

# NBC TRANSMITTER

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NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.  
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## ADVANCES REPORTED IN MANY FIELDS DURING 1939



Paderewski

**T**HE yearend survey for 1939 has been made and shows remarkable progress in practically all fields of broadcasting. We present herewith a brief review of the Press Release on the past twelve months.

**TELEVISION:** Following inauguration of regular telecasting on April 30.

outstanding progress was made in production, lighting and programming. Portable field equipment was introduced and the schedule increased from two hours to an average of fifteen hours a week.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:** Events leading up to and following declarations of war in Europe challenged radio's news coverage as never before. NBC's factual reports kept listeners informed of all activities. One result of the news-packed year was the development to a fine point of a new type of radio "forum" broadcasting, in which commentators scattered throughout Europe in strategic capitals were linked in two-way discussions within a single program. The ten outstanding stories of 1939 as selected by A. A. Schechter were War Coverage, including Poland, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Memel, the European war, the Russo-Finnish Conflict and the Sino-Japanese War; Neutrality and Congress; Roosevelt's Peace Appeal and Hitler's Answer; Death of Pope Pius XI and Coronation of Pius XII; Royal Visit to America; *Squalus* Disaster; *Graf Spee*; Capture of the *City of Flint*; Duke of Windsor's Address from Verdun; Louis-Galento Fight.

**INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING:** Commercial news

programs were introduced, steerable antennae installed, and program service below the Equator increased by three and a half hours daily.

**TECHNICAL AND TRANSCRIPTIONS:** Outstanding were developments of high fidelity sound transmission for television and its application for electrical transcriptions.

**EDUCATION AND PUBLIC SERVICE:** A revolutionary step in educational broadcasting was taken with the development and inauguration of a new plan of public service programs to cover definite fields of learning in a systematic way. According to an analysis by Dr. James Rowland Angell, the NBC plan breaks down into three major services: (1) Programs designed for classroom use and programs by and for educators, discussing educational problems; (2) programs furnishing systematic information in various fields for adult education and assigned listening by students; (3) general service to public interests over a wide cultural front. This plan extends far beyond the schoolroom in subject matter, appeal and availability because, in Dr. Angell's opinion, the four time zones and the fact that each state has its own school system and each school its own schedule makes it



Ray Johnson, Arch Oboler and Alla Nazimova discussing Oboler's play, "This Lonely Heart."

impossible for a national network to extend direct classroom service beyond certain minimums. However, during the closing months of 1939, more than 80 programs a week were presented under the new schedule.

**DRAMA:** Continuing an unbroken eight-year rise, we reached a peak of 1,397 hours devoted to dramatic presentation. The quality improved commensurately with the introduction of new program series and the offering of performances by many distinguished theatre names.

**ARTISTS SERVICE** had outstanding concert success. New services inaugurated were Radio Features Division, for planning and testing "package shows", and a lecture division, enlarging the scope of bookings.

**MUSIC:** The Symphony Orchestra became a year-round organization. A specially written radio opera was given its world premiere. Several distinguished instrumental groups were introduced. International musical events were widely covered.

**SPORTS:** Opening with the Rose and Sugar Bowl grid-iron battles, NBC followed every major sport event of the year, including prize fights, baseball, track and field meets, horse, crew and airplane races, hockey, golf and tennis.

**WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS:** Direct contact with more than 100 leading women's organizations and active participation by individual women listeners

(Continued on page 5)



Special Events at the Outbreak of War

## 1939 YEAR-END STATEMENT BY DAVID SARNOFF

The following article is a condensed report of the Year-End Statement by Mr. David Sarnoff, reviewing the achievements of 1939 and pointing ahead to important developments for 1940.

"Radio in 1939 has had its greatest year. More than 9,000,000 radio receivers have been sold. With 45,000,000 receivers in American homes and automobiles, radio has become an integral part of our national life.

"American-owned radio communication services, vital to our national defense, have maintained direct contacts with all nations, belligerent and neutral. Our radio communication facilities guarantee the freedom of our communication lanes for the flow of international messages and in the interests of American trade.

"The war, and its threat to the neutrality of the Western Hemisphere, put the American system of free and private enterprise in radio to the acid test. American broadcasting met the test. American radio told the truth to its listeners at home and throughout the world. Its short-wave broadcasts were almost the world's only free, factual, and uncensored sources of radio news. From day to day and from hour to hour, it told the history-making story of the year.

"As RCA is the only radio organization in the world engaged in every field of radio, the progress of the Corporation is indicated by its position in broadcasting, manufacturing, communications and research, and its advances are determined by its ability to render public service in each of the fields in which it is engaged.

"An increase in the volume of business handled by NBC by which the nation's advertisers stimulated the distribution of products, enabled the company to carry on an expanded service in all fields of broadcasting." (At this point Mr. Sarnoff mentioned many of the activities recorded in the article on the front page.)

"In translating the developments of the research laboratory into practical devices for existing and new radio services, the RCA Manufacturing Company has contributed materially to the 1939 progress of radio in all fields. Rapid advances are being made in the development and use of radio devices in many industries in which speed and precision of manufacturing operation are vital factors.

"Improved television equipment, and tubes and transmitters for long, short-wave, and ultra-short-wave transmis-

sion and reception, have been developed for commercial use. Radio services depend on equipment, and RCA not only has invented, developed, and manufactured but has also aided the American radio industry to put these new products into daily use.

"The outbreak of war in Europe brought to RCA Communications, Inc., a substantial increase in traffic during the last four months of 1939. Daily word-of-mouth reports from the war zone by trained observers have been brought to America by this company, and then broadcast over national networks. Radio photographs from Europe and South America, received via RCA Communications, have appeared daily in our newspapers.

"In reviewing the year's accomplishments of radio, it is evident that they cannot be measured in statistics, or dollars and cents. They must be gauged by the public service rendered—by technical advance and by social contribution. It is in these terms that radio in 1939 has surpassed all its previous achievements.

"The research laboratories of the Radio Corporation continued their co-ordinated attack on all fronts of radio to explore the possibilities of improving old services and to create new ones. New areas of the ether spectrum have been invaded with startling results, and with great promise. Television, the latest child of the RCA research laboratories, after a period of field test, emerged into the domain of public service. Here economic and artistic problems were confronted requiring a trial-and-error method of solution. These problems have been studied in the television program operations of NBC in 1939 with substantial progress.

"On the technical side, the quality of television images broadcast by NBC has shown striking improvement in brilliance and clarity. A new type of Iconoscope or pick-up tube—the "Orthon"—has been developed by RCA Laboratories and tested with great success by NBC. This type of Iconoscope, far more sensitive than any heretofore employed, and requiring less brilliant light on the subjects televised, will be available to all television stations during the coming year. Similarly, the latest types of television transmitters developed by RCA are available to stations through the RCA Manufacturing Company.

"Two other important television developments are scheduled for public

## TELEVISION

*This is the first in a series of monthly articles on Television written especially for the TRANSMITTER by Noran C. Kersta, assistant to Mr. C. W. Farrier, Television coordinator. We hope that the column will serve as a record of RCA-NBC progress in this new field.*

NBC television ended the year 1939 having put on 668 individual programs in the eight months from April 30, 1939 to January 1st, 1940. The schedule was on an average of five days a week, two hours a day, for a total of 361.87 hours, or an average of a little over ten hours a week. The programs were made up of approximately one-third from the studio, one-third film, and one-third out-door pickups.

Some of the outstanding studio shows were such Broadway hits as *Jane Eyre*, *Dover Road*, *The Milky Way*, *Three Men On a Horse*, and others; such Gilbert and Sullivan operettas as *Pinafore*, *Cox and Box*, and *Pirates of Penzance*. Some of the outstanding outdoor pickups were President Roosevelt, speaking at the dedication of the New York World's Fair: the Eastern Grass Court Championship matches in Rye, New York; most of the Brooklyn Dodgers professional football games; six-day bike races at Madison Square Garden; the Baer-Nova fight; the Television Ball from the Waldorf; the premiere of *Gone With the Wind* at the Capitol Theatre; and the weekly boxing and wrestling matches from the Ridgewood Grove Arena. Among the outstanding film programs we have had Walt Disney cartoons, many foreign and domestic features, and the *March of Time* series; travelogues, educational and scientific shorts made up the remainder of the film programs.

Our television audience is estimated to be in the neighborhood of 2,000 home receivers as of January 1, 1940. With the average of four or five persons per receiver as indicated in an early survey, it means that our potential audience is between 8,000 and 10,000. Each week the television audience has an opportunity to express its likes and dislikes on every program transmitted. We have found that the average of all shows since the beginning of our survey on October 8th has been rated "Good", on a basis of "Poor", "Fair", "Good", and "Excellent". It has also been found that on the average, about

(Continued on page 5)

## NBC BIOGRAPHY

N. Ray Kelly

"We're off to see the wizard" sang the happy little notebook on its way to keep an appointment with Ray Kelly, master magician of Sound Effects. It was a very special occasion, too, because Ray Kelly this month completes ten years with NBC as head man in the business of whees, booms and bangs.

Way back in 1930 Sound Effects consisted of one make-shift door, for slamming, and a few cups and saucers. The department was kept in a spare closet in the top of the Fifth Avenue building. There was room to stand up on one side but the gables soon put a stop to that. There were only two or three shows a week, ones like *East of Cairo* and *Harbor Lights*, which needed sound effects anyway. About that time NBC decided to organize a special department to take care of the incidental sounds, previously made by the concessions or an odd musician here and there. Ray Kelly was called in to be the head of this new NBC Sound Effects Department; the title impressed him but the size of the quarters soon left him no illusions.

Today it is a different story. Kelly and his ingeniousness are responsible for the change. The Department has grown from one and a half to twenty-four men. Instead of the original two shows per week there are now some hundred and thirty, with the Department in New York divided into two functions, the operative group under Major Dillon and the Development and Maintenance group for which Mr. Kelly is directly responsible. Operations in the studio we are all familiar with, but the job of Development and Maintenance is to develop new sound equipment and cooperate with the stations in building and maintaining the same high standards of equipment and service throughout the network. Equipment of standard design is furnished network stations as required, or, in the case of stations doing their own construction, the necessary plans, drawings, etc., are supplied. At present there are five or six stations on the networks with full grown Sound Effects Departments and many others well underway.

Lots of the men in charge of sound effects all over the country were trained under Ray Kelly, and the familiar items to be seen in the studios, the big turntables, wagon wheels, etc., were most of them built in the fourth



Ray Kelly and Rain Machine

floor shop by Kelly and the three others who work with him. Alchemy and sound effects are not far removed. If a few incantations and thick smoke float out into the corridor, it is because a mysterious new gadget is being contrived.

Kelly was born in Prior Creek, Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, of part Cherokee, part Irish parentage. Perhaps the beat of ceremonial drums is still running through his veins, and it may account for his genius when it comes to sound effects, which after all are a sort of ritual. Some of the land now making Tennessee was bought by the government from the Cherokees. Mr. Kelly has said that if he had all the government still owed his family in the land deal, he could retire.

Ray Kelly was only two years old when his family moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Tulsa didn't actually exist then, but his father and family rode into the territory on a spring-bed wagon to stake their claim during the Cherokee land rush and when Tulsa materialized the Kellys were already moved in. School in Tulsa accounted for the next few years in his young life. The college career began at Washington University. However, he got his degree from Knox College. As an undergraduate, Kelly was stage manager and later president for two years of the Campus Theatre at Knox. The faculty sponsor for this group was a C. L. Menser who became associated

with NBC and was later responsible for Kelly's being called to us.

When the inevitable 1929 came along and put a stop to everything, Ray Kelly was in the Harvard Law School. During the summer he had worked for the Gypsy Oil Co. as a production clerk and so, after he left Harvard, he went back to his old job, but this time in a Seminole district lease camp. An unusual place to develop a sensitivity for sounds. Perhaps because Ray Kelly listened to the sound of drills all day and then spent the still nights in a bunk house where only tired men and crickets conspired against the silence, perhaps because he developed the mechanical dexterity so necessary to a drilling crew, perhaps these help to account for his success as a sound effects man.

The original sound equipment was all manual. Not until 1933 was permission granted Kelly to use recorded sound. Today we have five thousand different subjects on records. Usage is about half and half between manual and recorded effects.

When the Department gets a requisition for a given sound, if it is entirely new, then, Kelly says, the whole Department works hand in glove inventing. With a mysterious manner they pull out bits of incongruous materials and before long the sound has evolved. The rain machine is the classical example of this process. Stumped for a revolutionary method of making rain. Ray Kelly went out to lunch. He sprinkled a little salt on his lettuce, and there was the solution. With a little interpretation and a piece from the cabinet maker it became the rain machine. Bird seed, poured onto a turn table gently revolving, then eased off by a windshield wiper splashing it onto a perch and a ping pong ball and finally onto a pitched roof made of cellophane and tightly stretched cheese cloth, made a very realistic rain.

Kelly believes in putting the real article into use whenever it is possible. If you hear the sound of a duel you can be sure the sabres are real. Long ago he discovered you can't fool the feminine listeners about household sounds. They know the ring of five and ten cent store glass and there's no use telling them it's crystal. So the Sound Effects Department has its own very discriminating kitchen and pantry taking everything into consideration

(Continued on page 8)

## NBC CHICAGO

by Bob McCoy

## Santa Claus Came to Town

As promised in the last issue of the TRANSMITTER the Third Annual Christmas Party was held in Studio A on December 29. And also as promised the party was, literally, a howling success. The howling began in the throats of the NBC young and so contagious was it that it soon spread to the grown-ups along the walls of the studio and even to the overflow crowd in the corridor. In one corner was the mammoth Christmas tree and in the other three corners were people, people and still more people. Naturally, the center of the studio wasn't a vast waste of green congoileum. That's where most of the guests of honor were. Kids, kids and more kids and everyone of them having a swell time. Well, why not? After all, who could ask more of life than a trained crowd, a marionette show, magician and best of all—Santa Claus!

Besides the entertainment, every one received a present from Mr. Claus or one of his helpers he'd put under contract for the occasion. Judith Waller and John Whalley were two who were kept busy digging down for presents for the guests—big and little. Sorely missed this year was Niles Trammell who heretofore has always occupied a place on the floor smack in the center of the studio, having a grand time for himself. To Judith Waller and her committee go all of our thanks for a really happy Christmas party which is now definitely a tradition here.

## Vegetable Crooner

If Announcer Durward Kirby ever wants to mix up a pot of soup, he knows how to get the vegetables for it. All he has to do is sing. When he made his singing debut on *Club Matinee* little did he realize to what heights he would soar. When he did a repeat performance on the same program on January 5 he knew just where he stood. At least in the estimation of his fellow announcers. As the last notes of his solo died away, Announcer Bob Brown stepped to the microphone and read a touching tribute to Kirby's vocal talents. It was to the effect that the artists of the Metropolitan "... were indebted to him for making the public appreciate them the more ... and we confer upon you the degree of Novocanum, Cocanum ... because if there ever was a dope, it's you!"



KIRBY COMES HOME A WINNER  
Corinne Murphy, Durward Kirby (as if you couldn't tell), Jane Stahl, Lois Aepli and Ransom Sherman.

Then Guide Paul Millen, struggling under the weight of it—and the aroma—brought in the huge horseshoe made up of choicest vegetable specimens. Paul brought along not only the vegetation but some of the girls from Central Stenographic. By the time the violent osculations were over our announcer looked like some of the vegetables might have been hurled by the studio audience. Not for long however was Durward Kirby aghast at the effects of his charm and glamor. As the accompanying picture shows he made a quick recovery and like all champions was able to bring a broad smile to his violently red and beaming face.

## Peanuts, Candy, Popcorn

At the January 8th meeting of the Athletic Association, the question of having automatic vending machines installed was brought up. No decision was made by the members, but should they be installed, the profits derived from them would go directly into the



PART OF THE PARTY IN STUDIO A  
"Hey, Ma! See me, ma, see me?"

AA treasury. The machines would be a pleasant way of helping to swell the coffers, and certainly a convenience to anybody who can't take time to go to the main floor for cigarettes.

## Fine Romances

Up in the National Sales office these days two new rings are giving off a blinding light as they skim over the typewriter keys. One of those rings belongs to Esther Nilsen who at Christmas time announced her engagement to Mr. Herman Husted. Our congratulations to the fortunate Mr. Husted.

The other fellow whose luck is running in spades is Mr. Bernard Schroeder whose ring the popular Rubye Downs is wearing. Rubye plans on wedding bells March 1 and she and Mr. Schroeder will a-farming go. They'll go as far as Libertyville, Ill. Lest anyone think Rubye will live a *Grapes of Wrath* existence, perish the thought. The farms around Libertyville are super special productions all done in new glorious Technicolor.

## Quick Delivery

Proving that our Engineering staff is fleet as the wind and moves on winged feet, we cite this case, in which Engineer E. L. Bernheim was here in the Merchandise Mart one minute and at the Hotel Sherman the next. Well, almost the next. Seems the Sherman was scheduled for a broadcast at 12:30 a.m. one Thursday. At the last minute the equipment at the pickup point went "kaput." The nemo man worked frantically to get it going but to no avail. At 12:33 Mr. Bernheim left the Mart with an amplifier and a battery cord. At that time of the morning this neighborhood looks like the vast Arctic wastes and it felt like them. Not a cab in sight, but, fortunately for Bernheim, Mrs. Marvin Royston had driven down to pick up her husband, so, quick as a flash, into the car went Bernheim with an anguished plea to "... get to Hotel Sherman, quick." Evidently Mrs. Royston covered the four and a half blocks in minus nothing flat for the Sherman was ready to take the air at 12:40, equipment perfect and just dying to be put to use.

## New Faces

Welcome to these new members: Corinne Murphy, Margaret Benbow, Phillip Steitz, Earl Ebi, Claude Welles, Bob Larimer and Joseph Carroll.



Sidney Strotz

## SIDNEY STROTZ NEW V.P.

Sidney N. Strotz, manager of the Central Division, was elected a vice president by the board of directors at their regular December meeting.

Strotz has been manager of the Central Division since last January, succeeding Niles Trammell. Previously Strotz had been Program and Artists Service manager of the Central Division, since he joined the Company in 1933.

Strotz is noted especially for making Chicago one of the major points for originating outstanding programs and for developing radio talent which has achieved national prominence.

A native of Chicago, Strotz attended St. John's Military Academy and Cornell University, leaving college to serve in the 326th Battalion Tank Corps during the World War.

In 1928 he organized the Chicago Stadium Corporation and became secretary and treasurer of the Company, which built and operated the largest indoor arena in the country. He became president of the Corporation in 1930. As president of the stadium he promoted almost every form of entertainment from championship fights to circuses, indoor football games and ice carnivals, and brought Sonja Henie to this country for her first exhibition tour.

## 5 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

The \$15,000 "tubes" exhibit was installed among the clover leaf exhibits of the NBC tour.

The *Reception Staff Review* began a series of articles on the history and organization of the Company.

William Burke Miller advanced to the newly established position of Night Program Director.

## CURTAIN CALLS OF 1939

The last day of the old year heard an historic broadcast over the Blue Network. It ran from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m., was called *Curtain Calls of 1939*, and the speeches, talent and entertainment were as varied as the past amazing year. Mr. Sarnoff spoke and, by way of contrast, ten Jeter Lesters. Dorothy Maynor and Carmen Miranda contributed, and seven languages were heard by an astonished audience. We have had somewhat similar programs on other New Year's Eves, but this was in many ways unique, no other program having contained, for instance, a review of events leading up to a major war, or a television show.

Among the high spots were a visit to Helsinki, *Information Please*, Bob Hope, Joe DiMaggio and John Charles Thomas. The television part picked up Larry Clinton in the Sunken Plaza, who appeared on receivers in Studio 3H and thus conducted his band. The program ended with the audience, led by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt in Washington, repeating the oath of allegiance to the flag of the United States, and the playing of the *Star Spangled Banner*.

## 1939 ADVANCES

(Continued from page 1)

throughout the country contributed to a year of vast improvement and enlargement of interest in programs designed for women and children.

**NETWORK EXPANSION:** With the addition of 20 stations our network affiliates reached the unprecedented total of 181 outlets in the United States, Canada and Cuba, a far cry from our founding in 1926 when we were only 18 stations strong.

## TELEVISION

(Continued from page 2)

65 per cent of the receivers are in use at all times; daytime viewing is in the neighborhood of 50 per cent, and the night-time average runs over 80 per cent. A survey of the technical reception in the home has shown that the people rate the technical quality of our programs much better than "Good".

On January 15th, the FCC held a hearing on its new regulations for television. It is anticipated that partial commercialization of television will be permitted under the new approved regulations. NBC has been doing a considerable amount of groundwork for the past few years on the commercial aspects of television and it is expecting some early participation of sponsors under the new regulations, should they be finally accepted.



Mus. Mod. Art Film Library

A memorable moment from Fairbanks' "Robin Hood," second program of the NBC Film Society. See Page 11.

## A PHOTO CONTEST

ALL NBC EMPLOYEES

### PRIZES

will be given, \$10.00, \$5.00 and a year's subscription to U. S. CAMERA, for the best pictures illustrating TITLES OF BLUE NETWORK SHOWS. ADVENTURES IN PHOTOGRAPHY, Wednesday nights on the Blue, will give you an idea. Due to the small number of entries, the first contest has been postponed for one month—but one month only, so send your pictures in now.

### RULES

are these:

1. Your picture must be illustrative of a title of a Blue Network show.
2. Send your print—not the negative.
3. Print must be 5" by 7" (available at any photo finishers for 25 cents).
4. Mail your masterpiece to the TRANSMITTER, Room 465, RCA Bldg., N. Y.
5. Send your name, department, division and explanation of the picture.

START IN

CLICKING

## NEW YORK

*Well, you know, it was Christmas, and people got together and had a high time, and a lot of interesting things happened, and there were curious incidents which will never be fully explained, and, well, you know, it was Christmas. Gradually we're getting the loose ends stowed away in the third drawer on the left, but there are still a lot of rumors running around the corridors in short pants. A pair of red flannels disappeared—from right outside the Legal Department of all places. Now what in the world . . . And then there was the kid at the 8H party who got a football from Santa and turned it back, which, in its minor way, is also puzzling. And the strange clicking noise from Television. And the sound of many leaves being turned over in Script. And the weird celebration the little Zombie staged for itself. Fortunately, we have all been through the holidays before, so everybody was more or less braced for the occasion, and we have no casualties to report, in fact everything was tossed off very neatly and we think it the best Christmas and New Year's yet.*

Broadcasting went on, telecasting continued, recording did not falter, and there were a few changes and promotions.

*For instance, Mr. D'Agostino, who, like the inevitable Nugent, has a faculty for popping into these columns virtually every issue, has done it again, this time by acquiring a new secretary. Hazel Olsen must have con-*

*vinced NBC pretty promptly that she had what it takes to take dictation, for she was barely a week in Stenographic before she joined the cliffdwellers of the fourth floor, parking her papers under Mr. D'Agostino's fabulous flora. (This may seem florid, but consult the December issue.) How does she do it? Well, her story is briefly told. Hazel majored in Sociology at Nassau College. She graduated from Katherine Gibbs Business School. During the last political campaign she worked for the Independent Coalition of American Women. The next three years found her at the Bank of Manhattan, and NBC completes the tale. She likes ice skating and music (but you won't see her in the Plaza). There are those who will be interested to know that her hobby is collecting Toscanini recordings.*

*And then there is Mary F. Sheppard. If you manage to steal past the reception desk of the producers' office, you might in your hurry run smack into her, now performing secretarial duties for those fateful judiciaries. Hunter was the college, and the publishing house of Grosset and Dunlap was her first business conditioning. From books to law seemed a logical step, and she was soon firmly entrenched behind the formidable lettering of Cravath, Degersdorff, Swain and Wood. She then went back to the academic atmosphere, taking a position in the publicity office of Fordham University. Her tastes are seasonal, tennis in summer, bridge in winter.*

*Beulah Scott set out on her NBC career just as we went to press, so here she is. She attended the Erasmus Hall High School where she distinguished herself on the athletic field, basketball and hockey being her favorites. At graduation she was named Girl Athlete of the class. She is definitely in the "Know," having worked for Dun and Bradstreet. This was followed by three years with Shreve, Lamb and Harman, a noted architectural firm which designed a certain tall building down Fifth Avenue a bit. It was this association that stimulated her interest in the arts.*

*And that takes care of the ladies. As for the gentlemen . . .*

*Returning to NBC after a two year interval with Hearst and CBS is Willan C. Roux, who joins the National Spot and Local Sales Department to work on M and O Stations promotion. A resident of South Orange, Mr. Roux was born and spent the better part of his life in New Jersey, although according to a rumor*



Our own Charles Van Bergen helps Debutante Mary Ellen Cookman relax at a Television Ball rehearsal.

*now floating around among his friends, he did go through a short period of residence in Ossining. He attended Newark Academy and Brown University, class of '23. After graduation he entered the advertising department of L. Bamberger and Co. and then set up his own agency. He joined NBC for the first time in 1932. Mr. Roux dabbles in stamp collecting and plays a little golf. His principal interest is gardening, however, with which he combines a propensity for building rock walls, possibly acquired during the Ossining period.*

*They're giving us the run around up in the Telegraph and Traffic Departments. Those occupying the chairs won't sit still long enough for us to discover who's taking whose place. Perhaps it's because the department is right next to that room where they play records all day long, but it seems to us like a game of Going to Jerusalem.*

*Beginning at one end of the line, because Kay Barr has left for San Francisco Press, we note that Anthony Cusumano is comfortably filling the former's chair in room 562—or else he'll be at home taking old automobile engines apart; he can really put them together again though. Cusumano came from Brooklyn City College and started work at NBC as a page, ten years ago, on a New Year's night.*

*Albert Frey is filling Cusumano's shoes. He has been in Traffic since last July and now sits looking around uneasily at the alluring chairs in other corners of room 565. He came originally from the Mail Room and has been with NBC for several years.*

*Val Kalligeros runs quick and grabs Frey's ex-chair and now has a coy expression on his face. He began*

*(Continued on next page)*



FATHER MILLER'S MIRACLE

When we saw this, we knew you'd want to see it, too. Meet Mrs. Casper B. Kuhn.

(Continued from page 6)

life as a Guest Relations Page, one day he became legman for Telegraph, and now he is in Traffic.

Vincent O'Connell goes in for Kalligeros as clerk and general office boy in Traffic. If you notice the slight brogue remember that O'Connell has only been over here for the past six years. Since O'Connell has left Telegraph, Pete Ratyca moves up to the day schedule and reports that he has the staff all under control. Bill Ripa comes up from Duplicating to take the night schedule. We are sure though that by next week all will be different.

All right, you probably think the Traffic jam is pretty confusing. That's nothing. Whole divisions are moving around in a mad circle, the TRANSMITTER as usual on the periphery. You see, they dispossessed the television receiver from 465 and moved the TRANSMITTER in, which left 317 vacant, and Harold Bisson, Advertising Production manager, took over, right where he was when he first came with the Company (he has to have a window for matching colors—and after all, the TRANSMITTER is just black and white and read all over), and that made 302 a great emptiness (the tabulators gone heaven knows where) and Information has gone in there, causing a gaping hole in Press which may be filled by the Library, which, of course, makes room back on the fourth floor that, it is rumored, might be taken over by Television. (We'd have gotten James Joyce to do this story for us, but he's busy with a semicolon.)

The News and Special Events Department had a gathering at Mr. Schechter's house on December 27th. Occasion: the holiday spirit, which brings together members of the Department once a year, and also the fact that Mr. Schechter has sort of moved. The party opened with a chorus of *Adeste Fideles*. The guests, having met first at the household appliances department of the five and ten, proceeded to Mr. Schechter's and a buffet supper. The packages were all opened at once, among the articles found in the tissue paper were a large cork screw, a box of roach powder, dust cloths, a broom and a bedbug exterminator. Also among the wrappings was Mr. Schechter, right in the middle. Some time later when the party broke up, members of the department went home convinced that this had been the special event of the year.

Now that you have gotten this far, we would like to congratulate you and make a date for next month at the same time in the same old place.

## AA ACTIVITIES

As a body the AA was practically in a state of hibernation during the holidays while its individual members were at play elsewhere. Wood and metal working, dancing, and women's swimming were all in a state of suspended animation, while basketball and chess were still struggling to wake up.

### Dancing

The dancers had one last class before the holidays in which the members insisted on learning some smooth waltz steps and fox trots that could be used for Christmas and New Year's parties. This emphasis on practicality had good results, and all the members reported great social triumphs when they returned to the class in January. On New Year's Eve some of them even attempted the tango, and came out without a scratch.

### Artists

The wood and metal workers, dormant during the festivities, reawoke in January and went back to their old haunt in room 300. Clay modellers and woodworkers are meeting on Monday evenings at 6 o'clock under the direction of Trygve Hammer, and the metal workers gather at the same time on Wednesdays. Any more people interested should get in touch with Lewis Julian in 293.

### Riding

Plunging into the season with new vigor after a short post New Year's rest, the Riding Club got under way with groups organized for both indoor and outdoor activities. The fresh air fiends continued to meet on Saturdays if weather permitted, and on January 6 attempted some skijoring on the snow covered roads near their headquarters in Closter, New Jersey. Skijoring (said to be pronounced "ski-yoring"), for those who don't know, is an ingenious sport combining all the perils and excitements of riding, skiing and crack-the-whip. The versatile members of the riding group seemed willing to tackle the intricacies of all three and took turns at towing from horseback or being towed on skis. Those on the latter end of the game seemed to spend more time in snow drifts than they did on their runners, and all ended the day with hands bruised by the tow-line. However, in spite of all discomforts, the sliding was so popu-

## ANNIVERSARY CHIMES

*The NBC TRANSMITTER salutes these members of the National Broadcasting Company, who, this month, complete their tenth year with the Company.*

### New York

May Frances Ball	Artists Service
Harry A. Olsen	Engineering
Louis A. Anderson	General Service
Elsie Marie Ashton	Information
Mary Frances Sprague	Information
Peter Zalanitis	Program
Norval Ray Kelly	Program
Edward DeSalisbury	Sales
Hugh Malcolm Beville, Jr.	Sales
A. Burke Crotty	Television
Theodore Zae	Treasurer's

### Washington

Elsie Mae Ramby	General
-----------------	---------

lar that near the end riding was given up altogether, and the members started some independent coasting and skiing.

### Bowling

Bowling is one exception to the rule on inactivity over the holidays. Like Tennyson's brook it seems to go on forever, and the balls continue to roll down the alley in spite of New Year's, winter or what not. As the alleymen (and women) emerged from the Christmas season, General Service Team 1 still held the lead, but Engineering 1 and Treasurer's had pushed out the Sales Team for second and third place. The gallant American women of the Ladies Team, after standing in tenth place last month, have fought back to ninth, while the men from Program, whose talents seem to lie more in the entertainment field, are still in the cellar. On individual honors among the ladies, Mary Lesko of Accounting runs off with both the High Series and High Score, getting a 464 and 187 respectively. Dot Michel of Traffic, secretary of the League, by the way, has the second High Series with a 446, while Ada Moyer, a ringer on the Ladies Team, is runner up for High Score with a 167. Among the men, George Frey of Sales has shot up to first place in both High Score and High Series with 660 and 258. George Milne's series of 615 gives him second place, while George McElrath (this sounds like a pullman porters' convention) is in second place having a High Score of 241. Albert Protzman and George Frey lead the individual averages with marks of 172 and 171.

## NBC TRANSMITTER

Published for and by the employees  
of the National Broadcasting Com-  
pany from coast to coast.

VOL. 6 FEBRUARY, 1940 No. 2

## EDITORIAL BOARD

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Address all correspondence to: NBC TRANSMITTER, National Broadcasting Company, Room 465, RCA Building, New York, N. Y. Telephone: Circle 7-8300. Extension 220.

## RAY KELLY

(Continued from page 3)

except, well—the ladies can't hear the colors clash.

You've probably heard the distant roll of thunder. Technician Kelly took six months trying to find a steer hide large enough to give the proper sound for a thunder drum. One was finally located in Chicago, cured and stretched onto a six-foot square frame. It is used now for many varieties of percussion sounds, long sustained rolls and distant explosions. In the natural world sounds very seldom are the same. That, too, is considered up in the sound effects shop. The single sound of thunder may come from an electronic machine, from a recording, from an inflated basketball bladder filled with bird-seed, or from the inexplicable thunder sheet with a magnetic pickup, as well as from the drum.

This winter a specially designed RCA sound effects kit for youngsters appeared. It had a little rain resonator, a mild steam engine puffer, a couple of balloons, one for surf, one for thunder, and other charms. The story finally comes out that the designer was Ray Kelly. Now every kid that got one for Christmas has written to Uncle Ray who has been elected Chief Engineer of the Short Pants Sound Effects Club. This makes the young Kellys, both of them, the talk of the town among the younger set of Great Neck, Long Island.

In fact, Ray Kelly seems to be able to create any sound with precision and proper variations. So if you're writing a radio play that needs unheard of noises, don't worry about them, go on worrying about the play, because Kelly could, if necessary, produce the sounds of life on Mars, and these would be authentic.

## KOA DENVER

by Charles Anderson

KOA goes to the Theatre! December 14th, Denver's 12 leading theatres began a promotional co-operation campaign as result of an agreement signed by General Manager Lloyd Yoder and Harry Huffman of Fox Intermountain Theatres, Inc. To celebrate the signing of the pact a mammoth program was presented from the stage of the Denver Theatre. Clarence Moore, Program Director of KOA, M.C.'d the show introducing Manager Yoder, Mr. Huffman, singer Donald Novis and Dr. I. Q. KOA will carry Theatre reporter program daily and theatres in Denver and Rocky Mountain Region will carry trailers publicizing KOA-NBC outstanding radio attractions. Conservative estimate states that theatre audiences will get 8,000,000 reminders yearly of NBC's programs. As Promotion Manager James MacPherson of KOA says, "8,000,000 KOA flashes can't be wrong."

Denver University has again commandeered the services of KOA's Assistant Manager and Chief Engineer Robert H. Owen. He will lecture the Electrical Engineering Seniors in the College of Engineering. Mr. Owen garnered his B.A. in Science and Electrical Engineering at the University of Colorado and spent several years with the General Electric Company in Schenectady, New York, before coming to Denver again to put KOA on the air for the first time, in 1924.

Saturday, December 9th, President Neville Miller of the National Association of Broadcasters, paid a visit to Denver for the regional NAB Conference. The meetings were attended by Manager Lloyd Yoder, and Assistant Manager Robert H. Owens.

The welcome mat was spread in typical KOA class for the arrival after Christmas of Mrs. Yoder, wife of Manager Lloyd Yoder. Mr. Yoder went



Seated: Harry Huffman (left) of Fox-I. M. Theatres; Lloyd Yoder. Standing: Manager Rice, Paramount Theatre; Bernie Hynes, Manager, Denver Theatre; James MacPherson.

to San Francisco to officiate at the Annual East-West game and to bring his wife back to Colorado with him. The Staff of KOA turned out en masse at the station to greet Mrs. Yoder and give her a bouquet of roses as an expression of our hospitality.

KOA is joining with the Sloan Foundation in a very worthwhile effort to make educational broadcasts equally interesting to every listener. With Dr. A. D. H. Kaplan, Professor of Government Management at the University of Denver, acting as authority, and Forbes Parkhill, nationally known writer, preparing the scripts, Roscoe Stockton, KOA Producer, is directing the series to be started soon under the title *You Make America*. The shows will have dramatic appeal and production techniques applied to make them interest-getters as well as educational aids to better understanding of the problems of Government Management. Program is result of months of consultation between Manager Lloyd Yoder, Dr. A. D. H. Kaplan, Clarence Moore, Program Director, and members of the Sloan Foundation.

J. A. Slusser, engineer in charge of the KOA Transmitter, received from the Chamber of Commerce of Aurora special commendation for the beautiful Christmas lighting effects which had passersby oh-ing as they drove by the building and tower. Two evergreens in front had strings of lights; a big wreath and rope of green over the door; inside another wreath and lighted Christmas tree; and on the roof the two small towers for the Hi-frequency antenna were floodlighted. All this combined with the neon on the tower and the fountain out front made something to look at.



Welcome to Denver, Mrs. Yoder!

# WBZ BOSTON AND WBZA SPRINGFIELD

by Charles Gilchrest

## Christmas Party

The WBZA, Springfield, crowd came to Boston to join the WBZ gang for the stations' combined Christmas Party Friday, Dec. 22. The whole mob was present except George Harder, Fred Cole and Bob White who were up in rural Snellville staging a Christmas broadcast from a little red school house for the Blue Network. Mr. Holman played the part of Santa and dealt out the studio gifts to each staff member. Followed a big turkey dinner with punch on the side and the lads and lassies had a swell time, later adjourning to the Bradford Roof for dancing and a floor show. Programs continued to be broadcast by a mournful skeleton crew who eyed the festivities enviously. Bob White made up for his doing duty come Yuletide by packing wife and self off to Springfield for re-union with his old gang for New Year's Eve.

## Holman Address

John A. Holman's address on "Prepare New England for Possible Enemy Invasion" brought a packed house to the Advertising Club of Boston's first 1940 meeting, even if it was Hangover Day—Jan. 2. Mr. Holman, general manager of WBZ-WBZA for NBC, also is a captain in the United States Signal Corps Reserve. In addition to the local ad execs the meeting was attended by every leading regular army, national guard and reserve officer in Boston.

## Coming and Going

Assistant Manager Vince Callahan and Sales Manager Frank Bowes opened the new year by going to New York on a business trip. Incidentally, the new Callahan kitten has six toes on each paw . . . Vince always does things in a big way.

Recent visitors to BZ included popular Bill Kostka, head of the N. Y. Press Department, who spent a day getting acquainted with the Boston NBC gang and discussing press problems with local radio eds. Consensus of BZ boys is that Bill is a swell guy with plenty on the ball.

## To and Fro

Sports Commentator Bob Evans is sporting one of those new torpedo bodied Buicks and so is Salesman Babe Norris . . . Frank and Mrs. Bowes are moving to Boston's Beacon

Hill and closing their country home for the winter. The twenty-five mile drive in snow and ice is too tough . . . Announcer Fred Cole achieved an ambition yesterday when the driver of a huge Greyhound bus let Fred take over the wheel for a few blocks. Fred also went home last night with a huge skyrocket four feet long but he refuses to say what its purpose may be . . . Promotion and News Manager George Harder's horseback riding has been curtailed by the deeply drifting snow along the bridle paths . . . Cy Young's nautically minded pals aren't wasting the winter even if their boats have been put in dry dock. The sailors meet regularly at WBZ for navigation training . . . Kay Leatherbee of Sales and Promotion is back from a midwinter vacation in New Hampshire . . . Vince Callahan, Frank Bowes, Babe Norris and Herb Masse spent a weekend in a snow surrounded Maine lodge and went to a country barn dance where only Mrs. Callahan and Mrs. Bowes could handle the tricky steps.

Announcer Arch Macdonald moved into Boston from his Providence, R. I., home for the winter . . . Traffic Manager Gordon Swan has been too busy lately to paste heads of the local gang on cartoons from the New Yorker and Esquire. Hence the BZ-Bulletin Board is drably full of nothing but serious business . . . Ruth Nylan joined the BZ staff, working in the Accounting Department under Bob Halloran.

## Christmas Cards

Home Economist Mildred Carlson and Song-Patter Men Gene and Glenn requested old Christmas cards on five broadcasts. Cards were to be turned over to crippled kids in Boston's hospitals to be used in helping numbed fingers regain agility. More than 70,000 cards came in. The hospitals finally announced they could use no more. The flow was stopped only when these stations broadcast that fact.

Perhaps you turned over to this page to finish reading Mr. Sarnoff's speech, perhaps you were in a hurry to find your name in the Boston-Springfield column, or perhaps—the point is perhaps you missed reading about the Photo Contest, on page 5. It's a good chance to make money and have fun at the same time, so why not join and get your friends in on it too.

## EXCHANGE CORNER

*This classified ad section is available, free of charge, to all NBC employees. Rules: Forty-five word limit; no regular business or professional service may be advertised. Address ads to NBC Transmitter, Room 465, RCA Building, New York.*

OLD COPIES of the TRANSMITTER will be available for one more month. If you wish to complete your files, let us know—if you are wise enough to keep a file.

NEWSREEL THEATRE—Last year NBC was the biggest user of Rockefeller Center Newsreel Theatre passes. This year they are again available. They admit you for 15c. If interested see Mr. Tart.

BEDROOM SET for sale—7 pieces Hungarian ash with walnut trim. Good condition. Original cost \$1600, will sell \$97. For appointment Wickersham 2-8694.

HARVARD CLASSICS for sale—A complete set not yet removed from shipping boxes. Best brown cloth binding, retail for \$40, will sell for \$25. Call TRANSMITTER.

TRUMPET for sale—Goldplated Conn "Symphony Special", with chromium-plated valves, special engraving, in excellent condition. Call TRANSMITTER.

RCA RADIO Victrola, AC, armchair model. Listed \$120, will sell \$50. Call Miss Conway, 733.

DAFOE'S "Robinson Crusoe", 1843 edition, with duplication on page 226, lines 16 and 17. Will pay up to \$200 depending upon condition. Call George Olenslager.

## STATEMENT BY SARNOFF

(Continued from page 2)

demonstration during 1940. One will be the improved projection of large screen television images, of a size adequate for theatre presentation. The other is that of television relay stations, using frequencies of 500 megacycles and upwards, an important step toward a television network.

"The birth-date of broadcasting in the United States is generally regarded as Election Day 1920, when the returns of the Harding-Cox election were broadcast. Only twenty years later, more people will actually see and hear the presidential candidates in 1940 by television, than heard the 1920 election returns by sound broadcasting.

"In all history, no other industry ever crammed so much amazing progress into one 20-year span. But the far-reaching developments, which are now the subject of investigation and experiment in the radio research laboratories, already indicate that the progress of the next two decades will surpass the achievements of the last two—in the birth of new miracles of radio science, and in the building of new highways of public service."

## GEORGE DE SOUSA NAMED VICE PRESIDENT OF RCA

George S. De Sousa, Treasurer, was elected Vice President and Treasurer of the Radio Corporation of America. David Sarnoff, President, announced following a regular meeting of the Board of Directors on December 22, 1939. Mr. De Sousa has been Treasurer of RCA since its formation in 1919, and prior thereto was an officer of the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America, the predecessor company to RCA.

## TRAFFIC XMAS GREETINGS

While the regular broadcasters were flooding the ether with messages of holiday cheer on Christmas Day, the Telegraph and Traffic Divisions broke out of the rut of routine messages and sent out their own greetings to various key points around the country. From the Telegraph room an elaborate design was transmitted to Chicago on the teletypewriter, a large Christmas tree with three candles bearing the initials, NBC, and the words, "Holiday Greetings to Chicago Communications from New York," in block letters, all formed by using the letter X on the machine. Mr. Kiklica in Traffic sent out an even more intricate design to all the key points of the A.T. & T. transmission lines. His picture employed most of the letters of the alphabet as well as X and numerous dashes and periods. It also represented a Christmas tree, flanked by an NBC microphone and the A.T. & T. Bell, and had the words, "Merry Christmas Happy New Year," in block letters.

About twenty minutes were required to run off the design on the machine. It must have been greeted with lively interest at the receiving points as people gathered around the teletypewriters to see all the details gradually taking shape. Within half an hour after it had been sent out, seventeen replies were received from the various key points sending thanks and returning the greeting. From Minneapolis came the greeting, "Very beautiful piece of artistry and best wishes to you all from Minneapolis Radio Department." Toledo replied, "Toledo thanks you and wishes every one a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and may your shadow never grow less," while St. Louis was even more enthusiastic: "A classy and artistic piece of work beautiful enough for framing and placing in a conspicuous place. We reciprocate your Xmas greetings." Other responses came from all over.

## KYW PHILADELPHIA

by J. A. Aull



Boy beats Girl in diapering contest.

"Parkie", the cow that introduces the KYW program, *At Our House*, ran into difficulty recently with almost disastrous results. It seems that the producers had been unable to find sound effects that completely filled the bill. Dan Munster, ingenious and mechanically-minded announcer, finally succeeded in developing an effect which seemed to satisfy—a small pair of bellows placed inside an ordinary megaphone. The cow effect was produced by blowing through the small end of the megaphone.

The other day, however, disaster occurred. As the "go ahead" was given from the control room, Munster blew through the megaphone just a bit more strenuously than usual. The bellows popped right out of the megaphone and clattered to the floor, while the only noise picked up by the microphone was a generous exhalation of Munster's breath followed by an uncontrollable snicker. It was the misfortune of Mrs. Edith Gifford Stanhope, who conducts the program's interviews, to follow "Parkie". Mrs. Stanhope managed to get out the first few words, but just as she reached the point where the script called for her to extol the awe-inspiring virtues of parenthood, she broke down completely—breaking into a paroxysm of laughter that bordered on the hysterical. The show's producers have agreed that it would be safer either to record an actual cow's voice or else to broadcast by remote control the actual moo of a cow at the beginning and end of every program.

Lambert Beeuwkes, Sales Promotion manager of KYW, has been busy mailing more than 2500 compasses to prospective sportsmen in the station's listening area. It all started early last month when Joe O'Byrne, director of

the KYW *Hunting and Fishing Club*, made one announcement during a broadcast offering a compass to any listener who would write in for it. Requests were received from 262 towns in six states, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

Thirty-six fathers who got that way on New Year's Day were treated to a special broadcast and entertainment in the KYW Auditorium on Tuesday evening, January 2, in honor of the "events". In addition to the entertainment, each father received a gift package including just about everything from a week's free Dy-Dee Wash Service to a box of cigars. Highlights of the evening were 81-year old Mrs. Elizabeth Ogden, who was born on New Year's Day, and Alton W. Seibert, Harrisburg, father of twins, who was flown into town by Esso Marketers to receive the two hundred dollars award of the Standard Oil Company. Seibert announced on the air that he would call the two little girls Carol Esso and Caroline Esso Extra because he was so happy about the whole thing.

After the broadcast, which featured the KYW orchestra and vocalists in appropriate baby songs, the guests were entertained with a diapering contest between a team of five beautiful student nurses from Hahnemann Hospital and five University of Pennsylvania students. The boys won a silver cup presented by the Stanley-Warner Theaters for completing their task in the record time of 34 seconds.

In addition to the Dy-Dee Wash Service and the box of La Azora cigars, the gift package included an Esso glass bank, two press passes to the movie, *A Child is Born*, a bank account of five dollars established by Esso Marketers for the new baby, and a tank of the new Esso Extra Gasoline.



Which of these fathers doesn't look happy?

## NBC HOLLYWOOD

by Noel Corbett



To win this month's Hollywood Photo Contest Jack Hall went to New York.

Parties and open houses were highlights of this year's holiday festivities. In addition to many private office parties and get-togethers, several of the employees hung out the "come one, come all" signs. Frank Figgins, Engineering Maintenance supervisor, gave his annual egg-nog party, and another successful meeting was Ben Gage's wing-ding.

By the time this hits the office desks, Joe Thompson will be a director on the New York staff. Thompson, who knows a good deal about musical programs, having worked with Meredith Willson and produced that type of program for the past six years, will work on musical shows in Radio City. Incidentally, for those in New York who might be interested, Thompson is an advocate of swing music. He has over 14,000 records which he is shipping to his new home in Gotham.

Here's an old story involving new people. Joe Kay put off getting burglary insurance and the other day sneak thieves entered his home and cleaned out all available cash and jewelry. The prowlers got thirty-two silver dollars which Joe was saving because they had cocked-eyed eagles or something, a dime bank that was almost full and a roll of Jefferson nickels. His college ring, his wife's wedding ring and a wristwatch made up the swag.

Oh, yes. Frank Davis sold another policy the next morning.

A couple of years back when Robert Schuetz came to Hollywood to be in charge of broadcasting equipment during construction of Hollywood Radio City, Helen Welty was secretary to the engineers in charge of the job. "Lefty" Lefler, then a page, acted as Schuetz' assistant in checking incoming equipment. When the job was completed

Schuetz returned to New York, Helen went to work for Henry Maas in Sales Traffic and "Lefty" was transferred to Traffic. Now they're all together again in the Hollywood Radio-Recording Division: Schuetz is the boss, Helen's his secretary and "Lefty" is the third member of the newly formed Department, working as clerk.

When Don E. Gilman decided to start 1940 right by lunching NBC Western Division executives, there was a 100% turnout. You can see the entire list of them gathered together in one place in the picture above. Left to right, standing: Sydney Dixon, Sales Manager; Wendell Williams, Continuity Acceptance, Hollywood; Paul Gale, Traffic Supervisor; Robert Schuetz, Radio-Recording Division; Walter Bunker, Production Manager, Hollywood; Charles Brown, Sales Promotion Manager; William An-



One picture, fifteen executives.

draws, Guest Relations, Hollywood; John Swallow, Program Director; Marvin Young, Assistant Program Director. Left to Right, sitting: Alfred H. Saxton, Division Engineer; Alex Robb, Artists Service; Frank Dellett, Division Auditor; Harold J. Bock, Press Relations Manager; Lew Frost, Assistant to Vice President; and Don Gilman, Vice President in Charge of the Western Division, NBC, Hollywood.

QUICK PIX . . . Lew Frost attended the East-West Game in San Francisco New Year's Day and later visited with Lloyd Yoder who journeyed there from Denver to act as head linesman of the tilt . . . Vice President Don Gilman was elected to the Board of Directors of the L. A. Chamber of Commerce the beginning of the year . . . Jack Stewart of Sales nabbed \$250 from the Times Movie Contest . . . Kathryn

Phelan has been transferred into Continuity Acceptance from Engineering . . . Charlie Brown has been appointed Chairman of the L. A. Ad Club's "On to Vancouver" committee. The Pacific Coast Advertising Clubs convene there in July . . . Paul McCluer visited with Sydney Dixon last month . . . George McMenamin's appendix went out with 1939.

## LLOYD AND FAIRBANKS LAUNCH NBC FILM SOCIETY

**FEB. 1** 5:10 and 8:30 P.M. Harold Lloyd in SAFETY LAST.

**FEB. 15** 5:10 and 8:30 P.M. Douglas Fairbanks as ROBIN HOOD.

A series of 10 famous films will be presented for NBC New York employees and their families. Admission to members only. Membership fee \$2.00 each person.

John Barrymore's DR. JEKYL AND MR. HYDE; Charlie Chaplin and Marie Dressler in TILLIE'S PUNCTURED ROMANCE; Lon Chaney's PHANTOM OF THE OPERA; and other famous films not publicly available.

SEND YOUR NAME AND ROOM NUMBER NOW TO—

CHARLES L. TURNER

ROOM 465

# WGY SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

by W. T. Meenam

## Christmas At WGY

WGY's second Christmas Party in the new building, with Manager Kolin Hager as host, has been chalked up among the unforgettable events of the 30 decade by 180 guests, including the staff, musicians, artists and their wives and sweethearts, as well as officials of General Electric. It was a costume party, the first undertaken by WGY, and there were action and entertainment every minute until the early hours of the morning. Highlighted among the events was the unexpected appearance of Philip D. Reed, chairman of the board of General Electric and the new President, Charles E. Wilson. Announcing their intention just to look in and pay their respects, they remained to join the holiday fun. Other G-E guests included Chester H. Lang, Publicity Department manager, and his assistants William Merrihue, Bartlett Rowan and Robert Gibson.

Victor Campbell and Gordie Randall were heads of the entertainment and they combined to produce an hour show with music by orchestras directed by Randall and Edward A. Rice, solos by Annette McCullough, Barbara Knox and Vicki Colamaric, a special song-sketch by the Landt Trio and Curly Mahr, a serious address which turned into a comedy by William Merrihue of G-E. and an original sketch in which male members of the staff, impersonating the secretarial staff, conducted a heavenly broadcasting station.

Among the many attractive prizes which were distributed to lucky numbers were a radio set, a spectacular basket of fruit, an album of Straus Waltz records, an I. E. S. Lamp, white pottery vase, musical powder box, end



FIND THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE  
C. H. Lang, Charles E. Wilson, Bernard Cruger, Kolin Hager, Philip Reed and Martin P. Rice.

table, set of dishes, a permanent wave, table silver and slacks. Many beautiful costumes were exhibited by the guests. There were Colonial costumes, Mexican, Spanish, Dutch, kid outfits, Hillbillies and many comedy make-ups. The most original was that built and worn by Bernard Cruger. Cruger's hobby is making miniature locomotives to scale from the giant locomotives. For his costume, he reversed the process and built, to scale, a five-foot speaking likeness of a ribbon microphone. Crug, inside the microphone, communicated with the outside world by means of portable public address equipment. Annette McCullough received a prize for the best "kid's" costume, and Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Meenam prizes for the most original couple's outfit—"Angels of Peace"—Hitler and Stalin.

The committee in charge consisted of Howard Tupper, chairman; Gertrude Peeples, Betty Donahue, Caroline Osan, Alexander MacDonald, John Howe, Victor Campbell, Chester Rudowski and Gordie Randall.

Three Christmas trees, gayly decorated and brightly flood-lighted gave the premises of WGY a gala holiday appearance. Massive ropes of Princess Pine were festooned the length of the foyer and at each end of the hall was a large tree. The third tree, thirty feet high, made a festive background in the audience studio.

## Kolin Hager

Kolin Hager extended a Happy New Year to WGY listeners on the *Scissors and Paste* program Thursday, December 28. The following morning a hastily summoned doctor ordered him

carried to an ambulance and the hospital for an emergency appendectomy. Mr. Hager survived the surgical ordeal in fine shape and three days later was doing a good job of running a broadcasting station from a hospital bed.

## Scissors and Paste

Tom Lewis, of Young & Rubicam's radio department, returned to his Alma Mater in time to join in the annual New Year's air show of *Scissors and Paste*. All members of the staff, secretaries, pages, engineers, announcers, etc., extended public greetings.

## Bowling

In WGY's six-team bowling league, the Whistles have a one-game margin, as of Jan. 4. Only three games separate the bottom and top teams. Anything can happen and probably will. So much interest has been built up in the game that three men, A. O. Coggeshall, John Sheehan and Chester Vedder asked Santa Claus for bowling balls and got them.

## Skiing

After waiting for weeks for a good skiing show, the winter sports enthusiasts of WGY are getting their fill. Bill Purcell helped Lowell Thomas with his broadcasts and skiing at Lake Placid and the following week tried out the slopes at Old Forge—Betty King Donahue with husband Lloyd enjoyed the New Year week-end at Placid—Horton Mosher, who did the real work for the Thomas pick-ups from Placid, spent his leisure time photographing skiers on the Placid trails and the bobsledders on Mt. VanHoevenburg—Victor Campbell attended the Ralston convention at St. Louis—Chet Vedder, senior announcer, is back at the microphone after six weeks' sick leave—Miss Ruth A. Clark is wearing the ring of Kenneth Hallenbeck of Press—Jack Keane and Mrs. Keane passed the Christmas week-end in New York.

## Bonanza

We were going to put a story in here that we have been trying to tell you for months, but the title will do just as well for calling your attention to the chance to win yourself a bonanza in the photo contest. Page 5 will tell you all about it.

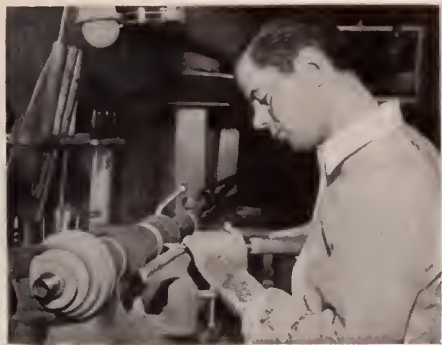


ANGELS WITH FUNNY FACES

Tom Martin, Ken Hallenbeck, Alex MacDonald, Michael Tusco, A. O. Coggeshall and Phil Brook.

# KDKA PITTSBURGH

—by Jim Luntzel—



Bernie Armstrong, away for the moment, from the KDKA organ.

Thousands of radio listeners know Bernie Armstrong as an outstanding organist, a master of music. But they do not know that he also is a mechanic, an actor and the possessor of a unique sense of humor; neither do they know (and he would certainly deny it) that he is a maker of mistakes.

To his credit, Bernie designed KDKA's new \$25,000 pipe organ, the first Wurlitzer ever to be designed especially for radio. While he was working on the plans he got an idea. "Why not," he thought, "build a smaller pipe organ for the home. After all, the wife is visiting her mother, and if I work nights I can get it finished and surprise her when she comes back." So he plunged into the project. The console, Bernie decided, naturally should go into the living room of the apartment. So into the living room it went.

Now, everybody knows that a pipe organ must have a blower; but what everybody doesn't know is that a blower fits just dandy under the kitchen sink. This was Bernie's own discovery. The two-and-a-half horse power motor which runs the blower was somewhat of a problem, but Bernie, with the true instinct of a born discoverer, found that it went nicely in the kitchen pantry. Of course he had to remove a shelf or two but old ideas always must make way for the new. The chimes fitted perfectly in the bedroom clothes closet, but where to put the xylophone? This required a bit of study, but eventually the xylophone went under the davenport in the living room. Finally, everything that an organ needs to be an organ found its resting place in the Armstrong apartment. Bernie would sit in the living room. He would press vox humana on the console keyboard,—and vox

humana would emerge in dulcet tones from the bathroom. Bernie was thrilled. The neighbors weren't.

"They won't mind when it's all tuned up," Armstrong told the irate landlord. "Besides, I will play request numbers for them. They'll like it then."

Then Mrs. Armstrong came home. One look at the console: everything was O. K. One look at the kitchen,— "Get that thing out of here!" There was a glint in Mrs. Armstrong's eyes.

"Now don't be hasty, Baby. Just let me play it for you. Listen how nice it is. Just like downtown."

And Armstrong sat down to play one of those intricate arrangements for which he is famous. He gave it all he had. At the first few bars, Mrs. Armstrong listened with lips compressed. Then Bernie opened up. Sound effects started pouring from every room of the apartment, bedroom, closets, kitchen and hallway. Mrs. Armstrong is said to have fainted.

The Armstrongs now live in a bungalow.

Perhaps it's a complex. It COULD be, because Bernie has more than one. The number one fixation in the Armstrong psychological make-up is his horror of going into a store. He hasn't gone into a department store, a clothing store or a bank for ten years. He even refuses to go into a drug store. He explains it by saying:

"I just don't go for that sort of thing. It makes me nervous; I'm embarrassed." Every stitch of clothes he wears was purchased by a Western Union messenger boy. Anytime Armstrong needs socks, shoes or "sealing wax" he calls the boy and makes the purchase through his "agent".

This could go on until it would make a book which would dwarf *Gone With the Wind*. It could contain chapters on how Bernie won \$4,000 in the sweepstakes (hardly a mistake by any calculation), and how he bought a complete set of lathes, band saws, drill presses for a basement workshop; how he dropped a hammer on his foot and decided to sell the outfit, costing more than \$800 for \$150; how he regretted his sale a week later and started buying the same equipment back piece by piece at a cost of more than \$250; and how after making one small cigarette box he decided to "send away" and buy various objects already cut out

which he glues together, varnishes and gives to his friends as products of his machine shop.

Before he came to KDKA, Armstrong was organist at the Stanley Theater in Pittsburgh and for three years he took part in sketches and blackouts on the stage with such stars as Dick Powell, Joe Penner, Jack Haley and Joe E. Brown. Before that he played the organ in silent picture theatres and this period goes back to the days of "Fatty" Arbuckle, Mary Pickford, Gloria Swanson. He remembers playing for *The Shiek* with Rudolph Valentino. Going back further we find him as a youth of 13 playing violin in the pit orchestra. Those were the days of road shows in the "opery house". Bernie made a salary of \$2.00 a night.

We find him at the age of six pestering his parents for a banjo, which he eventually got from Sears-Roebuck. He learned to play all the "hoe-downs" and "patters" by ear within three months. At eight he pestered again, and a mail-order violin was forthcoming. At 9 the pestering started once more—this time for a piano. When he was ten years old he could play all three instruments with such skill that his parents decided to give him a musical education, so the family moved to town. (Weston, W. Va., papers please copy) and for three years he studied the piano. By the time he was 13 he was playing the exit march daily in school. He received a dollar a month for this. During that summer he got his first "big" job, among grown men, in the "opery house" mentioned above.

Bernie has had innumerable offers to go on the road with various stage and movie stars as accompanist and straight man. He has always refused. Pittsburgh remains the only big city in which he has ever worked.



NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY  
GENERAL LIBRARY

# WASHINGTON

—by Marion P. Gale—

Until President Roosevelt's Christmas broadcast when he extended his greetings to the nation, WRC-WMAL engineers had never had an occasion to switch to emergency equipment while on the air. However, while the invocation was being delivered at the lighting of the Community Christmas Tree ceremonies, just before the President was scheduled to speak, an amplifier tube in the main set of equipment burned out. Quickly Ralph Hamill, Control supervisor, changed over to auxiliary equipment. Only three seconds of the actual program were lost. Ever since the first Presidential broadcast announcers and engineers have carried along duplicate equipment to insure success in transmitting the Chief Executive's voice.

The NBC-*Evening Star* "Mile O'Dimes" campaign, which last year raised over \$10,000 for the fight against infantile paralysis, has been repeated here as a feature of the National Capital's celebration of the President's Birthday Ball festivities, as was announced by General Manager Kenneth H. Berkeley. The campaign was begun January 14th and continued through January 29th. The "Mile O' Dimes" stand, which attracted so many thousands last winter, was put up once again on the corner of 14th Street and New York Avenue directly in front of

the entrance of the WRC-WMAL studios in the Trans-Lux Building.

Gordon Hittenmark, "WRC Timekeeper", distributed more than 18,000 dolls to hospitals and charity organizations in and around Washington this year as a result of his Christmas Doll Campaign for needy children. This year's record was the highest of any of the four years that Hittenmark has conducted the drive. Beginning December 4th and ending Christmas Eve, he broadcast pleas daily on his program for donors to his campaign. A specially constructed dollhouse was erected at a down town street corner so that people could deposit their dolls any time of the day it was convenient.

The title of Director of Women's Activities for WRC and WMAL has been conferred upon Mary Mason by General Manager Berkeley. Since "Cousin Mary", as she is known to her WRC *Home Forum* listeners, started broadcasting in 1925, her work has been mostly with women's programs. During her four years in Washington, she has been in great demand by club and church organizations for her interesting talks on progress in radio.

Announcer Jack Roney is recuperating in a local hospital from severe burns he received when a kettle of water on a stove tipped over on him.

George Wheeler, who has been a

WRC-WMAL announcer for the past year, has been appointed to the Production Department. Roger Von Roth, recently with Station WDBJ at Roanoke, Virginia, will take Wheeler's place as an announcer effective February 1st. He started in radio many years ago at NBC in Radio City . . . working first in the mail division, then as a page, a guide and later as a member of the set-up staff. He is a graduate of Dan Russell's announcing school, and has announced at Stations WAIR Winston Salem, and WPTF Raleigh before going to Roanoke.

Rose Ewell, receptionist, entertained a number of NBC people at her home on New Year's Eve. "Sardines" and "Murder" were the two most popular games of the evening. Those attending were, Vice President Russell, Attorney P. J. Hennessey, Esther Jenkins, John Hurley, Mary Mason, Vic Kissal, Gladys Murphy, Bryson Rash, Rodney Erickson, Ross Filion and Eva Cluff.

An informal party was held in Commercial Manager John Dodge's office the day before Christmas. A contest between Rudy Goldenstroth, auditor, and Vice President Russell was decided a draw. Several NBCites turned their Christmas money over to Mr. Russell on the outcome of bets made that day on the California-Tennessee game.

Here's a chance to get acquainted with the WTAM Cleveland staff. The party which brings them all into the picture is the fifth annual one in honor of Manager Vernon H. Pribble, who is seated at the head of the table. Unfortunately there isn't room to tell you who the rest of them are, but you can see they're a very attractive looking group. We'd like though to point out our columnist Bob Dailey just above those curls on the right.



WTAM honors Manager Vernon H. Pribble, seated at the head of the table.

## NBC SAN FRANCISCO

by Kay Barr



Thousands stopped, looked and listened.

Since early December the NBC stations in San Francisco have been receiving wide and favorable attention for a series of broadcasts based on the history of San Francisco and the Bay region. Both KGO and KPO are carrying the broadcasts under the title of *The City of St. Francis*, and Dave Drummond, writer-producer, is doing the heavy work back stage.

Starting with one half-hour program each week, a second was added when the material became too plentiful. The *San Francisco Chronicle* is co-operating, which is another achievement for Manager Al Nelson. For nearly two years before he became manager last October the local newspapers had shunned radio news except for program schedules. *The City of St. Francis* series reached its climax in a two and one-half hour program in the Civic Auditorium. It was also a celebration of the Diamond Jubilee Anniversary of *The Chronicle*, which made its first appearance January 16, 1865. All of which is getting much favorable attention for NBC stations. In connection with the *News*—KGO-KPO Christmas Sing promotion, the stations received especially kind attention from *The News*.

KGO and KPO attracted thousands of Christmas shoppers with three window displays in San Francisco and Oakland. Two were miniature broadcasts with moving figures and sound. The third was a demonstration of a toy sound effects set. In the picture, Uncle Bennie Walker, m. c. in the group, appears at the right. Ruth Sprague, "Susie Q", right of Bennie in the group, also appears alive, top center. Credit should be given to Milt Samuel, Press head, and Al Dinsdale of the O'Dee Studios, who was assisted by Cyril Miller and Laurie Hollings.

Manager Al Nelson gave the staff a party December 22, starting at noon. Everyone not on actual duty was present and those who were working heard the program over a special inside set-up. George Mardikian, owner and chef of the famous Omar Khayyam restaurants, was on hand with 18 roasted turkeys. Every person received a gift and scores received prizes up to a console receiving set.

Five Christmas trees, artistic festoons and wreaths decorated the offices and lobbies; "Uncle" Bennie Walker made a convincing Santa Claus; Jennings Pierce was the general chairman; Announcer Larry Keating did much of the emcee business; Program Manager Glenn Dolberg led the "community" singing, and a dozen others contributed time, energy and genius to the success of "the best party we ever had." Pierce and some of the boys produced the climax in the special record of songs and talks addressed to Nelson, a feature of which was an arrangement of special words to the tune of *Jingle Bells*, *Jingle Bells*, only the call letters, KGO-KPO, were used in place of the usual words.

Cupid contributed to the Happy Holidays at KGO and KPO studios with five matches. June Shaw of Press started the epidemic by announcing that she had been married since last July 17 to Dr. Clifford L. Feiler of Cleveland, Ohio. Her resignation was to be effective January 15.

Florence Larsen of Mimeograph re-



Detail of the Xmas display in Ethel Henercoff's home.



Anita Bolton, Jennings Pierce, Mardikian, Al Nelson and Gladys Cronkhite.

ceived the significant diamond solitaire from Alfred Siren, and said the marriage would take place during the coming summer.

George Fuerst, head of Traffic, received his grandest Christmas gift in the form of a capital "YES" from Mary Cody, and they will march down the middle aisle within a few months.

Engagement of David McNutt, also of Press, to Janet Gullman had been announced but Dave slipped one over by jumping over to Reno for a surprise ceremony December 31. The happy day culminated a University of California romance.

Natalie Park, actress of the dramatic staff, and Melvin Vickland, former announcer, planned an elopement to Reno. But Natalie's mother got wind of the plan and went along. The Reverend T. Clarence Vickland, uncle of the groom, also got the tip and joined the party so he could perform the ceremony. Vows exchanged January 4.

In co-operation with *The San Francisco News*, KGO and KPO broadcast the annual Carol and Community Sing from the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco, Christmas Eve. Some 7000 persons were attracted to the place by the program, a third of these being unable to get into the theatre. Outstanding soloists and singing groups were on the 90-minute program, parts of which went network and shortwave. Ancient bells from the Mission Dolores started and finished the network portion of the broadcast, being picked up in the 155-year-old tower of the Mission. Boys pulling ropes were too vigorous and two of the ropes broke. Engineers had to ring the bells by hand to keep the show going.

## ROVING REPORTER

### BUT ONCE A YEAR

The 8H Christmas show was a great success. Lurking between two blondheaded tots after it was over, we heard a lot of remarks that any producer would be glad to print on his marquee. It was also quite original, combining in one and the same performance the dramatic glorification of Cinderella, a tapdancing Pied Piper, and a Santa Claus whose favorite paunchline was "My! I wish I wasn't so hoarse!"

But we don't intend to report here the highlights, the dancing, the beautiful costumes. To us, the best part of the show was the eighth floor after the presents had been dispersed—and we mean dispersed. Children wreathed around the columns, mothers chasing offspring among the ashstands, football games, rubber balls lying in wait, airplanes buzzing, whistles blowing, bells ringing, toy dogs barking, toy dolls walking, rolling, tumbling, squirming around the floor. It was an overwhelming spectacle, something like a Hollywood premiere, which we were incapable of describing. So we asked our cartoonist to try it, and after visiting the Picasso show to refresh his memory, he immortalized the whole business in the masterpiece at the right.

A day or two later, still chagrined at the defeat of our literary prowess, we boarded a 5th Avenue bus (where it seems almost anything can happen) and ensconced ourselves on the upper deck. At the next stop a young man with an intelligent-looking young woman got on and sat down a few seats ahead of us. The young woman immediately turned around and said, looking straight at us, "But it's an old hack. It is!" Such clairvoyance is cruel. We are still wondering, as you probably are too by now. But that's all.

### PAGE BOYS' EISTEDDFOD

Even the singing mice begin to pale when we think of the usually austere brass buttons and citation cords bursting into song. Sixteen voices, some in the high C range and a sprinkling of baritones and even basses, on the guide staff is quite a phenomenon even for a soundproof building. And all sixteen voices were raising Saint Nick in the halls, come Christmas Eve. Eventually they ended up in Studio 8G for the Christmas Eve program of *Name It and Take It*. The audience thought the show was under martial law when the uniformed staff marched in with their specially acquired you name it and we'll take it attitude. All through the program Ed East, the well known master of ceremonies, kept hinting at a surprise, and it turned out to be the sixteen guide and page voices led by Production man Bill Marshall. It concluded the half-hour program with ten minutes of four part Christmas carols.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE STORK'S MOUTH

Hugh Savage's cherubic grin is well known on the mezzanine and somehow even comes over the loudspeaker when he calls the tours together. The grin is wider than ever now. Hugh the Expectant has become Hugh the Proud. On January 10, at 8 o'clock in the morning, at Physicians Hospital in Jackson Heights, his wife presented him with a fine bouncing baby girl, 6 pounds, 12 ounces. This is worth the heartiest congratulations of us all, and it is likely to have a considerable effect on our public relations. The infectious smile, the friendly voice have become irresistible. Guides reporting for tour now have a sense of roseate clouds floating about the mezzanine. And the tourists, hearing themselves called, feel an unexpected touch of spring in the air and enter the elevator with hearts uplifted and a warm sense of all being well with the world.

### JENNIFER WREN

We've mentioned in another place, but we're not going to tell you where, the gay whirl of life in Radio City, divisions skyrocketing from one floor to another, managers whizzing past, and the TRANSMITTER in its third office in three months. Our last one was known to habitués as the Elbow Room, just 62 floors below the Rain-bow Room. The present one is a little smaller and seems to have been christened the Orifice. We've been trying to think what it all reminds us of—and at last we've remembered. It reminds us of a story, just a little thing we picked up from the boys in the back-room, but we thought you'd like to hear from the mob, so here is the edifying story of small Jennifer Wren.

It seems a little bird, just back from Palm Beach, started to build a nest in an oak tree. She was tired of living with her family and wanted to branch out for herself. But no sooner had she started in on her twigging, than a storm came along and blew the branch down. It was a rather decrepit old tree. Nothing daunted, the little bird started in again on a new branch, but that was soon closed because of the Bank Holiday. She tried again and the farmer's boy, playing Tarzan, knocked the stuffings out of her horsehair upholstery. She tried once more and had just finished putting a copy of *Poems We All Love* in the guest room, when the farmer came along and cut the tree down for firewood. By now the little bird was feeling pretty discouraged. As she sat in a bush, brooding, she saw a spider trying to build itself a web. Six times it tried and failed: the seventh time, however, the spider dropped gracefully on its thread from the top of the bush to a twig right in front of the little bird, who quickly gobbled it up and said to herself, "If at first you don't succeed, go home to mother," and she flew back to Palm Beach and went in for Female Suffrage.

