going America?! Yes, to our group, we are survivors.

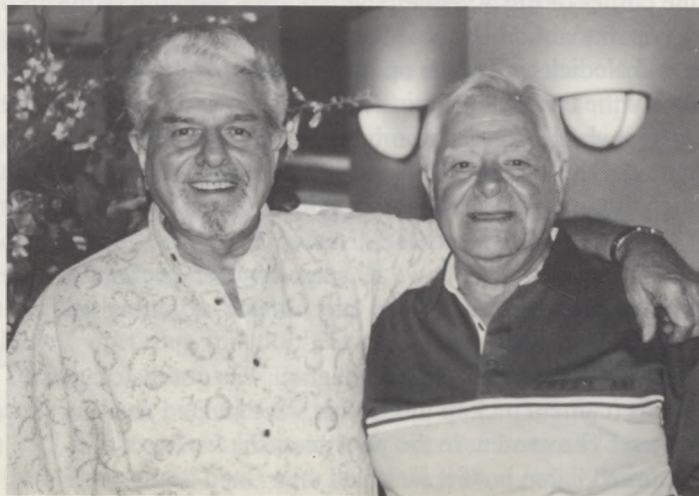
We here at PN headquarters want to wish everyone a very happy holiday season. From Thanksgiving through Chanukah, Christmas and into the New Year. We hope your best hopes and desires are realized. With a new start in 1997, we hope our membership continues to enjoy our common PN interests. Please remember to send in your dues for 1997, they're still at the same rate of \$20 and you can send it in today. And thanks for all of your well wishes for our group too.

Regards, *Pete*

*P.S. — ❖ Summer With the Petersons ❖*

Sorry we didn't send this in to Rippy for his PN People column. — On a personal note, Peg and I had a very busy season since last spring. We took some hurried trips — first, to a grand niece's spiffy wedding at the Ritz Carlton in Pasadena CA. While in LA, our good pal and long time friend Vinnie DiPietro met us at our hotel for breakfast. He is still in great shape and it's always a pleasure to see him.

Next we stopped at my cousin John's (Ret. USAF pilot-commander; 30 yrs.) at his attractive home in Henderson, a suburb of Las Vegas, Nevada, where, incidentally, we made a small contribution to Vegas'



*Vinny Di. and Peter P. — two old pals.*



economy. The shows in Vegas are super. For any PNER wondering where to go for fun, VEGAS is that place. It has gone "FAMILY," and has shed much of its "Playboy" image. The area is booming. We also had weddings in Boston and Philly to go to, as well as spending time at our son's beautiful villa on Hilton Head Island, SC. There we enjoyed swimming, boating, (in his new power boat) and fishing. Along with other sea creatures, I caught a pretty good sized hammerhead shark off the coastal waters.

It was a very busy year. Lastly, and most recently, Peg and I went to a one nighter performance at the reconstructed and upgraded "John Harms" theater in nearby Englewood, NJ where they now bring in NY headliner acts — one night only. We saw Vic Damone give a magnificent performance of his great songs that were once everyone's favorites. The graying audience gave him a standing ovation. Vic was notably affected, reacting to several additional curtain calls with more songs, and he gave his best. He was as smooth and as good as ever. He was so overjoyed that he confided to the audience that he couldn't wait to get to a phone to tell Tony Bennett to come and perform at this local theater.

We recently saw Eddie Fisher there too. He sounded great. I had a personal reunion with him backstage. He gave me a bear hug when I told him I did camera on "COKE TIME", his old TV show in the fifties. Then remembering as we chatted and laughed about an incident on St. Patrick's Day '54 when Morton Downey had a guest appearance on the show in studio 6B. Fisher was on stage in the spotlight. Axel Stardahl was conducting the off-camera orchestra when the teleprompter with the lyrics for Eddie's next song jammed. Axel kept vamping waiting for Eddie to sing (we were live on-the-air to the full NBC network). Eddie didn't know the words to "Mother Macree." He reached out of camera range and pulled Downey into the picture and said, "You're the man who would know this song better than I." Downey thought for just one moment, knew he hadn't rehearsed with the band and said, "No Eddie, this is your show, *YOU SING IT*," and walked off into the dark. The prompter was frozen and Eddie was lost.... Herb Sussan the director was frantic, so we went to a COKE commercial. The live audience howled! It was remarkable how Eddie remembered and picked up on that incident after so many years as we both laughed. Yes, it was a busy spring and summer for the Peterson's.

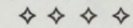
**P.P.S.** As a Yankee fan of long standing I must crow a bit about their performance in the Fall Classic — four straight — what a team!

**P.P.P.S** Now that President Clinton has won a second term let's hope we can enjoy a by-partisan four straight years.

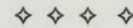


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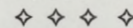
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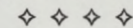
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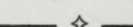
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And a special thank you to  
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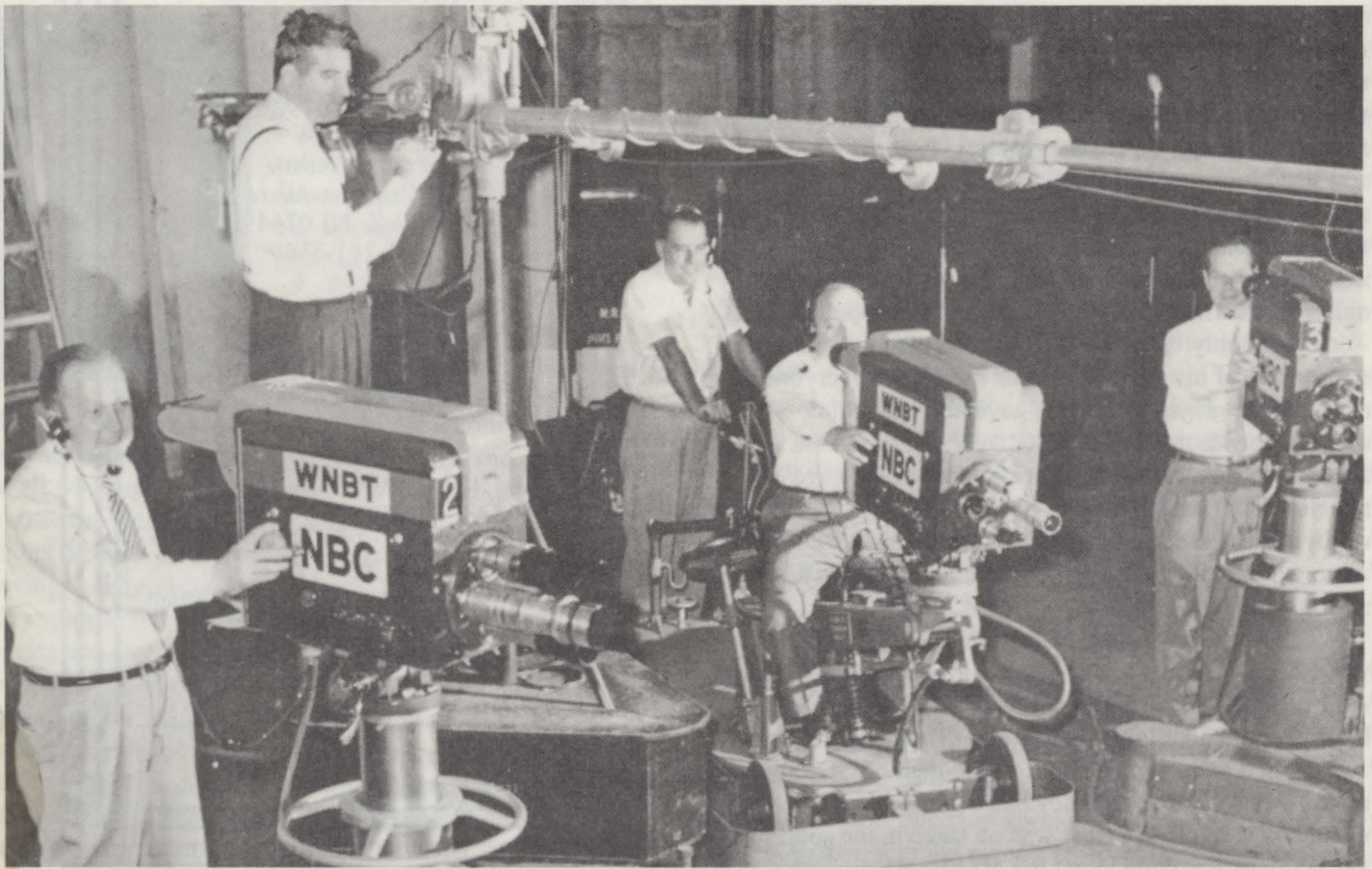
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# A PICTURE FROM OUR ARCHIVES.....



*Howdy Doody Technical Engineering floor crew in Studio 3H, 1953. L to R: cameraman Art Jensen; boom operator John Kenny; dollyman Silvio Giusetti; dolly cameraman Harvey Belair; cameraman Bjorn (BJ) Bjornsen.*

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