

DREAM - HOPE



BY
BILL EARL, M.A.
AUTHOR OF THE
WHEN RADIO WAS BOSS
SCRAPBOOK SERIES

THE HISTORY OF A MAJOR WEST COAST RADIO STATION
AND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S 50 YEARS OF "RADIO ELEVEN-TEN"

UPDATED AND REVISED EDITION

A **DESERT ROSE** PRODUCTION

DREAM-HOUSE

The history of a major West Coast radio station
and Southern California's 50 years of "Radio Eleven-Ten"!

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From

Research Archives

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For further information, comments, or questions on Dream-House, the When Radio Was Boss scrapbook series, or about Silver Age radio, contact

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ILLUSTRATIONS

FRONT COVER

Top row (from L): China Smith ("The China Man"), Shadoe Stevens ("The Shadoe"), Don Burns, Dick Sainte.
Second row (from L): "World Famous" Tom Murphy, B. Mitchel Reed ("The Beamer"), 1972 billboard/t-shirt "face," Jay Stevens.
Third row (from L): Russ O'Hara, "Milton Oak," Bob Dayton, Lee "BABI" Simms ("Old Doc Frail").
Bottom row (from L): "Brother" John Rydgren, Johnnie Darin, Mikel Hunter ("Motorcycle Mikel"), Dave Diamond.

All illustrations on the front cover were given to **Desert Rose Productions** by various collector associates, by the individual air talents themselves, photographers, or graphic artists, or by various radio station publicity and promotion departments, over the years. **Desert Rose Productions** hereby thank, credit, and give appreciation to those sources for their support, and their donations of printed items to **Research Archives'** Silver Age radio morgue. (B.M.R. photo, courtesy of Bruce Wojcik; 1972 "face," courtesy of Mikel Hunter; "Milton Oak," courtesy of China Smith.)

BACK COVER

Counterclockwise: Dick Biondi, Bob Eubanks, Casey Kasem, Johnny Hayes, "Pat Moore," Dave Hull, Charlie O'Donnell, Bill Slater.

This painting was a winning entry of the annual KRLA "Valentine (Art Festival) Contest" that was submitted and given to KRLA in 1967 by a then-aspiring amateur artist, Drew Struzan. This was the KRLA personality lineup from August 1966 to February 1967.

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FOREWORD

ONCE UPON A FROSTY NIGHT

Music to strengthen your heart;
to soothe your soul.
Enter the dream-house leaving your
Debts asleep, your history at the door:
This is the home for heroes,
Our music, a love you can afford.

Drew Struzan
February, 1967

Military school was a drag. Especially those weekends when my parents didn't come. It was sad seeing the other parents come and take the St. Catherine cadets home, or wherever. But mine came once in a while for those Sunday afternoon lunches at the Orange Fair Bar and Grill (now Tony Roma's), on Harbor and Orangethorpe, with those harlequin lamps smiling down on me. There's got to be a better life for a 10-year-old than marching with welded rifles, looking at Disneyland's fireworks, and longing to be outside the Resh Street fence. But it's the Summer of 1961. And I'm out.

I sure like the little transistor radio Father Billy gave me. "Made In Japan." Well, I know that means cheap. But it works. Let's see what's on. Wow! This is great, the "Bonanza Theme!" And I like this one, "The Mountain's High." This sure doesn't sound like Ira Cook at KMPC, that Mom used to have on in the kitchen. Who's this? Charlie Brown? He's the one who has his daughter in the studio with him. I also like Hal Murray and "The Murray-Go-Round," George Babcock, Jim Hawthorne, Bill Angel, and Art Nelson. These guys are great! I really like Don French. So that's what they look like. This little KFWB folder, from Mitchell's El Rancho Television, shows all their faces! Don French. He looks like Skipper Frank Herman. Hal Murray looks like one of those television game show hosts.

The 10-year-old was walking down Altura to the Hugo Reid Primary School, little transistor radio in hand, tuned to KFWB. That was the station everybody seemed to listen to. Those KFWB record folders are fun to collect, a different color every week, different pictures every week. I think KFWB had just had a strike. Now, different new guys seemed to be popping up each week. What happened to Charlie Brown? I really liked him. His face was on last week! And who's Jim Kelley? Bobby Dale -- he's bald! The 10-year-old now turned up De Anza. It was clear that this 10-year-old liked this new "toy," a 6-transistor radio, even better than those Dick Tracy newspaper comic strips.

The boy was now walking home. The Mar-Keys "Last Night" was coming out of the radio. The boy was walking to its beat. Suddenly, without notice, a car came around the Encanto corner pretty fast. The boy got out of the way, by the house with the bottle caps hanging from the tree, where a horse race jockey lived. But in doing so, there went the radio, right down to the curb. It was clear that his decision to walk around with the radio without the case might not have been a good idea. Maybe the case would have saved the radio. Well, it served its purpose. The boy turned on the radio. And the radio turned the boy on, too. It was time for a new radio. His radio was just static. Hmmm! Here's a station down to the right of KFWB. Is that Linda Scott I hear? The only station that's coming in is this, sort of, loud channel by the "11" where it sounds now like "Tradewinds, Tradewinds." Static. The radio seemed beyond repair.

The big, white Chevy Delray pulled into the driveway. It was so neat having Mom drive with her own car! Well, she's a high school teacher now! I bet she'll hear a lot about that music, I've been listening to, from the Moors! Mom suggested, "Let's go up to the Hastings Ranch shopping center by the A&P Market and Drug King." Drug King! That's where I bought the "Henry Mitchell" hand puppet. That seems so long ago. Radio is what I like now!

Mom's Delray pulled up in front of the shopping center on the lower side. There's the Ontra Cafeteria. And, right below the Ontra, there's Bank Of America. And look at that huge aluminum star!! The star was a huge one, shining silver. And it was right above the door of the Phillips store. Looks like they sell appliances. I hope they have a new radio.

The boy got out of the big Delray in the parking lot. The night was so clear. The green

cursive neon sign "Sears," there in the shopping center parking lot, seemed brighter than ever. And one could see for miles clear down the valley. The boy stood in the parking lot looking south. He could see the lights far below, as the shopping center parking lot was so high. Off in the distance, red antenna tower lights were blinking on and off south of Arcadia, south of Temple City. I KNOW THOSE LIGHTS! Memories of his earlier childhood flooded back, thoughts and places from years before.

For all of his life, he remembered visiting his grandmother at the Delta Rest Home, (which, to him, looked sort of like the Sunny Dell Acres house in "Dick Tracy"), on Delta in Rosemead, sitting in the back seat of his Dad's blue-and-white Chevy, as his father and uncle drove his grandmother back to the rest home on a Sunday evening, after the weekly Sunday visit. The ride down San Gabriel Boulevard was always a fun one, looking at all the signs and all. But the farther south on San Gabriel Boulevard, the more rural it seemed. Fields were common. As they turned left on Rush to Delta, it seemed like they were in a different world. Open spaces. Oil wells that hummed like hungry grasshoppers.

As the car turned east on Rush Street, off in the distant fields there were antenna towers standing proudly in a pasture. It looked like six of them. The red lights were blinking on and off. I wonder what they are? An airplane landmark? A radio station?

His grandmother's rest home always had a lot of importance for this 10-year-old. Besides reminding him of "Sunny Del Acres," his parents always told him that he was dressed in a red Scotch-plaid sun suit when he walked for the first time! A lot of happy memories at the Delta Rest Home. But no more. His grandmother had died in 1960, about a year before.

The boy stared out at those transmitter tower lights. Those were the same ones he always remembered from those Sunday rides down to the new land -- the land of fields and giant antenna towers with flashing red lights.

It was time for the boy to go into the store. As he walked into the store with his mother, the huge silver star hung overhead on the frontage of the building above the front door.

The Phillips store had a lot of appliances. But radios? In the back of the store was a pegboard display. Wow! Take a look at that! Look at those transistor radios! They're black and chrome! And wow! They're made by General Electric. Made in the U.S.A. This radio is gonna last!

The boy's mom bought the G.E. radio for her son. The boy couldn't be happier. The radio had a silver "ring" on the top, where one could hold onto it. A lot easier not to drop. The new radio was really slick!

The boy's mother walked to the Woolworth store a few doors down. The boy walked back to the Delray, and waited for his mom by the car, clutching his new prize, a G.E. transistor radio! It was almost 9 p.m. The stores were about to close. The boy decided to turn it on. He turned the dial. One station seemed to leap from the radio with a sharp, clear sound, the loudest of any! The boy stared out into the valley, south toward the direction of those distant flashing red radio tower lights.

"Standby Los Angeles! KRLA now proudly presents The Frosty Harris Show on Radio Eleven-Ten!!" (Cha cha cha!!).

For a moment, the boy was spellbound. He discovered a new radio station. This wasn't KFWB. This was "Radio Eleven-Ten"! The boy held the transistor radio to his ear, as his mom drove them home. He heard more of his newfound friend. The voice was so happy sounding, so jolly, so cheerful! He sounded so fun! Frosty Harris! The show continued.

"You're in tune to Frosty The Showman at KRLA! Now, more tunes from The Showman!!"

I wonder why he's called "Frosty"? Because it's cold before Midnight? That's got to be it. I wonder what he looks like? He's probably jolly, and maybe on the plump side!

The boy took the new G.E. transistor radio into his room. He fell asleep with the radio under his pillow. As he drifted off to sleep, he faintly heard, "You're listening to the B.E. show!" B.E.? Those are my initials, the boy said to himself. The clock was after Midnight. The boy drifted off to sleep with a whole new adventure under his pillow.

And far south of Arcadia where the boy slept, the spectacular red lights on the powerful antenna towers, by the wide open pastures and fields, continued their blinking. Something had come full circle into the boy's life. The radio towers in the field by his grandmother's home were the same transmitter towers he saw in the distance from the parking lot with his G.E. transistor radio. And the station he had discovered was the loudest on his dial since the transmitter towers were so close, just a few miles south in South El Monte, right next to Rosemead.

KRLA had entered that boy's life that late Summer of 1961. And little did that boy know then, that this station would become the soundtrack to his life.

The poem at the beginning of this FOREWORD was printed below the beautiful painting that graces the back cover. It was one of the winning Valentines that was presented to KRLA for the annual "Valentine Contest" in 1967. The title of Dream-House comes from this poem. The owner of this painting, who has asked to remain nameless, has given us permission for its use in Dream-House as both title and back cover. We thank this former "Eleven-Ten Man" for making this happen.

Dream-House is the story of an important soundtrack of over fifty years to Southern California. Before KRLA, there were two other stations on the "Radio Eleven-Ten" channel, KPAS and KXLA, that we'll discuss briefly. But the main focus of Dream-House is to tell the story of KRLA, through the programming that touched so many people. As the author, we grew up between the antenna towers in South El Monte, the studios in Pasadena at The Huntington Hotel, and, as a adult, within a short drive of the later transmitter tower site in Irwindale. By living so close to these KRLA locations, we were able to spend many days, over the years, visiting the facilities, talking to the various engineers, air personalities, and other staff members, to gather much of the information provided between these covers.

Because we have never actually been on the KRLA payroll, even though we have contributed to KRLA's programming in several on-the-air projects in 1974, 1977, 1981, 1985 and 1989, we have been able to write what really happened without being under any management pressure to write "the company line."

There is an aspect that we have decided not to completely cover, and that is the behind-the-scenes technical, or legal aspects, of KRLA from 1959 to 1979, when a permanent license was awarded the station. In 1977, KRLA engineer Don Beem had heard about our 80-page "A+" thesis on KRLA, which we had written for Pasadena City College from October through December 1969. When Beem was enrolled at Cal State Fullerton, he contacted us, and invited us down to the transmitter site in South El Monte, to discuss possible collaborations, and help from us for his own thesis on the legal struggles of KRLA in losing and gaining a station license. Beem knew we had done a lot of research eight years before. Now in 1977, Beem wanted to write his version of the KRLA story, but with an emphasis on KRLA's license and technical history.

However, our thesis in 1969, the first ever written in detail on KRLA, and Beem's in 1980, 11 years later, approach the station from two different viewpoints.

To the people who did help us in this endeavor, we wish to thank for their recollections. If any area of KRLA we have left out, or gone lightly on, such as news, sports, or behind-the-scenes personnel, is because of not having enough information to give a full account, or not able to get a second corroborating story to keep all recollections correct and accurate.

Even with all the extraordinary detail between these covers, Dream-House does not claim to be complete, as it is virtually impossible to cover everything. But we've tried to cover as much as possible that a listener or fan could remember or identify with. The "finished product" of KRLA is what Dream-House is all about.

This edition has been completely revised and updated with much new information. All original chapters have been re-edited. Line by line. Several of those chapters have been totally revised and retitled. And this book continues over two years past where the original edition left off. Plus, we've added an "editorial-style" AFTERWORD, with a "blueprint" for radio's future. This new edition is easier to read, tighter, much more accurate, and objective, due to new information researched.

It's time now to "enter the dream-house," the history of a radio station that was the soundtrack to so many lives. KRLA, the dream-house is open. Enter. And enjoy.

Bill Earl, M.A.
December 1991

CHAPTER 1

I KNOW YOU'RE EVERYWHERE, SO THERE!

Shortly after September 9, 1941, in the rural farmlands of southern El Monte, nestled below the Whittier hills, and next to a man-made lake built by the Army Corps Of Engineers, a pasture that had been the feeding grounds for horses and cows was about to be transformed into something else. A small white building was built at 823 North Lexington-Gallatin Road. Big red-and-white antenna towers were to be installed just north of the small white building.

KPAS. A 5,000 watt station to be serving the farm community of South El Monte and the San Gabriel Valley was about to be born. It was called KPAS, for its studio would be built in an old "carriage" building on the grounds of the fashionable Huntington Hotel in Pasadena. The radio station would start out at just 5,000 watts because of the war. But the following year, in November 1942, the power would be raised to 10,000 watts. A mighty voice for the growing San Gabriel Valley.

However, after the ownership changed in 1945, new call letters would be given to KPAS. KPAS would not just serve "PAS" - Pasadena, but "LA" - Los Angeles. So KXLA began anew in 1945. The programming of KXLA in 1945 would be "block" programming, with all types of music, such as Country music or light opera. KXLA would also feature news, editorial comment, cooking lessons, and bridge lessons. Since KXLA was in Pasadena, a deal was cut to have the performers at the nearby Pasadena Playhouse perform some of their acting sketches.

Most of the programming would originate from the Pasadena studios. But there would be a booth with turntables in the small white building in South El Monte, so some broadcasting could take place from that location at the heart of KXLA, as well. Because KXLA was a local suburban station in the farm area east of Los Angeles, special attention was given to local programming and local advertising, to serve the El Monte and Pasadena communities.

Some KXLA programming featured the talents of Jim Hawthorne, who was highly creative and popular, and a young disc jockey named Art Laboe. However, one of the more popular shows on KXLA was a syndicated Country music show, highly popular with the farm community in the agricultural pasture lands surrounding the KXLA transmitter. Because of the strong agricultural community surrounding the KXLA transmitter "tower farm," it was decided that KXLA, instead of offering a mishmash of various "block" programming, would concentrate on one format.

And that would be Country music. Many of the farmers in the South El Monte area had come from the Midwest Heartland where Country music was very close to them and their pleasures. KXLA had not only recorded Country music shows, and remote broadcasts from Country music nightclubs and the nearby El Monte American Legion Stadium, but had "live" musicians and bands who performed from the studios in Pasadena.

Some of the early staff names at KXLA were Ernie Ford, an announcer for KXLA, and Cliffie Stone, who would be a performing musician at the Pasadena studios. This Country music format would be so successful, and KXLA was thriving with its agricultural audience, that in April 1955, a new beige-colored transmitter building was built directly next door to the little white building. This new transmitter building for KXLA would have state-of-the-art facilities, and be built complete with a kitchen and complete lounge facilities, along with U.P.I. "rip-and-read" news-wire printer, a shower and toilet, and also large water-cooled transmitter consoles that could be jacked up to 50,000 watts, if the F.C.C. allowed the station to increase its power in the years ahead.

The new transmitter building was at 825 North Lexington-Gallatin Road. The old building, at 823, would be dismantled inside, and the small building itself would be used as primarily a storage building for parts. So for the next four years, KXLA served the farm area of the neighborhood surrounding its transmitter facilities quite well. Again, a radio station should try to serve its community. With so much agricultural and farm developments in the El Monte area, KXLA provided a good service.

However, Los Angeles was growing in the years after World War II. The "Baby Boomers" would soon be starting to move into their teenage years. It was clear that programming for the huge number of "Baby Boomers" would be the important way to go. KFVB could see that, and so on January 1, 1958 started its TOP 40 "Color Radio" programming, featuring big name personalities. KFVB soon became the Number One station in all of Los Angeles. It pretty much

had the city to itself. These teenagers (and their parents) all listened to KFVB. It had extremely high ratings. The format was quite slick, and well produced.

In 1959, a Canadian entrepreneur, Jack Kent Cooke, and his American brother, Donald Cooke, wanted to acquire a Los Angeles radio station. They were able to purchase KXLA in early 1959, and had plans to change the format to that of TOP 40 contemporary music, to compete with KFVB, and try to attract some of that audience. Even though Jack Cooke was a Canadian, because his brother, Donald, had American citizenship, the deal was able to go through, even though, Jack Cooke would not be allowed by law to have any hands-on role at KXLA. Jack Cooke did anyways, which would cause problems for the station, and its license, along with other miscalculations that we will outline briefly but not in too much detail, as Dream-House deals primarily with the "sound" and programming of "Radio Eleven-Ten," and not so much on what was happening behind the scenes that was relatively unknown to the public. (For further details, we recommend former KXLA/KRLA engineering employee Don Beem's college thesis, on the shelves of the Cal State Fullerton library.)

The Cookes wanted this new TOP 40 format to start in August of 1959. But because of various delays, the new format would not start until Midnight, August 31/September 1, 1959. Because of the identification of KXLA being known as a Country music station for the previous 10 years or so, the Cookes decided that new call letters should accompany this new change in format. So on September 1, 1959 at Midnight, KXLA would become KRLA, the new call letters chosen, standing for "Radio Los Angeles." Even though KXLA/KRLA was primarily a suburban station in El Monte and Pasadena, the Cookes wanted the public to think of KRLA as a Los Angeles station. Again, to compete head on with KFVB, and others.

The teenage disc jockey turned on the microphone. He took a deep breath. For at only 19, he had a big responsibility. He would be the first voice ever heard on this new radio station. The sounds of the Country radio station had come to an end. The twangy guitars and fiddles had just finished. The 19-year-old teenage disc jockey was on.

"You have been listening to KXLA. You are now listening to KRLA-Radio For The Young At Heart." Jimmy O'Neill, the first voice of KRLA, had launched a new radio station. KRLA was born.

The Cookes put together a team of disc jockeys under the guidance of the first KRLA Program Director, Bill Wheatley. The first lineup that was to "tentatively" be heard on KRLA was Jimmy O'Neill, a 19-year-old disc jockey, and personal favorite of Jack Cooke, from 7-10 a.m., Wilson Hurst 10 to Noon, Ken Barnes from Noon to 3, Greg Mason 3 to 7 p.m., Hal Goodwin from 7-11 p.m., and Frank Pollack from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. It was understood that what would be in the 5-7 a.m. hours, as to satisfy the F.C.C., some talk was made of having some type of farm programming in that slot. But if the Cooke's could still satisfy the F.C.C.'s requirements for other types of "agricultural-style" programming, then TOP 40 music could be played in those hours, too.

The Cookes wanted consistency in the broadcast day. Even though they knew they should have farm-area programming to serve the El Monte-Pasadena communities, they would prefer all-music for the entire 24-hours. After an off-the-air "dry run" of this lineup, the Cookes found some of these air talents unacceptable. So Wilson Hurst and Ken Barnes would not be part of the new lineup on the air after all, as soon as they could be replaced.

The Cookes also had asked the F.C.C. to raise the station power from 10,000 watts to 50,000 watts to launch the new station with a bigger power to serve the entire Los Angeles area. Not just the communities of El Monte and Pasadena.

Because the disc jockey lineup was still being formulated by the Cookes and Wheatley, from Midnight on the early morning of September 1, 1959 through 6 a.m. on September 3, the new KRLA would just feature TOP 40 music played back-to-back with promos for the new station and its first contest, that was thought up by the Cookes, "The Golden Key" contest. The "live" disc jockey lineup was to start on September 3, 1959 at 6 a.m. "The Golden Key" contest was where a "golden key," that would symbolically turn on the new 50,000 watt transmitter in South El Monte (to kick off the increased power of the station), would be hidden somewhere in the Los Angeles area. "Clues" would be given over the air as to where its location was. Whoever found this "golden key" would be able to "pull the switch" at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte to jack up the station's power, and also win a large cash prize.

The problem was, during the time of the promos announced on KRLA from September 1 through September 3, it was not decided exactly where the key would be hidden. So the "clues" broadcast over the air were meaningless. This would cause problems for KRLA, and their new license, in being accused of hoodwinking the public by giving "clues" that were incorrect. There was a certain standard of ethics that contests were supposed to have. If a radio station did not

follow the letter of the law, the station's license could be in jeopardy for not serving the public interest properly.

During this time, however, people in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten" swarmed all over The Huntington Hotel grounds, and even the fields adjacent to the South El Monte transmitter site, thinking that "The Golden Key" might be hidden on station property, a likely place. However, while all these people were scrambling around, the key was not hidden anywhere, as the Cookes had not decided where to put it. In other words, the contest was fraudulent at that time, as there was nothing out there the public could find.

However, after the Cookes finally decided to "hide" the key at Marineland, and gave very obvious clues to its location, it was indeed found over the Labor Day weekend, when the Cookes knew that Marineland would have a "big gate" (lots of ticket buyers.) Jimmy O'Neill recalled, in 1984, that once it was determined that the key was hidden at the Marineland "area," people actually "combed the hills" adjacent to Marineland to look for this key.

On September 3, 1959, KRLA went "live" with its lineup of disc jockeys, all except for one who was still under contract back East, and who would not be available until a short time later. The lineup of disc jockeys, starting September 3, were Jimmy O'Neill, Bob Cole, Greg Mason, Hal Goodwin, Frank Pollack and Frosty Harris. Harris originally was going to be going by "Bruce Harris," and even jingles were cut with that name. But because the morning man at KFWB was Bruce Hayes, it was decided that the "Bruce" was to be dropped. Instead, the catchy sounding "Frosty Harris," "Frosty The Showman," and "The Showman" names would be used. Of this lineup, Harris was probably the most dynamic over all. Harris had a bright, happy style, that really made a radio come alive, and did an air-tight show.

At this time, KRLA's first "jingle package" was heard, in which "Pasadena" or "El Monte" was never once mentioned, but "Modern Radio Los Angeles," and "KRLA, Los Angeles," were. A station is supposed to, on its hour and half-hour IDs, identify itself from the city on its license, as in KRLA's case, Pasadena, as this was where the studios were. It would have been more accurate if KRLA had identified itself as "KRLA, El Monte," or "KRLA, South El Monte," as this actually was the physical location of where the sound of KRLA was coming from, as being sent out over the transmitter towers. But the F.C.C. didn't require "transmitter site" identification. So the license read "KRLA, Pasadena." However, the ID jingles played said "KRLA, Los Angeles." This was not appreciated by the F.C.C. when this was brought to their attention.

The man that Cooke wanted for the morning-drive spot was Perry Allen, a popular disc jockey at WKBW in Buffalo, New York, who because of commitments to the station there, could not come out to Los Angeles until after the "live" disc jockey format began. The Cookes thought of a promotion that would be built around Perry Allen. They launched a "Find Perry Allen" contest. Listeners in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten" were supposed to walk up to anyone who bore the described resemblance to Allen. If the person they walked up to was actually Allen, they would win \$50,000. Suddenly, KRLA listeners began walking up to strangers, trying to find Allen, as KRLA had given the implied impression that Allen was indeed in the Los Angeles area. However, Allen was still in New York, unknown to the public.

Again, as in the first few days of "The Golden Key" contest, the Cooke brothers had staged a bogus contest that was impossible to win by its listeners. The station made its listeners think that Allen was in Los Angeles, when they knew he really wasn't. Again, as in the "The Golden Key" contest, both contests were not conducted in "the cleanest sense." This too would cause problems for KRLA's new station license with the F.C.C. However, Bob Purcell, KFWB's General Manager, knew that Allen was still in Buffalo. So Purcell sent KFWB newsman Charlie Arlington to New York to "find" Allen. When Arlington did, KFWB demanded that KRLA pay them the \$50,000. KRLA refused to pay its "rival" at first. But after legal negotiations, they were forced to. When this was brought to the attention of the F.C.C., along with the suspicious "Golden Key" contest, KRLA was in trouble. The F.C.C. began investigating if KRLA was operating in the public interest as it was supposed to.

So far, the F.C.C. was beginning to develop a list of problems, with this new radio station KRLA, involving contests that bordered on fraudulent, a Canadian making major decisions for an American radio station (which was against the law), and now, improper station identifications. KRLA was making a lot of mistakes, even though its programming was developing into a good product. Other problems, that the F.C.C. would discover, would be "doctored logs," to show religious programming that was supposed to have been broadcast and never was, and "farm programming" (that was supposed to serve the El Monte farm area) that actually was just a list of produce that could be purchased at the market! This was not acceptable "farm programming" as

far as the F.C.C. was concerned.

But these behind-the-scenes legal problems were unknown to the listeners. The listening audience was continuing to sample KRLA, even though it was way behind the mighty KFVB in audience numbers, for TOP 40 programming. KFVB was still the overwhelming Number One station in Los Angeles. With KRLA still a "rural" station for El Monte and Pasadena, and with its growing problems with the F.C.C., KFVB felt it had not much to worry about. There was speculation that KRLA would not be on the air much longer, as the F.C.C. might "pull" its license for these early miscalculations and violations of F.C.C. rules.

Perry Allen finally did join KRLA as the new morning man. In hearing Allen airchecks from the Summer of 1959 at WKBW, Allen was very "high-personality," using "drop-ins," and lots of good humor. Perry Allen, being the strongest jock, was given the important morning-drive shift on "Radio Eleven-Ten." Shortly after that, Jimmy O'Neill recommended to the Cookes that he knew of another personality that would be excellent in the midmorning housewife hours. He was older than some of the others and balding, and had the maturity for that audience. So Roy Elwell was signed by KRLA, at O'Neill's suggestion.

So "after the dust settled," KRLA was able to put together its first "real" lineup: Perry Allen, 6 to 9 a.m., Roy Elwell 9 to Noon, Bob Cole Noon to 3, Jimmy O'Neill 3 to 6 p.m., Greg Mason 6 to 9 p.m., Frosty Harris 9 to Midnight, and Frank Pollack Midnight to 6. Hal Goodwin, by this time, had left KRLA, and would be going to KFVB as a newsman, and later sell frozen meat-in-quantity on television commercials. Before the end of 1959, Greg Mason would leave KRLA, and for a very interim time, Jimmy O'Neill's shift would expand to 3 to 7 p.m., and Frosty Harris would start two hours earlier, expanding his show to 7 to Midnight.

In December 1959, KRLA featured a "Secret Word" contest, where full-page contest flyers could be found at Thrifty Cut-Rate Drug Stores throughout the "The Land Of Eleven-Ten." The flyers, even though just black-and-white, were the first KRLA promotional to feature photos of "The Eleven-Ten Men."

This was the only KRLA promotional to feature pictures of Allen, Cole and Pollack. Below each photo, listeners were to guess what was the "secret word" of each of "The Eleven-Ten Men." That was another "fun contest" that brought the new KRLA close to its listeners.

In early 1960, KRLA's regular time slots would return, as a young, fresh-sounding personality, Sam Riddle, joined "Radio Eleven-Ten" in the 6 to 9 p.m. slot. Riddle had two distinguishable features on his show. Riddle would always start out his show with the trademark phrase "Hello, Music Lovers!" He also made frequent references to his favorite sandwiches, which some listeners would actually bring down to the station, "peanut butter and banana sandwiches." Riddle also liked calling himself "Sambo" Riddle, too. Riddle was young and good-looking, and fit the youthful image that KRLA had wanted to develop, in contrast to the slightly older, and more slick sounding, "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" at KFVB.

KRLA's strategy, at this time, was to have young, attractive, youthful personalities who would be playing this new TOP 40 music. Their visible youth alone was thought to attract younger listeners who would like a "younger sound" than KFVB. Whereas the KFVB "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" were "older" personalities in their 30s or 40s, "The Eleven-Ten Men" would be on the average much younger, in their 20s, for the most part. It was thought that teen listeners would prefer personalities closer to their generation.

By June 1960, KRLA was in need of a weekend man and relief jock. So the next to join KRLA, in June 1960, in the station's formative years, was a young man from KACY in Oxnard, Bob Eubanks. Eubanks was hired by KRLA Program Director Herb Hymen, who had earlier replaced Bill Wheatley, in the P.D. chair. Eubanks had the good looks and young image that KRLA was looking for at that time. And Eubanks had a memorable tag on his show, "And remember one thing ..."

Shortly after Eubanks joined KRLA, Frank Pollack, the all-night disc jockey, was developing back problems, and didn't like playing TOP 40 music. Because of that, and also because Cooke did not "like" Frank Pollack as an air talent, Eubanks was moved into the Midnight to 6 spot. "The B.E. Show" brought a youthful crispness in contrast to the older, more subdued sounds of Frank Pollack. (We met Pollack in the early '80s playing Big Band music at Glendale, Arizona's KLFF, formerly the AM legend KRUX.)

Also that summer in 1960, Bob Cole would be leaving the Noon to 3 show to go back to the Midwest where we were told, he would be more comfortable. When this desirable Noon to 3 slot opened up, Bob Eubanks made a strong bid to move into those hours from the Midnight to 6 shift. Instead, KRLA signed another relatively youthful talent, Roger Christian, to the Noon to 3 show, replacing the older Cole. Christian told us about how it was either Eubanks or Christian for

that opening. Christian said to us,
"He wanted it, but I got it."

However, by the Fall of 1960, KRLA decided to do an interesting programming change that happened only once in Los Angeles radio history. KRLA would make a "swap" or "trade" for a disc jockey at another radio station in Los Angeles. In baseball this is common, but not in radio. Here's what happened. Perry Allen did not want to be a TOP 40 disc jockey any more. He preferred going to Middle-Of-The-Road programming. At the same time, a young disc jockey at "Radio 93" KHJ, from the twin transmitter towers at the corner of Venice and Fairfax in Southwest Los Angeles, Wink Martindale, wanted to expand his audience, and get greater visibility on a TOP 40 station. "Radio 93" was one of the steadfast M.O.R. stations in Los Angeles, also being one of the oldest radio stations in Los Angeles, too. It was decided to make a cross-town trade. Martindale for Allen.

Both stations were happy. Both personalities were happy. The trade was made. And Wink Martindale became the new 6 to 9 a.m. morning man at KRLA. Because Martindale had already been known to Los Angeles listeners from his days at KHJ, he already was an established persona. Because of that, KRLA felt it got the better deal. Also, KRLA wanted to move away from an "cloud" that might have hung over the station from the disastrous "Find Perry Allen" contest. Martindale had that youth and vitality that KRLA was trying to project, in contrast to KFVB. Martindale also had begun to host a television dance show from the Sea Circus Arena at Pacific Ocean Park in Santa Monica. Martindale's good looks, and screen image for television, was thought to be a big plus for KRLA.

Martindale, as morning man, did have a rubber toy sound effect. He called it a "winker," that he squeezed very frequently, which emitted the same kind of sound as when one squeezes a child's toy, like a rubber duck. Also, Martindale had a "Wink Awake" contest, involving listener birthdays. On Martindale's "Dance Party" show on television, Martindale would use this show as a way of introducing some of the other telegenic "Eleven-Ten Men" to the viewers. We recall one show where Martindale introduced Bob Eubanks. This was said to be Eubank's first television appearance in Los Angeles! So on October 1, 1960, Wink Martindale became the new morning man on KRLA, and the station lineup went as follows: Martindale 6 to 9, Elwell 9 to Noon, Christian Noon to 3, O'Neill 3 to 6, Riddle 6 to 9, Harris 9 to Midnight, and Eubanks Midnight to 6.

It was in late 1960, after Martindale took over mornings, that KRLA started its record survey folders of the weekly top selling hits. The early folders featured a vertical folder with its cover similar to KFVB's. Shortly after, KRLA went to a different style, where the KRLA disc jockey faces were in the forms of musical notes. Most of these later record surveys were on yellow paper. One week was on salmon. The earlier style used various colored paper. All had black ink, as opposed to KFVB's, which was a different color paper and different color ink, each week.

Also, on these KRLA record surveys, KRLA had a contest involving a rather unknown Elvis-style singer named Ral Donner. Various pieces like a jigsaw puzzle would be shown of not only Donner's face, but also of "The Eleven-Ten Men" like Frosty Harris' eye, or Wink Martindale's nose. It was less slick than what KFVB had been doing. Again, it helped make this new KRLA closer to its listeners.

KRLA needed a weekender and relief at this time. So at Bob Eubanks recommendation, Dick Moreland, a deep-voiced air talent from KACY, where Eubanks had served before KRLA, was signed for part-time. Moreland had a rather Country-style, and always closed his shows by saying,

"This has been a Desert Rose Production," and "Bye bye, buy bottled and bond, bye bye."

The reason for the "Desert Rose Production"? Well, when Moreland was in Oxnard, there was a lady who lived nearby, who was a devoted fan of KACY. She sometimes brought refreshments to "the boys" at the station. Her name was Rose. She had previously called Moreland, and told him she was going to visit some relatives "up in the desert," in Palmdale. Moreland then gave her the now-famous nickname, "Desert Rose."

She used to always let Moreland know she would making an aircheck (tape off her radio) of Moreland's show. Since Moreland knew she would usually be recording it, he would always say,

"This has been a Desert Rose Production."

When Moreland joined KRLA, it was only on a part-time deal at first. But like Eubanks before, Moreland would be able to join the starting lineup at earliest opening.

Moreland also liked to read a poem that he wrote, on his shows, with the title and closing line that became his trademark, "I know you're everywhere, so there!" The poem, first heard on

The Dick Moreland Show in 1962, went as follows.

Honey, how I see
You everywhere I be,
In books, in flowers,
In sunshine and showers
And in everything that's bright
And in the darkest lonely night.
I see you in everything I see
Because, beloved, you are a part of me.
I see you in the air
And I hear you in every prayer
So I know you're everywhere,
So there!

("I Know You're Everywhere, So There!" - Dick Moreland, 1962.)

KRLA concluded 1960 with an air personality lineup that was younger and more energetic than KFWB's. That was the KRLA edge, at that time, that they hoped for. The first casualty of 1961 was the departure of Roger Christian. Christian left his Noon to 3 show. He said it was "time to move on." Christian would later go to KFWB in later 1961, and then to KHJ in 1965 to become one of the original 93/KHJ "Boss Jocks." Christian would then go to KBLA (originally Noon to 3, but ended up on KBLA's last day as that station's last "morning man"), KGBS, KIQQ-FM, and KRTH-FM. Christian also would co-write many songs with Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys. His songwriting, about fast cars and drag racing, would be legendary.

With Christian off the KRLA lineup as of January 20, 1961, the following week, by January 27, Dick Moreland was placed in the Noon to 3 spot. With Roy Elwell 9 to Noon and Dick Moreland Noon to 3, KRLA had a strategy of using its two more mature-sounding air personalities in a sort of "housewife block" that would attract female listeners, and slightly older demographics, than the others.

Replacing Moreland on the weekends was another KACY air personality, Bill Keffury. Keffury would remain at KRLA in a variety of weekend show positions. But, Keffury would never become part of the starting lineup, as he would be drafted in June of 1963. But for this time in KRLA's history, Bill Keffury looked like he too, would someday be a regular KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man." Keffury told us he also was involved in behind-the-scenes clerical duties during the week.

KRLA now introduced a new jingle package. It featured such great jingles as "You Hear More Music Than Any Other Station," "Life Begins At Eleven-Ten," and "Radio Eleven-Ten (YAY! YAY!!)" The sound of KRLA was certainly brighter, and younger, than what was happening on KFWB up the dial.

It was at this time in 1961, when we first heard KRLA, as described in the FOREWORD. What got us even more interested in KRLA, was that in the Fall of 1961, we were attending the 6th grade at St. Phillip School, on Hill in Pasadena, only a mile or two away from the KRLA studios at The Huntington Hotel. A lot of the kids from the St. Phillip School lived near the hotel. They told us about how KRLA had this big, huge radio station lobby with "On The Air" signs, that would light up whenever the mike was turned on. There actually were couches and sofas in the station lobby, where listeners could sit in the lobby and watch the disc jockey do his show through a big glass window! Plus, at the St. Phillip School, it was very fashionable to carry in one's lunch pail, a little 6-transistor radio, to listen to "Pasadena's own KRLA," during lunch and recesses.

Since we lived not that far from the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte, and went to school right near the KRLA studios, it was obvious that being so close to KRLA physically, that factor would play an important role in this 10-year-old "adopting" KRLA as his favorite station. Also, KRLA was fun to listen to, at this time, with its many "fun tests," where if one could identify a song, one could win \$11.10 ("Eleven dollars and ten cents"). Two memorable ones were "Sneaky George," and "Dr. Ken Basey." We can recall, so many times, walking around the Colorado-Rosemead area of East Pasadena, in the vicinity of "The Chef's Inn" and Pasadena City Lines bus stop on Quigley Avenue at Green, listening to KRLA, eagerly awaiting the on-the-air shift changes every three hours.

In the late summer of 1961, KRLA had an interesting music show on Sunday mornings, jockeyed by a KRLA newsman, Ed Perry, that was sponsored by a men's clothing store that was always "liquidating" its stock. As a 10-year-old, we did not know what "liquidators" meant, but soon learned a new word -- thanks to Ed Perry, and KRLA.

However, it was in late 1961 that a rather substantial change would come to the KRLA lineup. Jim Washburne would join KRLA as Program Director, replacing Herb Hymen, and take

over the 3 to 6 p.m. shift. (Earlier P.D.'s Wheatley and Hymen did not do any on-air jocking on KRLA.) Washburne would refer to the L.A. basin as "The Washbasin." He had a pleasant enough style, and kept KRLA on a good path of energetic programming and happy sounds. Washburne's memorable on-air line was "...but isn't it quiet when the goldfish die?"

With Washburne in the 3 to 6 p.m. show, that changed the schedule in that Jimmy O'Neill would be now 6 to 9 p.m., Sam Riddle now 9 to Midnight, and Frosty Harris would switch over to part-time, 9 to Midnight on Saturday, and 6 to 11 p.m. on Sunday, following Bill Keffury's 3 to 6 p.m. Sunday show.

One thing that air personalities did in the '60s was to have a "farewell" show, when that beloved personality would drop off the lineup. It was thought of as a special treat for listeners, so that the talent could thank the listeners for their support, and be able to also inform the listeners about their plans.

Wink Martindale had just accepted a management position with Dot Records, so he would not be able to continue hosting a radio show. However, Martindale had informed the listeners that he would be leaving, ahead of time, to allow the listeners to be able to send postcards to KRLA to "vote" for who they thought should take over for Martindale in the important 6 to 9 a.m. "wake-up" slot.

On Martindale's final show, on Saturday, April 14, 1962, it was announced that Bob Eubanks had won the vote. The following Monday, April 16, 1962, Eubanks would take over the 6 to 9 a.m. spot. Management felt that Eubanks had the same boyish, clean-cut image that Martindale had. It would not be that much of a shock to listeners, as Eubanks already was on right before Martindale, Midnight to 6. Eubanks would continue the same features that Martindale had, such as the "Wink Awake Club." KRLA continued to go with its younger image strategy to hold its own against KFWB.

Right after Martindale left the station, KRLA came out with a "Chicken Delight" promotion. Large yellow posters, featuring all the KRLA disc jockeys with "photo" heads and "cartoon" bodies, would be featured on the walls and windows of the Chicken Delight stores. The Chicken Delight store, on Duarte Road in Arcadia, gave us their poster, at that time. Since "The Twist" was very popular then as a nationwide dance craze, KRLA had a promotion with Chicken Delight, and played the "Chicken Delight Twist" over the KRLA airwaves.

It was at this time in 1962, that we had the opportunity to visit the KRLA studios for the very first time. One day we were driven to the KRLA studios at The Huntington Hotel. We opened the door, and were amazed to see this huge lobby and the big glass window, where one could sit on sofas in the lobby and watch the "Eleven-Ten Man" on-the-air, do his show. We can still remember all the "I'm A KRLA Nut" bumper stickers, featuring cartoons of peanuts, stuck all over the KRLA deejay booth. And seeing Roy Elwell read the weather off a small "blackboard"-style slate held up by the engineer on the other side of the glass.

We can still remember Roy Elwell wearing a long-sleeve white shirt with cuff links, waving at us, through the glass. As this was before Noon, Dick Moreland also was in the building. He gave us a copy of the "Twist To KRLA" record album, that featured all "The Eleven-Ten Men" in "Twist" dance positions on the cover. We still have that record in Research Archives' morgue!! Moreland also gave us a small blue postcard similar to the Chicken Delight poster. So this was KRLA!

It was exciting to this 11-year-old. At KFWB, where we had tried to visit the year before, the disc jockey booth was not allowed to be seen by the public. But at KRLA, "The Eleven-Ten Men" were right there through a window, with sofas set up to encourage people to come into the lobby to watch the shows. This was a station that wanted to be close to its audience.

Now in spring 1962, KRLA had a solid lineup of "Eleven-Ten Men," Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 a.m., Roy Elwell 9 to Noon, Dick Moreland Noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Jimmy O'Neill 6 to 9, Sam Riddle 9 to Midnight, and now back on the KRLA starting lineup, Frosty Harris Midnight to 6.

Harris did the Midnight to 6 show, then went immediately to college to work on getting a Social Science teaching credential, as he was concerned about the lack of job security in radio. He told us it was quite a strain, at that time, to have that schedule. During Harris' time as the Midnight to 6 personality at KRLA, he would feature, in the early morning hours, "Frosty's Fish Finder." Harris would read, over the air, which fish were "ready to be caught" over at Legg Lake, half a block away from the KRLA transmitter.

Many fishermen, who liked to fish at Legg Lake, used to listen to Harris each morning, right before sunrise, to get an early start at the tackle-and-bait shops, and get ready to catch! It was a common sight, at that time at Legg Lake, to see dozens of fishermen camped out on the shores of Legg Lake with the KRLA antenna towers right overhead above them, in the foggy early

morning air, all listening to "Frosty The Showman" give fishing advice.

However, the strain of going to college and the all-night show would prove too much for Harris. He would leave his Midnight to 6 show, and just do news on KRLA as "Bruce Harris," before leaving KRLA entirely in the Spring of 1962. And whatever happened to Frosty Harris? Harris got his credential, and then got a job at Arroyo High School in El Monte, teaching Social Science. Harris would later become a P.R. representative for the El Monte Union High School District. He still kept his ties to radio by working weekends at KIEV, Glendale, in a Gold format. "The Showman" later would become a counselor and administrator at the El Monte Adult School. He would be in a position to hire and supervise Adult Ed instructors in the English As A Second Language and Amnesty program. One of the instructors that Harris placed in 1984, was a former KRLA radio fan who first turned on KRLA as a child after 9 p.m. on The Frosty Harris Show, on a new little transistor radio he had just bought. And the name of that instructor? Bill Earl.

Replacing Harris in the Midnight to 6 spot, was a pleasant, sincere sounding air personality named Arlen Sanders, who would be the new Midnight to 6 "Eleven-Ten Man." So KRLA entered the Summer of 1962 with Eubanks, Elwell, Moreland, Washburne, O'Neill, Riddle and Sanders, and on the weekend, Bill Keffury from 6 to Midnight on Saturday, and 6 to 10 a.m. on Sunday.

However, in June 1962, KRLA would do a first for Los Angeles radio. KRLA's "traffic" (radio word for preparing "logs" and continuity) person, Sie Holliday, always had a very pleasant, sexy, and super good voice. So once in a while, Holliday was used for promos on KRLA such as its "Sounds exciting!" and "Sounds delightful!" tracks that were cut in the Jim Washburne era. Washburne, at that time, decided to make Sie Holliday the first female disc jockey in Los Angeles, and gave her the 6 to 10 p.m. Sunday night show! This was long before female air personalities, a very common breed today. Again, KRLA was first with another original. However, this would only last for a very short time. Holliday would go back behind the scenes, and occasionally do a promo, or participate in various skits. She would also be very prominent in 1964 in another era of KRLA's history. The voice of Sie Holliday would be heard on KRLA for many, many times, over the years ahead!

1962 was a good year for KRLA, under the supervision of P.D. Jim Washburne. Washburne even invented a clock for the disc jockey booth. It would be divided up like a pie, that would tell the air personality when to play a certain record or spot. The immortal clock, with the sign "KRLA Big Time" below, would be a familiar fixture in the KRLA deejay booth for a long time ahead in KRLA's history.

However, in September 1962, another change was about to be made to "The Eleven-Ten Men." Jimmy O'Neill was getting involved in television work with a late night show, "The Jimmy O'Neill Show," on Channel 13. So O'Neill left KRLA, after a beautiful farewell show, where the last record he played was one co-written by his wife, "You Won't Forget Me," sung by Jackie DeShannon. O'Neill would, the following year, turn up on weekends at KFWB. But for now, "the first voice of KRLA," and the last of the originals from 1959, was gone in September 1962.

(Radio legend "World Famous" Tom Murphy told us how he came down from the Northwest to visit Los Angeles, in the early '60s, and remembered seeing Jimmy O'Neill. Murphy told us, that he wasn't exactly overwhelmed by O'Neill's on-the-air style, but " . . . he sure had a great haircut!")

To replace O'Neill, Washburne signed a young jock who used the name "D.J. Dennis James" in Oregon, Dennis James Bruton, known on the air now as "Rebel Foster," to the KRLA air staff. Bruton felt that in Los Angeles, the name "Dennis James" would confuse people with the television game show host with the same name, who was popular at that time. Washburne decided that in order to keep a strong "familiar" personality in the 6 to 9 p.m. hours, to move Sam Riddle back to his original 6 to 9 p.m. shift. Rebel Foster would be 9 to Midnight. Foster had a character he "created," named "Mrs. Maude Skidmore," an older lady who Foster "took care of." It appeared that "Maude" had "a thing" for Foster. Foster was always quite polite to her, by calling her "Mrs. Skidmore." (We are assuming there was no "Mr. Skidmore.")

In September 1962, the "Back-To-School" lineup of KRLA was Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 a.m., Roy Elwell 9 to Noon, Dick Moreland Noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Sam Riddle, back in his old stomping grounds 6 to 9, Rebel Foster 9 to Midnight, and Arlen Sanders Midnight to 6. Bill Keffury did now the Saturday night 6 to Midnight show.

To promote this new lineup, KRLA came out with a full-newspaper-page ad of cartoon drawings of the September 1962 KRLA lineup, all sitting around a "board room" table, with "class is now in session at KRLA-1110 on your dial" written on the blackboard. "The Eleven-Ten Men" were depicted as school kids, with yo yos, chalk, books, and slates. These drawings were quite

good. Again, it created in the public's mind a fun station with good likeable personalities.

However, by December 1962, Rebel Foster and Dick Moreland would "trade" air shifts, moving Foster Noon to 3, and Moreland 9 to Midnight. Moreland, it was said, did not want to be pigeon-holed as a "daytime housewife jock," and so greeted moving to a nighttime show with much enthusiasm. Also, Foster's "Mrs. Skidmore" character was thought might appeal to a female daytime audience.

KRLA was now moving into its 5th year in 1963. However, by February 1963, Roy Elwell decided to become a midmorning jock at KFWB's sister-station in Richmond, KEWB, but because of all the toll bridges in the Bay Area, the station wanted him to drop the name "Roy Elwell," and on KEWB become "Scott Bridges." A feature that Elwell had on his show, "The Coffee Break Club," would continue with his next-to-be-announced 9 to Noon replacement. However, Los Angeles would miss "ridin' with Roy," and his trademark expression, calling listeners "Angelenos," "group," and commercials heard on Elwell's show, featuring "Del Sharbert," for "Mrs. Paul's Fish Sticks."

KRLA needed a strong, mature housewife-appealing personality for the 9 to Noon show, now that Elwell had departed to the Bay Area. Who KRLA chose for the 9 to Noon show was a former KFWB "Seven Swingin' Gentleman," who for an unspecified reason, did not return to KFWB when their 1961 labor dispute was over with. Ted Quillin, or T.Q., had been one of the original KFWB "Good Guys," when the "Color Radio" format started in 1958. Quillin started at KFWB in the Midnight to 6 show. When Al Jarvis went into semi-retirement, Ted Quillin was moved to daytime, in the Noon to 3 show, where he instantly had a rapport with a mostly female audience.

Quillin had a rather "mature" style, and was the perfect choice to replace Roy Elwell. Quillin even continued Elwell's "Coffee Break Club," where listeners could win prizes from the numbers on their membership cards. "The Coffee Break Club," was so popular, that KRLA had a song made that was played during this midmorning feature called "Coffee Break." Of all the KFWB disc jockeys who left KFWB in July 1961 during its labor dispute, all of them eventually came back to KFWB, except weekender Joe Smith and Ted Quillin. But Quillin now found a home on KRLA, and gave the midmorning show even a more "mature" feel than even Elwell had done.

Ted Quillin had one memorable line, that closed his show every day, that was his trademark at KFWB, and now he used at KRLA, as the clock approached Noon.

"This has been Ted Quillin, wishing you blue skies and green lights ... and mama come get your little baaaaby boy!!"

By this time, the F.C.C. had come down real hard on KRLA behind the scenes because of those problems in 1959; a Canadian in charge, fraudulent contests, doctored logs, etc. It ordered the station "off the air." But the F.C.C. decided that KRLA could stay on the air with an "interim" non-profit operation, until new owners could be issued the license of the station.

But the public was not familiar with this. What they heard was a new, fresh, radio station, that seemed to be more in touch with the local community, and its listeners, than the Number One station in town, KFWB. Listeners could see the KRLA deejay booth from its lobby. Its transmitter was in a growing area of the San Gabriel Valley, still rural, but by 1963, growing very fast with new homes being built in El Monte and the surrounding community. It was clear that KRLA, even though a far behind "second," would be still there on the dial.

However, as good as Jim Washburne was as Program Director, it was clear that to compete with KFWB, some changes in the jock lineup would have to be made. With former KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man" Wink Martindale now on KFWB 6 to 9 a.m., it was clear that KRLA needed to make a strong "counter-move."

As we approach April 1963, we will see if KRLA would be able to keep its feet on the ground, be able to reach for some special "stars," and be able to get the "stars" that it wanted.

CHAPTER 2

REACHING FOR THE STARS

KRLA, in February 1963, had a "trying-harder" lineup of likeable personalities, and a relatively younger image than KFWB, that made "Radio Eleven-Ten" a good second -- but still far behind "Channel 98" in the ratings. The year 1963 was one of rather peacefulness in the top hit music. KRLA continued to spin the hits. The only real fad that was of any major significance, in 1963, was surfing.

Both KRLA and KFWB had effectively jumped on the "surfing bandwagon." KRLA had a major presence at Surf Fairs. Also, during this surfing craze, KRLA's Rebel Foster had started putting on dances at the Retail Clerks Union Hall Auditorium in Buena Park, and also in Redondo Beach at Foster's own nightclub. Some memorable words heard on KRLA, were Foster's memorable,

"Let's wail at The Retail," and "Be there or be square!"

Bob Eubanks' night clubs, "The Cinnamon Cinder," also steamed along with its many locations, from the Traffic Circle in Long Beach, to Main Street in Alhambra.

KRLA still was the small, little station from a horse pasture in South El Monte. The big heavyweight KFWB, with its studios right in the heart of Hollywood, and transmitter off of Soto in Lincoln Heights, was the major station to listen to. What KRLA tried to do was slowly and steadily build a station, have a bright attitude and youthful image, and be a pleasant alternative.

Under Program Director Jim Washburne, KRLA had a fresh sound, some good contests, and had a more honest and genuine approach, than the glamorous Hollywood-slick tones of KFWB. The signing of Ted Quillin in February was a good catch for "Radio Eleven-Ten." Quillin continued in the 9 to Noon show, and the "Coffee Break Club" rolled on.

At this stage in early 1963, the KRLA personalities were good, certainly not the more-famous names such as at KFWB, but "The Eleven-Ten Men" had a certain intimate style, and sincere closeness to the listeners, that KFWB was unable to do. Just the fact that KRLA was right on the premises of a local suburban hotel, with a big glass window to see the disc jockey do his show, while listeners would come into the lobby to watch, whereas KFWB was on the 2nd floor of a building in downtown Hollywood, away from where young listeners lived, with its non-public deejay booth way back in the bowels of the 2nd floor, was a contrast in itself.

KRLA continued with a lineup of "Eleven-Ten Men" that, at this time in its history, had some growing potential. In February 1963, KRLA's air force was Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 a.m., Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Rebel Foster Noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Sam Riddle 6 to 9, Dick Moreland 9 to Midnight, Arlen Sanders Midnight to 6, and Bill Keffury on the weekends. But the station still lacked an identity. There still wasn't that one thing that would hook a listener, and get people to not only listen, but to make KRLA part of their lives.

As stated before, KFWB was the station that all TOP 40 personality-inclined air talents had longed to work. "The Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" at KFWB had already lured Roger Christian, Jimmy O'Neill and Wink Martindale, over to its Indiana at Multnomah antenna towers. For any young jock trying to reach the top in Los Angeles radio, KFWB was the ultimate goal.

Following the defections of O'Neill, Christian, and Martindale, (and earlier, Hal Goodwin, who became a KFWB newsman, with no jocking on "Channel 98"), the next KRLA personality who was offered a chance to join "Color Radio" was Sam Riddle. As told in Chapter 1, Riddle had been moved out of his 6 to 9 p.m. show, when Washburne joined "Radio Eleven-Ten." His show, even though good during the 9 to Midnight hours, just wasn't the same as when he was 6 to 9 p.m. So when O'Neill was lured over to KFWB, Riddle was given his 6 to 9 p.m. show back, where he remained until this point in the history of KRLA. When the opportunity to join KFWB came, Sam Riddle took his "peanut butter and banana sandwiches," and "Hello, Music Lovers!," and joined KFWB, shortly after leaving KRLA, in March 1963.

KRLA was definitely experiencing a talent drain. KRLA had young, fresh-sounding personalities, and seemed to be grooming them for the big time. But unfortunately so many left, one after another to KFWB, the "big time" in Los Angeles. It was time for KRLA to try to get some big-name heavyweights from out of town, if it had to, to take on KFWB. Too many "had defected" to "Channel 98." Now with the "defection" of Sam Riddle, there was only one "Eleven-Ten Man" left who had been on KRLA from the early months in 1960, and that was Bob Eubanks.

Eubanks did have good looks. A record label even had put out a record album, about this time, sponsored by the "Formula 42 Lemonized Cream Shampoo" people, with Eubanks' telegenic face right on the cover. But Bob Eubanks had other plans. He wanted to do something big on television someday. Bob Eubanks also wanted to become involved in related businesses to broadcasting behind-the-scenes, such as night clubs and concert promotion (which would prove to be very financially lucrative for Eubanks in the years ahead.) Bob Eubanks already had been seen on the Wink Martindale "Dance Party" show, and as morning man, had done numerous personal appearances, including appearing at Alhambra High School, in a Dick And Dee Dee mini-concert, during the lunchtime for the Moors.

What KRLA decided to do, was to move Bob Eubanks from 6 to 9 a.m. into Sam Riddle's 6 to 9 p.m. shift, when Riddle exited "Radio Eleven-Ten" for KFWB. Eubanks, like Riddle, had the right young image for the 6 to 9 p.m. primarily "teen" audience show, where mostly teens would listen while doing their homework. KRLA knew that Eubanks, like Riddle, would attract the big-in-number teen audience. So Bob Eubanks began the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, a shift where Eubanks was able to appeal to the huge block of "Baby Boomer" teens, who were the biggest bulk of the KRLA listening audience, during those nighttime hours.

What Bob Eubanks developed in the 6 to 9 p.m. show was something that not even Sam Riddle before him had attempted. And that was to develop his nighttime show around a theme that would appeal directly to teenagers. Each night, a different group of students would have a major reason to listen to KRLA.

The show was called "Teen Toppers." It would feature a different school each night. There would be a student representative of a particular school who would poll the student body as to what their favorite songs were, then relay that list back to Eubanks on KRLA, along with names of particular students, administrators, and popular faculty members.

Eubanks, each night, would salute a different school, mostly public high schools. But sometimes Eubanks saluted parochial schools, junior high schools, and in several rare occasions, even junior colleges were saluted by Eubanks. Each night, Eubanks would pick a different school to salute, and play the top records for that school. KRLA would also the following year, publish a "Teen Toppers Top Sixty Tune-Dex," which would feature the favorite, most popular songs, followed by several "Postriphaiting Platter Picks," that were the special school picks of the week, followed by 20 up-and-comers. Considering today, where computers or research "consultants" tell stations what to play, this was truly a fresh, spontaneous type of programming, with at least 80 records in rotation!

Eubanks had found a hot topic. The show had a hot direction, and became extremely popular in the 6 to 9 p.m. hours. The image of Bob Eubanks, along with the "Teen Toppers" show every night from 6 to 9 p.m., gave KRLA its first Number One show, over KFWB.

With Eubanks now in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift replacing Sam Riddle, who had gone to KFWB, a vacancy was created for the morning-drive show. KRLA had not had a comedic morning man since Perry Allen in 1960. And this time, KRLA was not going to shift another member of "The Eleven-Ten Men" in that shift, as it had before with Eubanks. Instead, it was going to bring in from the Bay Area, a funny, and very strong heavyweight air talent personality.

Bob Hudson (real name: Robert Howard Holmes) had been quite popular to Bay Area listeners at KYA in both the all-night and morning-drive shifts, and after KYA, at Richmond's KEWB, in afternoon-drive, which was a sister-station of KFWB. Bob Hudson was truly funny; a certainly non-straight personality, who just might be the lightning rod that KRLA needed to draw listeners to "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," from KFWB. KRLA had not had a talent like Hudson before. He was a total personality, and one of the greatest in Silver Age radio history.

When Hudson first joined KRLA, his primary act was to refer to himself by how good looking he was. Sort of a "Gorgeous George" on the radio. He called himself various names to highlight his "good looks" and "handsomeness," such as "The Lovely One," and "Beautiful Bob."

As KRLA was located on Oak Knoll in Pasadena, ironically the street directly east of Oak Knoll was, of all things, named "Hudson." Of course, this was long before Bob Hudson joined KRLA. But the fact that Hudson had this huge ego on the radio made listeners think that maybe they actually did name that street for Bob Hudson. (For a while, this impressionable 12-year-old thought that.)

Hudson joined KRLA in March 1963, right after the successful KRLA "Kontest," the "Tap Kontest." Listeners had to walk up to strangers, tap them on the shoulder, and ask if they were the KRLA "key carrier" who had the keys to a new 1963 car. (Shades of Perry Allen.)

Hudson as the morning man was exactly what KRLA needed. It now had a morning man to match the personalities that reigned at KFWB. But after all, Hudson had been part of the

KFWB chain of stations. KRLA was getting serious to go toe-to-toe with the heavyweights at KFWB, with this heavyweight from "Channel 98" 's sister-station.

"Beautiful Bob," as Hudson referred to himself in the early days of his work at KRLA in March 1963, was, without doubt, the best of all the personalities that Jim Washburne had brought to KRLA. The new lineup, with Bob Hudson as the strong morning man for the rest to follow, was Hudson 6 to 9, Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Rebel Foster Noon to 3, Jim Washburne 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dick Moreland 9 to Midnight, Arlen Sanders Midnight to 6, and Bill Keffury on Saturday night from 6 to Midnight.

Hudson, as the strongest man at the station, suddenly made KRLA have major gains in its listening audience. Almost overnight, people started to talk about Bob Hudson, and his tremendous conceit and huge ego, which was, for the most part, one big successful act! "The Lovely One" had got KRLA to suddenly become a contender in major Los Angeles radio. This is a perfect example of the theory that the most colorful air talent on the radio station should always be put in those early morning hours. Every time KRLA had done so, it was successful.

Bob Hudson became such a popular hit with his "glowing praise" for himself and his overall "good looks" (blue eyes, hairy chest, just absolutely "beautiful"), that KRLA had printed up button pins, with bold blue letters "Hudson Lover." If you were a Hudson fan, you were a Hudson lover. Hudson began to take the Los Angeles radio audience for his own. Also, on KRLA's "Studio City" record surveys, there were full-page ads in those folders, asking listeners to hear "The Lovely One." One featured a drawing of Hudson's "beautiful blue eyes."

Studio City Advertising had been putting out these "Survey Of Hits" folders each week at this time in 1963. These not only included the major music-format stations of Los Angeles, but usually two very generous pages to KRLA. One of the pages, of course, was the KRLA "Tune-Dex" record survey. But on the other one, usually on the back, was a full-page ad showcasing a different KRLA promotion or contest. Or even better, it featured a full-size photo of a KRLA disc jockey!

Shortly after Hudson was signed by Washburne, Jim Washburne decided to leave the Los Angeles radio market, and give up the Program Director's chair, to join KYA at Candlestick Point, San Francisco.

Replacing Washburne as Program Director was Rebel Foster. Foster moved himself out of the Noon to 3 hours, and promptly into Washburne's former 3 to 6 p.m. shift. It was time for Foster to find a replacement for Jim Washburne on the air-schedule. Foster could not afford to lose any new and growing audience of KRLA, that had started flocking to the station with Bob Hudson's tremendous popularity. Since Foster knew the great results of having Hudson come down from the Bay Area, to move into KRLA's important morning spot, perhaps this one friend of Hudson, who he had strongly recommended, might be a strong contender in the Noon to 3 spot, now that Foster had moved himself to 3 to 6 p.m.

Kemal Kasem had worked with Hudson in the San Francisco Bay Area at Richmond's KEWB, KFWB's sister-station. Kasem downplayed his last name at KEWB. Instead, he just called himself "Casey" (a nickname for "Kasem"), and used the air-handle "Casey At The Mike," for his evening show, following Hudson's afternoon-drive shift. Hudson had encouraged Kasem to come to Los Angeles to KRLA. Even though KRLA was losing its license, having been ordered off the air for various problems detailed in Chapter 1, KRLA was a station that, because of this atmosphere, would allow a creative talent to really expand, develop and grow with a lot of freedom. Also, Kasem always had an interest in going in either movies or television acting. And Pasadena was right next to Hollywood!

So Kasem was signed by Foster to take over the Noon to 3 show. However, as at KEWB, Kasem would downplay his last name. Kasem would continue to call himself "Casey At The Mike." If Kasem was a hit, it would be easy to add "Kasem" later. In the meantime, the name "Casey At The Mike" was easy to remember. In a town, Los Angeles, that had two major league baseball teams, having a name indirectly linked to baseball was a definite plus.

"Casey At The Mike," Noon to 3, was an instant hit! (A home run!) Kasem had a mature sounding voice, and a professional style, that had a lot of class. Kasem used to open each hour of his show with the phrase,

"Curtain going up on Act (1,2, or 3) of The Casey At The Mike Show." As we were only 12-years-old when we heard Kasem start on KRLA, we honestly thought that Kasem actually "closed" the "curtain" (on KRLA's window, at that time, were venetian blinds) of the disc jockey booth, at the Pasadena studios, at the end of each hour. Then, we thought, after the newscast break, he reopened the "curtain" at the start of the hour. Obviously, this didn't happen. But in the impressionable mind of a 12-year-old, and because, as Stan Freberg, consultant to KRLA in

late 1966, would say,

"Radio is 'The Big Screen'," listeners actually could imagine that curtains were opening and closing on Kasem's show. (Remember, in the KRLA lobby with its sofas, listeners could actually watch the show through the glass, like a stage.) The nickname "Casey At The Mike" only lasted the first month or so. By summer, Kasem was using "Casey Kasem" on the air, and no longer "Casey At The Mike." Kasem was becoming a star in his own right.

Two other important things to mention about Casey Kasem joining KRLA in May 1963. Kasem had a feature on his show, where he would give "teaser" stories about recording artists or records. The listeners would have to keep tuned, and to carefully listen, to see just who Kasem was talking about. This was something that Kasem had started in the Bay Area. But when arriving at KRLA in May 1963, Kasem used it much more heavily.

But it was Casey Kasem's sign-off that ranks as probably the greatest sign-off in broadcasting history.

"Keep your feet on the ground, and keep reaching for the stars. And until you get the one you want, I hope you'll stay with 'The Station Of The Stars' -- KRLA."

Kasem was so true and correct. KRLA was becoming "The Station Of The Stars" -- the station where real personalities were developing real talent that would, within the next two years, take KRLA up to the top, and build it with great radio legends. A few more personality changes would have to be made first. It would be two more years until May 1965, when the great "Station Of The Stars" dream lineup would finally be in place. But Kasem had a dream ... and a vision. And with Hudson, Kasem, and Eubanks the strongest talents at the station, it was clear that the star called "Number One" would soon be in reach for KRLA up in the Princess Blue Sky heavens.

In May 1963, Foster's lineup at "Radio E even-Ten" was one of a lot of strengths. Bob Hudson was getting extremely popular, and moving in fast on Wink Martindale at KFWB. Martindale still was more familiar to L.A. listeners, from his days at KHJ and KRLA, in years past.

However, as strong as Hudson, Kasem, and Eubanks were, as the key players in this lineup for KRLA, there was a missing major player. Still missing was that certain overall star, who would totally take over the station with an innocence and an excellence. A lot of names have been discussed so far in Dream-House. There will be plenty more to follow. But one name that will live in legends towering over all, will soon be finding his path to "The Land Of Eleven-Ten."

In our FOREWORD, we talked about a young boy who first heard KRLA on a little transistor radio, remembering a special hero called "Frosty The Showman." There was, years earlier, another young boy who lived in Alhambra. He used to ride his bike up to The Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, to watch Jim Hawthorne on KXLA, with Hawthorne's magic and creativity on the air. The boy used to look into the glass, and have his own dreams that, maybe, he too would be in the chair where Jim Hawthorne, with his big round glasses, was sitting, waving to this youth from Alhambra in the lobby, from the other side of the glass.

Years later, this boy, now grown up, had visited his brother at the beach. He was discouraged by not being able to get hired by KFWB in 1963, where he had hoped to go. But his brother encouraged him to make one more phone call. He called Rebel Foster, Program Director at KRLA, and introduced himself. He said he had been a moderately popular disc jockey back East, and in New Mexico, and wanted to work in Los Angeles radio. Foster immediately said, excitedly, over the phone,

"Get down here fast! Our weekend man, Bill Keffury, has just been drafted! We need someone for weekends and relief now!"

He then got into his car from his brother's house at the beach in Orange County, and drove up to The Huntington Hotel. Little did Foster know it at the time, but Foster would be hiring the one person that years later, a whole generation would remember as their favorite deejay.

So many people we have talked to have all answered the same, when asked who was the one overall personality who was their favorite. And the one who really represented the greatness of KRLA, the dream-house, the home for heroes. This special "hero" had now joined KRLA in June 1963, replacing Bill Keffury, in the four-hour 6 to 10 p.m. Sunday show, and filling in, once in a while, during the week. Dave Hull had entered the dream-house.

Hull's first show on KRLA was on a Sunday night, June 6, 1963. We recall very vividly sitting on the curb on Altura Drive, near the corner of Paloma Drive in Arcadia where we grew up, listening in at 6 p.m. that warm Sunday night. We had just walked back from watching a Little League game down at Hugo Reid Primary School Park. Suddenly at 6 p.m. after the news, on our little G.E. transistor radio, we heard these words from the tops of the KRLA transmitter towers in South El Monte. A record had just started playing. The first record of the show. Not more than

ten seconds into the record, Dave Hull gave his first words over "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," under Princess Blue Sky, and the transmitter towers in South El Monte.

"Well, how do you like the show so far?" Dick Moreland told Hull it was the funniest line he had ever heard on the radio. With these words, Dave Hull started his show on KRLA.

For those who are most familiar with Dave Hull as primarily a funny and hyper, highly excitable personality, as Hull personified in 1964 through 1967, this Dave Hull of June 1963 was especially subdued, and gave a very straight, more serious approach. His better-known "Hullabalooer" style would come later. Hull started his weekend show in a very low-key manner, and would be the KRLA weekender for Sunday nights for the rest of the summer.

The next change in Foster's lineup was about to occur. Dick Moreland had been handling the 9 to Midnight show on KRLA since December 1962. However, when the opportunity arose for Moreland to get further involved in station management, and production and music, Moreland would give up his show in the KRLA starting lineup, and move into the weekend only slot, where he would remain from June 1963 to summer 1967. Foster looked outside the station to bring in a replacement for Dick Moreland 9 to Midnight.

Foster had this strategy. Hudson in the mornings had this whole persona about being handsome, beautiful, blue-eyed, and hairy-chested. It was, of course, part of Hudson's act. But it really worked. For the first time, KRLA was being noticed, because of its superstar morning man, "Beautiful Bob."

Foster thought, that how about just the opposite for 9 to Midnight? How about bringing in "the ugliest and skinniest disc jockey in the world"? This would be in total contrast to the heavysset and handsome "Beautiful Bob."

So Foster brought in to KRLA, to start July 1, 1963, Dick Biondi, who was already a pretty big name in Buffalo and Chicago, already having famous days in both those markets. Biondi was not really ugly. He was tall and rather thin, and did wear big horn-rimmed glasses. But, like Hudson, had developed his own act around his looks. But unlike Hudson's tremendous ego in regard to his handsomeness, Biondi went into the opposite extreme to self-deprecation, all in fun. Biondi had a rather shrill, fast voice, and lightning-bolt style that made him a total contrast to the deep-voiced sound of Dick Moreland previously heard during the 9 to Midnight hours. Biondi reminded us of Jerry Lewis at his most hyper-ist.

In August of 1963, the Los Angeles Times, in a special radio supplement, featured a full-page ad showing a great photo of "The Eleven-Ten Men" gathered around an armored car. Bob Hudson was shown standing on the top of the truck. It was a good picture of "The Eleven-Ten Men," that Casey Kasem called "The Stars" of "The Station Of The Stars." Only Dave Hull was not shown. He was on the air at that time. Dick Moreland was now mostly behind the scenes.

It was in September 1963, that KRLA would finally give Dave Hull his shot at the "big time," by moving Dave Hull into the 9 to Midnight show, when Biondi left after only two months, to go back to the Midwest. Taking Hull's place on the weekend, would be an engineer/D.J., Bill Ditty. Ditty, we recall interviewing at KRLA in late 1969, when the original 80-page thesis (that Dream-House is an indirect product of) was being written. Our research shows that Ditty, did work the Sunday evening show starting in September 1963 and continuing for a very short time into early 1964. Ditty, at the time we met him in late 1969, told us he used the name "Do-Wah-Ditty" on the air as his handle.

Also, in late 1963, KRLA had a "Sound Your Rs" promotion, featuring newspaper advertisements with alternating jock photos, such as Hudson's face in an alarm clock, Quillin, in a coffee cup, and Foster, in a steering wheel.

KRLA ended the year 1963 with a lineup that had some great spots to it, such as Hudson, Kasem, Eubanks and Hull. The lineup was still developing. But KRLA was better than it had been in years, with some of its strongest personalities ever. The magic was starting to take place. KRLA had a strong morning man, Bob Hudson. It had a big talent in those hours to be the anchor of the station, to hold it all together, to make people listen in the mornings, then to keep "Radio Eleven-Ten" on for the rest of the day. Casey Kasem was becoming an instant legend with his stories about the stars, his sincerity and professionalism, and his legendary sign-off.

We chose the title for this chapter, "Reaching For The Stars," because of not only Kasem's famous close, but KRLA was becoming a station filled with real "stars." Hudson and Kasem were not well known before 1963. But they came into town just two months apart, and started to build the station into something that would be huge. Bob Eubanks created a massive following in the 6 to 9 p.m. show with his "Teen Toppers" show, which would become a favorite of teens all over the Southland.

KRLA ended 1963 with Bob Hudson 6 to 9, Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Rebel Foster and "Maude Skidmore" 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dave Hull 9 to Midnight, Arlen Sanders Midnight to 6, and on Sunday: Dick Moreland Noon to 3, and Bill Ditty 6 to 10 p.m. However, the station still lacked an identity. It still was looked upon as a suburban station. Not one that was in the same league as KFVB, still on top. "Channel 98" still had major blockbuster personalities and listener loyalty that had been developed for many years.

KRLA was about to move into 1964. KRLA now came out with a second record album called "KRLA Million Dollar Sounds," featuring one side of "fast" songs, and the other side of "slow" songs. It would be released in early 1964. A proud picture of Program Director, Rebel Foster, would be on the back. KRLA instrumental jingles would be heard on the beginning, and end, of both sides.

As KRLA moved further into the new year, two events would cause KRLA to suddenly become the major station in Los Angeles radio in 1964. The first was a very simple one to explain. Charlie Brown (real name: Chuck Blore), the man who had developed KFVB into "Color Radio," had left KFVB during 1963. With Brown gone from "Channel 98," and KFVB never fully recovered from the infamous "strike" in August 1961, some of the magic and chemistry had left too, even though KFVB P.D.s Jim Hawthorne, and later, Don French, and, in 1966, Bill Wheatley, did try their best. And the second? The surfing craze and dance parties were about ready to make room for the biggest phenomenon in music history. One that would affect not only KRLA, but the "Baby Boom" generation, and even the world.

So much has already been written about how The Beatles suddenly took America by storm in early 1964, with great promotion from Capitol Records, and a world looking to be happy again after J.F.K. The Beatles came about at the right time. Their impact on fashion, hairstyles, attitudes, and the whole pop culture are well known. But what has not been covered before, is how The Beatles would affect a suburban radio station, and all the "Baby Boomer" teens, that embraced "The Fab Four" as Pied Pipers. For it was The Beatles that would give KRLA the identity it needed.

KRLA, in early 1964, had great personalities, some much stronger than others. But it was when KRLA decided to get behind The Beatles totally, whole hog, that KRLA became not only Number One, but the soundtrack to so many young people lives. KRLA's Dick Moreland was the first to see the magic potential of The Beatles. And that the vast numbers of suburban "Baby Boom" teens that lived in the vicinity of KRLA, in the suburbs, were taking to The Beatles as their favorites of their generation! Moreland could see something that was big. Real big. Bigger even than Elvis. For the "Baby Boom" teen audience was the biggest teen audience in radio history.

Moreland decided that KRLA would do something that would leave KFVB biting "Radio Eleven-Ten" 's dust, way far back on the track. KRLA would become the station for "Beatlemaniacs." KRLA not only would play all The Beatles' singles, but also all The Beatles' L.P. cuts. (No TOP 40 station played album cuts in regular rotation before!)

At Dick Moreland's recommendation, Dave Hull, in early 1964, would start "The Official Southern California Beatles Fan Club," and make himself President. The Beatles gave Dave Hull what he needed to emerge as the Number One personality on KRLA. Hull jumped all the way onto The Beatles' bandwagon, and, at the same time, developed and let loose his frantic "Hullabalooer" personality. No longer was Hull the subdued jock of June 1963. "The Hullabalooer" was born with sound effects and horns. Every Beatle song made would be played on The Dave Hull Show. Dave Hull was the voice for all Beatles information on Los Angeles radios!

The Beatles, along with the great emerging talents of Hudson, Kasem, Eubanks, and Hull, were about to make KRLA Number One for the first time ever. A station that could go off the air any day because of difficulties with its license, was suddenly about to become the most popular station in Los Angeles. "The Station Of The Stars" was now going to be Number One.

KFVB, after its failure to jump on The Beatles' bandwagon first, did not know what hit them. KFVB tried to do something with a Beatle connection, but it was too late. (Pictures of Wink Martindale with a Beatle wig only seemed to show KFVB's desperation. "Beatlemaniacs" knew that crew-cutted Dave Hull was the real Beatles connection!) KFVB was being turned off, by the young adult audience, in droves.

Now, just about everyone in Southern California, it seemed, was listening to KRLA. KRLA was now the place to be! Not only for listeners, would KRLA be the place to be, but now a nationally-known major talent would be joining "The Eleven-Ten Men," that would further add to the chemistry of greatness, and be another "star" that would lead to KRLA's all-star "dream"

lineup in May 1965.

One of the most popular shows for young people on television was "American Bandstand." Since its beginning, it had been broadcast from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with Dick Clark, and his sidekick-announcer, Charlie O'Donnell. When Clark decided to move "American Bandstand" to the West Coast, Clark, also, took with him Charlie O'Donnell. That would mean that Charlie O'Donnell, who had also done radio disc jockey work in Philadelphia, would need a new radio home in Los Angeles, now the home for "American Bandstand."

KRLA, seeing that a major personality like Charlie O'Donnell, highly visible from television, was now looking for a station in Los Angeles, invited Charlie O'Donnell to become one of "The Eleven-Ten Men." In May 1964, O'Donnell was signed by KRLA to work the Sunday morning 6 to Noon show, and later moved into the 6-10 p.m. shift also. O'Donnell would be moved into the starting lineup at first opportunity.

O'Donnell had a great smooth voice, and a good image for KRLA, recognizable from his work on television and "American Bandstand." He was just what KRLA needed. We were sitting in our back yard patio, after having some corn from the barbeque, when we first heard O'Donnell on his first KRLA weekend. We were so impressed upon hearing O'Donnell's first shows in May 1964 when he joined KRLA, that we felt O'Donnell should be on everyday, not just on Sunday. We called Dave Hull, on the air at KRLA, and suggested Charlie O' have his own show. Hull stated,

"He does," and proceeded to tell me about his Sunday program.

With O'Donnell now in the KRLA lineup, as its top weekender, calling himself "The Jolly Lean Giant," because of his being the tallest of all "The Eleven-Ten Men," another of "The Eleven-Ten Men" would also acquire a new nickname which would be one of the most successful in radio history. The story of "The Emperor" begins here.

Bob Hudson felt, by now, that he had carried his whole "handsomest" act as far as he could. He decided he would top that. "Beautiful Bob" would become "The Emperor."

In spending a lot of time in the Bay Area, one gets to learn a lot about legends in San Francisco. The entire city of San Francisco is full of stories about its legendary eccentrics. One such character that Bob Hudson always thought was a good one was that of "Emperor Norton."

Norton apparently was a super eccentric in the Bay Area around the turn of the century, who proclaimed himself to be "Emperor Of San Francisco." He even printed up money with his picture on it. At that time, people in the Bay Area thought that Norton was totally funny. They even went along with Norton, humoring him, and encouraging him with his "Emperor" delusions. Hudson remembered this character. When he came to Los Angeles, Hudson played with the idea of letting Angelenos in on this big joke. A guy who runs around thinking he's an "Emperor."

It was at this time in early 1964, that Bob Hudson had a brilliant brainstorm. Hudson would downplay the "Beautiful Bob" persona and become himself "Emperor Hudson," "The Emperor" of KRLA! It was absolutely brilliant! No radio personality had ever done anything like this before. Hudson not only called himself "Emperor Hudson," but acted the whole part, dressing in robes and crown for KRLA personal appearances. He created a whole fan club for himself called "Hudson's Commandos." Listeners could receive an actual certificate suitable for framing, signed by Hudson, stating Hudson was their "Emperor," and KRLA listeners were to be his loyal subjects. Again this was brilliant!

Hudson even produced skits on the radio. In short, pre-recorded vignettes, Hudson would be assisted by KRLA newsman Richard Beebe as "Colonel Splendid," Casey Kasem would use his acting talents as "Lieutenant Cavendish," and Sie Holliday would be the voice of "Daphne," "Emperor Hudson" 's secretary. The vignettes, written by Hudson who was a brilliant comedy writer, would become so popular, an actual record album produced by Hudson became available though KRLA and in stores. It would become one of the local hit albums of 1964, ranking up on the Southland L.P. charts in top tier positions with Beatle albums!

The album, "The Adventures Of Emperor Hudson," was a collection of the best of all the vignettes. It's truly funny even to this day. Hearing these integrated into the KRLA broadcast day was clearly a treat, with an invitation to join "Hudson's Commandos" at the end of the vignette. In one of them, Hudson wanted to straighten Sunset Boulevard, and make it one long bowling alley. Or, cover San Francisco Bay with ice, and make it a giant ice rink.

Hudson truly was at the top of his form. Once he became "Emperor Hudson," he became the Number One morning personality in Los Angeles radio, totally wiping out Martindale at KFWB. Hudson had tapped into something that was almost as big as The Beatles in giving KRLA an identity.

Also, after Hudson became "Emperor Hudson," he coined one of the most memorable

closing lines in radio history. As we all know, the KRLA studios were located at The Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, not too far from the oldest freeway in California, "The Pasadena Freeway." Hudson had used this freeway often. Because of the many curves in the freeway, and its small two lanes, the freeway was always pretty crowded and congested even then.

All of us who have ever been in a bottleneck on the freeway have probably dreamed about the fantasy that, if we could, to get everyone else on the freeway to pull over and let us pass without any blocking or congestion. No one would be in our way. Just think of it. Hudson's great line, that is immortal in radio history, was, "Clear the freeway, peasants, his highness is coming!"

As Stan Freberg has said, "Radio is 'The Big Screen'." At this time in our life, at 13-years-old, we could actually imagine motorists, after seeing Bob Hudson driving down the Pasadena Freeway, suddenly pull their cars over right and left, allowing Bob Hudson to drive freely. It was great theater-of-the-mind, and a fabulous illusion.

This idea of a morning disc jockey becoming an "Emperor" was such a big, big hit that other radio stations around the country scrambled to pick up on the idea. KCBQ, in Santee, had both a "King Seamus O'Hara," and, later, a "King Jack Hayes." KFXM, in San Bernardino, had a "Conqueror Dave Fransen," complete with a blond goatee like a medieval leader. And Hudson even copyrighted his trademark handle "The Emperor," and allowed personalities in other radio markets to use the whole act. Ironically, at KYA where Hudson had served back in the early '60s before going to Richmond's KEWB, one of KYA's jocks, Gene Nelson, called himself "Emperor."

But Hudson was the original, and by far, the best, with "The Emperor" morning show act. He had the talent. He had the tremendous ego, and colorful persona, that really made this work. And in the entire history of KRLA, Hudson became its most outrageous, and most popular, morning man. Hudson has been quoted as saying that he and Casey Kasem "built KRLA." It's hard to disagree with that.

Bob Hudson, as "Emperor Hudson," had one of the most spectacular acts in the history of KRLA. Nobody came close. He created a tremendous following of fans. Hudson, in the Los Angeles Times, once was quoted as saying, "The kids really thought I was nuts." Teenagers (and by now, their parents) couldn't wait to turn on their radios to hear "The Emperor." Some teen listeners used to actually wake up at 6 a.m. on their clock radios, where they wouldn't miss one moment of Hudson's show before school. Hudson even printed his own play money called "Beautiful Blue-Eyed Bobs," with his picture on the bills as "Emperor Hudson." (Shades of Emperor Norton.)

Hudson took a turn-of-the-century idea from the Bay Area, and made it his own. Bob Hudson was truly the biggest and brightest star at the "The Station Of The Stars." With Hudson in the morning with his "Emperor" routine, Kasem afternoons Noon to 3, Eubanks with his "Teen Toppers" in the evening, and Hull 9 to Midnight, with his Beatle gossip and all the latest Beatle records first, before anyone else in Los Angeles radio, and "American Bandstand" 's O'Donnell, and Dick Moreland, on the weekends, KRLA truly became the "The Station Of The Stars."

KRLA entered the Summer of 1964, when the dream-house would expand to having disc jockeys as heroes, and be a link to The Beatles - a home for anyone who wanted to know anything about "The Fab Four." KRLA would be the station for those listeners, like ourselves, who loved The Beatles.

KRLA was about to hit Number One. It had its identity now. It had a growing chemistry now of major talents. KRLA Program Director Jim Washburne, and later Rebel Foster, indeed "reached for the stars," and out of the broadcasting sky, reached for-and-caught-such soon-to-be legendary radio stars as Hudson, Kasem, Hull, and O'Donnell, to join Bob Eubanks and Dick Moreland, "home-grown" KRLA stars, in an impressive KRLA personality lineup.

KRLA "reached" across the Atlantic to England, to embrace four new "stars" across the horizon, The Beatles, soon to be the Pied Pipers of the "Baby Boom" generation, who would grow, evolve, and develop, in parallel, to their young adult fans, who would be growing up themselves. And KRLA would be the soundtrack for that generation! After all, KRLA was right there in the suburbs where that audience lived, and easily accessible on the grounds of a suburban hotel, which encouraged them to come to the glass window - and see their very own radio station!

Truly, at this point, "The Station Of The Stars," as Casey Kasem called it, was totally living up to its name. It now was about to acquire a new name, that of "The Original Beatle Station For Los Angeles." We now move toward August 1964, where KRLA, with The Beatles, would consummate its marriage made in radio heaven, high above Princess Blue Sky, and the horse pasture in South El Monte, in The Valley Of The Jolly Lean Giant.

CHAPTER 3

VALLEY OF THE JOLLY LEAN GIANT

In August 1964, KRLA had a lineup that was a blend of both the old and the new. The Beatles had been on the scene since February. KRLA decided, whatever it took, to use The Beatles to catapult itself into the top tier of Los Angeles radio. At Dick Moreland's suggestion, Dave Hull had started a Beatle fan club. A fan club for Dave Hull himself, was in full swing by August 1964. Also, in August 1964 KRLA's license problems came full bloom. By August 1964, KRLA was known as the station to listen to, if you wanted to hear the latest Beatle track. This is where it would be played.

Up to now, on Los Angeles radio, young adult contemporary TOP 40 radio stations primarily played the top selling 45s. The Beatles changed that. Every one of The Beatles' songs was "starting lineup," first tier, and was not filler, as up to now, record albums had been. Record albums for young adults had always subscribed to this formula: the hit, the flip, the follow-up, a cover version or two, and filler. That's it. The Beatles put out albums where all cuts were first rank. No one, up to then, had that distinction. The Beatles changed all that.

KFWB, by August 1964, was a station that had been Number One since 1958, for six strong years. But it was starting to show its age. Charlie Brown had exited KFWB, the year before. KFWB had a stable of solid personalities, but kept to the "slick" formula that made the station big. It thought of The Beatles as just a passing trend, something that was popular now, but maybe not next week. KFWB didn't understand the importance, or the major social significance of The Beatles. By the time they did, the listeners had turned elsewhere, and KFWB as a TOP 40 major force was over.

But KRLA had nothing to lose. KRLA needed an identity. The Beatles gave it to them. The most important factor to KRLA at this point, is that the station was willing to roll the dice and risk all, on getting behind the biggest music group in the history of popular music. KRLA seemed to know something was really, really special here. And with that foresight, KRLA stepped on the gas, wiped those "second place" tears away, and made one sweet dream come true.

The Beatles were not just another music group. But after the death of J.F.K. and excellent promotion by Capitol Records, The Beatles caught fire. They became not only the tops in music, but trendsetting in fashion and attitude. Nothing like The Beatles ever happened before. Nothing since has even come close. Hairstyles were changed. Attitudes were changed.

KFWB, up to now, had been perfectly content keeping up its format. The station played what was popular, but did not go overboard and rally behind any particular group or act. Acts come and go. But the steady station KFWB would not budge. The station had a good formula, and they stuck with it. KRLA was the little station from South El Monte that had nothing to lose and everyplace to go but down ... they were already there. KRLA had already lost its license earlier, and could very easily be gone the next day with a new format with new owners.

KRLA lived from day to day. And because of this, it took chances. It rolled the dice for the high risk. And it's an American success story. KRLA really made it. When The Beatles struck, KFWB, which had been in a slight decline after Brown's exit, never recovered. KFWB Program Directors, who followed Brown, Jim Hawthorne up to mid-'64, Don French, from mid-'64 thru 1965, and Bill Wheatley in 1966, tried their best, but the momentum was clearly with KRLA. KFWB was suddenly seen as Hollywood-slick, whereas KRLA was a station where the teenagers would turn to for Beatle information. KFWB had long-time popular personalities, but didn't really recognize the force that The Beatles would be to young people ... and the world. (Their best personality, Elliot Field, would leave KFWB in 1964.)

KRLA decided, in February 1964, to become "The Original Beatle Station For Los Angeles." What did it have to lose? The decision to make KRLA totally behind The Beatles was both brilliant, and a high rolling decision that only a station like KRLA could have made.

The lineup at KRLA, as "Radio Eleven-Ten" finished July 1964, was Bob Hudson 6 to 9, Ted Quillin 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Rebel Foster 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dave Hull 9 to Midnight, and Arlen Sanders Midnight to 6. Dick Moreland did weekends. Charlie O'Donnell still hung out in the 6 to Noon Sunday slot, in addition to, later on, 6 to 10 p.m. Sunday.

By August 1964, KRLA had fully become "The Original Beatle Station," by not only

playing The Beatles' latest singles, but all the L.P. cuts on The Beatles' albums, both English and American versions. If a listener wanted to know about The Beatles, KRLA was the station to listen to. Dick Moreland suggested that Dave Hull become the President of the Southern California Beatle Fan Club. Not only did Hull give away The Beatles' home addresses over the air, but also played all The Beatles' songs before other stations were able to get them. He always seemed to have the latest Beatles gossip. Hull wrapped himself in The Beatles' Union Jack, and became "The 5th Beatle" to Los Angeles listeners.

In August 1964, KRLA would present a major first. Up to that point, "live" music concerts were along the lines of M.O.R. acts. Rock groups did not have major concerts in Los Angeles, or in the U.S.A. They, up to that point, if there were personal appearances, were part of "cards" made up of many different acts, that toured sometimes the U.S. in big buses, and played small venues. In August 1964, KRLA would undertake what no L.A. radio station had ever done before. That is to bring The Beatles to Los Angeles for a concert at The Hollywood Bowl.

Bob Eubanks decided to mortgage his house and take out a loan, to be the promoter to present a full-fledged Beatles concert in Los Angeles.

Up to then, any concerts presented were M.O.R. acts, or classical. Having an act like a rock act, many banks would not agree to such a loan to present The Beatles, or any rock act, to Los Angeles listeners. It simply wasn't done. Eubanks had shopped around at several different financial institutions, until he found one that would put a mortgage on his home, and finance the concert. In August, 1964, KRLA and Bob Eubanks (along with Rebel Foster) produced and sponsored the first Los Angeles Beatles concert, with all of the KRLA personalities to introduce the acts on stage. Eubanks brought The Beatles to Los Angeles. That's something that did more for the overall listenership of KRLA than anything before it.

The station had moved away from the "teen-idol" image of O'Neill and Riddle, and on to the latest thing from England. The Beatles were everywhere on KRLA. Before the concert, KRLA's Beatle Fan Club President Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Special" show, from 6 to Midnight, had featured 6 hours of mostly Beatle music, including special jingles KRLA had made. To the tune of Beatle songs, short jingles were played singing the "yeh yeh yeh" of KRLA! (And lots of "Beatle Double-Plays"! It was truly a "Beatles Bonanza" on KRLA!

During the Summer of 1964, The Beatles were totally in vogue. Many commercial spots were heard on KRLA for Beatle-related products. One spot on KRLA, featured oil painting prints, of The Beatles, for sale.

The Beatles gave KRLA what it needed. An identity. KRLA now billed itself as "The Original Beatle Station." On KRLA, one could hear things about The Beatles one couldn't hear anywhere else.

The only other competing station in Los Angeles was KFVB. KFVB had a strict formula and format that in the late '50s worked. But, as said before, KRLA had nothing to lose. So it "broke formula" by playing not only the singles, but every cut on every Beatle album. KFVB stuck to its "Fabulous Forty," but did play Beatle singles. KRLA totally wiped them out.

However, even though KRLA was totally behind The Beatles, its license problems did continue to hang over the heads of "The Eleven-Ten Men" like a Damocles sword. It was privately announced that KRLA would need to make a program change. Management was concerned about two air personalities that sometimes bordered on the "risque" side, Ted Quillin and Arlen Sanders (and didn't really fit into the Beatle/"British Invasion" direction of KRLA.)

Ted Quillin told us that the pre-August 1964 owners of the station, Don Cooke and his brother Jack, always liked him from his days at KFVB. When Elwell left KRLA in February 1963, Quillin was signed to the midmorning 9 to Noon show. Quillin had a "maturity" about his persona on the air. Quillin told us that he always used "doubles" (double entendres). He always kept it clean, except in the minds of the listeners, who might have taken it a different way. But that's how "doubles" work.

One day, during Ted Quillin's 9 to Noon show, he had played "Do The Bird," by The Rivingtons. Quillin then said (quote),

"That's The Rivingtons doin' their bird for you. If you don't like that beat they've got, it's like hog maws and hog jowls."

At that point, Quillin proceeded to go into the next song. The door to the KRLA disc jockey booth in Pasadena suddenly flew open. John Barrett, the General Manager, came in excitedly and perturbed and said,

"That's the dirtiest thing I've ever heard anyone say on the radio."

Quillin didn't know what Barrett meant. Barrett told him that he just heard him say "hog balls" on the air. Quillin said to Barrett, something to the effect, that Barrett must not be that

familiar with the South, because he would have known what hog maws, and hog jowls, were. Barrett insisted that Quillin said "hog balls."

So, according to Quillin, Dave Hull, who was in the studio area at the time, was ordered, by Barrett to go in and take the mike from Quillin, and finish his show. Barrett, had at that point, taken Quillin out of the studio, and into his office to fire him on the spot, for saying "hog balls" on the air, and the double entendre, "doin' their bird."

Barrett called Don Cooke, who was back East, to let him know he had just fired Quillin for saying "hog balls" on the air. Cooke told Barrett that he didn't care what Quillin said. He gave Barrett a direct order to put Quillin back on the air at once. So Hull stepped out of the booth. Quillin finished his show. Dave Hull confirmed this for us.

KRLA had been under a private company as owners, Eleven-Ten Broadcasting. Because of events briefly detailed in Chapter 1, hearings were held against the station to determine its fitness to continue. On July 31, 1964 the KRLA powerful water-cooled transmitter in South El Monte was turned off for 20 seconds, then turned back on, to show the start of new "owners," the Oak Knoll Broadcasting Company, who would operate KRLA on an "interim" license, and turn over all profits to KCET Channel 28, and U.S.C.

It was now August 1st, and the interim company was now in charge. According to Quillin, within a few days after August 1, 1964, both himself and Arlen Sanders would be fired by Barrett, the first change in KRLA's programming, under the new Oak Knoll Broadcasting Company. The Cookes no longer had any more say in KRLA, from that point. For further information on the KRLA license situation in August 1964, we recommend Don Beem's college thesis on the shelves of Cal State Fullerton's library. So with Quillin now out at 9 to Noon, that time slot was perfect for Charlie O'Donnell, "The Jolly Lean Giant."

First, O'Donnell had two main things going for him. He had a clean image. Management wanted KRLA to have a "super clean" image. After the license problems, KRLA couldn't afford to take any risky chances on more problems. O'Donnell's show, "American Bandstand," was an institution. O'Donnell's connection with that show showed Los Angeles that here was a guy that parents wouldn't mind their teenagers listening to. O'Donnell was a natural to join the KRLA starting lineup, in the first available opening, which happened to be the ideal 9 to Noon shift. Because O'Donnell had that certain image of maturity, O'Donnell fit into the housewife time, 9 to Noon shift, perfectly. He would not be replaced on the weekends then, as Dick Moreland moved into the Sunday 4 to 9 p.m. shift, where he remained for the next three years.

So we have Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Foster, Eubanks, Hull and Sanders. But the last name would now drop off the lineup for similar reasons as Quillin. Bobby Dale now joined the KRLA lineup in August 1964, replacing Arlen Sanders.

Bobby Dale was a very "colorful" personality, who had a style that was truly his own. Dale first came to Los Angeles airwaves in August 1961, when KFWB had its big strike, and brought in "good guys" from its two other sister-stations, including KDWB, Saint Paul, where Dale had been very popular in the important 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon-drive show. Dale joined KFWB in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift where he developed a style that was "philosophically wise." However, this would be Dale's best time slot at KFWB. When B. Mitchel Reed came back "after" the strike, Dale was moved into 9 to Midnight. Finally, before he left KFWB, he was in the ultra-relaxed Midnight to 6 spot. From there, Dale went to KEWB, Richmond, where he remained before joining KRLA.

Immediately upon assuming the Midnight to 6 slot, Dale became the "third Bob" on KRLA, becoming "Benevolent Bob," in contrast to Eubanks' "Bashful Bob," and Hudson's "Beautiful Bob." An interesting story on Bobby Dale at KRLA, comes from Charlie O'Donnell. He said he was given the job to train Dale on the operation of the board, in the KRLA disc jockey booth. To the left of the board console was the vertical row of red buttons, used to play the "carts" that had been set up by the engineer on the other side of the glass, and also the jingles. The story goes, that when O'Donnell told Dale to press one particular red button, Dale said to O'Donnell,

"Not me, man. I've seen 'Dr. Strangelove'!"

Dale had a style that was very casual, ultra-relaxed, somewhat eccentric, and almost "beatnik" in nature. Dale certainly did not fit the profile of a TOP 40 deejay at a teen station, with his bald head and black-rimmed glasses, and being a little on the pudgy side. But just the same, Dale became the second addition to KRLA, in August 1964, in the Midnight to 6 spot, and certainly brought a style all his own. So in August 1964, the KRLA lineup was once again solid. "Benevolent Bob" became another reason why KRLA was becoming the "The Station Of The Stars."

By August 1964, and this new lineup on KRLA, the station had become Number One overtaking KFWB in the popularity of listeners. KFWB continued its plunge downward. Ironically

at this time, KFVB was staffed with former "Eleven-Ten Men" like Wink Martindale, Sam Riddle, Jimmy O'Neill, and Roger Christian. But KRLA was "The Original Beatle Station," and that said it all.

During this time in 1964, KRLA proudly put out, every week, "Teen Toppers Tune-Dex" strips, with a listing of over 60 different songs, that KRLA played in rotation, a full 20 more records than on KFVB. The "Teen Toppers" strips were quite attractive.

At the bottom of these "Teen Toppers" strips were rotating pictures of the "Eleven-Ten Men." One of our favorites is Dave Hull with this description next to his picture,

"Listen for scuzzy no-good rat fink Hullabalooer Dave Hull."

and another one, with Rebel Foster, saying,

"Swing along with Rebel and Maude Skidmore. Rebel Foster."

The only two personalities not to be pictured on these colored strips were, strangely enough, Bobby Dale and Dick Moreland. Bob Eubanks was shown the most frequently, as the "Teen Toppers" lists were debuted on the Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 p.m. show. Eubanks was the most visible of "The Eleven-Ten Men," not only because of his highly popular "Teen Toppers" show, but because of what was going to happen this month on KRLA in August 1964: the presentation of the first Beatle concert at The Hollywood Bowl, presented by Bob Eubanks and KRLA.

That was the biggest coup for KRLA. For months before August, the anticipation that The Beatles were coming, made KRLA Number One, and never looked back. The station rode the coattails of The Beatles all the way to the top. Even on the bottom of the KRLA "Teen Toppers" strips was the proud exclamation: "The Original Beatle Station For Los Angeles." KRLA not only got behind The Beatles, but seemed to heavily emphasize the second tier of "British Invasion" groups such as Peter And Gordon, Billy J. Kramer And The Dakotas, Gerry And The Pacemakers, and the rest.

Again, KRLA rolled the dice, and the gamble paid off. The station linked itself to the most phenomenal trend in the world, "The British Invasion," and The Beatles. With Bob Eubanks mortgaging his house to put the concert on, and Dave Hull and his horns promoting the Dave Hull Beatle Fan Club every night, the station was reaching its all-time high. During this time, the station even put out an album. "Hear The Beatles Tell All," featured interviews with The Beatles, by none other than Dave Hull, and KRLA newsman Jim Steck. Again it solidified, in the audience's mind, that KRLA was indeed "The Original Beatle Station."

But the biggest event of August 1964, was the first Beatles concert at The Hollywood Bowl. KRLA listeners were treated to the exciting sights and sounds of The Beatles, "live." There was no doubt that KRLA was the station that was the audience's link to The Beatles. As long as The Beatles were on top, so was KRLA. It was a winning combination. As a souvenir of The Beatles' concert, a special was heard, over the KRLA airwaves, with interviews behind the scenes, and man-on-the-spot reports. It was broadcast soon after the concert, on KRLA, so the listeners who were there had something to relate to, and the ones who didn't go could share in the excitement.

But what KRLA put out, as the next souvenir of The Beatles' concert, is what goes down in broadcasting history as another first that came from KRLA. KRLA decided to print a four-page black-and-white publication that would have scrapbook souvenir photos of "The Eleven-Ten Men" at The Beatles concert, and, of course, exclusive pictures, never before published anywhere else, of The Beatles themselves. This four-page "paper" would be printed black-and-white on heavy white paper. It would also feature a column by the most popular of "The Eleven-Ten Men," Dave Hull, right on the first page, with his picture right there by the masthead.

The publication, however, needed some kind of a name. One idea was "KRLA Beatle Concert Souvenir Program," but that would be too long. What did it finally end up being called? Instead of "KRLA Beatle Concert Souvenir Program" it was shortened to just the first "word," and part of the second, "KRLA Beat." The masthead would be big white letters in a black background. The letters "KRLA" would be irreverently at angles. The word "BEAT" would be in big bold ones. The front of the paper would have the current KRLA "Tune-Dex," and Hull's column.

Inside, there would be pictures of the Beatle concert, and also various candid shots of the KRLA disc jockeys themselves at the concert. Also there were pictures, for the very first time, of the KRLA disc jockey booth, where listeners could see where it all came from. The headlines of the first issue were "Ringo To Enter Hospital For Operation." These would be distributed free to music shops, and at the KRLA studios in Pasadena. This would be the first actual publication ever put out by a radio station other than little record survey folders and one-sheets.

After the success of the first issue, KRLA realized it had come up with something that was

another first. If the first issue (by the way, did not say #1, or even the date) was a success (it hit the stands in October) then the station would keep the momentum going by having periodic issues. Besides Dave Hull's column, other KRLA personalities, like Rebel Foster and Casey Kasem, contributed to the next few editions.

The first newspaper ever devoted to pop music, and a radio station, was born. The KRLA Beat! And this was three years before Rolling Stone, generally thought of as the first. But the KRLA Beat was the first. And you can't change history. So moving into the Fall of 1964, KRLA now had an important link with the audience. Its very own "newspaper." From The Beatles concert in August, to the first KRLA Beat in October, the momentum, of Number One KRLA, was hotter than a firecracker.

The first change in the on-air lineup, since KRLA became Number One that past Summer of 1964, was for one night to cut back Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Special," and bring in something totally unusual, that just may turn out to be a regular feature if it worked, and if the audience liked it.

On Saturday night, October 31, 1964, Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Special" was trimmed to 6 to 9 p.m. Bobby Pickett was signed by KRLA to go on from 9 to Midnight. However, Pickett was not an ordinary disc jockey. He actually wasn't a disc jockey at all, but a writer and performer, who had a Number One record several years earlier, "The Monster Mash," where Pickett did a Boris Karloff impersonation through the whole record.

For Halloween night, Pickett recreated his Karloff impersonation, and actually brought in a large metal ash can, to create an echo effect, along with all kinds of hammers, chains, etc. for this Halloween 9 to Midnight show. Pickett not only did the voices of Karloff, but of other "monster" voices. The show was quite excellent, and actually, at times, scary. This was five years before Disneyland's "Haunted Mansion."

The first show was such a hit, partly due to the fact it was Halloween, that Pickett became a regular KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man." He even had his picture end up on the "Teen Toppers Tune-Dex" strip, and in the four-page KRLA Beat. This Saturday night combination of Hull from 6 to 9, which played sometimes almost a full 3 hours of The Beatles, back-to-back with Pickett's show, made KRLA Saturday night, a night to actually want to stay home and listen.

Pickett's show lasted on KRLA Saturday nights through the end of the year. After a couple of months, the show started to sound repetitive and, after all, KRLA was at the top -- Number One now -- and didn't want to get stale or stagnant, by any means. During its short run, The Bobby Pickett Show was certainly one of the most innovative shows heard on radio, and certainly was ahead of all the other monster fads, such as Seymour and Elvira, years later.

When Charlie O'Donnell was moved to the starting lineup in August 1964, when the new caretaker ownership came in, KRLA did not right away sign a new weekender. True, Dick Moreland was working weekends, but he was involved in station management, and that tied up his time somewhat. Bobby Pickett, as the Saturday night 9 to Midnight personality, because of his "monster" image, wasn't really trying to attract a more broader audience.

In early November 1964, Gary Mack (real name: Gary McDowell) was signed by KRLA to handle the weekend and relief shows. Mack had come to KRLA from Fresno's KYNO. At the time Gary Mack joined KRLA, there was an implied understanding that Mack would be given the first vacancy in the regular lineup, as Mack's goal was to be on the air, in the regular lineup, in the Los Angeles market. During the Fall of 1964 and start of 1965, KRLA had a very strong lineup with Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Foster, Eubanks, Hull and Dale, with Moreland, Mack and Pickett on the weekends.

At this time, one could hear on KRLA, a contest that was a lot of fun, and was exciting to listen to. And that's the KRLA "Music Man" contest. Even though this contest had been used in a limited capacity in summer 1963, it was during the Fall of 1964 that the KRLA "Music Man" contest would be in full swing. The idea was for a caller to guess which KRLA disc jockey name would "pop up." A recording of Sie Holliday was played reading, one name after another, of all the KRLA disc jockeys. If one could guess when the horns came in, they'd win. So, one was to pick one of the jock's names, and listen to the rundown. This was a very successful contest in that it made recognizable to the listeners all the familiar ones, like Hudson, Kasem or Hull, and even the newer ones like Dale and Mack.

During the Christmas season in 1964, KRLA had a Dave Hull "Junk Float," in the annual Hollywood Christmas Parade, then called the Santa Claus Lane Parade, where Hull encouraged listeners to send in their "junk," which would be built into a float. Shortly after this parade, a record was made about Dave Hull, a two-sided double hit single "Dave Hull The Hullabalooer," backed

with "We Love The Hullabalooer." This was one of the first hit records ever to be made about a Los Angeles radio personality.

KRLA left 1964 with its most successful year to date. KRLA was Number One. The station had now an identity. It was "The Original Beatle Station." The station had colorful record survey strips, the "Teen Toppers" lists. The station now was under a new license control, with an interim company replacing the Cooke brothers, that hopefully would keep the station strong. And the KRLA Beat was rolling off the presses, and became one of the hottest items any radio station had put out up to that point. Number One KRLA was now set to enter 1965!

The first casualty of 1965 was the departure of Rebel Foster, who joined, as Martindale, Riddle, Christian, and O'Neill before, KFVB. For Foster, it was in the KFVB 9 to Midnight show. Foster's leaving was a loss to the listeners, because Foster had been a solid personality in an important time slot, afternoon-drive. It was important, at this point, that KRLA handle Foster's departure in the correct way, to keep the momentum.

As we have stated before, the strongest man in the station lineup should be in the morning-drive, and the second strongest in afternoon-drive. Those are the times when more people are listening to radios because of auto commuting. Now, with Mel Hall as Program Director, who would not be doing an airshift, the schedule could be adjusted to make sure that the two strongest were in both drive-times.

KRLA already had a very strong morning man in Bob Hudson. To move into Foster's old 3 to 6 p.m. show, was the personality most closely identified with The Beatles, and in some ways, the most popular at the station, Dave Hull. Dave Hull, upon taking over the 3 to 6 p.m. show was in his strongest peak ever. Listeners would rush home from school, or work, to hear all the gossip about The Beatles, in a more accessible hour than 9 to Midnight. (Kids had to go to school the next morning.) Having Hull in the afternoons was a brilliant move.

The combination of Hudson in the morning, and Hull in the afternoon, made two solid anchors in the important drive-times. The midday lineup was equally as strong, at this point, with the combination of Charlie O'Donnell 9 to Noon, and Casey Kasem Noon to 3, a proven Number One combination. Bob Eubanks in his 6 to 9 p.m. "Teen Toppers" show was also a big hit, especially with the record survey strips coming out faithfully every week.

To replace Dave Hull, in his old 9 to Midnight show, was none other than Dick Biondi, brought back to KRLA in February 1965, when Hull replaced Foster 3 to 6. Dick Biondi already had made a splash in the Los Angeles market, from July to September 1963, in the 9 to Midnight hours. Biondi's return gave KRLA another relatively "clean" personality, who had a wacky sense of humor, and high energy that again took KRLA in the direction it wanted to be in. And that is with clean-cut, teen-appealing personalities with high visibility. All-individualists who any parent would, no-doubt, approve having their kids listen to. Biondi still called himself, self-deprecating, "The Ugliest And Skinniest Disc Jockey In The World" and "Wild Eye-tralian." (Biondi was of Italian descent.) He kept up the momentum that Hull had shown in the 9 to Midnight spot.

However, two months later in April 1965, KRLA decided to again reinforce its nighttime sound, by bringing in the most successful Midnight to 6 personality in the history of KRLA, and make Midnight to 6, a new hot slot with an outstanding personality in that showtime. The story of how KRLA brought Bill Slater to "The Eleven-Ten Men" lineup is an interesting one, and important to the story of KRLA. Bill Slater, Midnight to 6, became the most successful all-night personality in KRLA's history.

As we have said before, KFVB, up to 1964, had been the main station to be at. It had a solid reputation as being the most popular radio station in Los Angeles in all age groups. For years, jocks all over the country, longed to join KFVB. Not too many openings occurred at KFVB. Their lineup had long-time favorites going back to 1958, when KFVB began its "Color Radio" format. Some went back even further. One (Joe Yocum) actually started in the 1940s.

Still the allure of becoming a member of KFVB's "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" was enough for very capable personalities to join KFVB in a weekend slot, knowing that someone might eventually leave. Then they would achieve the dream of being one of the "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen." That was Bill Slater's goal, when he joined KFVB in 1964. It was clear that the glory days of KFVB were over, as KRLA "The Original Beatle Station" certainly swept KFVB away. But the mystique of KFVB in Hollywood, as a legendary station, caused jocks to want to be there, from their Hollywood studios, and Lincoln Heights transmitter towers.

Bill Slater joined KFVB in 1964 after Elliot Field left the station, and Sam Riddle moved into 9 to Noon, creating a vacancy on the weekends. Slater was given the Sunday 1 to 5 afternoon shift, with the understanding he would be moved into the KFVB lineup at first chance. Slater waited, but the vacancy never came. When Slater was moved into the more popular 5 to

9:30 p.m. Sunday night "prime-time" slot of KFVB, in early 1965, Slater was further positioned to move into the starting lineup. The change never came, as the spot that was supposed to be Slater's, Noon to 3, was given instead to a super powerhouse personality, from KLAC (which shared KFVB's antenna towers), Don Mackinnon.

Slater, disillusioned on being passed up for this Noon to 3 shift at KFVB, and in seeing that KRLA was way ahead in popularity, left KFVB to join KRLA in the Midnight to 6 spot. Even though the hours were not as visible, Slater still wanted to be on every day in Los Angeles radios. When Bobby Dale wanted to return to the Bay Area, Slater was given the Midnight to 6 show, and transformed the show into a big hit.

Slater was good-looking, very clean-cut, lived in a suburb in a "Pleasant Valley Sunday" town, West Covina, with his wife, family, and even a dog. In many ways, Slater was said to be almost a radio version of a young "Ward Cleaver." With the innocent type humor of Biondi, having Slater follow Biondi was a brilliant idea. Slater seemed to attract Biondi's audience to stay tuned to KRLA even later.

Slater had his own army of fans who used to go down to the station, and actually sit on the porch, camping out on the steps, during Biondi's 9 to Midnight show, and staying over into the Slater all-night show. These fans, who always seemed to hang around the station at various times, during the era of Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight, and Bill Slater Midnight to 6, really turned out in big numbers. So many, that The Huntington Hotel, in which the station was located in an adjacent building, actually had to put up curfew signs to discourage the "Porch People" from camping out on the steps all-night.

Bill Slater had two important features on his Midnight to 6 show. He continued Bobby Dale's "all-night happies." Listeners could call Slater up personally in the KRLA booth and request their favorites. KRLA always, at various times, took requests. But this was the first major attempt on KRLA to really go all-out behind requests. The success of this format would reach fruition next year, where the station would go totally "All-Request." But the most memorable feature, on The Bill Slater Show, was a direct throwback to radio being a fantasy adventure and theater of the mind. And that was Bill Slater's "Weather Room."

Giving the weather had always been a rather tedious task on the radio. Many times, it was strictly an interruption of the music that KRLA listeners wanted to hear. So what Bill Slater did, in the freedom of his all-night show, was to create a situation that was reminiscent of early radio, similar to where Jack Benny would describe going into his vault. What Slater did was create the illusion of a room, probably right off the KRLA disc jockey booth, that would be filled with dials, gauges, boiler steam sounds and ticking clocks, that Slater would enter. By going over all the "gizmos," Slater would figure out the weather.

This was an extremely clever act. When we first heard it, being only 14-years-old, we actually thought there really was a "weather room" right there at KRLA. In fact, when we went to the studios in 1965 to try to see the room, and get a "tour of the weather room," it was disappointing to find out this room only existed in our minds. Our father was involved in the weather instrument business, and the fact that KRLA, and Bill Slater, might actually have a "weather room" would hold a special significance.

In April 1965, when Bill Slater joined the KRLA lineup, the "The Station Of The Stars" got even stronger. It developed a following where every KRLA personality was Number One in their time slot. For the first time in KRLA's history the entire lineup, Monday thru Friday, was Number One in all shows. Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Hull, Eubanks, Biondi, and Slater. The station was never stronger. The Beatles were still on top. It looked like KRLA was going to keep running ahead with victory, and never look back.

However, an interesting development was about to happen across town, over on the corner of Venice and Fairfax in southwest Los Angeles, that would come on the scene just as KRLA was basking as Number One. It would directly affect the KRLA weekend lineup over the next two months.

KHJ, at 930 AM, "Radio 93," it called itself, had been one of the first radio stations to exist in Los Angeles, when the two, twin, self-standing antenna towers were constructed in a field at the northwest corner of Venice Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue in southwest Los Angeles. At that time, radio stations were given "3-call letter" combinations. KHJ was one of the first radio stations to actually exist as, in 1922, commercial radio was pretty much brand new.

Up to March 1965, KHJ "Radio 93" had a solid Middle-Of-The-Road music-style programming. Over the years it featured such M.O.R. personalities as Robert Q. Lewis, Michael Jackson, Paul Compton, and Lucky Pierre. Even, at one time, as we discussed in Chapter 1, both Perry Allen and Wink Martindale, both who opened the KRLA microphone in early KRLA history,

were heard on "Radio 93." By March 1965, KHJ had a pretty solid M.O.R. audience, but no real impact in Los Angeles radio.

Bill Drake had been a TOP 40 disc jockey in Northern California. He was given the opportunity to consult station KGB, in San Diego, in an experimental "KGBeach Boys" format, after a strong success at Fresno's KYNO. Drake tightened the playlist to 30, from the traditional 40, cut down the disc jockey patter, and trim station jingles down to just the essentials, all in order to present more music. Drake was so successful in San Diego at KGB, that he was asked by RKO's KHJ, to help turn KHJ into a major hit music station like he had done to stations in both San Diego and Fresno.

Drake had a solid lineup in San Diego, featuring such strong personalities as Johnny Hayes and Steve Jay. So when given the opportunity to consult RKO's KHJ, to take on Number One giant KRLA, Drake moved full speed ahead and joined Ron Jacobs, KHJ Program Director, to create "Boss Radio."

First, what Drake and Jacobs did was to "steal away" from KRLA, Gary Mack, from the weekends. Drake knew Mack from KYNO, Fresno. As said before, Mack wanted a regular time slot at KRLA. But when it was obvious that none would open up soon, except for the Midnight to 6 slot which Slater slipped into, Mack left KRLA, in spring 1965, to join the new KHJ as part of the original team of KHJ personalities called "B.J." 's or "Boss Jocks," as KHJ "Radio 93" was now "93/KHJ Boss Radio." Besides Gary Mack, Drake and Jacobs also signed former "Eleven-Ten Men" Roger Christian and Sam Riddle, and future "Eleven-Ten Men" Dave Diamond and Don Steele.

Replacing Gary Mack, on KRLA, was Johnny Williams. Williams worked just one weekend shift at KRLA, before being snatched away by Drake and Jacobs to be the all-nighter at the new KHJ. It was clear that Drake's 93/KHJ would be a big force against the "The Station Of The Stars," KRLA, basking proudly in South El Monte from The Valley Of The Jolly Lean Giant. "Boss Radio" KHJ became the toughest competitor ever to KRLA. It deemphasized personalities, offered more records played each hour, and was a clear alternative. KHJ did not neglect playing The Beatles. But KHJ wrote the "Beatlemaniac" listener off, by emphasizing The Rolling Stones, and non-stop contests, offering more money than KRLA could afford.

But at this time in 1965, KHJ was strictly the new kid on the block, the latest challenger. True, it did lure away KRLA's Gary Mack and Johnny Williams. But they were unknowns, compared to Dave Hull and Bob Hudson. And besides, KRLA had The Beatles and Bob Eubanks, and the second Beatle concert would be presented that Summer of 1965. KRLA wasn't worried. KFVB had already been mortally damaged. The new KBLA in Glendale had a very weak signal and, at this time, just automation and no personalities.

With this new vacancy on the weekends, KRLA looked to San Diego for its new weekender, a dark-haired and handsome Johnny Hayes. Hayes had been doing the 4 to 8 p.m. important afternoon-drive shift at KGB, in San Diego, in early 1965. He was supposed to be the all-night man at the new KHJ when Drake and Jacobs took it over. Somehow, wires got crossed, and Hayes instead joined his former Bay Area friend, Bob Hudson, and went with the proven winner, KRLA, becoming its weekender, and also a very frequent and much heard voice during KRLA's production announcements and promos.

Hayes had just quit KGB, in 1965, over management pressure involving Hayes' "housekeeping" of the disc jockey booth, and the threats of moving Hayes back to the all-night shift, where Hayes had started at KGB. Little known to Hayes at that time, that if he had not quit KGB, Bill Drake would have signed Hayes to the Midnight to 6 spot at 93/KHJ, in the original lineup. But Hayes, instead, had taken Hudson's advice to come to KRLA.

An article in the KRLA Beat had stated that Hayes was the handsome "boy next door, or son away at college." He had a handsome, clean-cut image that really fit the 1965 KRLA direction. Hayes assumed the weekend slots, where he broadcast the KRLA "Tune-Dex" show, debuting the new KRLA record survey, every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and also early on Sunday morning at 6 a.m.

Hayes had been known as "Danny Daye," during his early radio days in Georgia. When Daye came out to California, along with Bill Drake in the early '60s in the Bay Area at KYA, Candlestick Point, Daye started using the name "Johnny Hayes," dropping his "Danny Daye" air name from Georgia. Hayes was the all-night man at KYA. When Drake began consulting KGB, in San Diego, in April 1964, Hayes again went with Drake, and did the all-night show at KGB. Due to superior performance, Hayes was moved to the important 4 to 8 p.m. shift, where he was Number One in the afternoons, in this important time slot.

So Johnny Hayes joined KRLA, "The Station Of The Stars," and became probably the

strongest weekender in KRLA's history. Hayes was an adaptable utility man, that could take over any shift, and make it really work. Johnny Hayes also had the handsome boy-next-door looks, that so many girls from the "Porch People" really fell for, and had unrequited crushes on. With these combinations, Johnny Hayes was the last important link to Number One KRLA, from the pasture in South El Monte in The Valley Of The Jolly Lean Giant.

The "dream lineup" of KRLA was solid and fully complete, in May 1965, when Hayes joined "Radio Eleven-Ten." "The Eleven-Ten Men" in mid-1965, were the strongest lineup ever ! Bob Hudson 6 to 9, Charlie O'Donnell 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight, Bill Slater Midnight to 6, and Johnny Hayes (and Dick Moreland, of course) on weekends. This lineup had the right combination of success, and a magic. It had a chemistry.

Hudson had the great humor; O'Donnell, the maturity; Kasem, the sincerity and warmth; Hull, the Beatle connection; Eubanks, the connection to so many high schools all over the Southland; Biondi, the innocence and corniness; Slater, the listening ear to requests all night long; and Hayes, the handsome good looks, and crushes from girls all over the Southland, and the top ability to fill in for any of them with polish and class. And, of course, Dick Moreland, who, by now, was sort of "The Dean Of The Deejays" at KRLA, and was an "Uncle" figure to all. Never before, and never since, had KRLA had such a lineup of such chemistry, such magic, and such power. This was truly KRLA's "dream lineup." All that KRLA had ever worked for, finally came true at that time in 1965.

Even the KRLA Beat, which started as just a free four-page giveaway, back in October 1964, was now a full-fledged newspaper printed on professional newsprint. Since October 1964, it went through three or four different format styles, before growing into a regular major teen newspaper, featuring pictures of The Beatles, and all the others. Most important, it featured a column, "Inside KRLA," where each week, the column talked about everything that was happening with KRLA, the fans, the jocks, and the station. It is impossible, due to printing costs, to reproduce here all the "Inside KRLA" columns, but in reading them all over, the main two years of the KRLA Beat give quite a history of KRLA from 1965 to 1967. They really shed light on the strength, power, chemistry, and magic that KRLA was basking in.

The only "downside" we felt about the new KRLA Beat was that we always liked best the early issues that featured more about KRLA, more pictures of the personalities, more pictures of the disc jockey booth, and more news about KRLA. But when the paper got bigger, the news about KRLA was cut back, and the news about the music world grew. The reason for this is when the KRLA Beat started, it was primarily a giveaway advertising promotion about KRLA, and the exclusive pictures from the August 1964 Beatle concert in the first issue.

As the KRLA Beat grew, the paper eventually became a syndicated newspaper, where stations in other cities would simply put their call letters above the huge red letters "B-E-A-T," and where the entire paper would be the same from city to city, except for the middle "centerfold" pages, which would be localized with news about the station that had "bought" the Beat for their market. Therefore, the amount of news about KRLA did drop. But no one noticed, because all the other articles about music, fashion, trends, movies and the whole teen lifestyle, more than made up for it for most teenagers in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten" in The Valley Of The Jolly Lean Giant.

The promotions at KRLA, during this time, took on an even more special importance. With the KRLA lineup so stable and so secure, the station could instead now concentrate on the other aspects of KRLA's popularity. The "Music Man" contest gave way to the similar "Jockey Race" contest, where the disc jockeys were in a fantasy horse race, and listeners would "bet" on which disc jockey would win. This was great radio.

The year 1965 was truly an important year in the history of KRLA. All of its "Eleven-Ten Men" were stars in their own right! Charlie O'Donnell had a television dance show for a short time in late 1965, "Hollywood Discotheque." Even Johnny Hayes was seen hosting a television dance show on a one-time program. "The Station Of The Stars" was truly KRLA. The Beatles were hotter than ever. Their latest movie "Help!" even had KRLA's Dave Hull on the set of the movie in the Bahamas, interviewing The Beatles exclusively for KRLA.

KRLA was heavily involved in the Easter and summer "Teenage Fair," where the star attraction, Dick Biondi, would be either in a dunk tank, or in a cage with a monkey. Biondi tried to get the monkey to type "K-R-L-A" on a typewriter, before Biondi could be let out of the cage. Dick Biondi also at this time started "The Dick Biondi Road Show" where Biondi would put on high school assemblies and charity shows, where all the profits would go toward that fund raising goal.

During this entire Summer of 1965, KRLA had a whole array of promotions and activities that kept KRLA's name in the limelight more so than ever before. KRLA once sponsored a public appearance of Bob Hudson wrestling a bear!

Also, KRLA sponsored a basketball team called the "KRL-Apes," where the KRLA disc jockeys played basketball games against high school student teams, usually the warm-up for the school games. Sometimes, they even opened for professional teams. Again, KRLA had high visibility, and was very much in the public's eye.

During the Summer of 1965, KRLA Program Director Mel Hall could be heard as "Captain Show Biz," in promotional spots for Number One KRLA. A popular contest, during the summer baseball season, was "Beatleball," where if one called in to identify Beatle song fragments, one could win tickets to the 2nd annual KRLA Beatle concert at The Hollywood Bowl.

KRLA, at this time, increased the visibility, of its sports coverage, by featuring high-profile sportscaster Danny Baxter, whose hourly feature "Inside The KRLA Book," offered both sports prediction and sports commentary, even more popular than rival KFVB's Cleve Herman. (We, being only 14-years-old, actually thought there really was a physical "KRLA Book," with tout sheets on horse races, and other sporting events. Again, as Beatle George Harrison would say on KRLA in 1968, "It's all in the mind, really.")

KRLA also sponsored, along with Bardahl, a Model "A" old-time car that was fully restored. With this, KRLA issued a Bardahl sticker, and Maltese cross KRLA sticker. The car was driven through the streets of Southern California, drawing massive crowds. At this time of the KRL-"A" making personal appearances, KRLA released a record album featuring The Bobby Fuller Four, with two songs about the KRLA car, "KRLA-King Of The Wheels," and "KRLA Top Eliminator." The back cover of the album had a memorable black-and-white picture of all "The Eleven-Ten Men" standing around the car in the basement "Carriage House" parking lot below the KRLA studios. And the lineup that was shown, was the greatest single lineup of air personalities in KRLA's history.

KRLA's "Tune-Dex Teen Toppers" strips were found in record stores all over the Southland, with stores displaying a proud decal, with KRLA's Maltese cross in bold red, stating that this store has the KRLA "Tune-Dex," and that it was one of the stores that reported its sales to KRLA. KRLA's Casey Kasem even made a hit record, where he read (to the George Martin version of "And I Love Her") a letter written to him from a listener named Elaina, who remembered Casey from the Bay Area, where he served before KRLA. It told how she hugged her favorite Beatle, George Harrison, at a Beatle concert. The record, "Letter From Elaina," actually made the national charts. (Understandably, other stations in Los Angeles did not play this record.) Dave Hull even did a parody of this, called "Letter From Gretchen," about a girl who slugged Ringo in the nose.

And then in August 1965, KRLA presented The Beatles again at The Hollywood Bowl for the second year in a row. At The Hollywood Bowl, there actually was a "KRLA Anthem" played, similar to The Pledge Of Allegiance, where listeners and audience members would actually stand up from their seats and "pledge allegiance," at the concert, for KRLA, with the big letters "KRLA" on the backdrop to The Beatles at The Bowl. Tickets were given as KRLA promotions for the August 1965 concert, just like in 1964, the year before.

KRLA introduced new jingles, in September 1965, that were very slick, and based on the instrumental theme, "That's Where It's At," by The T-Bones. This "That's Where It's At" package were the first new KRLA vocal jingles, since the "Radio Eleven-Ten" package of 1961.

During the Fall of 1965, Dick Clark produced a show on television called "Shebang," which was broadcast out of Bakersfield. The man Clark wanted to host the show was Dave Hull. Hull, due to family commitments, turned it down. But the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man" who got it, as a second choice, was Casey Kasem, who has gone on to become one of the most recognizable voiceovers on television, and visible in his "American Top 10" television show in the '80s. "Shebang" originally was shown from 5 to 6 p.m. every evening on Channel 5, but seemed to lose its momentum when it was moved to early evenings at 7:30 in early 1966. The show was cancelled shortly after that move. Again, the time a show (or deejay) is on is very important, and if programmed wrong can have major consequences. ("Twin Peaks" should never have been moved to Saturdays!)

It was at this time in the Fall of 1965, that a young 15-year-old from Foothills Junior High School in Arcadia, as a freelance student reporter for The Plaid Post, the F.J.H. school newspaper, decided to score a coup. He would interview Dave Hull, the most popular disc jockey in Los Angeles, for his school paper, on the front page. This teenager had seen Dave Hull and his family during Mass in Holy Angels Catholic Church on Sundays. He knew Hull lived in Arcadia at

the time, and might be receptive to an interview.

So on a Saturday afternoon during the Fall of 1965, before Hull's Saturday afternoon show, this teenager went to the KRLA studios, where Dave Hull gave a generous interview for this freelance student reporter of Foothills Junior High School. The interview was so good, it was put on the front page of The Plaid Post with a big photo of Hull's face. The interview was the hit of the paper! Students who usually just threw the school paper away, or made paper airplanes out of it, kept this issue because it had Dave Hull right on the front! However, because the teenager that interviewed Hull was not a member of the Journalism class, and because he lived "South of Foothill" (only those who lived "North of Foothill" were really in the in-crowd at Foothills Junior High School), the teenager's name was left off the interview. But he knew, and most important, Hull knew who gave the interview. The boy's name? Bill Earl.

In the late fall 1965, KRLA got an exclusive copy of the new Beatles album, "Rubber Soul." KRLA played all the tracks, including a controversial one, clearly about a love affair married Beatle John Lennon had, "Norwegian Wood." KRLA played this cut in heavy rotation, with the disclaimer by Dick Moreland before the record, "Time magazine says this song has a hidden meaning and questionable lyrics. Decide for yourself here on KRLA," and then played the record.

The end of 1965 had Dick Biondi doing his first New Year's Eve "countdown" show, featuring the biggest records of 1965, 100 to 1 in order. And then at the stroke of Midnight, an old KRLA jingle from 1961 was heard, (the old "electronic" countdown after the news) that led away from 11:59 p.m.

"It's 1966!"

was announced proudly over the KRLA airwaves. KRLA was now into 1966. KRLA from its six big transmitter towers in The Valley Of The Jolly Lean Giant, in its South El Monte pasture, was into another year! Hudson, O'Donnell, Kasem, Hull, Eubanks, Biondi, Slater, Hayes, and Moreland were truly stars. Most were known all over the U.S. KRLA had truly linked its station image with that of The Beatles, "clean" personalities, and an excellent sound.

However, so much of KRLA's rise to the top depended on The Beatles. KRLA did not really catch on until it did get on The Beatles' bandwagon. Remember, Hudson, Hull, Eubanks, Biondi, Kasem, and Moreland, were all at KRLA when it was still a distant "also-ran" in 1963. It took The Beatles, and KRLA's all-out campaign behind The Beatles, to catapult it to the top. But when KRLA did that, its fortunes pretty much rested squarely on The Beatles.

And when The Beatles' popularity began to fade in 1966, due to factors that will be discussed in the next chapter, and KHJ's rising popularity, with its non-stop contests and more music (the ratings for KHJ in the Fall of 1965 showed KHJ actually beating KRLA in certain day-parts and demographics!), KRLA was suddenly experiencing a new vulnerability.

Besides that, the world was rapidly changing. The Birth Control Pill was now available. Recreational drugs (and "new" music) were being experimented with, in San Francisco. If one listens closely to "Rubber Soul," one can hear that even The Beatles were changing too. The influence of Bob Dylan, and marijuana, was starting to show. They weren't "mop tops" anymore, with such new songs as "Girl" (tit, tit, tit, tit, tit). The forces that would change KRLA were already starting to develop. The KRLA lineup was strong, but just how long could this "dream lineup" stay in place?

KRLA was about to enter 1966, which would be, up to that point, the most "progressive" year in pop culture social history. KRLA would enter 1966 with a sense of past security. But that past security was now changing, like rattled windows and shaken walls. 1966 would be a year of many changes, including major changes at KRLA. It would be the year KRLA would start to realize it had peaked, and the new momentum was now with KHJ.

KRLA had been soaring into the sky like a beautiful balloon, high in the clouds of Princess Blue Sky, over The Valley Of The Jolly Lean Giant, in South El Monte. But even the most beautiful balloon, can be so fragile, where just a small rose bush thorn could send it down to the ground.

CHAPTER 4

BURSTING OF THE BEAUTIFUL BALLOON

1966 was one of the most important years of the 1960s. It was in 1966 that so much in the world started to change. A group of musicians in San Francisco, in the Haight-Ashbury district, would be experimenting with new sounds never heard before. And LSD and marijuana would further make their way into mainstream youths in America, and the whole culture that went with it.

Truly, the greatest influence on young people were The Beatles. As we've said before, with so much already written on The Beatles, we don't intend to tell their whole story here. But because The Beatles evolved and changed so much in 1966, and because KRLA was so linked in the audience's minds with The Beatles, and was still "The Original Beatle Station," the popularity of KRLA was directly linked to The Beatles. KRLA was, for the last two years, squarely on The Beatles' bandwagon. But three events in 1966 would contribute to KRLA suddenly becoming vulnerable, and suddenly, possibly, losing some of its luster from its high previous peak before.

During this time in 1966, the campy "Batman" television show with Adam West, was highly popular. So to cash in on this latest fad, KRLA, in early to mid-1966, issued two sets of KRLA "Bat Stickers," which Dave Hull affectionately called "sticky-type bat dealies." The second series was even better, and more colorful than the first, and more rare, also.

We can recall being 15-years old, and talking to Dick Moreland, in management at KRLA, in early 1966, about airing a "Batman" spoof we wrote, "Fatman And Slobin." Even though Moreland declined to use the spoof, he did give us a Jan And Dean "Batman" record album, which we still have today. Moreland did hear our tape, and gave us a good audience for our creative endeavor.

KRLA did get behind the "Batman" craze with its stickers which were highly popular. Some schools actually banned them from school. Because of their popularity, they would be glued on almost anywhere. It was a very successful television show, and the "Bat Stickers" were a very clever promotion.

In February 1966, KRLA had sponsored another one of its famous annual "Valentine Contest," where listeners were encouraged to send in elaborate amateur art work. The KRLA Beat in early 1966, was at its strongest level, with the biggest issues, and the highest readership.

The KRLA lineup was its very strongest ever, in the history of KRLA. Bob Hudson 6 to 9, Charlie O'Donnell 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Bob Eubanks 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight, Bill Slater Midnight to 6, and Johnny Hayes and Dick Moreland on the weekends and relief. This was the excellence of KRLA at its personified best. Even The Beatles were at their peak with "Rubber Soul," even though some KRLA listeners didn't quite understand some of the new lyrics, or strange influences, that had shown their influence, over "The Fab Four."

In fact, the Spring of 1966 was the "last hurrah" peak of KRLA, as KFVB was dying its slow death, and "Boss Radio" at KHJ was just about to really catch on strong. After a radio station reaches its peak, and as high up as it can go, the only direction is down. Unfortunately, because of a changing world, changing Beatles, and major changes in the KRLA lineup, the year of 1966 would show the first cracks in the great "rock mountain," that, for the past two years, seemed virtually uncrumbleable.

KRLA, up to this time, had always played the hits from the "Tune-Dex." The top records in sales in Southern California. However, some of the brightest, and most popular, moments on KRLA, were when KRLA took requests directly from the listeners. Many rock acts would make a pilgrimage to the station's studios in Pasadena. Special banks of phones were installed, for these stars to answer the KRLA request lines. This was one very important way that KRLA remained close to its listeners, by listening to their needs, and by bringing the various performers right into the station, to talk to the listeners. Bill Slater's all-night request show always had a backlog of requested songs to play. Dick Biondi, also, during the 9 to Midnight show, featured heavy requests, which further increased the station's popularity. KRLA was truly a station very much in touch with its listeners.

At this time in KRLA's history, it was decided to have more of their best feature. KRLA would go "All-Request Radio," where every record played on KRLA would be by request. Toll-free request lines would be set up all over Southern California, with the on-air promos made by the voice of Johnny Hayes, announcing the request phone numbers, from South Gate to El Monte, and all points between.

Dick Moreland would be ordering new jingles for this "All-Request Radio" format. It was told to us that Dick Moreland drove out to San Bernardino, to have these new "All-Request Radio" jingles recorded. This new set of "All-Request Radio" jingles would commonly be referred to, in the business, as the "Ash Can" package, as it sounds like the drums at the end of the jingles were actually percussion on ash cans. These "All-Request Radio" jingles were truly the best of the KRLA jingles up to that time. One notable jingle of this package, that never made it on the air, was one that was sung to the tune of "K-R-L-A-PRE-VIEW!" Instead of that, this one last jingle, stuck at the end of the package as an inside joke, went "K-R-L-A-F*CK YOU!" A rare master never used on the airwaves of "Radio Eleven-Ten."

The KRLA "Tune-Dex," that had been a listing of the top selling records would now be replaced by the "KRLA Most Requested Tune-Dex," that would now be featured in the Studio City "Survey Of Hits." At the end of every hour, the new jingle, "KRLA's Number One Most Requested Song," and the most requested song that hour, would be played. It was absolutely fun to listen to KRLA, at 5 minutes before each hour, to hear what the most requested song would be. This was excellent programming, and again made KRLA closer to its audience. The "All-Request Radio" concept, even though expensive in having all those phone lines, still was a high point at KRLA, and was one of our favorite periods of KRLA's history. However, several things would happen in the Summer of 1966, that would change KRLA's momentum, and, for a short time, cause KRLA great concern whether or not it should be on The Beatles' bandwagon, where it proudly had been for the past several years.

The first major event, to affect KRLA, was the release of The Beatles' album, "Yesterday And Today." We worked in a record store in San Gabriel, during the Summer of 1966, and remember all too well, all the outcry at this highly controversial album. Instead of the usual record album cover, that The Beatles had put out up to this point with the smiling "mop top" faces, this one would be something totally different. And shocking. We believe it is a great work of art, and a masterpiece in record art album cover history.

The Beatles were pictured with strange smiles on their faces, seated on a bench, wearing white butcher jackets, holding broken toy dolls with decapitated heads. Slabs of raw meat and bones were draped across The Beatles' chests. One of The Beatles was holding up the decapitated head of one of the dolls. Shocking? Keep in mind, this was in 1966!

When people saw this cover, they immediately were shocked. Capitol Records immediately recalled the records, before too many got sold, and pasted another cover over this fabulous picture. We were lucky enough to get one of the early ones, with the real cover hidden under the new one, and can remember our mother steaming off the new cover, over the kitchen stove, in 1966. The world was shocked. These were not the lovable "mop tops" anymore. What statement could The Beatles be making? Infanticide? Cannibalism?

Actually, Beatle John Lennon did reveal that this cover was a reaction to the album itself. This record was a collection of Beatles songs that had been "butchered" (left off) off the American Beatles albums. It was a common practice at that time, for the American album releases to have fewer songs, than the original English albums. This was John Lennon's statement on how he didn't appreciate the American record company putting out a collection of songs, taken out of their original albums, musical works of art, and "butchered" onto a leftover album. But the public outcry was shocking. It was true that The Beatles were certainly "growing up." The whole idea of "mop tops," in looking back can tell us, was all an illusion anyway.

But this time in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," listeners were concerned about The Beatles. Parents were concerned also. And so was KRLA. Did KRLA still want to be "The Original Beatle Station," with The Beatles going overboard? However, the KRLA Beat tried to meet this crisis head on, by running pictures of the controversial album cover, and asking reader reaction. KRLA had done this quite successfully in 1965 with "Norwegian Wood," when the controversial lyrics brought concerns to KRLA listeners.

KRLA was still "The Original Beatle Station," and Bob Eubanks was about to sponsor another concert in Los Angeles. This time it would be in a bigger venue, "Dodger Stadium," which would be renamed "Beatle Stadium," for this big event. But was the image of The Beatles the same? KRLA decided to keep being the biggest Beatles booster. However, shortly after the controversial album, a second problem with The Beatles developed.

It was reported that John Lennon had been quoted as saying, that The Beatles were more popular than Jesus Christ now. This totally turned off Dave Hull, a very devout Catholic, who was privately offended by that statement. KRLA, which had wrapped itself so successfully with The Beatles, who gave KRLA the identity it needed, was now starting to wonder, maybe, how to downplay its Beatles connection, at least soften it a bit. With The Beatles becoming more radical, just what was KRLA on the bandwagon of?

Besides the problems with The Beatles, the strong KRLA "Station Of The Stars" lineup was about to suffer its first casualty. And it would be a sad one, because the first change in the great KRLA lineup would take place in July 1966, with the loss of the highly popular morning man, Bob Hudson.

The story goes that Hudson had made a novelty cover-version record, of the highly popular song about the mentally ill, Napoleon XIV's "They're Coming To Take Me Away Ha-Haaa!" Hudson's novelty cover was called "I'm Normal," where Hudson would parody the Number One song on KRLA.

According to sources, John Barrett, KRLA's General Manager, warned Hudson not to play it. Hudson did. Barrett took that as insubordination, violating a direct command of management. Hudson was immediately taken off the air and fired. Barrett apparently had felt Hudson had grown too independent and egotistical, and was no longer able to be controlled by management.

It was a classic power play. Dick Moreland, we were told, was afraid to break the news to Hudson, in that, "Hudson might pick John Barrett up and throw him against the wall." Moreland, as the messenger, was afraid that would happen to him also. But Hudson had gone too far, and now was involuntarily terminated from "The Eleven-Ten Men." Hudson, the very next day or so, was signed by KBLA, Glendale, in the same 6 to 9 a.m. morning show. But because of the station's weak signal from the antenna towers atop the Verdugo Mountains, in Glendale by Montrose, Hudson at KBLA was unable to have all the listeners as he had at KRLA. In many parts of the Southland, Hudson, on KBLA, just couldn't be heard.

This was a major blow to KRLA. The loss of its highly popular morning man, who many say "built the station" into Number One, and with the 6 to 9 morning show the most important time slot in the whole station, it was critical that KRLA try to pick up the pieces, and do something right away, not to lose any momentum. Without a strong morning man, KRLA could be devastated, especially with the growing popularity momentum of Robert W. Morgan, as the long-time morning man on 93/KHJ. KHJ was fast becoming the new Number One.

KRLA was in a real problem. Hudson was cut. Barrett had to show that he was in charge, and would not tolerate any challenge to management's authority. Barrett needed a strong morning man. Especially now, with KRLA's identification with The Beatles now under fire. The strongest man at the station, after Bob Hudson, was Dave Hull. Would Dave Hull move into the morning show?

Hull told us in October 1969, that Barrett offered him the morning show. Hull turned it down. Hull felt that the firing of Hudson shouldn't have happened. Hull felt that maybe just a suspension would be more in order. Hull told us that Barrett looked at him and said,

"Dave, I can't."

Barrett could not back down, and bring back Bob Hudson. Barrett knew that the loss of Hudson would be crucial. But KRLA did have a strong lineup of "stars" (of "The Station Of The Stars.") Maybe with some creative scheduling, the audience may accept the new lineup.

The only weekend man besides management-involved Dick Moreland was Johnny Hayes. This would be Johnny Hayes' opportunity to be a full-fledged "Eleven-Ten Man" in the starting lineup. Unfortunately, it was a bittersweet one for Hayes. For it was Bob Hudson who worked with Hayes at KYA, San Francisco, who called Hayes at KGB, San Diego, where Hayes was 4 to 8 p.m., and told Hayes to come to KRLA.

So now with Hudson's exit from KRLA, the lineup would be changed, to move Hayes on to the starting lineup. Because Hayes was still the "newest kid on the block," it was not thought of to move Hayes into the morning show. Others would have to be moved, to make room for Hayes.

Here's how the decision was made in July 1966. Bob Eubanks had been very successful with his new game show on television, he had started hosting, "The Newlywed Game." That show taped in the evenings. So for the past few months, Eubanks had been only doing his "Teen Toppers" show just two or three days a week, with Johnny Hayes as a permanent substitute on the days Eubanks could not make the nighttime show, due to the ABC-TV taping of the game show.

It was thought that since Eubanks wanted to move to another shift, to let Johnny Hayes

take over the 6 to 9 p.m. show every night, as Bob Eubanks' replacement, and to continue the "Teen Toppers" show. Johnny Hayes was "tall, dark and handsome," like Eubanks. So management thought that Hayes would be a natural to take over this show without making too drastic a change for the listeners. Again, KRLA wanted to keep as much intact as possible.

With Eubanks out in the 6 to 9 p.m. show, it was decided to leave Hull, Kasem, Biondi, and Slater where they were, in their highly successful show times. Eubanks did not want to go back to the 6 to 9 a.m. show.

So it was decided that Charlie O'Donnell would move into Hudson's show time, and the 9 to Noon spot would be filled by Bob Eubanks. O'Donnell had that "maturity" that Hudson had, but did not use any humor. However, it was thought by emphasizing more music on The Charlie O' Show, that would make up for it. Hudson recently told us, that he advised O'Donnell not to take the morning show, as O'Donnell would have to compete with so many legendary morning men on the other channels, but O'Donnell took the challenge and moved into the morning show.

Unfortunately, many of Hudson's loyalists, and KRLA listeners, switched over to KBLA to hear their "Emperor." This defection would cause Robert W. Morgan on KHJ to become the new morning-drive Number One personality on L.A. TOP 40 radio. For the first time since 1964, KRLA looked vulnerable.

However, Bob Eubanks 9 to Noon was highly successful. Eubanks wanted to move away from his "teen idol" image, and was afraid that his association with too much of teenage audience, like the "Teen Toppers" show, might interfere with his image as a television game show host. 9 to Noon were Eubanks' best performances as an air personality, and reflected a growing maturity as a radio performer. Eubanks did an excellent job talking to housewives during the midmorning hours.

KRLA now had a new lineup, the first change in the starting lineup in over a year. Charlie O'Donnell 6 to 9 a.m. , Bob Eubanks 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem, Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Johnny Hayes 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight, and Bill Slater Midnight to 6. Dick Moreland could still be heard on the weekends. KRLA was still highly popular overall, but without Hudson's strong start for the day and lineup, KHJ could see that the dream-house might now be a house of cards.

KRLA had calculated with its "All-Request Radio" format, into the Summer of 1966, and was able to keep the audience interest with both its "All-Request Radio" format, and also the third annual Beatles concert that Bob Eubanks (9 to Noon) would be sponsoring. Even though The Beatles' popularity had slipped dramatically in 1966, because The Beatles would be coming to KRLA in a Bob Eubanks' sponsored concert, KRLA wanted to keep on The Beatles' bandwagon, even though it had been slightly derailed by The Beatles' outrageous album cover, and controversial statements about Christ.

However, the winds of change would once again blow from Princess Blue Sky above KRLA. This time, another member of the "The Station Of The Stars" would be leaving the starting lineup. Bill Slater had been moving in the direction of KRLA production and in doing so, decided to give up his all-night show. Even though his all-night show was still at the top, Slater wanted to work in KRLA production during the daytime hours, and, after all, the all-night show can be a hard thing to live with for a long time. Since Johnny Hayes had now moved into the regular KRLA lineup, there was a vacancy in the weekend shifts. So Slater decided that it would be weekends and production for himself, for now.

To replace Slater on the Midnight to 6 shift, KRLA turned to another alumnus from KACY, Oxnard, who had worked with Dick Moreland, Bob Eubanks, Bill Keffury and Jim Steck. For Midnight to 6, KRLA welcomed Pat Moore to "The Land Of Eleven-Ten." Moore was one of the best Midnight to 6 personalities in the history of KRLA. Moore had joined KRLA from KDEO, Santee, where Moore was heavily promoted as "San Diego's New Nightly."

Moore had been in the early evening spot at KDEO. When Moreland had informed Moore of a rare opening at KRLA, "The Station Of The Stars," it was an opportunity that Moore couldn't pass up. After all, KRLA had been the Number One radio station overall in the Southland. Pat Moore was an excellent personality, and also had the valuable first-class license from Don Martin School in Hollywood, so Moore was valuable to KRLA on both sides of the glass. So with Moore joining KRLA in July, the KRLA lineup was Charlie O'Donnell 6 to 9, Bob Eubanks 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Johnny Hayes 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight, and Pat Moore Midnight to 6. On the weekends, and for relief purposes, were Bill Slater and Dick Moreland.

The successful "All-Request Radio" format was heading full speed ahead into the summer. The Summer of 1966 also saw the best Beatle concert of them all at Dodger Stadium.

For the third year in a row, The Beatles were brought to Los Angeles by KRLA. However, The Beatles were getting pretty radical in their music. Their classic album, "Revolver," had just been released. It was clear that The Beatles were no longer the "mop tops" that KRLA had rallied behind just two short years ago. Because of the Christ statement, and the "Butcher Cover," plus there were strong rumors that The Beatles were experimenting with marijuana and LSD, the luster on The Beatles had lost its shine somewhat throughout America. But KRLA continued to be "The Original Beatle Station," and acted as if it was still 1964.

That was part of the problem. KRLA was being swept along with such major changes in the world around it. Without Hudson in the morning, plus the sagging popularity of The Beatles, coupled by the growing popularity of 93/KHJ "Boss Radio," it was clear that the once great "rock mountain" of KRLA, was possibly starting to crumble. However, toward the end of 1966, KRLA came up with some of its greatest creative promotions ever, in the history of the station. Three of the biggest took place in late 1966, where KRLA would have some of its greatest moments, before being swept under in the flow of radical events of 1967, that not even the past forerunner, and pacesetter, KRLA could have predicted.

The first of its fabulous promotions, was a fantasy gasoline station idea. KRLA would run what sounded like real commercials, for "Valhalla Thunderbolt Gasoline." These were so terrifically realistic, it took some listeners a few times to catch on that it was all a fantasy. But what a fantasy! The gas stations were called "Valhalla". Each one would feature a huge sign of a "prancing Norseman." The gasoline was free. One paid only for the hundreds of additives in the gasoline.

KRLA offered to send to listeners who sent in a S.A.S.E., an actual "Valhalla Cost-Plus Credit Card." The "commercials" were read by a character, "Remington Noble," who encouraged listeners to send in for the credit cards. Don't worry about paying. "The Friendly Vikings" at "Valhalla" would come to your home, and sit around drinking mead, until it was convenient for you to pay. This was, as Stan Freberg has called radio, "The Big Screen." Some people actually went looking for "The Sign Of The Prancing Norseman." It was one of the greatest promotions ever created by a radio station. Valhalla, Gasoline Of The Gods, was a tremendous success. Thousands of KRLA listeners sent away for their credit cards.

An interesting story about "Valhalla" got back to KRLA, and was told by Dick Moreland. Moreland said that a listener from "The Land Of Eleven-Ten" was driving through the desert, and came across a gas station that had a big sign, "We Take All Gas Credit Cards!" (That was a common practice in those days, before O.P.E.C., and gas shortages.) This listener, it was told, drove into the gas station, and filled up the gas tank with this station's gasoline. When finished, he handed the attendant on duty the "Valhalla, Gasoline Of The Gods" credit card. Guess what? They took it! The power of radio, and KRLA in particular, at this stage of the station's history, was absolutely fantastic.

Another fabulous promotion, that KRLA featured around this time, in late 1966 and early 1967, was "commercials" for "Jack Armstrong Packard" dealership in Palmdale. There would be this huge 8-story sign for "Jack Armstrong Packard," surrounded by acres and acres of "road hungry Packards." The credit manager, at Jack Armstrong Packard, was named "Boola." As she spoke (the voice of Sie Holliday) about how she'd "love to give you instant credit," a chorus of male voices would sing the college chant, "Boola Boola, Boola Boola." This was radio, and KRLA, at its finest. However, the funniest line of the "Jack Armstrong" spots, was how they advertised that "Jack Armstrong Packard" was "Freeway close" to all of Southern California. Isn't that a typical California expression, "Freeway close"? With that line, KRLA was really ahead of itself.

The third fabulous promotion on KRLA, came in late 1966, when KRLA hired the great advertising "genius," Stan Freberg, to do a series of promotional spots for KRLA, in December 1966. Freberg is the master of radio. Freberg believed that radio is "The Big Screen," in that the imagination, that can be stirred up by radio fantasy, is greater than what any other medium can do. The radio screen is limitless.

For one of the greatest, and most memorable, productions at KRLA, was the series that Freberg developed, of a KRLA executive named "Mr. Hardrock," who had a Sonny Bono "Prince Valiant" -style wig placed over the roof of the KRLA "Carriage House" building, at The Huntington Hotel in Pasadena. The wig would hang down the sides of the building, where it would interfere with The Huntington Hotel gardeners cutting the lawns. This was all fantasy, of course, but with Freberg's genius so utterly believable! Nobody was greater than Stan Freberg when it came to radio imagination.

In the next vignette, "Mr. Hardrock" had the Sonny Bono wig "backcombed" into a Brillo

Pad-style, Bob Dylan "fright wig." And to hold it in place, a crop duster plane with tanks of hair spray would fly over the KRLA "Carriage House" building, and "spray" the wig. The hairspray would also, however, get all over the rich neighborhood of Pasadena and San Marino, that KRLA was located in, and cause the neighbors problems with dogs and mink coats all being hairsprayed.

Freberg was an absolute genius with these spots. We had the privilege of meeting Stan Freberg at a book signing event at a bookstore in Pasadena. We gave Freberg a cassette dub of these spots from Research Archives. Again, KRLA had scored a big triumph. These spots were so believable, that some people actually thought a giant wig had been fitted over the roof of KRLA. This again, was KRLA at its best, and radio at its best. Nothing in Los Angeles radio came close to these three great promotions of 1966 and 1967, "Valhalla," "Jack Armstrong," and the wig on the roof of KRLA. It was radio as it should be. Where is radio like this today?

KRLA, also in 1966, tried to catch on to the bandwagon of what appeared to be maybe the "next Beatles," since The Beatles were getting heavier and heavier. And that is jumping on the bandwagon of The Monkees. The Monkees television show had started in late August and early September of 1966. KRLA was there, offering Monkee Fan Club cards and kits, including a "Monkee stocking cap for your head." However, The Monkees were not The Beatles, and even though the Monkee connection was highly popular, it was certainly not anything like Beatlemania.

Toward the end of 1966, Casey Kasem developed a new feature on his Sunday afternoon show. Kasem called this, "The Sweetheart Tree." Kasem would read letters from listeners, dedicating songs to their sweethearts. In the background, instrumental music of Beatles and Monkees ballads would be heard. Very reminiscent of "Letter From Elaina." Kasem always was one of the greatest at KRLA, with his utmost sincerity, and honesty on the air. "The Sweetheart Tree" was very touching programming. It was another reason that Casey Kasem had such a loyal and devoted following in KRLA's history.

Also, toward the end of 1966, KRLA had a contest, where listeners could win their choice of any make and model of any new car, from the 1967 lineup of new automobiles. KRLA closed the year 1966, with another Dick Biondi New Year's Eve Show. Biondi would count down the biggest records of 1966, leading right up to the New Year's Midnight, and 1967. 1966 was about to come to an end. It was too bad that Bob Hudson didn't survive the year, as the future of KRLA in 1967 just might have changed if Hudson had remained in the morning. But KRLA still had an overall magic and a chemistry, that really shined over the air with O'Donnell, Eubanks, Kasem, Hull, Hayes, Biondi, Moore, Slater, and Moreland. KRLA had a tremendous end of the year, with the most creativity and innovations ever in KRLA's history.

However, 1967 would be another story in KRLA's history. In 1967, the world would change so far with The Beatles evolving into "Sgt. Pepper," and the dawn of Monterey Pop. And suddenly KRLA would no longer seem that hip anymore. But that won't be for another few months. Right now, in January 1967, KRLA was still one of the greatest radio stations in the world. KRLA entered January 1967, with its very entertaining "Red Baron" contest, inspired by the year-end song "Snoopy Versus The Red Baron." Listeners would pretend they were in a World War I plane trying to shoot down The Red Baron. If they did, they would win a prize. This was fun radio at its best.

Before we move any closer into 1967, we need to remember the first Super Bowl in January 1967, and how it was "blacked out" in Los Angeles, but broadcast over television in San Diego. Some of the engineers at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte, designed an antenna for televisions, out of an old broomstick that was found in the kitchen of the transmitter building, and some old coat hangers from the lockers in the kitchen. The engineer rigged this up to the television set that they used to watch in their kitchen-lounge, in the South El Monte transmitter building. Sure enough, it worked, and San Diego television stations were suddenly, crystal clear. The engineers informed the Pasadena studios about this. The brilliant idea then came up, to give these plans over the air. Listeners could send for instructions, on how to rig up a broomstick and coat hanger, to watch the Super Bowl.

It was a tremendous hit. All over Los Angeles, in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," KRLA listeners were now able to watch the Super Bowl football game over the San Diego television station, now crystal clear, due to this antenna. KRLA had scored another first.

Also, KRLA would feature, in early 1967, an hourly feature called "Question Of The Hour." A thought-provoking question, usually dealing with social consciousness, was asked, over the air (by the voice of Sie Holliday), and really got KRLA listeners to think.

1967 was getting into full bloom. In February 1967, KRLA again would feature its annual "Valentine Contest." This contest was really more of an art festival. Listeners sent in some very

creative Valentines. One, even had "live" doves flying around inside the "Valentine." Another, was a huge concrete "heart" that was dropped outside the KRLA studios, at the foot of the steps leading up to the front door.

However, the most memorable winner of that 1967 "Valentine Contest" was a young listener, an aspiring artist and poet named Drew Struzan. Research Archives put out a tremendous search through phone directories, to try to track down this person, but to no avail. (After the first edition of Dream-House was released in June 1989, a book dealer, Bill Liebowitz, owner of Golden Apple, told us that Drew Struzan may be "the Struzan who's a famous movie poster artist," quite successful at that time, in 1989. Upon Kolchak-like investigating, following a lead, we contacted by phone, a "Mr. Struzan" in San Bernardino County, who confirmed he is an artist for film advertising, but told us he has "no recollection at all" painting any "Valentine Contest" entries for KRLA in 1967. We then sent this-Mr. Struzan a copy of Dream-House, along with a print of the Valentine painting, to see if he recognized the painting as something he might have done as an amateur, 23 years before, but as we never heard from him in response, by the time of this revised edition, to help solve this "mystery" behind this "once-lost painting," the mystery remains.)

However, we give full credit to "Drew Struzan" (wherever he may be), who in 1967 presented KRLA with a painting, and poem, that is beautiful, poetic, highly inspirational to us, and, probably, the greatest relic of KRLA memorabilia ever.

Drew Struzan's painting, to us, was one of the most beautiful paintings we've seen. It depicts "The Eleven-Ten Men" of January 1967, in almost like the Dutch Master cigar poses.

This was the greatest of all the KRLA "Valentine Contest" entries. It had disappeared for many, many years, until finally resurfacing in 1982. This painting really represents the end of an era of KRLA. This painting symbolizes that end perfectly. Never again in KRLA's history would KRLA's personalities ever be the "heroes" that this painting so richly depicts.

The disc jockeys in this painting are one of the greatest lineups in the station's history. The painting of Pat Moore looks similar to Dave Hull, as no picture of Moore was available, at that time, for Struzan. This painting, in a way, is almost a tombstone, and the poem an epitaph, of a station that would never ever again, equal the greatness of that era. Those were heroes to so many. They are legendary. And the painting reflects that greatness.

Shortly after Struzan's beautiful painting was presented to KRLA, an old friend would return to the KRLA airways. KFWB had been sold to Westinghouse in 1966. One of the KFWB "Good Guys" who had previously left KFWB just a month or two before, from the "ungodly" Midnight to 6 shift, was Rebel Foster, who KRLA welcomed back to the lineup in February 1967. By this time, in early 1967, Bob Eubanks had been very successful with his ABC-TV hosting of "The Newlywed Game." Eubanks asked to leave his highly popular 9 to Noon show, so that he could just do Sunday afternoons on KRLA. He still wanted to keep his foot in the door of the station that he loved.

When Eubanks left 9 to Noon, that created a spot for Rebel Foster, who returned home to KRLA in February 1967, in the 9 to Noon show. But, unfortunately, for us listeners, a downplayed "Maude Skidmore." So, the KRLA lineup in February 1967 was now Charlie O'Donnell 6 to 9, Rebel Foster 9 to Noon, Casey Kasem Noon to 3, Dave Hull 3 to 6, Johnny Hayes 6 to 9, Dick Biondi 9 to Midnight, Pat Moore Midnight to 6, and Eubanks, Moreland, and Slater on the weekends.

Foster would have preferred his old 3 to 6 p.m. show. But, by that time, Dave Hull was so hugely popular in the 3 to 6 p.m. slot, so Foster was given what was available, and that was 9 to Noon. Foster was quite good in the 9 to Noon hours. He had toned down considerably, from when he had been 3 to 6 p.m.

Two other contests of merit were heard on KRLA, during the early part of 1967. Both the KRLA "Connection" contest, and the KRLA "C.I.A." contest, were quite popular during early 1967. They continued the long tradition of KRLA having fun activities to involve its audience.

The KRLA "Connection" contest was where the listener was to guess a current song from the KRLA "Tune-Dex," based on a clue about the song, that had been mentioned earlier in the show. The KRLA "C.I.A." contest was where listeners could call up a special recorded phone number. If one's voice was played over the air, from the "answering-machine" -style tape, one could win the contest if they called in. Both were reminiscent of the early KRLA "Fun Tests" from 1961, and were quite good.

KRLA also, in early 1967, would release the first of a series of record albums, compilations of KRLA hits called "21 Solid Rocks," and "Son Of 21 Solid Rocks" with "KRLA" carved in the side of the mountain on the cover, featuring the King Kong-like KRLA mascot, "The

KRL-Ape." These were terrific albums, and are distinguished by the enclosure of "New York's A Lonely Town," by The Trade Winds, with the special KRLA voiceovers added by Mel Hall, "And there's no KRLA,!" and, "Sure do miss KRLA!"

KRLA also, during this Spring of 1967, still continued its "All-Request Radio" format. But also called its music mix, "KRLA's Spring Festival Of Hits," and on the weekend, "KRLA's Weekend Festival Of Hits." KRLA, in the Spring of 1967, had a fresh sound. The "Request Radio" format was continuing very strong showings, and made KRLA, at this time, unique among Los Angeles radio stations.

On Sunday nights, at this time in spring 1967, KRLA broadcast a very-hip program called "Radio Free Oz." The program would later be broadcast "live" from The Magic Mushroom nightclub, on Ventura Boulevard in Studio City, formerly a Bob Eubanks' "Cinnamon Cinder" location. Phil Proctor, John Carpenter, and Peter Bergman, were ultra-hip "comedy" performers, who called their performing troupe, "The Firesign Theater." "Radio Free Oz" shows were heard beginning at 8 p.m.

However, one event in the history of KRLA will always stand out, as one of the most memorable. And when we tell you the story of what happened, keep in mind that something like that could probably never happen again. But it did happen at KRLA, and is one important event that will always stand out in radio history.

As we have said many times, the most popular disc jockey in the history of KRLA, in reviewing all its history, had to be, Dave Hull. At that time, in the Spring of 1967, Dave Hull was also the highest-rated personality ever at KRLA. Now that Bob Hudson was no longer in the morning, Dave Hull, in the afternoon-drive, was truly KRLA's superstar.

As we have talked about earlier in [Dream-House](#), Dave Hull always had the reputation for playing The Beatles' records first. Even though Hull had previously expressed deep concern about the lifestyles, and radical behavior of The Beatles, their statements, and last year's controversial album cover, Hull still continued to play The Beatles' records first. Hull, and The Beatles, were still a KRLA exclusive.

In the Spring of 1967, Hull was able to obtain an advance copy of The Beatles' next album tentatively titled, "When I'm 64." This album would go on to be the most influential, and recordbreaking album, in the history of popular music, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." This album showed that The Beatles were no longer "mop tops," or loveable kids, but serious talented musicians, with highly cultural influences on the young adults, and teenagers, in the United States.

Because of Hull's closeness with The Beatles, Hull had obtained tapes of the album, that he wanted to play, on his 3 to 6 p.m. show on KRLA, as an exclusive. Apparently, there had been an agreement among management, that all stations would debut the record at the same time. No radio station would have an exclusive on it. That meant Hull could not play the new Beatles album, until the other stations (KHJ, KFWB, KBLA) had an official copy of the record, that they would be authorized to play, by Capitol Records.

Hull did not like this idea. Hull had always been the one, to always break The Beatles' records first in Los Angeles. The listeners knew this, and expected this from Hull. Hull did not want to let his audience down, who had been so loyal.

Hull went into the management offices, on Friday afternoon, April 28, 1967, before his 3 to 6 p.m. show, and tried to convince the station that he should be allowed to play these advance tapes, because the loyal listeners deserved this exclusive from Hull. Management said no. The following day on Saturday, April 29, 1967, Dave Hull did not show up for his weekend show. Instead, he went to a party for Twiggy, the fashion model.

The following Monday, May 1, 1967, management announced that Dave Hull was dismissed from the station. The following statement was read over KRLA News, "KRLA announces with regret, the dismissal of Dave Hull."

Dave Hull was fired from KRLA. The most popular disc jockey in Los Angeles, and at KRLA ever, was fired. He would no longer be on KRLA. The end of an era? Almost. KRLA quickly reshuffled its program schedule to the following: Charlie O'Donnell would still be 6 to 9 a.m. However, 9 to Noon would be, from now on, Bill Slater. Casey Kasem would remain Noon to 3. Rebel Foster now was given his old show back, from management, which Foster had wanted, 3 to 6 p.m. The rest of the lineup remained the same.

KRLA management announced officially, that this was "the new schedule." Because Hull violated station policy, and did not show up for his show, his dismissal and termination were justified. Bill Slater was excellent 9 to Noon. Finally, Slater had been given a time slot that he

really shined in. Even though Slater had been Number One, Midnight to 6, the past year before Pat Moore took over, many listeners never had the opportunity to hear Slater. Now they did!

Rebel Foster, again, really cooked in the 3 to 6 p.m. show, like he had back in 1964, and early 1965. But on this Monday, May 1, things were quite different. The listeners were totally outraged. Even "The Eleven-Ten Men" made references on the air, about Dave Hull being fired. Foster even tried to smooth the situation out, by saying on his new show,

"Dave, you got a lot of friends around here, babe, including me."

But the request phones went crazy. People were not calling in for requests on the toll-free lines, but to ask the same question, "What happened to Dave?," and how they wanted Dave Hull back! For the next day or so, the various "Eleven-Ten Men" made continued references to their support for Dave Hull, over the air. Finally, on KRLA News, it was told, that management has ordered all air talent to "refrain from mentioning terminated employee Dave Hull's name over the air."

But management never expected, or anticipated, what would happen next. Hundreds of KRLA's fans and listeners, without any encouraging by anyone at the station or Hull, staged a huge massive sit-in, on the steps outside of KRLA, at the Pasadena studios. Some listeners even staged a protest march in front of the KRLA transmitter, on Lexington-Gallatin Road, in South El Monte. Police were called, as one irate listener threatened to "chop down" one of the six KRLA antenna towers, at the transmitter site in South El Monte, which would have knocked KRLA off the air (and be quite dangerous to the cows and horses below in the pasture.)

But the big demonstration was in Pasadena. KRLA staff members, vendors, salesmen, and whoever, were unable to get into the station, because of all the crowds of KRLA listeners camped out on the porch, with huge signs, all protesting Hull's dismissal, and that KRLA had better bring Hull back! And this was in 1967, before the big days of campus unrest, and sit-ins and protests after the Tet Offensive, and Kent State. KRLA management, at first, tried to hold firm. Police and security guards were assigned to try to keep peace outside the radio station, with all the placards and protesters. The Huntington Hotel next door was even concerned. They had never seen such a massive group of people descending on the radio station, since it opened in 1941 as KPAS.

It was amazing. Camera crews for television stations came out. Newspapers sent their reporters. Even the unthinkable, other radio stations reported it. Nothing like this had ever happened before in radio. But Dave Hull was no ordinary disc jockey. Hull was a legend, a hero, and an idol for so many. Dave Hull was a true superstar in Los Angeles radio. Other disc jockeys had left other radio stations, and even KRLA in the past, and listeners usually got over the change in a day or so. Sometimes, they even liked the new replacement better. But not this time. Dave Hull was different. Dave Hull was KRLA. Some listeners even called up Rebel Foster, or followed Foster out to his car, and blamed Foster for taking over Hull's show.

This was absolutely amazing. KRLA management tried to be tough. But after several days of this, knew it had to do something fast.

Management did not want to take Hull back. Hull was too popular, too strong, too independent. KRLA could survive without Hull, or so they thought. Then, rumors got around to KHJ offering Hull a time slot, 6 to 9 p.m. several years before, and might about to again. KHJ had already overtaken KRLA in many dayparts and rating groups. If KRLA lost Hull for KHJ, then KRLA was afraid that Hull would take all those massive number of listeners with him. Without Hudson in the morning, Hull was the only real strong superstar in the drive-time hours. Could KRLA really survive a challenge from KHJ, with O'Donnell 6 to 9, and Foster 3 to 6, against Robert W. Morgan 6 to 9, and Don Steele 3 to 6 on KHJ?

With that comparison, it was clear. Hull had to be brought back. And so by the end of that week, Dave Hull was back on KRLA, 3 to 6 p.m. Slater left the 9 to Noon show, to go back to weekends. Rebel Foster who was put in a very awkward position by management, when he was put in the 3 to 6 p.m. show in place of Hull, was moved back to 9 to Noon. The sit-in won. The listeners had their "Hullabalooer" back.

KRLA management finally realized just how strong a personality they had in Dave Hull. KRLA had a major radio superstar with Dave Hull. He was the favorite for so, so many people. KRLA management never again gave Hull a bad time, at least not in this era of KRLA. ("Music Power '69" was still two years away.) A lot will change in the world in two years. But, for now, KRLA had its "Hullabalooer" back home, where he belonged. The "Porch People," and the sit-in demonstrators, went home. Hull was back 3 to 6 p.m. Nothing like that has ever happened since in Los Angeles radio history. That's what really happened. And you can't change history.

Until the KRLA front door was remodeled in early 1970, one could still see signs of that

protest, carved into the front door, and spray painted on the steps. References to how listeners wanted Dave Hull back on KRLA. The KRLA door, over those years, always had a lot of graffiti. But none stood out so greatly, as "We Love Our Hullabalooer."

We were told a very interesting story about the album, "Sgt. Pepper." The Beatles always liked drinking "Dr. Pepper," before and after their concerts, in America. Apparently, that beverage was not that accessible in England. The Beatles wanted to call their new L.P. record, "Dr. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." ("When I'm 64," for an album title, was simply a working title.) We were told, that it was none other than Dave Hull, who told The Beatles they would be in one big lawsuit, if they used the name "Dr. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." At Dave Hull's suggestion, it was changed from "Dr. Pepper's" to "Sgt. Pepper's." And the rest is history.

KRLA survived the Spring of 1967. But one major event in the world, in June 1967, would send shock waves all over the world, and shook KRLA, and its listeners, so greatly, that the entire pop culture would change. KRLA's listeners would, almost overnight, grow up. The KRLA listeners would suddenly be seduced by a Black man from Seattle, a White blues singer from Texas, and the smell of incense, marijuana and flowers everywhere. For in June 1967, the impact of Monterey Pop hit KRLA full, full force.

KRLA, and all the fun and innocence it stood for, was about to hit the mat. For the world, in the Summer of 1967, was changing very, very fast. The Vietnam War was in full force. People were seeing war atrocities on television. Recreational drugs were coming into fashion. And The Beatles came out with "Sgt. Pepper," and its obvious drug references to getting high, LSD, and loving to turn you on. June 1967 was the most radical month to date, with "Sgt. Pepper," the first week of June, and then Monterey Pop, the first week that school was out.

The Monterey Pop Festival was the first real outdoor "festival" rock concert. It featured such awe-inspiring performances by Jimi Hendrix, The Who, and Janis Joplin. When people saw the light show backdrop of The Jefferson Airplane, singing about pills making you large or small, and the ultimate sight of Jimi Hendrix burning his guitar on stage. And then what The Who did with their guitars. Nothing like this had ever been seen before.

KRLA had sent several disc jockey representatives up to the fairgrounds concert in Monterey; Bill Slater, Rebel Foster, Dick Moreland, and newsman Jim Steck. KRLA gave "live" reports back on the festival. But what Monterey Pop did, was to show such a strong contrast to the innocence of Dave Hull, the father-figure maturity of Charlie O'Donnell, the kindness of Dick Biondi, and the sincerity of Casey Kasem. For the first time ever, KRLA seemed out of it, seemed "square," seemed out of touch with what was happening in the "real" world. KRLA tried to get a hipper image, by calling itself "50,000 Watts Of Flower Power," and "50,000 Watt Flower Pot." But what KRLA was, with its clean-image disc jockeys, and what people were really getting into, the contrast was overwhelming.

We recall hearing this juxtaposition of the clean, innocent KRLA, with the new emerging counterculture after Monterey Pop, by listening one morning to Charlie O'Donnell, as he was playing the most requested song of the hour, "A Day In The Life," from "Sgt. Pepper." We were walking down Golden West Avenue, to Temple City, with our little G.E. transistor radio in hand. Think about that for a moment. Charlie O'Donnell, "The Jolly Lean Giant," playing a song about "turning on." Or Dick Biondi playing "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds." Something was happening. "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" were not the "mop tops" that Dave Hull used to play on a Saturday night, long ago in 1964. They grew up. The listeners grew up. KRLA didn't. Things were happening too fast for KRLA.

The same weekend as Monterey Pop, another major change would happen in Los Angeles radio. Radio station KBLA, on Saturday, June 17, 1967, would change format to a Country music format, from TOP 40. One of the most popular of the KBLA "Super 'In'-tertainers" was about to be let go. Fortunately, he was able to get a new home with KRLA. He would be the first sign, that a change was coming to KRLA.

Bob Dayton joined KRLA on Saturday, June 17, 1967, substituting for Rebel Foster 9 to Noon, and the next day on Sunday, June 18, substituting for Dick Moreland, from 4 to 8 p.m., while they both were in Monterey. Dayton was the first new voice to be heard over "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," since Pat Moore in July 1966. With Dayton joining KRLA, it was clear that Bob Dayton would play a part in what was happening in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten."

Dayton had known Rebel Foster. So when KBLA signed off the air, to become KBBQ, Foster immediately told Dayton to come to KRLA. During the rest of June 1967, and through July and early August, Dayton would be heard on KRLA filling-in, while a lot of the regular "Eleven-Ten Men" were off on vacation, in various substitution spots. Finally, Dick Moreland

gave up his Sunday afternoon show, and Bob Dayton took over the Sunday 4 to 8 p.m. shift. Dayton was slick, polished, and had a real, real energy, that KRLA had been lacking for a long time. Dayton was the first sign that a major change was going to come to KRLA, in the incense-and-marijuana-filled "Summer Of Love."

During this "Summer Of Love," KRLA had a contest that was probably the last one that symbolized the innocence, and excellence, and freshness, of the old KRLA, that was about to come to an end. A very popular song that summer was by The Fifth Dimension, "Up, Up And Away," about a hot-air balloon ride, that would take one up in the sky, in a glorious ride. They say the title came from a disc jockey in San Bernardino, at a popular radio station there. (IFIAFFI was still two years away.)

KRLA had one "last hurrah," a terrific contest and promotion in "The Summer Of Love," 1967. KRLA had its own eight-story "Beautiful Balloon," to coincide with the KRLA contest, by the same name that summer. KRLA launched this giant balloon from the parking lot of the world famous Hollywood Bowl, as the final phase of the KRLA "Beautiful Balloon" contest. This involved the release of thousands of helium balloons, containing prizes ranging from one, to one thousand dollars, each. The pilot, John Caywood, was dressed in a gorilla costume, as he was playing the role of the station mascot, "The KRL-Ape."

However, when this huge 8-story balloon was launched from the parking lot at the Hollywood Bowl, the giant balloon sailed along at tree-top level, before unexpectedly crashing into Lake Hollywood. A half dozen television station news and film cameramen, and a "throng of several thousand KRLA listeners," not to mention the KRLA deejays, "looked on in helpless wonder." The pilot, John Caywood, escaped uninjured but had a tough 50-yard swim out of the lake, attired in his gorilla costume.

But this accident, of the KRLA balloon going down, was more than just an unfortunate accident to a KRLA promotion. It was a symbol. It was a symbolic sign that KRLA, "The Station Of The Stars," and the station of "The Beautiful Balloon," would, in a way, very clearly, and suddenly, be "crashing," itself. KRLA was starting to show its age. The world in "The Summer Of Love" was now marching to the beat of "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," like the rats following the Pied Piper. Charlie O'Donnell playing "A Day In The Life," was too hard to comprehend. Past was meeting present, head on. The impact of Monterey Pop had hit KRLA with tremendous force. And the young people were realizing that KRLA, maybe, was a station of their past, their happy days, but the world now is a time to be serious. To tune in, turn on, and drop out.

"The Beautiful Balloon" crashed into Lake Hollywood. KRLA as "The Beautiful Balloon," and the station of innocence, fun, and fantasy, was about to crash, too. "The Beautiful Balloon," known as KRLA, "The (once-upon-a-time) Station Of The Stars," the home for heroes, the dream-house, and its glorious past, was also about to break up, into the marijuana-filled air, and realize it was becoming a relic.

We recall hearing one of Dick Biondi's shows, in August of 1967, talking about "The Beautiful Balloon." "All-Request Radio" was about to come to an end, too expensive to continue, as KRLA was about to change direction. The jingles, "All-Request Radio," were about to be replaced with "KRLA Now!" No mention on the air would be made of the closing down of all the KRLA request lines, and Johnny Hayes' promos of the toll-free numbers.

KRLA was "The Beautiful Balloon," itself. It soared to the highest reaches of Princess Blue Sky, but now would realize, that it's a long, long, long way to fall, and that it isn't easy finally coming down. KRLA, "The Beautiful Balloon," had burst.

CHAPTER 5

THE NEW SEASON OF EXCITEMENT

1967 was a year of so many changes in the world, and of pop culture. August 1967 was here, and the phrase, "The Summer Of Love," drifted through the country like exotic incense. The KRLA, that entered August 1967, was clearly showing its age, even though the era was one of KRLA's best, recovering from its setback last year with the termination of Bob Hudson.

However, the lineup that early summer, no matter how good, how professional, and in our opinion, so excellent, did, in a way, seem out of touch with the world, in August 1967. After The Monterey Pop Festival, the one major event which forever changed the world, young people, the core of KRLA's audience, suddenly became more "hip" overnight. Longer hairstyles grew out for males. Even we changed in the Summer of 1967, by having longer hair, over the ears at least, longer sideburns, an attempted moustache, and John Lennon-style glasses, found in an antique store in San Bernardino County.

August 1967 also was about the time that the first FM "underground" radio station was developing, in the basement of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church. Ironically, in the same city as the KRLA studios. Teenagers, in 1967, were now buying FM radios and components, and now were buying L.P. albums, whereas instead, just a few months before, 45 R.P.M. singles were the norm. It now was important what was in the grooves, what the music was all about.

After Monterey Pop and "Sgt. Pepper," the need for radio to show it was "hip" was even more important. Anything that seemed like it was out of touch, or too straight was, suddenly and instantly, rejected by young people, who had embraced it just a few months ago. Because in 1967, the world changed so fast, almost every minute, and what was in vogue in May, after Monterey Pop, "Sgt. Pepper," and KPPC, was out of it in June. Things moved so fast then.

With the new "underground" FM station, KPPC, and the defection of KFVB's B. Mitchel Reed to KPPC, many young people looked upon KPPC as the real "hip" station in the Southland. The contrast between B. Mitchel Reed and, say, the innocence of Dick Biondi, was so remarkably clear, it was shocking. Not only was KPPC coming on strong on FM, but two days a week. on Wednesday and Sunday, KPPC could be heard on 1240 AM, from two big, twin antenna towers atop the Independent and Star-News newspaper building. In fact, listeners who had never heard KPPC on FM, could tune in to B. Mitchel Reed, or Tom Donahue, as they played such radical tracks as "The End," by The Doors or "Revelation," by Love.

The raw sexuality of Jimi Hendrix had totally seduced so many of the girls who just a few months ago had sat on the steps of the KRLA studios, and cried on the shoulders of Dick Biondi. Could these fellows, Biondi and Charlie O'Donnell, for example, relate to what was really happening? As like the Bob Dylan song about a "Mr. Jones," knowing something is happening, but not really knowing what it was.

An interesting side note on that song was right into our life, because across the street from the house we were living in was, indeed, a very "square" gentleman named, of all things, "Mr. Jones," who, on Halloween, used to walk up and down on his front lawn, holding a 2' x 4', fearful of the Pepsi Generation throwing salt on his lawn.

This "Mr. Jones" did have several stepsons. Whether or not he knew it, one of his stepsons was indeed part of the counterculture. The contrast between overweight, B.O.-smelling "Mr. Jones," and his ultra-hip stepson, was so much the Bob Dylan song come to life. The song could very well have substituted, for "Mr. Jones," the names Biondi or O'Donnell, because around them, the world was changing so fast. Some of the KRLA staff, as great as they were, and as legendary as they were, at this time of August 1967, really were the "Mr. Jones" of the song.

By August 1967, the venerable solid lineup of KRLA was about to crack with the rush of "Summer Of Love" changes that were blowing in the wind. KRLA, in August of 1967, suddenly realized it was a past great station, but it was not "hip" with today. People hadn't really talked about KRLA in a long time. KHJ was the new mainstream Number One. KRLA was rather "straight," in a way, in comparison to the radical waves in the world around it.

Rebel Foster, who always seemed to be in the forefront of what was "hip," became Program Director of the station again. It was Foster's goal, at this time of KRLA's life, to make the

station "hip" again. And most important, get people to talk about the station again. The station had been too fat, too pre-KHJ content, and, in a way, too "square," considering the many radical changes around it. Foster, at this point, needed to do something. With Foster in the P.D. chair, those changes to KRLA programming he would call "The New Season Of Excitement."

Fall, traditionally in television, was always the time when the networks, at that time in 1967, always introduced the new television shows. The networks always highly promoted their "new seasons." Television networks even had umbrella "themes," that the new shows revolved around, such as "NBC Week."

August 1967 was the time that KRLA decided to do what the networks did. And that is to get people to talk, and to listen. And in this time of KRLA's life, to rediscover "Radio Eleven-Ten." And realize that KRLA also could be "hip," and a hot alternative to the "underground" of KPPC, the stagnant sounds of KFWB, in its last dying days, and, of course, the new AM Number One KHJ, which would never change what "hasn't broke."

It also needs to be reported, at this time, that KRLA, beginning with "The New Season Of Excitement" in August, and continuing right up to early 1968, did away with the KRLA "Big Time" clock, and, instead, the disc jockeys were required to say,

"It's 27 after 8 o'clock, Dave Hull Showtime," or

"It's 11 o'clock on The Non-Stop Pat Moore Show."

Again, this was used to give KRLA a new sound. The "Non-Stop" portion was to emphasize the increased amount of music to compete with KHJ, that by this time, was beating KRLA in the ratings, right and left. KHJ was looked upon as, without doubt, the new Number One, and mainstream trendsetter in Los Angeles.

What Foster's "New Season" "blueprint" was to do, was to re-group the KRLA lineup in two parts. The old, faithful, last three remaining, followed by Foster himself, Bob Dayton now given a permanent spot, followed by a very hip newcomer with a lot of blue-eyed soul.

The first slot Foster looked at was the morning show. Traditionally, the morning man should always be the strongest man on the station, as it had been the case with the comedic talents of Bob Hudson, up to 1966.

So the first casualty of "The New Season Of Excitement" was the departure of Charlie O'Donnell from the lineup. O'Donnell had been widely seen on television as the sidekick for Dick Clark on "American Bandstand." But, in August 1967, Dick Clark and "Bandstand" were not ones that projected an aura of hipness.

An interesting side note, is that that same year, 1967, Dick Clark would film that summer, probably the best movie that captured the whole flavor of "The Summer Of Love." "Psych Out" was a classic movie in recapturing, and preserving, the exact flavor of that summer. Most people did not realize that Dick Clark was the man behind that movie, and made it possible to happen. Clark downplayed his role with that movie because, after all, the hippies and counterculture certainly didn't look up to Dick Clark the way they did, say, Tom Donahue, or B. Mitchell Reed. At that time, when "hipness" was such an important yardstick, Dick Clark was just not what was happening.

And by close identification, neither was Charlie O'Donnell. Unfortunately, O'Donnell had the image of that of one's father, sort of "an Ed McMahon-for-teenagers." Even though O'Donnell was pretty much the same age as the others, he still came across on television and in person, as sort of a father image, in conservative suits, certainly not "hip." But, in 1967, image was very, very important. With those liabilities, O'Donnell was the first to fall from KRLA's lineup.

"The Jolly Lean Giant" had gone from KRLA. But, in August 1967, it was clear that a change in the morning-drive was a necessity, and really had to be done. It was again the end of an era.

O'Donnell departed mornings. The need now was for Foster to put in someone who was strong, a more typical, comedic, morning-man personality. Someone who would be so popular, the rest of the station would prosper, by listeners turning on KRLA in the morning, and keeping it on the whole day. The choice for morning man came down to two people. Himself or Dave Hull. The other possibilities were eliminated by these factors.

Casey Kasem. By this time, Kasem had wanted to branch into television and movies, and had no interest in really continuing his regular Noon to 3 show. Certainly not becoming a morning man. Kasem's strong showing was always in the more mature-sounding housewife hours. Kasem was a legend in the Noon to 3 shift. So Kasem was not in line for the morning-drive.

Johnny Hayes. Hayes was a rather unknown quality to the KRLA starting lineup, just getting used to being Bob Eubanks' "Teen Toppers" replacement, 6 to 9 p.m.

Dick Biondi. Biondi, unfortunately, would be the second major casualty of "The New

Season Of Excitement." Biondi never did come back from his last "Road Show." That will be discussed, in detail, later in this chapter.

Bill Slater. Bill Slater was already heavily involved into the production aspects of KRLA.

Pat Moore. Even though Moore had been a successful morning man at KACY, Oxnard, a few years before, Moore had other ambitions on KRLA, that will be discussed later.

Bob Dayton. In our opinion, Dayton would have been the best for that time slot. But Dayton was still unknown to KRLA listeners. Foster wanted someone more familiar.

Dick Moreland. Bob Eubanks. Moreland would remain a KRLA weekender, but was involved in KRLA management, and a morning show would not fit in with those other duties. Bob Eubanks had already been morning man back in 1962, as Wink Martindale's replacement. Eubanks had already taken himself off the KRLA starting lineup, in his excellent 9 to Noon show, and remained on weekends, as his "Newlywed Game" was already a full-time job in itself on television.

The two left for the morning shift were Foster himself, and Dave Hull. But Foster wanted his old show shift back, and was more comfortable in afternoon-drive, than as a morning man. (Even though Foster and "Maude Skidmore" could have been quite entertaining.)

Foster always loved his 3 to 6 p.m. show hours, which he had proudly claimed after the departure of Jim Washburne, back in 1963. Some of Foster's most happy and successful moments were in occupying the 3 to 6 p.m. drive-time chair, where his energy and talent, with his character "Maude Skidmore," were such a winning combination in 1964. When Foster left KRLA, in February 1965 to make room for Dick Biondi's return, Foster always knew he wanted to come back to "his station" KRLA, and to reclaim what was once his, and to move back into the 3 to 6 p.m. slot.

The one man left was Dave Hull. Hull had already been offered the morning show back in July 1966, when Bob Hudson was terminated from the station. But, as discussed earlier, in Dream-House, turned it down, out of respect to Bob Hudson, who Hull felt should have been brought back after a short "suspension."

So, at this time in August of 1967, it was clear that the strongest man on KRLA was Dave Hull. It was now his job to pick up the mantle left by Hudson a year before, and make KRLA first in the mornings. It was already clear, by the incident in May, that Hull was extremely popular. Even though Hull had an innocence and childlike humor, and certainly was not considered, in the industry, as "hip," his past identification with The Beatles, and his name as the most popular on KRLA, made Hull really the only real choice for 6 to 9 a.m.

Dave Hull would now be the anchorman of "The New Season Of Excitement," and was moved to 6 to 9 a.m., as he was the "strongest man" at the station. Hull did a very good morning show, and had several popular features. The best was morning traffic reports, from a character "Sgt. Red Pepper," in a hot-air barrage balloon. KRLA produced, at this time, an excellent promotion of "Sgt. Red Pepper" cut-outs, complete with a "Sgt. Red Pepper" character paper doll, complete with goggles, and a badge reading "Dave Hull Fan Club," on his coat. This promotion was quite creative, and a good one!

Dave Hull told us, in 1989, that in late 1967, and early 1968, one of the most popular features on his show was the "Barrage Balloon Traffic Reports From Sgt. Red Pepper." This was classic "Big Screen" radio, where the fantasy was that "Sgt. Red Pepper," (played by the voice of Bob Dayton), would be up in a barrage balloon, and floating all over Southern California freeways, reporting on traffic.

Hull pointed out to us, that this was long before aerial traffic reports were even done. It was so successful that some listeners actually thought a big observation balloon was floating over the freeways. And what was funny about this was, sometimes, the balloon couldn't be controlled very well. The winds would blow it way out to Azusa, or Cucamonga. This was probably one of the best features of The Dave Hull Show in the mornings. It, again, showed how great KRLA could be when it tried.

Also, Dave Hull created two other characters for his morning show. "Crazy Harold," the Los Angeles Times paper boy, and "Big Molly." In August 1967, the Los Angeles newspaper, the Herald-Examiner, was undergoing a major long strike, which affected the quality of the paper, and its readership. The Herald had always been a "blue-collar" paper, usually read by the working class, without much education. To a sophisticate like Dave Hull, who lived glamorously in Arcadia, it was a paper that really was one to be looked down on.

Hull creatively made up the character "Crazy Harold" (read "Herald"), who delivered the Los Angeles Times on a run-down bicycle, chewing a piece of tar, and having a playing card in his bike spokes. For those who caught on to Hull's put down of the Herald, it was quite funny.

Especially to us, who were working for the Los Angeles Times sales office, at 1021 East Walnut, (Room 203) in Pasadena, during that time in 1967, and appreciated any jokes on the Herald, which, at that time, was not very respected by middle-class college-prep students, like ourselves.

The other Dave Hull morning character was "Big Molly," who with difficulty, pulled on her girdle. Hull encouraged all female listeners to pull on their girdles, at the same time as "Molly" did. It was quite funny hearing the girdle "bust out," due to "Molly" 's Rubenesque figure. Hull sometimes said he was "filming" the girdle pull-on, and would "play it back" for listeners each hour. This character on Hull's show was quite amusing. Even though, by today's standards somewhat chauvinistic, it still was funny.

And it was neat to have KRLA, once again, have a funny morning man. Our research shows that a morning man should be funny. And Dave Hull certainly fit the bill. About 11 years later, Hull's humor would turn up on a comedy album he made with Bob Hudson, where Dave Hull, calling himself "Dave Judson," engaged himself in very classic comedy tracks, that still hold up today. Hull was definitely an asset in the morning for "The New Season Of Excitement." So the morning show went to Hull. Foster now concentrated on the rest of the day in this major change in KRLA's look.

There's an old saying that goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." With that philosophy, Casey Kasem should have been retained in the Noon to 3 spot, where Kasem so excellently ruled since 1963. But Foster's "New Season Of Excitement" was to virtually move everybody around. So Kasem was put in the 9 to Noon show. Kasem was good in that spot, as he still kept the housewife audience. Foster's philosophy was to put the two strongest men, back-to-back. Hull, followed by Kasem, packed a one-two punch that Foster wanted KRLA to go with.

By that reasoning, Hull followed by Kasem was a good idea. However, Kasem did not like his new hours, and left the starting lineup of KRLA just a few weeks later, and just did a weekend show. By that time, the magic of KRLA was gone, and Kasem had bigger plans in television and movies. Kasem's departure will be discussed later in this chapter.

The next shift was Kasem's old Noon to 3 slot, where Kasem had held supremely for the past four years. No one really could replace Kasem in that time slot. But Foster tried to make another noticeable change. So Johnny Hayes, being, by now, a familiar voice to KRLA listeners, was moved into the Noon to 3 spot, even though Hayes now had quite a following from all his time in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift.

But Foster wanted to shake things up, and have the three most senior talents in a 1-2-3 combination, Hull followed by Kasem, followed by Hayes. It fit Foster's idea of the "old KRLA," 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the "new KRLA," from 3 p.m. on.

Bob Dayton was put by Foster in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, rather than in a higher profile drive-time. Dayton had earlier joined KRLA just one day after the demise of KBLA, from the Verdugo Mountains. Even though Dayton was a slick personality, anyone who knew Dayton, or heard his off-mike jokes, that we cannot even quote in a "family book," knew that Dayton would have been a terrific morning man, for KRLA in August 1967, if he had been allowed to break loose, and have free rein.

Where Hull was childlike and innocent, Dayton was risqué, sophisticated, and very suggestive, but in a real unoffending way. Dayton was a one-of-a-kind, had a "playboy" -type image, and a real-hot-living guy, according to his comments. One day, Dayton even showed up at KRLA with a black eye. You'd never catch Dave Hull with that. They just weren't the same.

Dayton, at this time, was pretty straight TOP 40-oriented, and kept the humor to a minimum. For example, he used "The Dayton Players," voices that he used for little skits. Whenever Dayton came up with a rather suggestive comment, a "female voice," sounding like a so-called "dirty old lady," would come on with "her" own suggestive innuendos and comments. This type of humor, if kept-in-check, of course, on a family radio station, would have been perfect during a morning show. But, at this point, Dayton was rather an unknown, and KRLA did not want an unknown to do the important morning show.

But Dayton would have given KRLA a fresh, hip and funny style in the mornings, and would eventually end up in almost every other time slot except mornings, until May 1973, where he finally was put in the right position. However, because of Dayton's reputation as a night person, who liked going to clubs in Hollywood, and so on, having Dayton in the mornings probably would interfere with his lifestyle, having to get up at 4 in the morning.

The next change, for "The New Season Of Excitement," would be the replacement of Dick Biondi. Dick Biondi, in his over two years of 9 to Midnight, was truly a legend in broadcasting at KRLA. Fans known as "Porch People," used to camp out outside the station on the steps, to talk to Biondi, and cry on his shoulder. Biondi truly cared about those kids. Biondi sometimes

would arrive for his 9 p.m. show sometimes hours before, just to meet with his tremendous legions of fans camped out on the steps of the KRLA studios.

Dick Biondi also used to stage "The Dick Biondi Road Show," where Biondi, and major-name talent, would appear at high school assemblies, and charitable events, with all the profits going to the school and charities. They don't make people like Dick Biondi anymore. He was truly one of the most beloved people ever on KRLA.

But Biondi had an image problem in 1967. To many in the industry, he was considered "un-hip" or "square." With his large, horn-rimmed glasses, and calling himself the "world's ugliest and skinniest disc jockey ever," he did not fit into the new "hip" image KRLA had now cultivated. "The Summer Of Love," marijuana smoking, and heavy music, just didn't go over with Biondi at the board. Summer 1967 was the wrong time to be Dick Biondi.

Biondi was funny, and a bit wacky, but certainly did not have a hip image. In fact, Biondi's humor was primarily Midwest humor, where Biondi had made his name famous for years before. The Biondi humor was never California-style. Especially now in "The Summer Of Love." Biondi seemed to be a square, playing The Seeds, The Doors and Jimi Hendrix.

In reviewing Biondi's airchecks from this period, July 1967, his last full month on the air, he still sounded slick and good. But his humor was obviously restrained, and he did his best to play the more heavier music without the self-deprecation, even though sounding slightly uncomfortable. But in the words of Jim Wood, Biondi's replacement,

"He died on the air."

Biondi, along with Charlie O'Donnell, were the two casualties of "The New Season Of Excitement." It was sad to see such beloved personalities get replaced in KRLA's air force.

What Foster wanted for 9 to Midnight was a complete total change from what KRLA had been offering for the past four years. Since July 1963, KRLA had always had a funny jock in the 9 to Midnight slot. First, Biondi from July to September 1963, Dave Hull from September 1963 to February 1965, and then Biondi again, from February 1965 to August 1967. But, as said before, August 1967 was a totally radical departure from any year, or month, before that.

What Foster did is put on, from 9 to Midnight, the complete opposite of Biondi (and Hull also) and that is a jock known as "The Woodchopper," and "The Vanilla Gorilla", Jim Wood. Wood had gotten his somewhat controversial, not-for-broadcast nickname, "The Vanilla Gorilla," being one of the only two White disc jockeys at all-Black KGFJ, broadcasting from The Odd Fellows Hall in South Los Angeles, with its archaic "flagpole" antennas on the roof, from 1 to 4 p.m. everyday.

KGFJ was an R. and B., Black music station, serving the Black community excellently. In the days before Civil Rights, KGFJ actually had an integrated lineup, with both Black, and White, personalities back to back. That certainly was a better ratio than KRLA, with no Black jocks.

Jim Wood was a deep-voiced, Black-sounding jock, who even though White, sounded quite Black. Wood was, in a way, a "threatening and fascinating presence to adolescent White girls, as the lure of Jimi Hendrix was," to quote one of our sources. One of the most striking changes to KRLA took place on, about maybe, the second, or third day, that Wood was on the air. We caught the R.T.D. bus, on Lake and Colorado, to go to KRLA, at The Huntington Hotel, to meet Jim Wood on his shift. We wanted to talk with him about how he landed at KRLA, and what happened to Dick Biondi.

When we arrived at KRLA, from our short bus ride, there still were the usual "Porch People," but much, much fewer than just a week before with Biondi. Some of the "Porch People" commented to us how sad they felt about no more Biondi, and why he wasn't there. Several of the teenage girls who were on the steps told us, "there's a real horny old man in there." We were told that she had been referring to Wood. (A description like that certainly would never be said of clean-cut "Uncle-figure" Dick Biondi, a few weeks before.)

Biondi had been out of town, taking his "Road Show" across the country, a-la-Bob Hope. Everyone had expected Biondi to come back. It was even announced on KRLA that Biondi would return. But he never did. No mention was made that Biondi was permanently gone. Wood took us inside the disc jockey booth, so we could take some snapshots.

It was clear that he was quite different than Biondi. He did seem a lot more mature, than Biondi had been. But it was Wood's on-air style that gave the greatest contrast. Deep-voiced, smooth, snapping his fingers constantly, so one can hear them snapping when his mike was on. Soulful. Cool. Wood was all of those things. Wood was an excellent personality for late-night KRLA, and was a drastic change from the harmless, corny Dick Biondi.

Also, Wood, coming from R. and B.'s KGFJ, didn't know the TOP 40 pop hits as well. For example, on one of Wood's first KRLA shows, in August 1967, Wood called Van Morrison, "Van

Johnson." Jay And The Techniques he called "Jay And The Americans." and Jimi Hendrix, as "Jim Hendrix." But Wood knew all the soul music best, and that made up for anything else.

KRLA also utilized Wood in doing "live" remotes from the Cheetah night club, in Santa Monica near the old P.O.P. site, now demolished. Wood will probably be most remembered at KRLA, from his "live" broadcasts from the Cheetah in Santa Monica, which were legendary performances in early psychedelia.

"The Vanilla Gorilla," Jim Wood, was now entrenched at KRLA in the 9 to Midnight show. Wood certainly was a refreshing innovation on KRLA. It showed that KRLA was serious in being a somewhat heavy alternative.

For the Midnight to 6 slot, there now was an opening. Pat Moore, being an engineer with a first-class license, had expressed, several times previously, that he could make more money on "the other side of the glass" being an engineer, rather than as an air talent. So Moore was moved from his Midnight to 6 slot, where he had done an excellent job, in our opinion, to the more accessible 6 to Noon Sunday slot, where listeners, who had not previously heard Moore because of his Midnight to 6 hours, could now hear what they had been missing, since July 1966.

The new Pat Moore Sunday show was a real treat. Moore was certainly an air talent that should have been used in a daytime slot at KRLA, perhaps, ideally, 9 to Noon. But Moore, due to his enviable position of being an engineer as well as an air talent, moved into the engineer's chair, both at the Pasadena studios, and also at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte, the real pulse of KRLA where the sound of KRLA, actually originated from.

Moore was now on Sundays only, and filling in during the Monday thru Saturday week. For example, on one Saturday, in early September 1967, in the 9 to Noon Casey Kasem show, Moore proved he certainly had a lot to offer the KRLA daytime audience. But, in August of 1967, not too many air talents had that valuable "first phone ticket." Being an engineer was security, that being on the air just didn't bring. In Moore's case, he could see the security of going for "the other side of the glass."

Before Pat Moore left KRLA as an engineer, Moore told us, in 1989, an interesting behind-the-scenes story that happened to him, during his non-joking KRLA studio engineering days. A fellow "KRLA employee," who, for privacy sake, we will not name, had just resigned. This "KRLA employee" was saying his goodbyes to everyone there at the station.

Moore watched him, as he said goodbye to the various other staff members. Mostly, this "KRLA employee" just shook hands, said goodbye, and went on to give departing words to the others. Finally, when this "KRLA employee" approached Pat Moore, Moore told us that he was totally taken off-guard by what happened next. Instead of this "KRLA employee" saying goodbye to Moore, like he had done to the others, and shaking hands, Moore recalled to us that this "KRLA employee" said no words to him. Instead, in silence, the following occurred.

"I couldn't believe it. He grabbed my ass. His hand was right there on the cheek!"

With that, this fellow "KRLA employee" silently walked out of the KRLA building. Moore said to us,

"You know, I had always heard talk that this guy was supposed to be a homosexual, but I never thought much about it, until after that day. I then realized that he had actually given me a sexual advance!"

The memories of that day, all those years ago, might be hazy, but clean-cut "straight" -arrow, Pat Moore told us that's what actually happened. And you can't change history.

Moore stayed with his Sunday morning show for at least a few weeks, until another change occurred. To take over the reins for the Midnight to 6 show, KRLA brought in Bill Slater, who had been, up to then, on weekends. As mentioned earlier in Dream-House, Slater actually was a former Midnight to 6 man, from his days in 1965 and 1966. But something happened to Bill Slater. We asked Slater, when we met him again, back in 1979, at an FM station in Portland, Oregon, where he had been doing an "underground" style show, about how Slater, who once had been so clean-cut, with a wife and dog, living in West Covina, total "Pleasant Valley Sunday" suburbia, just how he suddenly changed into a persona of long shoulder-length black hair, and a flowing black beard, after looking like a young "Ward Cleaver" before!

Slater said to us that nothing in music, or radio, was the same to him after a particular "psychedelic" experience that, in 1979, Slater told us about. Slater saw things differently after that. That era, and its influences, really changed him. There really were diamonds up in the sky!

Bill Slater had undergone some pretty radical changes in his personal life and appearance. He would next turn up, after leaving his Midnight to 6 show on KRLA, as a "new" Bill Slater, complete with long flowing hair and beard, almost Christ-like in appearance, where Slater would be a personality at KPPC, in 1969.

We had the privilege of sitting-in on one of Bill Slater's shows, in the Summer of 1969, from KPCC. What impressed us about Slater, was not only his obvious talent as an air personality, but in the huge notebooks that his ladyfriend, Cindy, and himself, had brought into the station, creatively having page-after-page of record tracks in "groups," or sets, according to theme. For example, a "color" set would be The Rolling Stones', "She Comes In Colors," followed by "Colors," by Donovan, or "My Love, She Comes In Colors," by Love, and so on.

These blocks of related music tracks were quite a refreshing innovation to "underground" radio. Slater, actually, had put together some outstanding research, and probably was one of the first air personalities to actually do something like this. Even though there are stations that use this type of programming today, in the late '60s it was considered innovation. It certainly was, having a disc jockey use his talent toward musical sets, and grouping, rather than just give the time and temperature. As stated before, 1967 was when disc jockeys first started to get to really "know" the music, not just play it, and Slater's knowledge of music was quite impressive.

So the new Bill Slater, who was now into more "progressive" music, after his experiences at Monterey Pop and psychedelia, took over the Midnight to 6 show, where he did some minor "set" experimentations, and gave KRLA the heavy edge it didn't have with more conservative, clean-cut, Pat Moore.

One other event, in the Fall of 1967, bears noting. And that is what took place during the Labor Day weekend in September. Foster, knowing that "The New Season," of KRLA, was quite a shock to long-time listeners, who fondly remembered KRLA as "The Original Beatle Station," back in 1964, in KRLA's halcyon days, programmed for KRLA "The 1964 Re-Happening." The entire weekend, KRLA went back in time to play the top hits, from the KRLA 1964 "Tune-Dex" 's. "The 1964 Re-Happening" did capture the excitement of 1964, when KRLA was truly in its heyday. It was an exciting programming feature, as the music of 1964 was some of the rock era's best.

We mentioned earlier, that the two major casualties of "The New Season Of Excitement," were O'Donnell and Biondi. There was one more. Bob Eubanks. Eubanks, by now, had been very successful with his "Newlywed Game" television show, and even though kept his foot in the door with his Sunday afternoon show, by this time, Eubanks was entrenched enough on television to totally leave "The Eleven-Ten Men" lineup.

In the Fall of 1967, Bob Eubanks, a long stalwart of KRLA, and the senior man on the staff, having started in 1960, was heard on KRLA no more. No farewell show, no announcements. Just one Sunday, in the Fall of 1967, and Eubanks was gone.

Eubanks had made the graduation to television, and his other business interests. And that is where Eubanks had wanted to be all along. With Eubanks' departure, the star cluster had lost some of its shine, at "The Station Of The Stars."

This was "The New Season Of Excitement." It did just what it intended to do. It got people to talk about KRLA again. And the station, which had virtually the same disc jockeys, year after year, in virtually the same time slots, now was something new to discover. "The New Season Of Excitement" was a major change for KRLA, and one that caused it to develop a certain hipness it didn't have before. Listeners were now getting used to the new schedule. It would take some time to re-adjust to all the new times for the old favorites. If it had stayed in place, it might have had a chance to gain listeners' sentiments. But after only a month, it changed again.

Casey Kasem had not liked the 9 to Noon shift. It was unfamiliar, and Kasem missed his old hours, where he didn't have to get to work until Noon. Kasem did handle the 9 to Noon show for a few weeks. But it was short lived. For, just a few weeks later, Kasem asked to be let out of his new show, and, instead, concentrate on television and movies. That meant Foster had to find a replacement for Kasem 9 to Noon. Kasem moved into the Sunday morning 6 to Noon shift, where Pat Moore had been heard. Moore, at this time, stopped being on the air.

Kasem's replacement in the 9 to Noon weekday show, was someone rather unknown to Los Angeles listeners, who made his name quite famous in the Seattle area in the mid-'60s. KRLA now welcomed Rhett Walker, known as Rhett Hamilton Walker I, or "R.H.W.I," to the "Eleven-Ten Men" starting lineup.

Rhett Walker had an extensive musical background, holding several higher education degrees in music, and was quite knowledgeable about music. Not just popular music, but classical music, musical instruments, and "music" as an art. Walker was best known to Los Angeles-area listeners, back in December 1964/ January 1965, as the top-rated, and highly popular, afternoon-drive (2 to 6 p.m.) jock at KFXM, San Bernardino. In a city like Los Angeles, which had British disc jockeys, such as "Lord" Tim Hudson at KFVB, Walker was the first New Zealand air personality on L.A. radios. However, no "New Zealand Invasion" occurred with music.

So Walker's New Zealand connection was pretty much played down. Rhett Walker started on KRLA, 9 to Noon, in September 1967, but for unexplained reasons, left KRLA just a few months later.

During Rhett Walker's brief run at KRLA, Walker did go into the community to visit high schools and talk about careers in music and broadcasting. In fact, during the Fall of 1967, Walker was a special guest speaker in an informal, Q. and A. session in the Arcadia High School music band room. We, being a student at Arcadia High School, were in the audience Walker seemed quite stiff, and rather formal, in that meeting. We recall some student asking Walker how much money he made, getting an "It's none of your business" from R.H.W.I. After that, it wasn't clear how many Arcadia Apaches became R.H.W.I. loyalists.

"The New Season Of Excitement" had a lot of fanfare, on KRLA, with frequent on-the-air promos, such as "3 to 6 in the afternoon - "The New Rebel Foster Show" ... 6 to 9 p.m. - "The New Bob Dayton Show ... The New Season Of Excitement on KRLA!"

If nothing else, "The New Season Of Excitement" got people to, once again, take a look at KRLA. It did instill some iron in the KRLA blood, that had been running a little tired in early 1967.

One on-the-air programming casualty, which occurred at this time, was the evening "Teen Toppers" record survey show, which started successfully on The Bob Eubanks Show, back in 1963, and continued into the 6 to 9 p.m. teen slot, when Johnny Hayes took over the shift back in 1966. But when the "new 6 to 9 p.m. Bob" took over in August (Bob Dayton), all mentions of the "Teen Toppers" show were gone. Again, in August 1967, being true to one's school was a little too square for the direction that KRLA was taking now. It could have been handled in a more sophisticated way with the "new Bob," but, unfortunately, when Johnny Hayes left the 6 to 9 p.m. show, the "Teen Toppers" fixture came to an end too.

Several promotions of merit occurred on KRLA, during the last months of 1967. One was in the fall, called the "KRLA Mission: Impossible." The famous television show theme music was played over another trendy KRLA contest. KRLA, also, had come out with the KRLA "Car Car" contest. Listeners could pick up, at Thom McAn Shoe Stores, excellent looking KRLA round stickers -- very attractively and "hipply" done, called "Rubber Baby Buggy Bumper Stickers." These stickers were not only very "hip" looking, printed in psychedelic color combinations, but were made of durable vinyl. For years after this promotion, the round KRLA stickers could still be seen on motor vehicles, all over the Southland.

KRLA also, during the Fall of 1967, besides having its remotes from the Cheetah night club with Jim Wood, featured the KRLA "Saturday Night Thing," dances and concerts, put on by KRLA, at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. The gingerbread-like Pasadena Civic Auditorium, well known for rather stodgy old Pasadena affairs, was home to concerts by The Seeds, The Lollipop Shop, The Wizard Light Show, and other "Summer Of Love" carryovers into the fall.

KRLA continued its KRLA Teen Set magazines. In one notable issue, in late 1967, it featured a "New Season Scrapbook" of the new lineup of "Eleven-Ten Men." However, as like the KRLA Beat then, this was a syndicated magazine, where KRLA only put its name on the cover, and maybe a page or two in the back, if any. Teen Set had contracts with various stations to "localize" the magazine. Those issues of the KRLA Teen Set are quite rare, and impressive.

Also, in late 1967, KRLA presented another classic record album. "KRLA 42 Solid Rocks," was actually a re-release of the first two KRLA albums of that series, and is distinguished by the graphics inside the double fold-out, featuring the names of Rhett Hamilton Walker I, Bob Dayton, Jim Wood, and the other "New Season" KRLA personalities.

One interesting sidenote to "The New Season Of Excitement," was a memorable one for those who happened to be listening at the time. There was, somehow, a power failure in Pasadena, that severed the station's programming, where it was unable to be sent over the antenna towers in South El Monte, at the transmitter site. When that ever happened, and we believe, in that era, it only happened twice, at that time, right inside the Chief Engineer's office in the transmitter building, a reel-to-reel tape, on a console unit, that could instantly be put over the air for emergency programs, was used again. Suddenly, in the middle of the programming, during The Rebel Foster Show, before 6 p.m., a voice came on saying, "Please stand by, KRLA is undergoing transmission problems," etc., and then broke into 1962-era music! This was a quite a time treat -- a blast to an earlier KRLA past. What made this even more eerie, is that the voice heard between the 1962 music, was that of former KRLA Program Director, and air talent, Jim Washburne, who had died in an automobile accident, just the year before.

Those emergency tapes were not updated very often. Because this situation did not happen very frequently, the tapes, or date of when those emergency tapes were made, were

quite easily forgotten, especially by the non-programming-oriented engineering staff at the El Monte transmitter. This tape did go on once before, in about 1965 or 1966, but we distinctly remember this last occurrence in November 1967, on a cool, fall afternoon. We were fortunate to have heard this 1962-era tape, with Jim Washburne's voice, for approximately 45 minutes, until the problem was corrected. It was rather surreal.

However, something happened, in December 1967, that was a real crack in the KRLA we knew and loved. Traditionally, radio stations had certain recognizable time slots, i.e. 6 to 9, 9 to Noon, Noon to 3, 3 to 6, 6 to 9, 9 to Midnight, and Midnight to 6. These slots were comfortable for the listener. It made listening for a long time a pleasure, free from the boredom of hearing the same voice for hours at a time.

In December 1967, Bill Slater left KRLA. Instead of replacing Slater with a new jock, KRLA, for the first time since late 1959, decided to alter the time slots, and expand two deejay shows from 3 hours, now to 4 hours, but, this time, experiment with automation. As we will discuss in the next chapter, what makes radio exciting, is the fact that radio can be "live." When one is listening to the radio, one knows that personality is there right with them. There's an exciting spontaneity to "live" radio, that makes radio so special.

What KRLA did, in December 1967, was to increase Bob Dayton's show to 6 to 10 p.m., move Jim Wood to 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. Then, from 2 to 6 a.m., was KRLA's first experiment with automation. In order to capture the rather avant-garde flavor that Slater had been doing from Midnight to 6 in September, KRLA, instead of bringing in a "live" announcer, to do the 2 to 6 a.m. shift, had the control room engineer ("the other side of the glass") play records back-to-back, without any disc jockey interruption. This program was called "Collage."

"Collage" was a very radical departure from the rest of the KRLA programming. Many of the records played on "Collage" were, for that period, long L.P. cuts, such as "When The Music's Over," by The Doors, or "Revelation," by Love. Having 20-minute records played without interruption, on such an AM station as KRLA, was really a treat. We can recall our father being sick, and having to go to the L.A. County General Hospital, about 2:30 in the morning. That was our first experience in hearing "Collage." It was very similar to the programming on KPPC, the first Los Angeles-area "underground" station.

As a technicality, there was another reason for no disc jockey announcer. Because, according to union rules, the control room engineers could not talk on the radio. Even though it was possible to turn on a mike from the control room, it was "union illegal." So the engineer in the control room, sat "on the other side of the glass," playing these "underground" records, that were not heard the rest of the day.

However, the bad effect of "Collage," which, by the way, just used pre-recorded ID announcements every half hour, was that KRLA "discovered" that taped pre-recorded shows could be profitable, in not having to hire a disc jockey. It could be done just with an engineer, rather than a disc jockey playing records; an engineer "on the other side of the glass," and a transmitter engineer "sitting transmitter," in South El Monte.

When the brass of KRLA could see that this "automated" programming was better for the bottom line, KRLA, in 1968, decided to take this format even further, and, in doing so, almost destroying a radio station in the process. But for now, the taped shows were just limited to the four hours from 2 to 6 a.m. of "Collage."

What started as an engineer "playing records," evolved into the same engineer simply monitoring a four-hour tape. It's also interesting to note that one of the board engineers who played those back-to-back discs, from the control room on "Collage," was one, Bob Sala, who would go on to work at KPPC AM and FM, from the basement of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church, and be an air personality there, along with former KRLA talent, Bill Slater.

With this last note, "The New Season Of Excitement" came to an end, as KRLA entered January 1968. With Hull 6 to 9, Walker 9 to Noon, Hayes Noon to 3, Foster 3 to 6, Dayton 6 to 10, Wood 10 to 2, and "Collage" 2 to 6, KRLA entered 1968 with a whole new look, than where it had been a year before.

It was also the end of the KRLA that we knew and loved. KRLA took an experimental thing like automation, and nearly destroyed the radio station for almost a year, until being rescued, almost a year later, by a hero from San Diego, getting over his own "blues." There were a lot of "blues" for KRLA in 1968. And "those Filbert E. Yarborough blues," were just part of them.

CHAPTER 6

THOSE FILBERT E. YARBOROUGH BLUES

Between September 1959 and September 1967, KRLA had been growing, and polishing itself. Through its early start, to its days of "The Original Beatle Station," right up to "The New Season Of Excitement," there was always something exciting on KRLA to recharge itself, and try to stay current. KRLA had been Number One. But the times "were a changing." KHJ had overtaken KRLA, and was the undisputed leader in Los Angeles radio. So to freshen KRLA's sound, new blood was added to "Radio Eleven-Ten" in the Fall of 1967.

If this format had been left alone, KRLA could have kept up its momentum. But KRLA decided to play around with a winning formula. 1968 would be the year that KRLA would experiment with a deadly substance. There would be a lot of "blues" for KRLA that year, as it experimented with automation, nearly crippling the station in the process.

And it would take a hero from San Diego, who was getting over a different kind of "blues," "those Filbert E. Yarborough blues," to get KRLA on the right track, at the end of the year. This room of our dream-house, KRLA, Chapter 6, will take us from experimentation with automation, almost defeat, and then to a December redemption with a hero named Darin. We now turn to KRLA in January 1968, and a station that had just launched a "New Season Of Excitement," but was unable to keep up its momentum.

KRLA entered the year 1968 with "The New Season" lineup still intact, except that a four-hour automated show had replaced Bill Slater, and the Bob Dayton and Jim Wood shows were expanded from their traditional time slots, in which they started. KRLA discovered, with its four-hour "Collage" show, from 2 to 6 a.m., that automation could be used more heavily without sacrificing the listeners who may not be able to know the difference. When Rhett Walker suddenly left KRLA, a few months after he joined "The Eleven-Ten Men," in early 1968, instead of replacing him with another personality, as had always been the case of "Radio Eleven-Ten," since its start in 1959, KRLA decided to expand its automation further, play around with the time slots, and hope the listeners wouldn't notice.

The listeners did. Instead of bringing in another "Eleven-Ten Man" to replace Rhett Walker, or move Casey Kasem back into the spot, or even Dick Moreland into the 9 to Noon show, KRLA decided to play with the schedule again. The traditional three-hour shifts were broken, as whole new time slots were created, expanding KRLA's automation in the process, and its dependency in 1968 toward using automation to try to solve KRLA's problems, in the ever changing world of 1968.

First, Casey Kasem did not want to go back into the 9 to Noon spot. When he gave it up in September, his reasons were clear. He loved KRLA, but it was time to move on, and go into television and acting, and maybe that for-syndication TOP 40 "countdown" show he had an interest in developing. Dick Moreland was too involved behind the scenes.

So instead of bringing in a new replacement for Walker, what KRLA did was to expand the shifts as follows. The first new lineup in 1968, was Dave Hull 6 to 10, Johnny Hayes 10 to 2, Rebel Foster 2 to 6, Bob Dayton 6 to 10, Jim Wood 10 to 2, and "Collage" 2 to 6 a.m. This lineup would last not too far into the year, and was replaced with the following. Dave Hull would still be 6 to 10 a.m. Dave Hull once told us, back in 1969, that a morning-drive show should not go past 9 a.m. Anything after that runs into a different audience, namely the traditional, at that time in 1968, housewife audience.

However, Hull's show was now 6 to 10, and so it went. From 10 to Noon was Johnny Hayes, now down to two hours, for, at this time, Hayes was involved in the KRLA Music Department. So his air shift would be reduced. Bob Dayton would be moved to Noon to 4. Rebel Foster did the afternoon-drive show, from 4 to 8 p.m. Jim Wood would be from 8 to Midnight. All the above programming would be "live," but from Midnight to 6 would be the "Collage" show. But with a difference.

When "Collage" first started in the 2 to 6 a.m. shift in late 1967, the actual records were played on the turntables in the control room on "the other side of the glass," by the engineer on duty. The engineer would cue them up, and actually play the discs. Later, a tape was played, replacing the records, which was the first use of "automation." By this time though, KRLA had installed on the east wall of the control room, large floor-to-ceiling Shaefer-brand automated units

to automate programming on a radio station. Everything would be put on special reels, and operated by computer. The Shaefer machines would be in operation for the entire "Collage" show, from Midnight to 6.

So "Collage" was now fully on the Shaefer units. The station felt that this was more economical, and less likely to have mistakes. It was to work perfectly. And it seemed to. This further caused the management of KRLA to continue its belief in automated programming, instead of "live" shows.

Also, moving into 1968, KRLA continued its contests based on fads. At this time, the most popular movie in the country was "Bonnie And Clyde." Naturally, KRLA would have a "Bonnie And Clyde" contest, where one would hear skits involving "Bonnie And Clyde." If the listener heard the right cue, and called in, they would win.

KRLA even pathetically tried to revive its "Beatlemania" days by having a Bee Gees fan club, headed by an actually disinterested Bob Dayton. But this was not 1964. Dayton wasn't Dave Hull. And The Bee Gees were not The Beatles. It was a sad, desperate attempt to recapture past glories in an emerging new world, with "Sgt. Pepper" still at the summit.

KRLA would have its final "Valentine Contest," but name-changed to "KRLA Art Festival Contest." The reason it would be discontinued after February 1968, is because of all the anti-war sentiments, one of the "Valentines" given to KRLA in 1968, was that of a bathtub filled with bloody dolls and red paint. This was the anti-war era, and that obviously was a strong statement so different from the painting from February 1967. At that time, KRLA realized that the dream was over. The dream-house was not like it had been anymore.

The first five minutes of Jim Wood's show was a Bill Cosby comedy feature, where Cosby, as "The Brown Hornet," did various comedy routines. This was sponsored by Coca-Cola, and was exclusive to KRLA in the Los Angeles area. Cosby's popularity at that time was not as strong as obviously it would be twenty years later, but it was an interesting side trip in KRLA's history.

The next casualty of early 1968 would be Jim Wood. Jim Wood had a tough job when he started 9 to Midnight, in August 1967, replacing Dick Biondi. He had a completely different style from Biondi and, unfortunately, the Biondi "Porch People," and hard-core Biondi audience, simply turned off the station. Jim Wood was unable to keep Biondi's audience, and had difficulty attaining one of his own. Jim Wood deserved a much longer run, but Wood would leave KRLA in the early part of the year, approximately in March.

So two members of "The New Season" dropped off the lineup, first Walker, who never did catch on, in spite of heavy station promotion, and Jim Wood, whose soulful style just didn't catch on after the audience had been so used to Dick Biondi.

The KRLA Beat would sadly fall from the KRLA lineup in the Spring of 1968. The KRLA Beat had destroyed itself by becoming too big. Finally, in spring 1968, it no longer was called the KRLA Beat, but just The Beat, as it had no more localized information on KRLA. Considering how influential it was back in October 1964, it truly died a slow death. One day it just didn't exist anymore.

Had the KRLA Beat just stayed a local promotional "house organ" on KRLA, it would have probably lasted longer, and been more representative of news "about KRLA," which was its main purpose in the beginning. The KRLA Beat of 1968 did not have much on KRLA itself, if any. They seemed cold and distant, compared to the friendly, first copies of late 1964, when the focus of the KRLA Beat was station involvement, not the entire, national music world.

KRLA tried to catch on to the new, trendy "Laugh-In" television show, by having "Here Comes The Judge" station IDs. But the magic just wasn't there.

The only "new" KRLA personality from 1967 left was Bob Dayton, as both Walker and Wood had left. What KRLA did, instead of replacing Wood, was to, instead, rely even more heavily on automation, and the big Schaefer units in the control room.

The new lineup would be Dave Hull, "live," from 6 to 10. Now, the Johnny Hayes 10 to Noon show would be automated, using the Shaefer units, with just voice tracks by Hayes. Bob Dayton would remain "live," Noon to 4. Rebel Foster would be "live," 4 to 8. Johnny Hayes would be back 8 to Midnight, replacing Wood, with a "live" show. "Collage" would follow, with total automation and no voice tracks, from Midnight to 6.

Now, one-third of the KRLA broadcast day was automated. And it gave the listeners who weren't supposed to know about automation, that here was a KRLA personality (Hayes) working a "split shift" from 10 to Noon, then home, and then back from 8 to Midnight again. Then home at Midnight, sleeping for 8 hours, and then back at 10 a.m.!! KRLA expected the audience to believe this!

Also, in early 1968, KRLA would produce the last record album of the series "Son Of KRLA 21 Solid Rocks Strikes Back Volume 3." There were four records in this series, including the double album (counted as one.) Again, this brought KRLA into homes, and record stores, via the turntable.

We need now to talk about the general atmosphere on KRLA with its programming in 1968. KRLA was moving closer and closer to total automation, and did not replace its airstaff when talent departed. Because of this, KRLA appeared to be a station that was in trouble, of trying to economize. This general philosophy was recognized by the listeners. Listeners also preferred to hear the regular three-hour shifts, instead of hearing the same talent for five or six hours in a row.

By increasing KRLA's shift hours, in spring 1968, it appeared the listeners were, in a way, being short-changed, compared to say Number One KHJ's three-hour shift programming. Unfortunately, KRLA was getting very comfortable with automation in early 1968.

As we mentioned before, the "split shifts" of Johnny Hayes from 10 to Noon recorded, and 8 to Midnight "live," were to be a temporary thing, as in late spring 1968, KRLA decided to carry its automation, and the Shaefer machine dominance, even greater. As of now, only eight hours would be automated, 10 to Noon, and Midnight to 6. The automation was like a drug to KRLA. It kept increasing.

KRLA decided to make a radical step in the Spring of 1968. KRLA would automate every shift, except for drive-times, (6-10, 3-7), Monday thru Saturday, and except for 3 to 7 p.m. on Sunday. Everything else would be pre-recorded total automation. So now we have Dave Hull 6 to 10 "live," Johnny Hayes 10 to 3 "taped," Bob Dayton 3 to 7 p.m. "live," (a good time slot for this excellent personality), and Rebel Foster 7 to Midnight "taped". "Collage" would continue its Midnight to 6 all-automated format.

It was determined that Foster was better suited to automation, than the funny Dayton. So Foster did the taped five-hour shift, while Dayton did a "live" 3 to 7 p.m. show. The "live" 3 to 7 p.m. Sunday show would be done by Casey Kasem "live," and now be called "Sunday Punch." It would now be a special-themed show around one artist or theme. However, Johnny Hayes would be on every day, seven days a week, 10 to 3, Monday thru Saturday, and 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sundays. KRLA apparently didn't worry that the audience would wonder why Johnny Hayes didn't get one day off a week.

At this time, Dick Moreland would continue to no longer have any regular shows, (he hadn't since August), but simply "fill-in" whenever the shift was vacant. One night, in June 1968, right after the Robert Kennedy assassination, Dick Moreland did a "live" 7 to Midnight show, in place of the automated Rebel Foster. The evening hours hadn't sounded this good in months.

It was also in 1968, that KRLA started its revolutionary "news" concept, "The Credibility Gap." This featured Lou Irwin, Richard Beebe, John Land, Thom Beck, and, later, various others, such as Harry Shearer, and David L. Lander, over the next year or two, including KRLA's resident songwriter musician, Len Chandler. Chandler would actually write a song based on the news of the day. And "The Credibility Gap" did various skits such as "Just Plain Sam," satirizing then-Mayor Sam Yorty of Los Angeles, in 1968, and others like Richard Nixon.

"The Credibility Gap" was a revolutionary attempt at something different in news. The only real criticism of "The Credibility Gap," at that time, was that it usually reflected the more "anti-establishment" viewpoint, and was somewhat slightly biased in that regard. But, at that time in 1968, being "liberal" was very much in vogue. KRLA, trying to stay "with it," encouraged "The Credibility Gap" to have an anti-establishment direction.

One side note on KRLA's automation. In the disc jockey booth, during this time when automation would be sixteen hours of the broadcast day, doubling up from eight, there was a handmade sign, up on the wall of the disc jockey booth. On the sign? "And then there were three!" meaning that now there were only three "live" voices to the KRLA programming: 6 to 10 a.m. Monday thru Saturday with Dave Hull. Bob Dayton "live," 3 to 7 p.m. Monday thru Saturday, and Casey Kasem "live," 3 to 7 p.m. on Sunday.

"And then there were three." That's a big, big change from just one year before. But automation had moved fully into KRLA's programming. This automation dragged the station into the gutters. It was clear, to careful listeners, that the station was mostly automated, simply by hearing the same introduction before certain songs.

However, 1968 on KRLA did have one particular bright note. On late Sunday nights, KRLA, with voice tracks by Johnny Hayes, had a pre-recorded show called "Collector's Corner." Here, record albums would be played in full, Side 1, and then Side 2, without interruption. This was an innovative idea at the time, but pressure from record companies, concerned about home

taping, caused this show to not have as long a run as it should. KRTH-FM tried this same idea years later, in 1979 on late nights, and met with the same resistance by record companies.

The next change to KRLA would come in July, when Johnny Hayes would leave KRLA in July, and be replaced by one of the early "Eleven-Ten Men," Roy Elwell, in a fully automated show, 10 to 3 Monday thru Saturday, and 9:30 to 3 on Sunday. Hayes, we were told, was burned out by automation, and needed a break.

However, the Roy Elwell in July 1968, appeared radically different from the Roy Elwell in 1962. Over the past few years, Elwell was involved in Talk radio, most noticeably on KLAC in the important 4 to 7 p.m. afternoon-drive spot. There, Elwell was a "Liberal" voice, to balance the "Conservative" sounds of, say, Marv Gray, Bob Grant, or Ray Briem.

So when Elwell re-joined KRLA, in July 1968, on Elwell's taped show there were personal spots from Elwell for "New Left" causes such as "Greenpeace," to the Free Clinic, and other liberal organizations, were frequently talked about by Elwell. If it was embraced by the counterculture, or had a certain "social consciousness," it would be mentioned on the pre-recorded Roy Elwell show. No mentions of "ridin' with Roy," or the famous Elwell-coined word, "Angelenos," would turn up on his 1968 shows.

With the exception of Dave Hull's 6 to 10 show, or Bob Dayton's or Casey Kasem's 3 to 7, the rest of the day, sixteen hours, was all pre-recorded on the Shaefer units. Because of its strong influence, the radical counterculture was very influential to KRLA at this time. FM radio, with "Underground Sunshine" KMET, was on the rise. So was KPPC, all-recovered from its big strike, but still pulling in listeners, all along.

During the Summer of 1968, KRLA tried to be a "hip" alternative to KHJ, its biggest competitor. But KRLA sounded sterile, and lacked the excellence and spontaneity that only "live" radio can bring.

So now it was time for KRLA to enter the Fall of 1968. It seemed like "The New Season Of Excitement" left long, long ago, faded away into another past memory. KRLA was now automated for sixteen hours out of its 24-hour day.

In September 1968, Dave Hull took a several-weeks vacation from his morning show. Instead of automating the morning show, as management did want to keep this block "live," KRLA, instead, brought in a New York-style comedian, Murray Roman to take over for Hull's 6 to 10 a.m. show.

Murray Roman had a very New York-style sense of humor, and a very, very "down," cynical morning style, compared to the highly excitable Dave Hull. It was interesting, at this time in "California KRLA" 's history, to have two New York voices, in its important drive-time shows, Roman 6 to 10, and Dayton, also with a New York philosophical-cynicism sense of humor, from 3 to 7 p.m.

But KRLA, during the year 1968, stopped being a major force in Los Angeles radio. Because of its heavy dependence on automation, KRLA sunk to its lowest depths in the nine-year history of the station. Dave Hull returned to KRLA that October, and Murray Roman left the KRLA drive-time lineup.

Also, in KRLA's history that fall, KRLA continually tried to be on top of the "latest". A new ID, with Dick Moreland's voice was cut, with the words, "Do Your Own Thing Today, KRLA, Pasadena." This was 1968, a radical time in the world. And KRLA tried to be hip. The music, and vocal track fragment, for this ID, came from a Brook Benton single.

So KRLA, as it moved into the Fall of 1968, was a sterile, automated, former great radio station. The station was now automated all day, except for just eight hours. The lineup was Hull 6 to 10, Elwell 10 to 3 (taped), Dayton 3 to 7, Foster 7 to Midnight (taped) and "Collage," Midnight to 6 (taped). Casey Kasem's "Sunday Punch" was "live" on Sunday from 3 to 7, the only bright spot on Sunday. Only four hours of KRLA's music programming was "live," on Sunday.

Before we close the year, there was one memorable programming milestone that needs to be mentioned at this time. It was in November 1968, that KRLA would have its "last hurrah" with "Beatlemania."

KRLA had a program that would feature Dave Hull interviewing Beatle George Harrison, in a song-by-song debut of The Beatles' "White Album." Hull told us it was actually Dick Moreland who interviewed Harrison, and Hull's voice was later added, replacing Moreland's, to give the illusion that Hull was actually the one asking the questions. Hull interviewed Harrison about each song. Harrison made comments cut-by-cut. At the end of the show was a priceless classic salute to KRLA, "The Original Beatle Station."

Since Hull used to give away on-the-air, the home addresses of The Beatles, Harrison decided to "give away" Dave Hull's Arcadia home address, at 2039 Elkins Place, Arcadia, (do not

disturb occupants!) on the air! Even though Hull was privately offended by The Beatles' drug use, and the "Christ statement" of 1966, this was really the last Dave Hull "Beatle Special" on KRLA. The show was featured late one afternoon on The Bcb Dayton Show. It was really a symbol for the end of KRLA's "Beatlemania." The following year, just two months away, would be "Music Power '69," and its many changes, including a sad one for a living legend.

So in December 1968, it was clear that KRLA was no longer the force it once was. The station was sterile, with no spontaneity, and was a weak imitation of the great radio station with such potential with "The New Season Of Excitement," just over a year ago. KRLA was truly feeling the "blues."

However in San Diego, someone else, also, was feeling "blues." The "blues" this bright, articulate, intelligent and very excellent radio personality was feeling was from a building that looked like a tract home, where 52nd and Kalmia came together, in San Diego. The same building where the sound of Johnny Hayes came from back in 1965. For the personality at KGB, San Diego, was facing a different kind of "blues." He was down with a bad case of "Those Filbert E. Yarborough Blues."

The road to the "big time," ahead of aspiring California radio personalities, sometimes, and usually, takes many turns. One day, in 1961, before he was even in broadcasting, a young man visited the lobby of KRLA, at The Huntington Hotel. That's where he wanted to be someday, looking into the deejay booth, watching "The Eleven-Ten Men" at work.

The young man, John Miller, had come all the way from Ventura County to visit the lobby of KRLA, and that big glass window. Miller returned to Ventura County, where he started working at a small station in Oxnard, KACY. Miller already knew that KRLA alumni Bob Eubanks, Dick Moreland, newsman Jim Steck, Bill Keffury, and Pat Moore, had all made KACY a stopping point in their journey to "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," from KACY's three transmitter towers on Pleasant Valley Road, in Oxnard.

Miller's full name was John Christian Miller. To make the name shorter, he became "Johnny Christian." Johnny Christian became one of the most popular of the KACY air force, and so to move into a bigger market, Christian moved to KMEN, San Bernardino, where such heavyweights as William F. Williams, Buddy Budnik, Jim Mitchell (Jim Lawrence), Donn Tyler, and Mark Denis had been behind the KMEN mike.

However, when Christian joined KMEN, there was one problem. Already on KMEN was Chuck Christensen, later to be known to Los Angeles listeners on KGBS-FM, Flint Peak, as "Chris Charles," in 1969 and 1970. Christensen, already established at KMEN, thought that the name "Johnny Christian" would be too confusing. So John Christian Miller would have to change his name before going on the air.

In the KMEN studio on Baseline was a flyer poster, advertising a James Darren concert that KMEN was hosting at the Swing Auditorium, at the Orange Show grounds, in San Bernardino. It was quickly decided that "Johnny Christian" would become "Johnnie Darin." Miller preferred the spelling "Darin" over "Darren," and "Johnnie" over "Johnny." And so The Johnnie Darin Show was born.

Johnnie Darin would not only become highly popular at KMEN with his movie star, matinee-idol looks, but would also become the Music Director of KMEN, also. However, to all KMEN personalities, the Bill Drake chain of "Boss Radio" stations was the place to really want to be at. To someday join Johnny Mitchell and Gary Mack at Number One KHJ, on Venice at Fairfax in Southwest Los Angeles, was a goal of all suburban personalities.

Darin thought he had that chance when he moved from KMEN to KGB, San Diego, the home of such Drake "Boss Jocks," in the past, as Johnny Hayes, Steve Jay, Mark Denis, and Dick Sainte. From KGB, San Diego, Darin knew the next stop would be either KFRC, San Francisco, another Drake powerhouse, or maybe the big time at Number One KHJ!

However when Darin was at KGB, due to various politics, it was clear that he didn't see that Drake would ever move him to KHJ, his ultimate goal. Darin had the opportunity to go to KFRC, San Francisco, which may be a dead-end in the Bay Area, with no hope of going to KHJ, or move to Los Angeles from KGB, to join a struggling, mostly automated station, which used to be the biggest station in the country, and the one he had visited years before, KRLA.

The decision for Darin was pretty easy. He wanted to stay in Southern California, and knew that KFRC wouldn't produce a ticket to KHJ. So Darin, upon hearing that his friend, Doug Cox, was about to take over the programming at KRLA, Darin was offered a proposition by Cox. Would Darin come to KRLA, in December of 1968 to just behind-the-scenes production. No on-the-air work -- maybe sometime in the future, though. Maybe, if Cox as P.D. was able to adjust the schedule, then maybe Darin could be on the air, but no guarantees for now.

Darin, feeling discouraged that he would not be able to go on to Bill Drake's KHJ, thought that this was the end of the line for him, as part of the Drake organization. So Darin said "yes" to Cox, and joined KRLA as a production man, as Doug Cox came aboard KRLA to try to salvage the almost fully-by-now-automated KRLA, once a great station, now an automated sleeping giant.

Darin started on KRLA doing production, his voice not heard on the air. However, for a talent as good as Darin's, the absence of being on the air was quite hard. Darin frankly missed being behind the mike. The idea of Cox and Darin was to maybe do a voice character on Dave Hull's 6 to 10 a.m. show, as Hull's show was starting to show its age. This character would maybe help Hull with news, or traffic, or, maybe even, comedy bits.

However, to aid the free-form of it all, and because Darin wanted to keep a low profile, in case the whole thing didn't work out, Darin would have to call himself something else. Darin, who still felt bad about not being in line, in the future, to go to KHJ, under Bill Drake, had a brainstorm.

Bill Drake, a founder of "Boss Radio" KHJ, never used his real name, Phil Yarborough. He was always "Bill Drake," as Yarborough wanted a name to rhyme with "WAKE" radio, in Georgia, where he had launched his career. Very few people, as far as listeners, knew who "Phil Yarborough" was. Everyone knew Yarborough as "Bill Drake."

Here was Darin's brainstorm. Since he was pretty much burned out being a Drake "Boss Jock" from KGB, Darin would call this sad, pathetic character for Hull's show, "Filbert E. Yarborough," a play-off on Drake's real name. It was a classic inside joke. So on The Dave Hull Show, this sad, young character would come on, and talk to Hull, calling himself "Filbert E. Yarborough."

It was a great two-man show. Hull and "Filbert E. Yarborough." The Dave Hull Show, which had slowed down, since its great sendoff in August 1967, needed this new blood. Hull was excellent, as he traded lines with this sad, pathetic "Filbert E. Yarborough." No one really knew who this "Yarborough" was, except that, throughout the day now, one could hear "Yarborough" 's voice doing promos, and some commercials, all, of course, without an identifying name.

However, at KRLA, in a station that had had no new voices since Rhett Walker over a year before, it was a treat to listeners hearing a fresh new sound on KRLA. Whoever this "Yarborough" was, he was good. This went on for several weeks until, one day, Bob Dayton called in sick. Doug Cox, the new Program Director, had to have someone go on "live" --fast! The only one at the station who Cox could use, since Moreland was unavailable, and Kasem was involved in other business, was Johnnie Darin. But instead of going on the air as "Filbert E. Yarborough," this would be Darin's time to finally debut on KRLA as Johnnie Darin.

So one afternoon, in December 1968, on the 3 to 7 p.m. Bob Dayton show "live," was Johnnie Darin. Darin introduced himself to Los Angeles audiences, and said it's a pleasure to be on KRLA, and to be finally getting over "those Filbert E. Yarborough blues." Darin, on this 3 to 7 p.m. show, sounded great. It was truly refreshing to hear something new on KRLA. KRLA which promoted itself with "The New Season" the year before, had sunk into low depths with a skeleton crew of personalities, and plenty of sterile automation.

Now, Doug Cox was about to try to make KRLA important again. There still was hope. Johnnie Darin sounded great, but in December it was just fill-ins. Once Darin had the substitution for Bob Dayton, the "Filbert E. Yarborough" character was dropped from Dave Hull's show.

Also, right around the end of the year, KRLA, in jest of recent earthquake predictions for early 1969, where California was supposed to drop in the ocean, produced a series of skits, featuring a fast talking salesman named "Sam Andreas," (like in "San Andreas Fault"), who would advertise for people to buy soon-to-be beach-front property in the desert, in anticipation of the rest of California dropping into the ocean, and where the hot new beachfront property would be in Blythe, or points east, in the desert. This was a very clever promotion, and one that is memorable to this day with much earthquake activity in California the past few years. (How about bringing "Sam Andreas" to KRLA now?)

Also, at this time, a very memorable photograph was taken at KRLA. It showed all the KRLA disc jockeys, in December 1968, standing on the lobby stairs, at the hotel studios, without their shirts on, and standing, in such a way, that they all looked like they were naked. It was quite a sight to see the bald, hairy-chested Roy Elwell, next to the clean-cut Johnnie Darin -- two eras of KRLA's history brought together for one surreal moment.

So Doug Cox, in late December of 1968, continued to try to make his impression on KRLA. Cox had some definite plans for KRLA's future, for 1969, to try to get the station back on top. However, one of the current "Eleven-Ten Men" would be leaving the lineup. And that was Roy Elwell. Elwell, who had just returned in July, had his primary interest in television, and Channel 9 "Tempo" shows. So Elwell would not be continuing into 1969. Also, Cox wanted a

more younger, brighter sound, for the coming year, with its hopeful more "live" shows.

Cox did not like automation, but the Shaefer machines had cost a lot of money. For now, Cox was stuck with them. So Cox would be bringing in someone else to take Elwell's place, 10 to 3, as Johnnie Darin did not want those hours for a taped show, and wanted to continue in production, at least for now.

Cox had the 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. shift to fill with a new "Eleven-Ten Man." He would have this new personality do it pre-recorded on the Shaefer units until, maybe, something else might develop with "live" radio. But it was clear that the 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show would have to remain taped for now. And his first 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show would not be until New Year's Day, 1969. Roy Elwell would stay on right through December 31st.

The man who Cox selected as his new midday "Eleven-Ten Man" was best known to Los Angeles listeners from KBLA, in the Verdugo Mountains, in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, right up to the very last day of that station, in June 1967. But before KBLA, this next radio superstar had a very interesting path before he got back to Los Angeles and KRLA. It would be truly up, up and away for William F. Williams.

William F. Williams first started in Southern California after he had been out of the service in 1962, at KMEN, San Bernardino, when that station changed over to a TOP 40 format, from what it was before as KITO. Williams was the original Midnight to 6 man. Williams was highly popular in the Midnight to 6 spot. But when Dean Weber, the original Noon to 3 at KMEN left, Williams was immediately put into that Noon to 3 time slot, where Williams became quite popular with the housewife audience.

Williams wanted to break into Los Angeles radio. So when KBLA, high atop the Verdugo Mountains, wanted to go to an all-"live" disc jockey format, Williams was signed by KBLA, in the 8 to Midnight show, before later moving into the 9 to Noon shift. However, KMEN in 1966 needed Williams back to do morning-drive in San Bernardino. So Williams went back to KMEN, for the 6 to 9 a.m. show in 1966, the same era that Johnnie Darin was there.

An interesting side note to William F. Williams at KMEN. The station had a cartoon mascot called "Bernie," who was a little blond-haired strongman type of character, who was featured in all the station logos. The character would be standing in striped trunks with no shirt, and holding a "discus"- type weight, and flexing his muscle.

KMEN, also, at that time, put out a record list survey folder each week, with pictures of all the air talent, usually in a head-and-shoulder coat-and-tie picture, very traditional for that era. Except for Williams, whose picture showed him standing like "Bernie," with no shirt on, and with a big smile! Williams had a great ego, and was a pretty macho guy, as well.

Williams came back to KBLA in the Spring of 1967. Williams, had earlier, left KMEN, to work afternoon-drive, 3 to 7 p.m., at KCBQ, Santee, in early 1967. Williams, at KBLA replaced Bobby St. Thomas, in the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, and stayed on KBLA, right up to its last day, in June 1967, when the station switched to a Country music format, and new call letters, KBBQ. At that time, Williams called himself "Bill Williams," as William F. Williams was too TOP 40 sounding for a Country music station. So Williams was certainly a box-office name, that Doug Cox was glad to have, as part of the "Radio Eleven-Ten" lineup, and the pre-recorded 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show.

However, Williams may be more famous for another story. While in the service, Williams was said to be involved with hot-air balloons, for military purposes. So when KMEN, in 1966, decided to have a hot-air balloon promotion, where the station had a huge hot-air balloon on Orange Show Road, directly across the freeway from the little white building in the golf course, and triple transmitter towers of KFXM, its rival station, Williams was selected to be the KMEN personality to go up in the balloon with the listeners, on short, ten-minute flights to promote KMEN. No other station had used hot-air balloons, before this time. It was because Williams knew how to pilot a hot-air balloon, and so was a natural for this promotion.

KMEN then invited listeners, all over the inland area, to take these free balloon rides with William F. Williams, "The Prophet," as they called him, because of his philosophical views on life. One of the listeners who heard about this hot-air balloon, was a young college student named Jim, from one of the local community colleges, who liked to write songs. Jim thought that a song about a hot-air balloon would be a great idea, but he wanted to experience the sensation of hot-air ballooning for himself.

Jim waited in line, on Orange Show Road, for his turn to go up in the wicker basket with Williams. Apparently, Jim liked the experience, because when he got down, he went back to his room at the college, and wrote a song all about William F. Williams, and the KMEN "Magnificent Flying Machine," as the balloon was called by Williams.

Jim went back to the balloon site, a few days later, where Williams was still taking the

listeners up in the balloon. He told Williams about the song, but it needed a title, and some additional lyrics and hooks.

Williams gave Jim the title.

"How about calling it 'Up, Up And Away!?', " said Williams to the young songwriter.

The young songwriter put Williams' words in the song, and as the title. And the record "Up, Up And Away," written about William F. Williams' "Magnificent Flying Machine" balloon, became a million-seller for The Fifth Dimension.

And Jim? He was Jimmy Webb, one of the most popular, and prolific, songwriters of the late 1960s. It was no surprise that when we met William F. Williams, back in 1984 at Williams' Lake Arrowhead cabin, that there would be pictures of hot-air balloons all along Williams' staircase.

So William F. Williams was to start on KRLA from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. everyday, beginning January 1st. However, because of the Pasadena Rose Parade, Cox wanted to have KRLA "live" from 3 p.m. on December 31st, all the way up to 10 in the morning on New Year's Day, so the parade-goers, on the parade route, could listen to KRLA, and get up-to-the minute traffic reports, and pre-parade information, in Pasadena where the KRLA studios were at The Huntington Hotel. So as a "sneak preview," to Williams' January 1st, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. pre-recorded show, Cox asked Williams to do Rebel Foster's 7 to Midnight show "live," for the pre-parade festivities.

On December 31, 1968 we had a brainstorm. We would stow away in a church building on Colorado Boulevard. Then, at Midnight, we would go across the roof, to the building's roof next door, a former restaurant called "The Headliner," and watch the parade from a great bird's-eye vantage point.

While we were stowing away in a church lounge in the Sunday School building, after everyone had left, we had with us our little G.E. transistor radio to our ear, so we wouldn't get bored. When we turned on the radio, we heard KRLA programming "live" with William F. Williams, instead of Rebel Foster, which was always taped. We immediately knew that something was up on KRLA. First, it was Johnnie Darin joining KRLA in December. Now, William F. Williams. Something was happening at KRLA.

As the night set in, we looked out the window, and saw the Pasadena City Hall, with its multi-colored "light show" inside its tower. The lounge was dark. We were the only ones in the building. We lay quietly on the couch, with William F. Williams, on KRLA, next to our ear.

We fell asleep, listening to the dream-house about to enter a New Year.

CHAPTER 7

IFIACFI

The clock struck Midnight. The little room in the church building, where we spent most of the night stowed away, was now dark. The radio was turned on. William F. Williams had just concluded his very first show on KRLA. Now, Dick Moreland was hosting the "Collage" show, but, for the first time, the "Collage" show was "live." The show sounded so much better. Why hadn't it have been "live" all along?

As we walked out to the roof of the old "Headliner" Coffee Shop, on Colorado Boulevard, to wait for the parade the next morning, the Dick Moreland "Collage" show filled the nighttime air. "Going Home," by The Rolling Stones. A long cut. That's totally wild. Dick Moreland playing a heavy Rolling Stones' song! The giant, twin transmitter towers of KPPC-AM towered over our head. The red lights, and Independent and Star-News neon signs, in the middle of each one, gave a glow to the Midnight sky. They looked so huge, so powerful, from where we were. 1240 seemed mighty, even if it was only 100 watts.

The following morning, after the parade, we were walking home. KRLA was again coming out of the transistor radio.

"This is William F. Williams, the new kid on the block, bringing you love and peace, everyday from 10 to 3." So that's what Williams would be doing. What happened to Roy Elwell?

And so 1969 was here. KRLA entered another year in its history. Doug Cox, as we stated in the last chapter, had signed on as KRLA Program Director, to take KRLA into a new direction, away from the "blues" of automation. Johnnie Darin was brought in to do productions. New jingles had been ordered for KRLA, for the first time since 1966.

The lineup that Cox inherited was Dave Hull, 6 to 10 a.m. "live," William F. Williams, now replacing Roy Elwell, 10 to 3, "taped," Bob Dayton, "live," from 3 to 7, and Rebel Foster, 7 to Midnight, "taped." This schedule was unacceptable to Cox, as Cox wanted to move away from "taped" shows everyday. But this was okay, at least for now.

Dick Moreland and Casey Kasem were still on the weekends, with Casey Kasem's "Sunday Punch" program, each Sunday 3 to 7, having a particular theme. Moreland didn't have a regular shift anymore, but was there if the station needed him on the air. The "Collage" taped show was all-night, but Cox, again, was unhappy with KRLA's automation. He knew it had to go. And 1969 would be the year it would.

There was one other problem that Cox faced, in January 1969. That was what to do about Dave Hull. Dave Hull had been morning man since August 1967, but clearly was a relic of the past eras of KRLA, "The Original Beattle Station," and junk floats. Since Cox knew that Hull's contract was up, that January 1st, Cox decided that "The Hullabalooer" was not in his plans for KRLA "Music Power '69," as Cox called his new plans.

So at the end of Hull's show, right after the first of the year, at 10 a.m., Hull was summoned into Cox's office. Doug Cox paid Hull everything owed to him, and became the man who fired Dave Hull. This was January 1969. It wasn't 1967 anymore, when scores of fans would go down to the station, and have a demonstration on the porch, to bring back their "Hullabalooer."

It was felt that Dave Hull was too square, and too un-hip, to be part of KRLA's new direction. Plus, since all the rest of the "old guard," under John Barrett's management, including Barrett himself, had left, it was no surprise that Hull would be "swept out," too.

We recall visiting Hull at his Arcadia home, at 2039 Elkins Place, (do not disturb occupants!) where Hull, in his bathrobe, took us out by his pool, remembering us from November 1965, and the junior high interview we did, and told us what had happened. Hull would be soon going to M.O.R. KFI, in La Mirada. But it was truly the end of an era, as Dave Hull was no longer part of the "Eleven-Ten Men."

Hull, however, would do some of his best moments in radio, during this time away from KRLA, when he joined KGBS, Lynwood, in 1971, where Hull along with two friends of his, who would telephone his show, and have some of the funniest moments ever in Silver Age radio, with Dave Hull's "Dial-A-Date."

KRLA, without Dave Hull, would certainly be different. That's what Cox wanted. It was the end of an era. But Cox wanted a new sound for "Radio Eleven-Ten." Having Hull stay on-the-air

was not in the plans.

So Cox had to rebuild the KRLA schedule, at this point. To do so, required putting in a new morning man, to replace Dave Hull, and to have a schedule of mostly "live" programming, to get KRLA to where he, and Darin in production, wanted to take it. And that is back to Number One. It was clear, in early 1969, that KRLA did experience a rebirth.

First, KRLA had new jingles, for the first time in three years. Probably, the greatest "jingle" of all was actually a record-length song, that was part of these new, early 1969, KRLA jingles.

It sounded more like a TOP 40 hit record, than a jingle, and, in a style reminiscent of The Buckingham's, the male voices, for about 2-3 minutes, sang lyrics about how KRLA "down from the foothills, to the ocean," is always there, and that KRLA is "just doin' our thing." The most important lyrics were, "KRLA is a four-letter word," meaning that KRLA is more than just four call letters, but a word in itself, representing all there is that is excellent of Southern California - and that KRLA personifies that excellence. In the middle of this classic "jingle" song, Beatle George Harrison's voice, from the late 1968 "White Album" KRLA premiere, was heard saying, "It's all in the mind, really."

The song (probably called "KRLA Is A Four-Letter Word") concluded with the immortal phrase, "KRL-Amen." When we wrote the 80-page thesis on KRLA, in October 1969, in junior college, this song was highly inspirational to us at that time, as we remembered it really represented KRLA's "rebirth" in 1969, from "those Filbert E. Yarborough blues," and stagnant automation, to "Music Power '69." The song should have been released as a single.

In 1990, we called Johnnie Darin, and asked him if he knew any specifics on it. Darin said that it probably was put out by Doug Cox and Dick Moreland. Darin speculated that Cox himself may have been the lead singer, as Cox had dabbled in music. We have a scratchy, scoped version of the song, on an aircheck in our morgue, and even though poor quality, it still can be heard, bringing back memories of those magnificent transmitter towers in South El Monte, with the mountains to the north very visible, on a clear day, under Princess Blue Sky.

Next, Cox had white-with-red "KRLA Music Power '69" button pins, that would be used to spread the word that KRLA had truly changed from its low point in 1968. "Music Power '69" was the slogan. Cox's philosophy was to emphasize that KRLA would be a great blend of not only the top 45s, but, because FM was becoming so popular, with KPPC and KMET, to play the best tracks off of hit albums. These "Long Play Weekends" would be featured every weekend, where every other song was a non-45 album track. It was brilliant programming as far as the music.

So with the music now adjusted, with a tremendous amount of L.P. tracks next to the KRLA hit singles, Cox, then, worked on the schedule. The first order of business would be a new morning man. The most natural choice would have been to move the already popular, afternoon-drive jock, Bob Dayton, into the morning-drive. But Cox decided to keep Dayton where he was.

We felt having Dayton in the mornings, and Johnnie Darin in the 3 to 7 afternoon show, where he had done such a superb job substituting for Bob Dayton the past December, would have been the best choice. By this time, Bob Dayton had been an established personality. His double entendres, and one-liners, were a good fixture for his show, and would have been appreciated in the morning, to this more-sophisticated audience.

But what Cox did was to put William F. Williams into the morning show "live," from 6 to 9 a.m. Williams already had been a morning man at KMEN, as we discussed in the last chapter, having had a following already, Cox gave Williams, Hull's old morning show. This was quite a shock to most listeners, who were so used to Hull in the mornings. To hear someone else in that time slot was quite a jolt.

Williams decided, as a gesture to Dave Hull's old audience, to keep something similar to what Hull did, by having a "panty hose" pull-on, as opposed to Dave Hull's "girdle" pull-on. Williams did this for a few days in January, but dropped it after a very short time. Where Hull was silly and adolescent, in the girdle pull-on, Williams was sophisticated, and somewhat suggestive, when he told his female audience members to slip on their panty hose.

One of the best KRLA promotional spots for Williams, was one where the voice of Sie Holliday was heard, saying very sexy-like, "I came back! I came back to nature!" The voice went on saying how she "threw away her girdle," and encouraged other William F. Williams' listeners to do the same, and "come back to nature!"

As joking about his female listeners' girdles was so much a part of Dave Hull's show, this new "anti-girdle" approach also showed that William F. Williams was now the new KRLA morning star, and past references to departed KRLA jocks should be discarded, too.

But it was the last line of these promotion spots that really played up the new

sophistication, and suggestive risqueness of Williams. After the female voice said, "I came back! I threw away my girdle, and came back to nature!," the next voice was Williams. In a rather sophisticated, suggestive tone, Williams replied, "And I'm glad she did." A classic spot!

KRLA also had a promotion, on Williams' show, where Williams would be awarding money (as a prize) to the best painted, and decorated, ash cans, that would be placed on curbs. Also, of course, the ash cans had to have the letters "KRLA" painted proudly on them.

Williams could be found going into the KRLA suburbs, looking for "KRLA Ash Cans," to give out prize money. KRLA was trying to make a big high-profile comeback, with William F. Williams as the new morning man!

Where Dave Hull could be silly at times, Williams always had a sophistication, and a cocky coolness. Unfortunately, Williams had big shoes to step in. It would be difficult to keep Hull's audience, but Williams went ahead, with style and grace.

Following Williams, from 9 to Noon "live," Cox put in Rebel Foster. As you may recall from an earlier chapter, Foster already had those hours back in 1967, replacing Bob Eubanks, who had been in his best hours, 9 to Noon, at that time. Moving Foster to those hours again, now seemed unusual, except that Foster was getting older. As one of the senior men at the station, Foster was used to try to get the housewife audience, and did so with his usual, energetic style. However, by this time, the "Maude Skidmore" character had been almost totally eliminated, and probably would not have gone over very well with 1969 housewives, with their everyday dreams.

As Cox had promised Johnnie Darin that he would be moving into a regular shift as soon as possible, the sooner now came, when Johnnie Darin took over the Noon to 3 hours, "live".

Johnnie Darin would turn out to be one of our favorites in KRLA's history, as the next few years will show. Darin had two distinguishable trademarks. First, Darin never said "The Johnnie Darin Show." It was always, "KRLA with Johnnie Darin." Darin felt, that after the rigid Drake-format, where one had to say certain things, Darin liked the new freedom at KRLA.

Also, Darin had another trademark on his shows. Darin would play "cover versions," very nicely segued together. In radio, where there usually was talking between every record, it was nice to hear two versions of the same song, blended together uninterrupted. It was one of Darin's best features.

Also, during early 1969, a series of promotion spots were heard on KRLA. The voices of William F. Williams and Johnnie Darin were heard, encouraging listeners to "stamp out," and avoid, "Rank Radio," (Webster defines "rank" as "strong and unpleasant in odor or taste") and, instead, keep it on "Radio Eleven-Ten." "Rank Radio," obviously, was referring to KRLA's rival, now firmly entrenched in the Number One spot, in Los Angeles radios, KHJ. Referring to KHJ indirectly as "Rank Radio" was a nice dig, and showed KRLA was going to be fighting back, and try to reclaim its once-upon-a-time winning ratings.

Bob Dayton was kept 3 to 7 p.m. Cox wanted to have some kind of continuity with the old KRLA from the past year. Since Dayton was already quite successful in that time slot, Cox decided not to move him. Cox still needed at least two, or three, more personalities, but they would come later, during "Music Power '69"'s formulation.

To program the 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. hours, at this time, Cox split them up into two. "Collage" would remain automated, until he could get a personality for those all-night hours. For the meantime, "Collage" was set, Midnight to 6. For 7 to Midnight, until Cox could fill that with someone he had in mind who was not yet available, he created an automated, back-to-back, album cut show, called "Odyssey." Using the voice of Dick Moreland for some song introductions, and promos, it would be a carbon copy of "Collage," but featuring shorter cuts, rather than the long versions that "Collage" featured.

This would be Dick Moreland's swan song at KRLA. Moreland had been a fixture at KRLA the longest, since 1961. For those listeners who remember "Odyssey," that was the last time that Moreland's voice would be heard on KRLA until 1981. For so much of the glory years of "Radio Eleven-Ten," Moreland's voice was heard on promo, after promo, after promo, and in so many time slots. But "Music Power '69" did not have a place for Moreland. So Moreland exited KRLA around February 1969, after the "Odyssey" program came to an end. There was no farewell show for Moreland. He just faded away. Moreland deserved a much better "finale." It was sad to hear KRLA without Moreland's deep voice, and friendly, familiar sound.

So this was the lineup for "Music Power '69," in January. It was the first real major change at KRLA, in almost a year. The most important thing, so far, is that the automation was on its way out. This would be the most important accomplishment of the Doug Cox era, and that was to finally, get rid of the automation, totally.

Cox was given a lot of freedom by station management to implement his new ideas, as he

was highly respected and a favorite of KRLA management exec, at that time, Larry Webb, and, we were told, that "Webb always liked Cox."

The man that Cox brought in, to do the 7 to 11 p.m. show at KRLA, replacing the interim "Odyssey," in February of 1969, was first heard to Southern California listeners at KCBQ, Santee, where he hosted a sort of an "underground" -on-AM show. Jimmy Rabbitt, (real name: Dale Payne) was truly a new breed of AM disc jockey. Rabbitt was an influential part of what Cox wanted for KRLA.

Rabbitt, with shoulder-length hair, and ever-present sunglasses, was certainly an original. He preferred to play the heavier, "underground" -type records, that were becoming more and more popular, at that time. Rabbitt did so, in a style that fit in to AM radio, and it did work!

KRLA had a major promotion for "The Rabbitt," with printed, graphic ads showing a graphic photo-drawing of Rabbitt as a head on a radio, with carrots reflected in his glasses. "Turn On Jimmy Rabbitt," was the slogan. Having Rabbitt on "Radio Eleven-Ten," did attract the "heavier" music listeners, who had been turning off AM radio for the more "progressive" sounds of FM.

Rabbitt certainly attracted attention. Because he was so original a personality, he took KRLA in a direction that was successful. Rabbitt became one of the more "hot" personalities, at KRLA, during "Music Power '69." The nighttime lineup remained pretty much this way in February 1969, with Rabbitt 7 to 11 p.m. "live," and "Collage" still "taped," 11 to 6.

The person that Cox brought in to do the Midnight to 6 show was an old familiar voice to KRLA listeners. But, this time, he was not the same guy he was when he left KRLA in July of 1968. The world was changing so fast during that time. The influences of the music, and the whole pop culture, had taken over an old friend, who Cox would bring back to do the Midnight to 6 show "live." And that's the return, to KRLA, of Johnny Hayes.

Hayes had left KRLA in July 1968, pretty much burnt out by the automation of KRLA that summer. Because of the ever changing world, that was happening so fast at that time, we were told that Hayes "dropped out," during those eight months, for some time off. The Johnny Hayes who returned to KRLA in February 1969 was not the same "boy next door, or son away at college," that Hayes personified back in May 1965.

Hayes had let his hair grow freely, now rather wavy and long, and he now was more totally into the new music of the "progressive," "underground" sounds that had now started to affect so many. We recall sitting in on The Johnny Hayes Show, one spring morning on his all-night show, for the entire six hours. Hayes would turn the lights off in the booth, and put up large vigil-style candles, reminiscent of the kind they have in churches in front of statues of saints, and where Hayes would do his show with those big candles burning, all night.

Hayes' style had really mellowed quite a bit. He probably had undergone one of the biggest changes from the others during those months he was away from KRLA. Hayes, who once had inherited the popular "Teen Toppers" show from Bob Eubanks, now was playing long album cuts, and esoteric music. Some of this music, it appeared to us, sitting in the booth with him, he had brought from home. This was a new image Johnny Hayes.

So the evening block of KRLA programming was now set. Cox had an all-"live" lineup for the first time at KRLA in a year, and "Music Power '69" was certainly a new KRLA.

Even the KRLA disc jockey booth, up to then, painted a soft, pastel, green, was suddenly painted soft, pastel, yellow. Shortly after that, yellow, foam rubber "tiles" were glued onto the glass, which separated the engineer from the disc jockey, to soften the sound of KRLA. The yellow paint was certainly an improvement, but those egg-carton type yellow tiles looked tacky, and did not look good to those of us in the lobby, watching our favorite "Eleven-Ten Man" through the glass.

The music format of KRLA, at this time in February 1969, was adjusted according to the time of day. From 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., KRLA played mainstream TOP 40, with a few long-play tracks mixed in. But from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m., it was basically a semi-free-form radio format, where Rabbitt and Hayes played longer tracks. They even brought some records from their own collections at home.

So the lineup was complete with Williams, 6 to 9, Foster, 9 to Noon, Darin, Noon to 3, Dayton, 3 to 7, Rabbitt, 7 to Midnight, (adding a extra hour), Hayes, Midnight to 6, and Casey Kasem, looking more and more like a relic of a different era, on the weekends. This was an all-"live" lineup now. It certainly was a big improvement from the days of almost all automation, the year before.

Also, in early 1969, in the Los Angeles Times' "West" magazine (now discontinued), KRLA ran a series of very artistic, full-page "paintings." These art work "paintings" were rather

abstract in style, and, usually, a song-lyric line was at the bottom, along with "KRLA 1110." These were suitable for framing. (In our family garage, that we had converted into a "sitting room," in early 1969, we actually had the series of these "art prints" framed on the wall!)

Something else was in the air at KRLA, in the early months of 1969. You've read our references to a legendary spirit, "Princess Blue Sky." Here where it came from, and why the spirit of such floats through Dream-House.

In early 1969, KRLA had a promotion on the air, where listeners could send in to KRLA, and receive a piece of "blue sky" (actually, the words "KRLA Blue Sky," printed with royal blue ink, on a small square of pastel blue paper.) This came from a production that KRLA had been featuring. It featured the voice of Sie Holliday, as she talked about a legendary, mythical, Indian spirit, "Princess Blue Sky," who was concerned with all the pollution in the air over "The Land Of Eleven-Ten." And, for a moment, to forget about going to the Moon, that coming summer, and think about our own land, and atmosphere, here on earth.

In the background, was The Shondell's song, "Crystal Blue Persuasion." Today, we cannot hear the song, "Crystal Blue Persuasion," without thinking of that promotion. We recall the first time we heard it.

We had just gotten a driver's license. One of the first places we used to drive to, was down Santa Anita (Tyler Avenue) to Legg Lake, right next to the KRLA transmitter site, with its magnificent antenna towers stretching high into the clouds. The day we drove down was a very windy day, in early 1969. Usually the air quality, in South El Monte was not that good. That day, the sky was as blue as can be, with clouds floating like giant white pillows.

The red-and-white transmitter towers soared to a blue sky, as we were sitting on the grass at Legg Lake. Upon looking up toward the direction of the antenna towers, we heard on our G.E. transistor radio (a new one that year), the story of "Princess Blue Sky." And how her spirit wished for all the air above "The Land Of Eleven-Ten" to be clear, and the sky a "crystal blue."

That day it really was. Maybe Princess Blue Sky really did exist. We still have photographs taken of the KRLA transmitter towers, from a windy day in South El Monte, when Princess Blue Sky was high above. It really, really was beautiful.

Unfortunately, the first casualty at KRLA in 1969 from the main "Music Power '69" lineup, was a man who should have been given a longer run, considering the hard job he had, in trying to fill the shoes of Dave Hull. William F. Williams, as said before, was not immediately accepted by the listeners. It's too bad, considering that "William F." had a style, and talent, that deserved a much longer run.

However, as what happens to so many great "individualists" who become radio personalities, Williams ran into trouble with management. It seemed that management, at the time, had objected to different things on the "William F." show. Maybe a blue line here or there, or whatever. So management wrote Williams numerous memos on what to do, and what not to do, on his show. Williams, being a strong professional who knew what he was doing, resented this flood of memos. So, as a joke, and because it really was funny, Williams decided to read these memos, on the air, sharing with the audience what management had wanted him to do on the radio, and so on.

There never really was any real problem with Williams' show. It's just that he was in the unfortunate position of being the leading player as the morning man. Because of that visibility, the KRLA management decided to try to get him to do his show more "their way." This was a mistake. Williams is about as strong an individualist as one would ever find on the radio. Williams was not the type of air personality who would patiently read the memos and then alter his show.

Instead, Williams said to the listeners, that, hey, this is what management is saying today! It actually was quite funny, as no problem really existed, and the memos, were quite harmless.

However, management did not see the humor. So they sent Williams another memo. But this one saying not to read memos over the air, or else. Guess what Williams did? He read it. Management heard it. Williams was next on the "axed" list.

However, Williams was allowed to do something that isn't really done much anymore, even at that time. And that is to do a farewell show. Williams, during this farewell, did two things of interest.

First, it was decided to have a somewhat strange "contest." Williams would ask listeners to call up on his show, and "audition" to be the new morning man, as Williams announced he was leaving. Williams announced that one of the "callers" he would select to be his replacement. He would "give his show away," to the one he selected. This, obviously, was simply a put-on, because it was already decided who would take Williams' place a few days before. But, instead of just having Williams leave, and his replacement come on the next day, it was decided to try to

make this more fun, by "giving away" the show to a caller.

On that morning, caller after caller called, "auditioning." Finally, a deep, mellow-sounding voice came on, calling himself "Russ." After this "audition," Williams then announced that this "Russ O'Hara" had "won" the show, and would start the next day as the morning man. However, this did not fool us, because we had recognized who "Russ O'Hara" was, from remembering listening to him out in San Bernardino, where we accompanied our father on business trips to medical supply retailers.

Russ O'Hara (real name: Russell Eugene Neileigh) had been the Noon to 3 personality at KMEN, out on Baseline, the same station where both Darin and Williams had worked at, years before, and most recently, in early 1969, O'Hara had been heard at KGFJ, from The Odd Fellows Hall, on Adams in South Los Angeles, playing soul R. and B. in afternoon-drive. But, to listeners, it actually seemed that maybe this "Russ" was strictly an unknown, who "won" the show. KRLA never explained this. O'Hara's big moments at KMEN was when he did the Noon to 3 show, and had a reputation of trying to say "Press On," as many times as possible between records.

So Williams announced that this "Russ" would take over the morning show, and Williams was going to say goodbye. During the last part of Williams' show, on his last morning, Williams kept repeating a mysterious word over and over. And that this word would explain everything that was happening to KRLA and Williams, at this time, and the reason why he was leaving.

Williams kept saying the word, "IFIAFFI," and "Remember IFIAFFI." Almost like "Remember The Alamo," or "Remember The Maine," in United States history. He did not explain what this "word" meant. But, for his last song, Williams said, maybe, this song would explain it.

Williams played "My Way," by Frank Sinatra. It was clear that Paul Anka's words had fit the "William F." personality to the fullest. Both before, during, and after the song, Williams said "IFIAFFI." At 9 o'clock the song ended, and William F. Williams was now part of KRLA's history.

But what did "IFIAFFI" mean? A short time after that, we visited the studios of KRLA in Pasadena, talking to Johnnie Darin, in the booth. While we were there, right above the "board," on a yellow, wooden back holder, that was used to support the spot notebooks the air talents would read from, we noticed carved into the yellow, painted wood with a blue ball-point pen, the words,

"IFIAFFI - Wm. F. '69"

This was almost like an epitaph on a tombstone. Again, the word "IFIAFFI" came back to us. We asked Darin just what did it mean. Did he know? After all, William F. Williams was quite a hero for us, at KRLA, at this time. Our initials are "William F.", also (William F. Earl).

We asked Darin about "IFIAFFI." Darin told us what it meant. And we could see that "IFIAFFI" fit Williams' personality to a tee. It also fit the philosophy of us at that time, as we were sort of a maverick to Mr. Harry Conover at Arcadia High School, being a Senior at that time, counting the days to graduation. What does "IFIAFFI" mean?

Darin told us it was made up by Williams, and that the letters stands for words. The words?

"I" = if

"F" = fun,

"A" = ain't

"F" = f*ck

"I" = it!

The "William F." philosophy of life. Who could say it better! We were so impressed by "IFIAFFI," that on a car in our family, bears the California personal license plates, "IFIAFFI." When people have asked us what it meant, we just say that its a "philosophical word from a prophet."

And it was. "IFIAFFI," and the song "My Way," by Frank Sinatra, was the swan song of William F. Williams. It's too bad that Williams joined KRLA when he did, as if had he joined KRLA in another time or era, maybe it would have been different. But in trying to take over for Dave Hull, it was an impossible task. And to top it off, that as we leave William F. Williams at KRLA, when the ratings for December 1968 came out, Dave Hull had the highest ratings on the station, in December 1968! It was next to impossible for Williams to take KRLA any higher than that.

But William F. Williams was an original, and had a style, and an attitude, that was most important. And it was this attitude of "IFIAFFI" that will make William F. Williams, a legend in the history of KRLA.

So William F. Williams left KRLA in March of 1969, just under three months after he started, and was replaced by Russ O'Hara. O'Hara's style was "down," and ultra-mellow. O'Hara sounded similar to Jim Wood.

O'Hara used to call himself "Russ O'Hungry," and quite often said, on his morning show,

that he was "always hungry." Many times, O'Hara would say he wanted a "Danish." We were told he not always meant the breakfast rolls, but it was actually a "Danish blonde," that O'Hara was "hungry" for. And almost every few minutes, O'Hara, during his morning show, would ask the audience,

"How's your head?"

So KRLA, at the end of March 1969, had O'Hara, 6 to 9 a.m., followed by Foster, 9 to Noon, Johnnie Darin, Noon to 3, Bob Dayton, who, by now, should have been dragged into the morning show, from 3 to 7, followed by the "progressive" sounds of Jimmy Rabbitt, and Johnny Hayes, after dark.

KRLA, also at this time, had purchased new, bright jingles, replacing the ones from January, with the "L" of KRLA emphasized ("K-R-L-A!"), from P.A.M.S. in Texas. Each personality had their own jingle. ("Bob Dayton-K-R-L-A!") These new jingles certainly brightened up the sound of "Radio Eleven-Ten." In fact, the station felt so excited about these jingles, that a contest was created around the jingles. If the disc jockey played someone else's on their show, (Bob Dayton playing the "Johnny Hayes" jingle, for example), if the listener called in, that listener would win a prize. This was a neat promotion, in that it got people to listen to KRLA, and to become familiar with its new "Music Power '69" lineup.

However, another legend for KRLA would leave "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," at this time. And that is Casey Kasem. Kasem had seemed like coming from another era, when he worked his last few 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday shows. It seemed like ages ago that "The Station Of The Stars" was first heard on KRLA.

But, at this time in 1969, it was time for "The Caser" to move on to bigger things. Kasem would turn up the following year, in the Fall of 1970, with his new "American Top 40" syndicated, pre-recorded show, that he would be developing, at this time, upon leaving KRLA. But, at this time in 1969, Casey Kasem's "live" shows would come to an end. Kasem simply outgrew KRLA. And, in a way, the station stepped on the gas, and left Kasem behind, too.

The station was moving in a young, hip, direction. With Kasem and Moreland now both gone in early 1969, the only ones that remained from the old glory years were Rebel Foster and Johnny Hayes, both who had left KRLA once, and came back. It was sad to see veterans leave the lineup. But time marched on in 1969, and the winds of change were in the air during "Music Power '69."

Two other programming highlights on KRLA, at this time. KRLA newsman John Land, now calling himself "John Gilliland," had spent the past several years working on a documentary series called "The Pop Chronicles," which would trace the history of popular music from the mid-'50s, up to 1969.

This program, narrated by Sie Holliday and Thom Beck, along with Gilliland himself, we felt was the best of any of the histories of rock and roll, that have been produced. KRLA had scheduled this show to run for one year, from spring 1969 to spring 1970. It would be heard every Sunday night, from 6 to 7 p.m., and would be sponsored for the entire year by Sears Roebuck, which would give away blue colored program schedules of "The Pop Chronicles," in the various Sears Roebuck stores.

At this part of our story, we now switch back to the KRLA schedule which, since Kasem left, was lacking a weekender. The man brought in to handle the Sunday night, 7 to Midnight shift, after "The Pop Chronicles," was a personality, first known to Los Angeles listeners from 1965 at KFVB, Mike Ambrose.

We first heard about Mike Ambrose when he was a major star at KDEO, Santee, in 1964. The following year, Ambrose went to KFVB to work part-time, waiting in the wings for a regular spot on the lineup. When Don Mackinnon died in 1965, (he had been heard at KFVB in the Noon to 3 show), it was rumored that Ambrose, or, more likely, comedic Jack Hayes, might be moved into those hours. When instead, Larry McCormick took over that shift, Ambrose left KFVB. Ambrose had strong ties to the San Diego area, where Ambrose was residing during the week, while he was doing the 7 to Midnight, Sunday night show, at KRLA. They say Ambrose actually drove up from San Diego, Sunday afternoon to do the show, and then, at Midnight, drove back.

Because of his ties to the San Diego area, Ambrose did not stay long at KRLA. But, for at least several months, Ambrose would be the lone weekender at KRLA, and did a good show. Ambrose had a deep, resonant voice, and would certainly have been a good addition to the KRLA lineup, had he been given the opportunity, and wanted to stay, in Los Angeles.

The next major change at KRLA would occur, as Cox would finally finish what he had set out to do in February. And that is to return KRLA to the traditional three-hour show shifts, 6 to 9, 9 to Noon, etc. To do this, Doug Cox would trim the afternoon-drive show, from 3 to 7 p.m. to 3

to 6 p.m., and shorten the 7 to Midnight shift, to 9 to Midnight, creating a new time slot from 6 to 9 p.m. To fill this time slot, Cox moved Russ O'Hara out of the morning-drive show, into the newly created 6 to 9 p.m. slot. This would give O'Hara an opportunity, it was said at the time, "to get into some heavier music." O'Hara's style was much better suited to an evening audience.

With O'Hara out as morning man, Cox decided to make an image change in the morning-drive show. Instead of someone with a heavier, "down" personality, he would get someone with a brighter, younger, more upbeat tone. Still, in our opinion, the best one for this time slot would have been Bob Dayton. But Dayton would now be in the trimmed 3 to 6 p.m. shift (the same time he was featured at KBLA, in June 1967, right before joining KRLA.) Besides, Cox wanted a "younger" sound, in that time spot, rather than move in a veteran voice to Los Angeles listeners, such as Dayton or Foster.

Instead, Cox brought in from San Francisco's KFRC, RKO's "Big 610," a personality who was tired of the Bill Drake scene, from spending five years under Drake's rule.

Steve Janovick was a native of Orange County, graduating from Anaheim High School. He first used the air name "Steve Janwick," on a desert AM station, one of his first air jobs. Janovick next surfaced, in Southern California, at KFXM, in San Bernardino, under the name "Steve Jay," as, again, using his real name, Janovick, was too ethnic sounding to be accepted at this time in radio circles. When Bill Drake took over the programming consulting at KGB, San Diego, from 52nd at Kalmia, with that one, big transmitter tower, soaring highly above the residential neighborhood, Steve became the original afternoon-drive personality at KGB, moving to San Diego from Fresno's KMAK. He did an excellent job from 4 to 8 p.m., before being switched with soon-to-be "Eleven-Ten Man," Johnny Hayes, who had been Midnight to 6, under Drake's leadership.

Steve was a big star in San Diego. "The Steve Jay Show," was one of KGB's best. However, San Diego was still a smaller market for Steve, and besides, there were other plans for this "Polish kid from Anaheim." Steve Jay was transferred up to KFRC, in San Francisco. He would assume the 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon-drive shift, from the Bay Area leader, as KFRC was Number One in San Francisco, at that time, in the Fall of 1966.

However, there was one problem with bringing Steve Jay to KFRC. It was his name. You see, there already was a "Steve O'Shea," on KFRC, from 6 to 9 p.m. (It was thought that having a "Steve Jay" on from 3 to 6, right before a "Steve O' Shea," would be too confusing for the listeners. The decision was made. Steve Janovick, now known as "Steve Jay," would have to give up his name for something else.

What they decided to do, at KFRC, is to simply switch the name around. Instead of "Steve Jay," Steve would now be called, "Jay Stevens." This was hard for Steve because he had already developed a massive following under the name, "Steve Jay." Besides, "Steve Jay" was closer to his own name. Everyone knew him as "Steve."

But at KFRC, Steve became "Jay Stevens." When Steve left San Francisco, to join KRLA as the new morning man, the name "Jay Stevens" would stay with him. He told us that he had tired of changing his name, and thought that "Jay Stevens" had more longevity, and a lasting quality to it, and less "TOP 40" sounding, as "Steve Jay" did. Jay did his first show on KRLA, in June 1969, as a relief personality for Rebel Foster, 9 to Noon, for a day, or so. When Foster returned, Jay was made the new morning man at KRLA. The lineup was complete, and back to its traditional three-hour shifts, and the six-hour all-nighter.

However, the strongest man at the station was Bob Dayton, and Jay would have been a good afternoon-drive. But Jay was given the morning-drive show, where he would last for two years. At this time in KRLA's history, Jay had the modified "Boss Jock" sound, that Cox wanted. The only "humor," that Jay used, was a "Harvey"-like, imaginary animal companion, he called "Moby Duck."

One more personality would be added now to KRLA, to make this completed Doug Cox lineup, the three-hour shifts all restored completely. And that was the addition of a new weekender, to take the place of Mike Ambrose who, by now, had left KRLA. For this weekend shift, KRLA brought in Gary Marshall. Marshall's talents lay more in production, even though Marshall had been popular as the morning man at KFXM, San Bernardino, in the mid-'60s as "The Morning Marshall," at the inland station.

Marshall would be signed to do weekends, relief, and some production work. In the Summer of 1969, shortly after Marshall joined, KRLA had a show, on the Sunday lineup, called "Heaven Is In Your Mind," named after the hit record by Three Dog Night, a group, incidentally, managed by KRLA's Rebel Foster.

"Heaven Is In Your Mind" would feature pop music. But between the records, there would

be rather hip, spiritual comments, or poems, read by Marshall, that would give the show a sort of hip-Christian edge, without becoming too dogmatic. In an era of "underground" music and the counterculture, it was refreshing to hear "Heaven Is In Your Mind," a show with a different outlook. This was Marshall's brightest on-the-air moment at KRLA.

(KFRC's Tom Maule told us, in 1990, that he, too, was offered a spot in the 1969 KRLA jocking lineup most likely weekends, at first, but when he told them he "didn't like the music mix," his chances of joining "Radio Eleven-Ten" were pretty much diminished.)

So KRLA had its full lineup in place, this Summer of 1969, with Jay, 6 to 9, Foster, 9 to Noon, Darin, Noon to 3, Dayton, 3 to 6, O'Hara, 6 to 9, Rabbitt, 9 to Midnight, Hayes, Midnight to 6, and Marshall, on the weekends.

As said many times before in Dream-House, one of the best ways that KRLA kept in touch with its listeners, was through printed, weekly record surveys. These had been discontinued, for the most part, when the KRLA Beat included them in 1965. But when the last Beat rolled off the presses in 1968, and when Studio City Advertising stopped the KRLA "Most Requested" list, in its folders, in 1967, the last KRLA record survey did too.

But under the new "Music Power" format of KRLA, KRLA once again brought back weekly record survey folders. (After a light blue "strip," for one week, the more slicker folders started. This "strip" had no jock picture on it.) The first one was on pink paper with red ink, and had the "star" of "Music Power '69," Jimmy Rabbitt, on the cover, in a graphic drawing-cartoon. Subsequent weeks featured O'Hara, Foster, and Darin, in that order.

The next issue featured Bob Dayton. There was only one week with Dayton's face on it. Dayton did not like his picture, even though it was a very good likeness of him. However, Dayton said it just didn't look like him. So after one week with Dayton's picture on it, there was never another "Dayton issue."

The folders were called "Music Power Playlists." The covers featured rotating KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men." On the back, an advertisement was usually placed. The first record surveys, on the inside, were just typed out, with a standard typewriter. As the weeks developed, better graphics were used on the inside. KRLA did not really equally rotate all "The Eleven-Ten Men" on the cover. It seemed the same faces were used, over and over. There might have been close to a dozen Russ O'Hara's. Yet the three "veterans" at the station, Foster and Hayes, were used very rarely. Dayton only once.

Casey Kasem never was featured. We were told a picture of him was made, (we recall seeing the photo "master") but Kasem had left the station before it ever came out. So there was never a "Kasem issue." Gary Marshall, or Mike Ambrose before, never were pictured, either.

So the finished Doug Cox lineup was in place by the Summer of 1969. But, by September, the winds of change, from Princess Blue Sky, had blown down again, over the six big transmitter towers alongside the Pomona Freeway. As summer turned to fall, Doug Cox made one last program move, before he would exit the station as Program Director, before the end of the year.

As said before, KRLA had offered an excellent mix of current hits, some past hits ("KRLA Golden Touch") and album tracks ("KRLA Long Plays"). However, by the end of the summer, that format was abandoned to straight TOP 40. Not only on the 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. shows. Now, both Jimmy Rabbitt and Johnny Hayes had now been forced to give up their blend of longer album cuts, and "underground" selections, in favor of mainstream TOP 40, playing such popular selections, at the time, as Dionne Warwick's "Odds And Ends."

Not only did KRLA go straight TOP 40, at this time, but a programming change would be made by Doug Cox in September, that resulted in moving the strongest personality at the station, into a low visibility shift, out of drive-time. In September 1969, the senior man at KRLA, Rebel Foster, left the lineup. Foster already had been heavily involved with Three Dog Night. So, at this time Foster left the 9 to Noon shift.

After Foster left that shift, where Cox had placed him the past January, Bob Dayton, certainly the best personality in the entire lineup, was moved out of his afternoon-drive time show, (where he had been since summer 1968), and into the 9 to Noon shift. Dayton was clearly the strongest man in the lineup, and should have been the morning man from 6 to 9 a.m. But Cox felt that Dayton, being the "oldest" on the lineup, (he was 36), would be better suited in a housewife slot. As soon as Dayton was moved into those hours, Dayton severely cut back the humor, and no longer closed his show with his trademark,

"I ---- gotta go now! Goodbye, world," to just
"Have a nice day!"

It was very obvious that Bob Dayton was unhappy in those hours. Dayton was now doing

the show with the brakes on, clearly something that shouldn't have happened. If anything, Dayton should have been allowed "free rein." Dayton sounded uncomfortable for the first time at "Radio Eleven-Ten."

Replacing Dayton in the afternoon, 3 to 6 p.m., was Lee Duncan. Lee Duncan, according to Johnnie Darin, had good production skills. But, as an air talent, Duncan's style was that of a low key, ultra-cool demeanor, that might have been best on, say, an all-night shift, or even on FM, at a real "underground" station. KRLA tried to promote Duncan, by having ads in the Los Angeles Times, "Duncan Cooks With Music." The main reason besides being strong in production, that Cox signed Duncan into those particular hours, is he had been doing afternoon-drive previously at KDAY, Echo Park.

During the Fall of 1969, during Doug Cox's final days as P.D., an interesting experiment was programmed on "Radio Eleven-Ten." On Sunday, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., all the "Eleven-Ten Men" would be heard, (with the exception of Johnny Hayes), in 90-minute blocks, (9 -10:30, 10:30-Noon, Noon-1:30, 1:30 - 3, 3 - 4:30, and 4:30 to 6), right before "The Pop Chronicles," and "Heaven Is In Your Mind."

This was a neat idea if it had been "live." But to get a personality to come down on a Sunday, for an hour and a half, wouldn't be practical, even though it would sound better. So for that reason, this programming was recorded. But the neat thing about this, is that one could hear all of "The Eleven-Ten Men" in hours that were different from their regular shifts. This actually "worked," as some of them actually sounded better in unfamiliar parts of the day. Hearing Jimmy Rabbitt, for example, on a bright Sunday afternoon, while taking a paddle boat out to pedal on Legg Lake, was quite a treat! (Or Jay Stevens in the afternoon, too!)

However, this experiment did not last too long. But it was really the only time, in the then-recent history of KRLA, where automation actually sounded not bad, for the reasons given above.

Also during the Fall of 1969, KRLA featured "The Best Of 'The Credibility Gap'" specials, that could be heard, on KRLA, both Sunday mornings, and repeated Sunday evenings. During the Summer of 1969, "The Credibility Gap" celebrated its first year of satirical news commentary. An hour special of the best sketches was heard one Sunday night that summer. One of the best skits, of this news parody group, had to be heard to be believed. It was the story of the Vatican buying radio stations all over the world, and what "The Credibility Gap" did with that story was classic satire, featuring "The Real Cardinal Heel," "Sister Mary Action," "Ascension News," and "The Hail Marys," all heard on radio "KPAX," programmed like a Drake "Boss Radio" station. It was one of the best.

Shortly after Duncan was signed as the 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon personality, it was announced that Doug Cox had been replaced as Program Director by Johnnie Darin. "The Darinization Of Eleven-Ten," was about to take place. However, Darin could see that KRLA had a big problem in the afternoon-drive shift. Bob Dayton was quite popular in those hours before, but due to the fact that Cox wanted KRLA to have a younger, hip image, Dayton was exiled to midmornings.

So, as Johnnie Darin assumed the Program Director chair, several important decisions had to be made. What to do about the afternoon-drive shift, and how else to fine-tune the station. Almost immediately after Darin took over the P.D.'s chair, the KRLA answering machine, (681-TAPE), where listeners could become "The Communication Generation," and "get it said," to state their views on a wide array of hot topics, such as the 18-year-old vote, or The Draft, Darin, instead, emphasized the telephone number, by having it all-digital, from 681-TAPE, to 681-8273.

But the biggest problem confronting Darin was the afternoon-drive shift. Darin knew that even though Duncan was good in production, there would have to be a change in afternoon-drive. Move Bob Dayton back? No, KRLA did need, maybe, a fresher sound in those hours. After all, 1970 was almost here. A new decade. Take Johnny Hayes out of the all-night show and move him to afternoon-drive? No.

Darin knew that the biggest competition for KRLA, in those 3 to 6 p.m. hours, was Don Steele at KHJ. He virtually ruled the 3 to 6 p.m. hours. Dayton was good against Steele, but Steele was Number One by far, with his fast paced energy.

That was it. Steele had energy! He was always "up," and a real screamer! KRLA needed to meet fire with fire. It had to have someone to go toe to toe with Steele. Maybe even beat Steele in the popularity ratings. Darin felt it could be done. Darin knew who could do it.

Darin looked up to Princess Blue Sky, high above the mighty transmitter towers in South El Monte. Darin knew, at this time, only intervention by a saint could be the answer to KRLA's afternoon-drive worries. And, sometimes, a prayer to the right Sainte can have a happy answer.

CHAPTER 8

WHEN THE SAINTE COMES MARCHING IN

"The Darinization Of Eleven-Ten" took place immediately when Johnnie Darin took over the Program Director chair from Doug Cox in late 1969. Darin, being a former "Filbert E. Yarborough" "Boss Jock," was comfortable with the mainstream TOP 40 format, and decided to keep that, rather than move back into more L.P.-cut sounds as Cox had leaned toward. However, as we stated in the last chapter, Darin was faced with having to do something to build up the important afternoon-drive time slot.

Jay Stevens, being a friend of Darin, was retained in the important morning-drive time. To do afternoons, Johnnie Darin knew he had to have someone with all the energy and vitality that Don Steele had over at KHJ. Johnnie Darin had someone in mind. A Sainte.

In December 1969, Johnnie Darin brought down from KFRC, in San Francisco, Dick Sainte, (real name: Dick Middleton) who Darin had worked with at KGB, San Diego, in 1968. Darin knew that if Sainte wasn't snatched by KRLA, that Sainte could probably end up at KHJ. This was an excellent decision on the part of Johnnie Darin. Dick Sainte sounded very much like Don Steele. At times it was hard to tell them apart. (A side note: Don Steele told us, in June 1991, during a visit by us to KCBS-FM, that he actually made up, and gave, Middleton the air-name "Dick Sainte," in Oregon radio, years before.)

Beside that, Dick Sainte had an energy, a vitality, and an exciting personality. He totally woke up those hours. The Sainte marched into KRLA in December 1969, and the 3 to 6 p.m. show instantly zoomed up to the top. In fact, each month Sainte's popularity got so high, neck-to-neck with Steele, and helped the station so much in those hours, that by the following spring, KRLA would get within reach of Number One again, in certain dayparts, for the first time in years.

KRLA, and "The Darinization Of Eleven-Ten," was ready to close the year, and the decade, of 1969 and the '60s, with Jay Stevens 6 to 9, Bob Dayton 9 to Noon, Johnnie Darin Noon to 3, Dick Sainte 3 to 6, Russ O'Hara 6 to 9, Jimmy Rabbitt 9 to Midnight (showing signs of frustration playing just TOP 40), Johnny Hayes Midnight to 6, and Gary Marshall on the weekends.

However, the year was not over with. At least not yet. Johnnie Darin, in late 1969, decided to do even more to make "The Darinization Of Eleven-Ten" sound even better. During December 1969, major construction took place in the KRLA studios. Construction began, during the time between Christmas and January 1st, to totally remodel the disc jockey booth at KRLA. Dark cork boards for soundproofing, and shutters onto the glass window, replacing the royal blue curtain, were installed. The jock could now close the shutters.

The venerable, trustworthy old KRLA disc jockey board was also replaced after at least 10 years, or more, of good service. The red buttons (remember Bobby Dale's comment?) would be a thing of the past. So were turntables. One of the biggest changes, would be for KRLA to no longer play "records." The music, now on "carts," would be played from the control room.

The station would, in 1970, totally play "carts" from the control room via engineer. Turntables were only on the side as backup, never used. Also, the control room was being remodeled "on the other side of the glass," making a new booth between the control room and disc jockey booth, that could be used for production or newscasts. The booth of KRLA was going to be in 1970, under "The Darinization Of Eleven-Ten," totally redone. The control room would also be remodeled, with cart racks along the back wall for hundreds of "records," and that new booth would be added in 1970, half way between the two. Construction began on this major remodeling during the last few days of 1969. During the programming you could actually hear the hammers of the workmen over the air, as the shows had to go on, and so did the construction.

Besides all the remodeling inside the station, outside above the new door to the KRLA lobby, a rectangle KRLA lighted sign was installed that would resemble a stained glass window. The psychedelic design of KRLA on this sign was quite impressive. However, when the station decided to "lease out" some of its offices, in a cost-cutting move, to other businesses, unfortunately the sign was removed. This great sign was quite memorable and impressive.

Even the lobby would be remodeled during this time. A giant "sun" face was built into the KRLA lobby floor. This same "sun" face ("man in the sun") would be used on KRLA

letterheads, and promotional materials, in the coming year ahead. (Later the "sunface" was reborn by Research Archives as a tribute, and for a new future.) This "sunface" logo would be featured on large poster-sized calendars for 1970 and 1971, poster prints, that KRLA gave out to clients, and also in a framed water-color painting print, that was given to most KRLA staff members to hang in their homes. (Both, soon-to-be-introduced 1971 jock, "World Famous" Tom Murphy, and "Bill Earl," have this painting in their homes.)

But besides the physical changes that took place between Christmas and January 1st, KRLA and Johnnie Darin, along with his friend Jay Stevens at the station, would give the listeners a real treat for the end of 1969 and, for that matter, the decade. Darin's idea, which took place the day after Christmas on December 26, was to turn the station back to the first four years of the decade. The years 1960, 1961, 1962 and 1963 would be saluted, by playing all the top songs from those years, along with special "old sounding" KRLA jingles, that would be recorded just for this special programming. Even some of the 1961-era KRLA jingles would be "dusted off" and played during this time.

Each of "The Eleven-Ten Men" would be taking on an early '60s persona, such as "The Big R" for Jimmy Rabbitt, "The Wild Irishman" for Russ O'Hara, "The Daring Johnnie Darin" for Darin, "Bouncin' Bob Dayton," for Bob Dayton, and "The Jaybird" for Jay Stevens, among the others. The listeners would be invited to call in and reminisce about the early 1960s, and vote for the most "Rotten Record Of The Decade." Johnnie Darin told us that he remembered the winner of that contest to be "She Can't Find Her Keys," by Paul Peterson.

But besides playing the early '60s hits, it was virtually pleasant to hear "The Eleven-Ten Men" talk about their own youth during that period. For example, Stevens reminisced about Anaheim High School. Johnnie Darin made references to his "wild youth." This humanized the disc jockeys in a way we hadn't heard before. It was clear that they truly enjoyed this programming a lot. Jay Stevens even described, over the air, some of the old KRLA record surveys that were printed in 1960.

But the greatest moments of this week, from December 26 to December 31, took place on New Year's Eve. Let us set the stage. We, as the year before, were on the parade route, to see the Rose Parade, the next morning, in Pasadena. As always, a little G.E. transistor radio was there. This year, no stowing away in church lounges, but camped out right on Orange Grove with a good friend, John Dillon, and two girls, Kris Hollowell and Cathy Rambeau, that Dillon knew from Pasadena City College.

Right before Midnight, the last few moments of the decade of the '60s, the slow, soft, sentimental sounds of "Auld Lang Syne" were heard on KRLA. And then an announcer's voice was heard saying farewell to the '60s, and to salute all the voices of the immortal "Eleven-Ten Men" who ever served on KRLA up through 1969. The names were counted down in order. One by one. Alphabetically.

Perry Allen. Mike Ambrose. Dick Biondi. Roger Christian. Bob Cole. One by one, until the final names. Rhett Walker. Jim Washburne. William F. Williams, and then the last one, Jim Wood.

This almost brought a tear to our eye, filling us with memories of so much growing up from 10-years-old, to a teenager, camped out on Orange Grove with two girls, at 19. And how those names were such a soundtrack to our life, and so many of us "Baby Boomers" in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," under Princess Blue Sky, and those powerful six transmitter towers from South El Monte. With the final name of Jim Wood, the decade of the '60s was over. KRLA was now into 1970.

1970, and the new decade on KRLA, began with the return of a familiar voice to KRLA over the years. And that was Rebel Foster. Foster returned to KRLA very briefly in January 1970 to do some weekend shifts, but this was very short-lived. Foster would not return to KRLA until the Summer of 1971, during a very interim period.

However, in early February 1970, Johnnie Darin would slightly fine-tune the program schedule in order to give him more time to carry out his P.D. chores. Most Program Directors at that time, and even today, prefer the midmorning time slot, usually 9 to Noon. This gives them the entire rest of the afternoon to do their other duties after lunch.

Johnnie Darin had been very successful in his Noon to 3 show, but decided, at that time, to swap time slots with Bob Dayton, moving Dayton to Noon to 3, and Darin 9 to Noon. Dayton, who absolutely hated to get up so early to do a 9 to Noon show, immediately agreed, even though Dayton still did not like having to stay "exiled" to the daytime hours, when he already had been in the second most important shift 3 to 6 p.m. the two years before. But KRLA already had a very strong 3 to 6 p.m. man with Dick Sainte, and again, Dayton being almost 37, and one of the

"oldest" in the lineup, was thought to attract the older housewife listeners who remembered him from way, way, way back in June 1967. That's ancient history in TOP 40 radio.

However, later that month on Friday, February 27, would be the last show from Jimmy Rabbitt on KRLA. That date was approximately one year from the time Rabbitt joined KRLA in February 1969, as the major draw to "Music Power '69." But Rabbitt had grown very disillusioned with being a TOP 40 disc jockey playing just the hits, when Rabbitt felt he could offer so much more to radio. Even though he did deviate from the format at times, he still was very restricted and no longer enjoyed what he was doing.

Jimmy Rabbitt, who was truly a new breed of disc jockey, and was a good blending of AM and FM, and some Country music-style thrown in, exited KRLA in February 1970, and went to KABC-FM in their network "underground" format. The direction that Johnnie Darin was taking KRLA into, during early 1970, was that of a slick, more polished version of what it had been last year in 1969 without the "Long Plays" (L.P. cuts), and was pretty much mainstream TOP 40. KRLA was chasing KHJ full throttle! The jingles that Cox had brought in, in March 1969, were replaced by both "fast" and "slow" KRLA jingles, where the "L" was no longer emphasized, and had more instrumental background to them.

The station was continuing to put out the "Music Power" playlists in early 1970. But toward the end of their run, the same three or four faces kept repeating over and over. There was never a graphic cut made for Rabbitt's 9 to Midnight replacement, who we will meet shortly. Bob Dayton's hadn't been used in almost a year. There had never been a graphic cut made of Dick Sainte, or even his predecessor, Lee Duncan. And the weekender, Gary Marshall, who by now was heard on Sunday morning from 6:30 - 8:30, and then back from 9 to Noon, after religious programming, never had his face on the survey folders either.

With Rabbitt's departure, it was now time to look for a replacement. The direction that Darin reached to was to a Northwestern air talent who was quite popular in that region, especially at KOL, Seattle, but unknown to Los Angeles listeners, Don Burns. Don Burns was signed to be the new 9 to Midnight personality. Burns started his nighttime show approximately March 1st. However, after over a year of "progressive" -type sounds in the 9 to Midnight shift since "Odyssey" a year before, and because it was clear that Burns was an up and comer, it was decided very soon into Burns 9 to Midnight show, that Burns would be better suited in a different shift.

What Darin did next was to increase KRLA's daytime audience, by creating a strong daytime block of two mature-sounding housewife-appealing talents. This made KRLA a hair away from Number One in the ratings during the daytime hours, for the first time in years. What Darin did, was to adjust the KRLA schedule to make better use of Burns' potential, since Burns did not seem that comfortable in the 9 to Midnight show. Burns had the "magic" (good looks and voice) that would be a natural to attract 1970 "everyday housewives" with their own dreams.

What Darin did was as follows. Bob Dayton didn't like being exiled to the daytime hours, after having been afternoon-drive for many months, and very successful in those hours. Dayton had a legendary personal night-life reputation, that would cause him to not like getting up early enough to do a Noon to 3 show.

Second, when Dayton was in this Noon to 3 show, his humor, especially in a time slot geared to housewives, had to be restrained, because of the possibility of offending a sharp, liberated housewife who might take offense to Dayton's somewhat chauvinistic and suggestive double entendres.

One of Dayton's best lines was when he read a commercial for a store opening, where they would give out prizes. Dayton said, "And they'll be prizes galore! (he paused) Prizes Galore! I knew her sister!"

Fans of "Goldfinger" were sure to understand. It was delightful to be old enough, and mature enough, to be able to understand Big Bad Bob Dayton's double entendres. Another great Dayton line, after reading a spot for a hardware store was, "I fix things around the house (long pause) . . . Martinis, mostly." Dayton was very sophisticated, and we always liked his "risque humor."

Another great Dayton-style line was after playing The Supremes' classic, "Up The Ladder To The Roof," Dayton said it was from the album, "The Drinks Are On The House." After a commercial with the line, "filthy carburetors," Dayton said, " . . . or the kind of jokes they like to tell." Our favorite, was after playing The Rolling Stones' "It's All Over Now," Dayton said, "I used to kiss her on the hand . . . but it's all over now."

So at the request of Bob Dayton to be moved out of the Noon to 3 show, Johnnie Darin moved Don Burns into the Noon to 3 shift. Bob Dayton, who had worked virtually every shift over

the past 2-1/2 years, was put into the 9 to Midnight show. Surprisingly, his show didn't get as risqué as we thought it would. By Dayton's standards, it was pretty tame.

During the time Bob Dayton had the 9 to Midnight show, Russ O'Hara, who had been heard from 6 to 9 preceding Dayton, gave Bob Dayton the nickname "Big Bad Bob Dayton," which truly fit the Dayton persona. Dayton seemed more loose and comfortable in the late evening hours. When he got off at Midnight, there was still several hours left for nighttime adventure Dayton-style. So in the Spring of 1970, KRLA had solidified its lineup, was able to replace Rabbitt with a more TOP 40-sounding Don Burns, and had a good, smooth sound.

Two side notes. First, KRLA for the past year, had been moving into the area of co-sponsoring concerts. Russ O'Hara was usually used as the KRLA emcee at a lot of these concerts. (We took O'Hara to lunch in August 1991. O'Hara told us he actually talked Jimi Hendrix into playing, unannounced-in-advance, at the Easter '69 "Teenage Fair" at The Hollywood Palladium.) We recall at several Three Dog Night concerts, a group incidentally connected to Rebel Foster, O'Hara would open the shows, putting in a big plug for KRLA, which frequently advertised these concerts quite heavily on "Radio Eleven-Ten." O'Hara opening for Three Dog Night has been preserved in vinyl, on the now-out-of-print Three Dog Night "Live' At The Forum" album, where his comments open Side 1, Track 1.

At this time in the Spring of 1970, KRLA decided to discontinue the "Music Power" playlists, with its two or three jock rotation. Instead, the record survey was replaced with a folded newsprint paper called Gathers No Moss, which obviously took its name, and logo style, from the Rolling Stone. This seemed almost full circle, because it was the KRLA Beat that was the original rock newspaper ever, appearing in October 1964, three years before Rolling Stone!

These Gathers No Moss newspapers were quite well done. Unfortunately, they were not widely distributed, and therefore not too many listeners were familiar with them. The first issue had a full-page center fold-out of, of all things, a fetus!

And some of the other ones that were memorable, were psychedelic drawings of Bob Dayton, Don Burns, and Dick Sainte. Some other copies had "parts," or jigsaw-type pieces, of facial photographs of Johnnie Darin, Jay Stevens, and Russ O'Hara. There was even a psychedelic drawing of Johnny Hayes, in a full fold-out. Again these were a delight. In fact, they were quite artistic, certainly creative, and had a certain "progressive" look to them. On the back of these papers was, of course, the KRLA record survey. One of our favorites had a large photo of the distinguishable Dick Sainte. (This picture is featured as the front-cover art of When Radio Was Boss, Volume 2.)

An interesting side note about Gathers No Moss. The photo used of Bob Dayton was actually the one taken from the Fall of 1967 in the upstairs production booth of KRLA, almost three years old. The latest Dayton one had been "eighty-sixed" by Dayton himself. He felt it just didn't look like him. Darin was shown clean shaven. The new pictures were quite complimentary.

Gathers No Moss was available weekly for the rest of 1970. The Gathers No Moss issues were certainly one of the best KRLA promotions in many years. They deserved a much longer run.

One of the more notable "center-folds," of the Gathers No Moss issues, was the psychedelic drawing of a giant mouth. An excellent photo of Jay Stevens was in the center of the "mouth," with the heading "Magic Morning Mouth Jay Stevens." The one of Darin was equally good, with "Mother's Little Helper Johnnie Darin." One of the better issues of Gathers No Moss showed small square pictures of all the KRLA disc jockeys, very good head and shoulder shots. For the first time, Don Burns, Gary Marshall, and Dick Sainte were shown.

This certainly was an improvement over the "Music Power" playlists, which did not have any new talent shown. The picture of Dick Sainte was one taken for KFRC, San Francisco, where Sainte had been right before going to KRLA. KFRC was another RKO radio Drake-formatted station. KRLA, in the Summer of 1970, had a solid lineup. The station sounded tight, bright and excellent.

The next major change that occurred to KRLA in 1970 was the sad exit of Bob Dayton, truly one of KRLA's best. As stated before, Dayton had been virtually bounced all over the KRLA schedule after he joined the station way back on Saturday June 17, 1967 in a different era of "Radio Eleven-Ten." He had been in at least five different shifts by this time.

But, in the late Summer of 1970, Bob Dayton would be the next casualty on KRLA because of three main reasons. First, Dayton was chronologically the "oldest" jock at the station, even though in 1970 he was only 37. But at a station that had always gone for relatively youthful personalities, Dayton was the senior man, and did not have that youthful image that, say, a Don

Burns, or a Russ O'Hara would have. An image of a station is quite important, and the image of, say, Bob Dayton emceeding a KRLA rock concert at The Forum in 1970 would not have been as appropriate a choice as, say, O'Hara or Burns.

Secondly, Dayton had been moved so much around the KRLA lineup, that by the late Summer of 1970, it was difficult to retain the same audience, used to hearing the same person at the same time, which worked so well for Morgan and Steele at KHJ, in the early days of "Boss Radio." This problem still affects programming today. Especially television shows (like our personal favorite, "Twin Peaks") that never have a chance to find an audience because of being bounced all over the program schedule.

And third, Dayton was a New York Long Islander, and his heart was always there. Bob Dayton had always wanted to be the next Dan Ingram, a major New York radio star. When he left New York radio, after a one-liner about Hiroshima, and earlier "risque" comments about a married, female, "Goldwater For President" supporter, Dayton's momentum to be a major New York radio star got detoured.

Dayton left KRLA in the Fall of 1970 for destination New York. Dayton never really was used to his full potential at KRLA, at this time in its history, especially as a would-be strong morning-drive man. This should have been done when the opportunity first occurred in August 1967.

What Johnnie Darin decided to do at KRLA, upon Dayton's departure, was to move evening jock Russ O'Hara from 6 to 9 p.m., to 9 to Midnight, and bring in for 6 to 9, a youthful KHJ part-timer named Shadoe Stevens (real name: Terry Ingstad.)

We first heard the name "Shadoe" at Bartell's KCBQ, from Mission Gorge Road in Santee, where Jerry Swearingen used the name "Shadoe Jackson" in the late 1950s. We were told that Swearingen was the first to use the name "Shadoe" with that spelling. By 1970, it had floated down to other talents. By that time, the "Shadoe" name was always a successful handle for jocks in afternoon-drive and evening/night hours.

Shadoe Stevens, on 93/KHJ, did not join the starting lineup there, as he had been designated to just weekends and relief. So when the opportunity arose from the exiting Bob Dayton, Darin, impressed by Stevens, signed "The Shadoe" to the 6 to 9 p.m. shift.

The next change that occurred at KRLA in late 1970, was the exit of weekender Gary Marshall. Marshall would be moving to Orange County radio. So Marshall exited KRLA in the Fall of 1970. Marshall had never really been "promoted" to the listeners at KRLA. Except for the one issue in Summer 1970 of Gathers No Moss, Marshall was quite invisible to the KRLA audience.

The replacement for Gary Marshall was a personality who really had been a big frog in a little pond, as probably the best air talent at KEZY, Flacencia. And that was Jim Meeker. Meeker joined KRLA in the Fall of 1970, and worked extensively in station productions. But it wasn't until spring 1971, that Meeker had his picture proudly displayed on the new KRLA record survey folders, that we will discuss later in this chapter.

Meeker had been the afternoon-drive jock at KEZY, the major TOP 40 station in Orange County. It was clear that Meeker was headed for bigger days on KRLA after he joined. Meeker's Sunday night show was from 5 - 10 p.m. The energetic, high dynamic sound of Meeker was quite a change from the softer sound of Gary Marshall. It looked like it was just a question of time before Meeker would join the starting lineup in KRLA's future. Everything seemed that way in the Fall of 1970. KRLA was a strong, and getting stronger, TOP 40 force in Los Angeles.

In November 1970, KRLA initiated new graphics in its newspaper publicity for the first time in years. And that was the brilliant, excellent-designed photo-drawings of the KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" head shots, surrounded by comic book pop-art-style stars and graphics, "KRLA Presents (name of jock)," with stars coming from the "KRLA Presents," and the disc jockey name in Warhol/Max pop-art style.

These new graphic promos had an exciting look. We can recall back in late November/early December 1970 rushing out to buy the "Preview" edition (now discontinued) of the Los Angeles Times each evening, just to get the picture of the rotating disc jockey each day or so. They certainly were a neat way to make recognizable KRLA's personality lineup to the public. They were some of KRLA's most exciting graphics in its history. These ran through November and early December 1970. The only real disappointment was using a three-year-old picture of Johnny Hayes, for Hayes' Midnight to 6 graphic block, rather than a more recent one. Hayes' appearance had changed since 1967. Especially in those years of late '60s/early '70s where everything moved faster than normal.

The child of these graphics became the return of KRLA weekly playlists, replacing Gathers No Moss. They were printed on bright-colored paper, hot pink, day-glo orange,

fluorescent yellow, and so on. They featured the same graphic photo-drawing of "The Eleven-Ten Men" in rotation each week. However, when these started in January 1971, the only "graphic" not to make it on the record survey cover was Johnny Hayes. Hayes was fired from KRLA in early 1971, which we will discuss coming up in this chapter, as we enter that year. So there never was a "Hayes issue." These were a definite improvement over the old "Music Power" playlists. These were called "The Music In Los Angeles" folders.

The only disappointing thing to mention about these record survey folders, was when new talent joined KRLA in 1971. Instead of using new graphic photo-drawings, KRLA simply used mug shot-style photos. These did not look nearly as good as the earlier ones using the November 1970 graphic photo-drawings of "The Eleven-Ten Men" from the newspaper artwork.

However, seeing the actual photograph for the first time, that the graphic photo-drawing was based on, was truly a delight. Especially those of such heavyweights as Johnnie Darin, Don Burns and Russ O'Hara. One record survey pictured the face of Johnnie Darin, but featuring the name and time of Don Burns! So these weekly record surveys would later feature "photos" of the jocks. The ones that used a real professional head-and-shoulders shot looked best. The later candid -type mug shots were not as slick, and lost their quality. These record survey folders would be issued every week until July 1971 (when they were dropped entirely.)

Also, at this time in 1970, "The Credibility Gap" irreverent news satires, were replaced by "The Communication Gap" or "The Information Gap," or whatever key word was placed before "Gap," "The _____ Gap," depending on the news story, and the KRLA News was now straight news only. It was sad to see "The Credibility Gap" go. But KRLA wanted straight news once again. The new "Gap" sounded polished, professional, and reminiscent of the old days in 1966 and 1967 when KRLA News was award-winning. Leo McElroy was the force behind this new direction in the news. Another newsman of merit who had the trademark,

"This (pause ... long pause !! ...pause) is Paul Oscar Anderson," was signed by KRLA.

Anderson was one of the best with this style newscast, somewhat on the "hammy" side, but very professional just the same.

KRLA ended the year 1970 with Jay 6 to 9, Darin 9 to Noon, Burns Noon to 3, Sainte 3 to 6, "The Shadoe" 6 to 9, O'Hara 9 to Midnight, and now the last remaining link to the days of "The Station Of The Stars," Johnny Hayes, all-night, Midnight to 6. 1970 was the year that KRLA had major remodeling, fresh new studios, all music now played by the control room engineer, solidified its lineup, and produced the brilliant Gathers No Moss.

As KRLA entered 1971, Johnnie Darin was replaced as Program Director by Dick Sainte. Because of the demands of being Program Director, Sainte decided to give up his 3 to 6 p.m. show, and just do weekends and fill-in. This was a loss to the KRLA lineup, as Sainte in the afternoon-drive was excellent. But Sainte wanted to relieve the strain of afternoon-drive and being in the Program Director chair at the same time, so, in early 1971, Sainte marched out of the 3 to 6 p.m. show.

The ideal candidate at this time for the 3 to 6 p.m. show would have been Jim Meeker. Meeker had already been a very strong afternoon-drive jock at KEZY, and he would have been a natural in that time slot. Instead, Sainte decided to move Shadoe Stevens into the important 3 to 6 p.m. shift, and Russ O'Hara into Shadoe's 6 to 9 p.m. showtime, who had already had that shift back in the Summer of 1969 and most of 1970.

Joining the KRLA lineup in early 1971, was a real dynamically cool jock who had really been electrifying in Santee, Lee Simms. Simms, who called himself "Lee BABI Simms" had been doing afternoon-drive at KCBQ, Santee, in 1968, when we first heard him on Southland airwaves. Lee Simms told us, in August 1991, during a telephone interview to his Richmond home, that KHJ was very concerned about the impact Lee would make in Los Angeles, after leaving KCBQ for KRLA.

Program Director Dick Sainte brought Lee up to KRLA the day before the 1971 Sylmar earthquake. Lee was staying at a motel in Pasadena, ready to start his airshift the next night.

Lee told us that the morning of the earthquake, he was awoken in his motel room by "all this shaking." Lee thought that it was some "dirty tricks" from KHJ, out to "shake him up," or whatever, as KHJ feared Lee Simms' high-profile, dynamic impact. When Lee found out that is actually was an earthquake, he was relieved that it wasn't "dirty pool" from KHJ. That night, Lee started his 9 to Midnight shift, and began "shaking up" the KRLA South El Monte transmitter towers with his own super debut.

We had a swing shift after-college job at a Circle K convenience store in Rosemead, on South San Gabriel Boulevard at Emerson Place just north of Garvey, when we first heard Simms

on KRLA in February 1971, as we were driving home during the eleven o'clock hour. Simms had a lot of energy, but more in a "cool" fashion, rather than the ultra-hot Dick Sainte.

However, one of the best programming decisions to ever grace KRLA's airwaves was about to take place. As we have said so many times in Dream-House, a successful radio station should always have the strongest man in the morning. At this time in February 1971, the most exciting and dynamic morning man since Dave Hull, was about to be hired by Sainte, as Jay Stevens would be moving to a new time slot home. Here's what Dick Sainte decided to do in early 1971.

Earlier, Sainte, as Program Director, decided to fire Johnny Hayes. Years ago in the KRLA studios in Pasadena, we showed Hayes a picture of Dick Sainte in a scrapbook from Research Archives. Hayes sat up in his chair, pointed to Sainte's distinguishable face and said,

"That's the guy that fired me!"

Our research says that Sainte did not like Hayes' more "progressive," at that time, style more than anything else. He thought that Hayes in the all-night show was a weak link to KRLA's programming, as Hayes sometimes "deviated" from the mainstream TOP 40 format. Because of Hayes' "deviations," Dick Sainte felt that Hayes should go. (Hayes appeared to never forgive Sainte for firing him. In January 1991, during one Hayes' shows, Hayes mentioned that a listener had called in and asked about whatever happened to Dick Sainte, who, in early 1991, was living in the Pacific Northwest. Hayes' on-the-air reply was, "Dick Sainte? I think he's dead!")

Johnny Hayes had never been heard on Los Angeles airwaves except for KRLA. When he was terminated from KRLA, Hayes was quickly signed by KDAY on Alvarado near Echo Park, where Hayes could be heard as the new weekend man on 1580 AM.

KDAY, at that time, had an "FM on AM" type format, playing rather "progressive," "underground" music. Hayes fit in to that format quite nicely. However, it was a shock not to hear Johnny Hayes on KRLA, but on KDAY, a much smaller, less-impact, station. But Johnny Hayes on KDAY did a good job in that format. Hearing Hayes play the heavier music during daylight hours was a real treat. So we say goodbye to Johnny Hayes from KRLA in early 1971, as Hayes started anew at KDAY.

The man to take over the Midnight to 6 show in clearly a demotion, was the former Program Director, Johnnie Darin. Darin actually was quite good in those hours. Darin told us that management wanted to oust him from KRLA entirely, but would let him stay on the lineup only in the Midnight to 6 shift. Darin had been a great P.D. but for station politics with management, was given this unfortunate demotion. (See Chapter 10 for an interesting "theory," from Johnnie Darin, on these "station politics.") Darin in the Midnight to 6 hours, we feel, did some of his better shows. Darin sounded more relaxed than he had in years. With the pressure of programming lifted from his shoulders, Darin sounded quite happy. Darin told us he enjoyed those hours very much with Jim Maddox as his newsman.

So Darin was moved out of the 9 to Noon show, and now was Midnight to 6. In Darin's old 9 to Noon shift, Sainte brilliantly moved Don Burns. By now, Burns was quite a smooth, mature voice in middays. Sainte kept a strong "female appealing" voice where he belonged in the 9 to Noon midmorning hours.

Replacing Burns, in his solid Noon to 3 show, was now Jay Stevens, who really seemed more relaxed outside of morning-drive. Gone was "Moby Duck." Instead, Stevens gave a very polished show, and sounded more mature. Housewives had a new delight in their daytime radios. Jay Stevens became an excellent Noon to 3 personality!

The type of person who is a classic morning man, is someone who is funny, someone who is obviously multi-talented, and someone who has a spontaneity and an unpredictable style, that is reminiscent of the up-to-then "great" morning legends on KRLA, Dave Hull and Bob Hudson. The man brought in by Dick Sainte to be morning man turned out to be, by far, one of the best morning men in the history of KRLA.

As Darin had done before, by looking to the Northwest for Don Burns, Sainte also reached "N.W." for the new morning man at KRLA, someone who was truly delightful to listen to, and one of the strongest air talents in Silver Age radio. We feel this man is one of the best air personalities in the country. And that's "World Famous" Tom Murphy.

"World Famous" Tom Murphy had been a big star at KJR, near Harbor Island in Seattle, and being brought down to Los Angeles was quite a catch. Murphy had real talent and certainly, without a doubt, was the strongest man in KRLA's lineup. In fact, next to Bob Hudson and Dave Hull, in the entire history of KRLA, Murphy was right next to them in the top tier of morning legends.

It's hard to describe "World Famous" Tom Murphy's style other than somewhat irreverent, humorously sarcastic, definitely hip, but sometimes a rather "smart" banter, that made his show so refreshing.

Now, in February 1971, KRLA finally had a strong replacement for Dave Hull that filled "The Hullabalooer" 's chair, the strong morning man it needed, and a super excellent choice as the leading player for the rest of the day. Dick Sainte knew that KRLA had perfected its TOP 40 music format. But it needed "World Famous" Tom Murphy to be the superstar for the '70s to really put KRLA on the map, and to be the big name that would bring KRLA to beat KHJ! And Murphy would be the anchor to do it!

KHJ morning man in early 1971, Charlie Tuna, took serious notice. KRLA P.D. Dick Sainte told Murphy that Tuna was ordered by KHJ management to actually listen to, and study, "airchecks" of Murphy's KRLA shows, to hear how a morning-drive radio show and real "high-personality" radio star, should sound.

KHJ knew that Murphy would easily, in time, be the new Number One morning-drive superstar in Los Angeles radio. There's no doubt that "World Famous" Tom Murphy was "the man that KHJ feared most."

"World Famous" told us that if we included this little-known story, it might not be believed, all these years later, due to Tuna's "star" on Hollywood Boulevard, and Tuna's 25-year longevity, and longtime popularity, in the Southland. Murphy, being modest, felt that maybe it should even be "left out" of Dream-House.

But our job is to report the facts, and not withhold the truth, for history. Those facts really did happen. And you can't change history.

With this lineup in place by Sainte, it was Murphy 6 to 9, Burns 9 to Noon, Jay Noon to 3, Shadoe 3 to 6, O'Hara 6 to 9, Simms 9 to Midnight and Darin Midnight to 6, with Meeker and Sainte on the weekends. The Sainte had marched into the Program Director's chair, made some brilliant changes on KRLA in bringing "World Famous" Tom Murphy to the mornings, and fine-tuned the KRLA lineup, to be set for Sainte's TOP 40 direction.

KRLA now was serious about reaching Number One again! KRLA was now all set in the right direction to overtake KHJ. "World Famous" Tom Murphy was slowly-but-surely catching on! KRLA seemed to have the momentum now, to make it the most important station into the '70s, leaving KHJ in its dust. The station was getting hotter all the time. It was sounding great!

The next change in the lineup occurred in the spring, when Russ O'Hara left the KRLA daily lineup which created a vacancy for one of the more outstanding '60s-era jocks to fill. Dave Diamond was proudly placed in "The Eleven-Ten Men" lineup from 6 to 9 p.m. An interesting discrepancy: On the KRLA record survey folder of 6/21 - 6/27 of 1971, Russ O'Hara was pictured, 6 to 9 p.m., even though Dave Diamond actually had that slot, since April. O'Hara continued on Sunday late afternoons, from 4 to 8 p.m., right after Dave Diamond from Noon to 4, before leaving the station later that summer.

The record survey cover, with "Russ O'Hara 6 to 9 p.m.," was said to be a "misprint," because O'Hara did not return to the 6 to 9 p.m. hours, once Diamond got that shift.

Dave Diamond (real name: Sid Davidson) was first known to Los Angeles listeners as being one of the original 93/KHJ "Boss Jocks" in spring 1965. However, Dave Diamond left the 6 to 9 p.m. slot, at the new 93/KHJ, just a few months after the station began "Boss Radio." Diamond was replaced by Johnny Mitchell, who had been known for years at Santee's KCBQ, as "Johnny Holiday."

Diamond's stay on KHJ was relatively short. Diamond later surfaced, high atop the Verdugo Mountains in Glendale, at KBLA, along with another short-time 93 /KHJ original "Boss Jock," and former KRLA personality, Roger Christian. Diamond had pretty much been a straight TOP 40 jock at KBLA, until the strongest KBLA "Super-'In' -tainer," Harvey Miller ("Humble Harv"), was lured away to the 1967-powerhouse, 93/KHJ, creating a vacancy in Miller's legendary 9 to Midnight slot at 1500 AM.

When Dave Diamond had moved into the 9 to Midnight show at KBLA, Diamond for the first time, experimented with longer L.P. cuts, and more "underground" -type programming, which was unheard of on AM, including KRLA, KHJ and KFWB. In fact, Diamond was the first AM disc jockey in Los Angeles to play these new "underground" records for an AM audience, even before B. Mitchel Reed at KFWB. Diamond also was the last voice heard at KBLA on June 16, 1967, as at Midnight, June 17, 1967, it became Country music radio station KBBQ.

Diamond was picked up by KFWB, and signed to do an 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. shift, right after B. Mitchel Reed from 7 to 11 p.m., and be part of a more "progressive" nighttime format of

"underground" music. Expensive bumper stickers were printed, "I Fly KFWB 98 Diamond Mine Airways." Diamond had a good hook with his last name, by calling his show "The Diamond Mine." Each hour was a different "level."

In Los Angeles radio history, Dave Diamond was one of the pioneer jocks in, at-that-time, "underground" radio. Until now, Diamond never had been acknowledged for his contributions toward those early days of "underground" radio.

Diamond left KFWB in early 1968, when the station was about to switch to an all-news format. Diamond went to RKO's KFRC in San Francisco, where he had worked with Dick Sainte at that time. So Sainte knew a good strong talent when Diamond was available again in 1971.

However, by July 1971, the winds of change would once again blow over the six magnificent transmitter towers in South El Monte at KRLA.

The KRLA transmitter site, in its South El Monte pasture, has always stood proudly. On days when the spirit of Princess Blue Sky hovered around the palm trees at the corner of Santa Anita and Lexington-Gallatin Road, the KRLA sound was clear and strong. And the right time to lay on the grass to hear the overhead giant sounds of KRLA in "The Land Of Eleven-Ten."

Ever since September 1959, KRLA had been the station where a person could hear the latest TOP 40 music and the best in strong personalities. But that would now change. In the Summer of 1967, Monterey Pop changed KRLA. Now, four years later, KRLA, in the Summer of 1971, would change even further. (How? The "Shadoe" knows!)

CHAPTER 9

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF PHASE 2

In July 1971, there was a little noticed, new development on the radio scene. At this time, this new development was just a "blip" on the screen, with no one really taking it too seriously. Some didn't notice at all. But this development, from the top of Mount Wilson, would be the first signal in Los Angeles, that a TOP 40 format on AM, by the end of the decade of the '70s, may be a thing of the past.

KRHM, a low-impact FM station from Mount Wilson, with a mish-mash of adult programming, music and talk, on 102.7, with really no notable adult audience, changed its call letters, in July 1971, to KKDJ. The station would now be an automated TOP 40 in stereo. No live deejays, but voice-tracked by "TOP 40-sounding" unknown "jocks" with a "Boss Jock" -style.

Up to then, the only "contemporary" music on FM was "progressive," album-oriented heavier rock, or adult M.O.R. "chicken pop." KKDJ would be the first FM station with a strong TOP 40 music format in stereo.

It was thought that if listeners could hear the same TOP 40 music that AM had been playing, but now in stereo on FM, maybe this could be a sign that an AM station in a TOP 40 format may have a limited future down the road, if TOP 40 FM ever caught on. But it was only 1971. AM was still the "band of choice." KHJ and KRLA were at the top. But it was still something to think about.

At that same time, in July 1971, Dick Sainte left KRLA to go where he was probably destined to go all along, and become a "Boss Jock" on 93/KHJ. At that time, KRLA was going to have a new Program Director. Dick Sainte leaving KRLA created a vacancy not only in his weekend show, but in the P.D. chair as well. (O'Hara left the weekend lineup at about the same time.)

The man selected to become the new Program Director of KRLA was 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon-drive personality, Shadoe Stevens. Stevens, now in control of KRLA's programming, had major plans for KRLA's format.

Stevens really never had a fondness for a bubble gum TOP 40 music format, like the one that had been successful on KRLA under Dick Sainte, and before him, Johnnie Darin. Stevens felt that a TOP 40 music format really just might have been a dinosaur that had its day in the mid-'60s, but had really gone as far as it could go, and was really out of touch to what people really wanted to hear: "progressive" album cuts, and not The Osmond Brothers or Dawn.

Stevens felt that KRLA was no longer in touch with the things young people were really into. And that playing The Partridge Family or Bobby Sherman, was no longer what people really wanted to hear.

Stevens felt, even though KRLA in the Spring of 1971 did finally reach its goal and just about caught up to KHJ's top ratings in Los Angeles radio, that the current format of KRLA was out of touch to what was really going on in the world. What had been the counterculture, was now moving into the mainstream. Stevens felt that the sound of FM, with its more serious, heavier "progressive" rock and album tracks, and more music-savvy jocks, was the way KRLA should move.

Stevens felt that what young people, more sophisticated now and more into the music, really wanted, were personalities who would really know the music. Not just announce the time and temperature. What Stevens wanted to do, was to make KRLA virtually an FM format on AM. And have KRLA develop a more FM-image, than compete with the "Boss Jock" sound on KHJ. (Earlier, in late 1970, Bob Wilson, "Your Chunky Leader," Program Director of Echo Park's KDAY, had changed KDAY from TOP 40 to album-oriented "progressive.")

True, KRLA was right next to KHJ, sharing the top positions in the ratings. But Stevens, as a radio visionary, wanted to move KRLA away from its mainstream TOP 40 format, and into a "progressive" format similar to KMET, KPPC, or the new KLOS. KRLA needed to "mature" as the young adult audience had been doing. The music would become heavier. And the sound of KRLA as a mainstream traditional TOP 40 would be no more. So Stevens reprogrammed KRLA. KRLA would have a new look, sound, and most important, image.

The first thing Stevens did was to adjust the program schedule, and start phasing out the

KRLA personalities that Stevens felt did not reflect the "progressive" image that Stevens would be implementing.

The first casualty, that would take place in August, would be the termination of Johnnie Darin. Darin virtually rebuilt KRLA from stagnant automation into the TOP 40 powerhouse it was in 1970 and 1971. But after being exiled to the graveyard shift, and losing his P.D.'s chair, it was just a matter of time before Darin would leave KRLA.

What Stevens did was to replace Darin in the Midnight to 6 spot with KDAY's Johnny Hayes, who had found a new home at the Echo Park-area station, after being fired by Dick Sainte earlier in the year. Now that Sainte had moved over to KHJ, Stevens brought Hayes back to KRLA into his old Midnight to 6 shift, which he had occupied from early 1969 to early 1971. Hayes told us in 1989, he was still grateful that "Shadoe brought me back."

Again, the Johnny Hayes in this era of KRLA was not the "handsome boy next door" or "son away at college," that Hayes was back in 1966 on his "Teen Toppers" show. This Johnny Hayes was one of early 1969, when he had brought the vigil candles, and did his "progressive" show in candlelight. Hayes now was of that FM-style demeanor that Stevens wanted for his upcoming "progressive" format that would be fully introduced in September. Since Sainte was out, Hayes was now able to come back.

Again, the sound of KRLA under Shadoe Stevens was going to be totally different than a year before. Whereas in 1969, The Johnny Hayes Show and Jimmy Rabbitt's show were the "mavericks" at the station, playing the more "progressive" sounds, in the Fall of 1971 with the new "progressive" album-oriented format, Hayes would be right in the mainstream, as KRLA was moving toward all- "progressive."

The first Shadoe Stevens lineup, as Stevens took over in late summer, and gradually "phased in" his programming, was "World Famous" Tom Murphy 6 to 9 a.m., Don Burns 9 to Noon, Jay Stevens Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, Dave Diamond 6 to 9, Lee Simms 9 to Midnight, Johnny Hayes back on the all-night shift, and Jim Meeker on weekends. Rebel Foster also came back to KRLA briefly during this time, but did not join the starting lineup. Foster did some substitute air shifts and regular Sunday late afternoon shifts that late summer and fall, filling-in the vacancy where Dick Sainte had been heard on the weekends.

Because of President Nixon's wage and price controls that were implemented in 1971, Stevens called this new direction for KRLA "Phase 1" (like Nixon's) as he started, when he took over in late July, to gradually "phase" in the more heavier music.

Announcements were made in early September, that on Saturday, September 18th at Noon, "A great rock station will get down to business," meaning the TOP 40 music would be out, and more "progressive," heavier L.P. tracks would be in. Stevens even ordered new KRLA jingles, replacing the smooth, slick ones from the Dick Sainte era. (This new jingle package would later be used to introduce "Phase 2," when the station would go even further into heavy music, and even a more FM-oriented format in 1972. More on "Phase 2" later in this chapter.)

The first new Stevens jingle was the hourly station ID, "KRLA, Pasadena," sung by a multi-voiced church choir. With the church organ in the background, this jingle was very noncommercial sounding. Stevens told us in 1989, that this was his favorite.

After Saturday, September 18 when the format "officially" changed at Noon, Stevens again adjusted the program schedule to better present his new music, and station direction, away from Dick Sainte's TOP 40 days.

Stevens felt that a morning man at a "progressive" FM-type format should not be a comedic, wise-cracking, funny type of "personality" like "World Famous" Tom Murphy. But instead, be someone very straight, "progressive" FM-oriented, and non-comedic. And not detract from the heavier, more serious music.

Since the morning-drive show is virtually the most important on the station, and sets the "mood" for the whole day, who would be on in the mornings would be very important, and create the "tone" that Stevens wanted. "World Famous" Tom Murphy did not fit that image. Stevens felt he had "too much personality." Having "World Famous" Tom Murphy play Ten Years After or Stone Ground, or other heavier groups at the time, was not the right image that Stevens wanted KRLA to project.

What Stevens did, was to switch the shifts of "World Famous" Tom Murphy with that of Don Burns. Burns would be the new morning man in this new KRLA direction. "World Famous" Tom Murphy would be in the very less-visible 9 to Noon shift. This was phasing Murphy out.

Stevens felt Burns had the "progressive" -FM straight style that would not clash with the music. So Don Burns became the morning man toward the Fall of 1971. With the new heavier music, KRLA was virtually becoming a new station. No TOP 40. No "pop" hits. Lots of album cuts

and "progressive" music.

Many of the new songs that were played moved KRLA away from the teenybopper and "Porch People," who years before used to sit for hours on the steps and cry on Dick Biondi's shoulders, and toward the FM "progressive" -music counterculture. At that time in 1971, it was thought to be very, very important to have a new "progressive" image. With so many young people in the know, who really knew music, moving away from AM toward FM, Stevens felt that this FM-style format was more in keeping with the times. The day of the TOP 40 personality disc jockey on KRLA was over with. Having Don Burns as a morning man was certainly different. But this is what Stevens wanted. He felt that the music was the star. A happy, comedic style was out of touch with the new serious music.

All the KRLA air talent were told to say less between records, tone down their styles, and virtually adopt an FM-style demeanor, even though some of them sounded uncomfortable with this format. Hearing the great "World Famous" Tom Murphy 9 to Noon with "the brakes on" was clearly a waste of Murphy's incredible talent. But Stevens wanted an FM-style. Murphy was just not that way. Murphy tried, but you could see that this new music was not his cup of tea.

The next casualty of this new KRLA was Jim Meeker. Meeker, as said before, would have been a great member of the KRLA starting lineup, and should have been given the 3 to 6 p.m. show when Dick Sainte moved into programming. Instead, Meeker stayed on weekends and did production. The 5 to 10 p.m. Sunday night Jim Meeker show of spring 1971 was exciting radio.

But Meeker also did not fit in to this new "progressive" image of KRLA, and so left KRLA that fall, as it was clear that he would not fit in to the new programming. Jim Meeker was an excellent TOP 40-style air talent. But he too, sounded very uncomfortable with the new music and FM-style that Stevens wanted the station to have.

The next major schedule change was moving Johnny Hayes out of the Midnight to 6 hours, and moving Hayes into the 9 to Noon shift. This meant that comedic "World Famous" Tom Murphy would be exiled to overnights! (Murphy doing a graveyard shift was a complete waste of his talent!) However, Murphy, with his smart-aleck-style demeanor and sarcastic humor personality, was totally out of place playing the new "progressive" music 9 to Noon. Murphy, was moved (really exiled) into the Midnight to 6 shift. Stevens preferred Hayes mellow FM-style, to that of the high impact "World Famous" Tom Murphy, who Stevens felt had "too much personality" for this format. So, Hayes was given the, more visible-to-the public, hours 9 to Noon.

The new KRLA "progressive" era format and lineup were in place. Listeners now could hear Don Burns 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes 9 to Noon, Jay Stevens Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, Dave Diamond 6 to 9, Lee Simms 9 to Midnight, and "World Famous" Tom Murphy Midnight to 6. Stevens would adjust this format very soon after, by switching Lee Simms into the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, and move Dave Diamond 9 to Midnight.

It was felt that Simms was less TOP 40-oriented than Diamond, and that the higher visibility 6 to 9 p.m. shift should go to more FM "progressive" -image personnel, who in this case was Simms. However, this KRLA lineup was pretty much a reshuffling of the cards. To get this format to where Stevens wanted it, he would have to "raid" some of the talent from FM stations, rather than tone down AM jocks, as he tried to do with some of KRLA's who remained from the TOP 40 era, now over with forever.

The biggest name in Los Angeles radio in "progressive" FM was really one of the first "underground" -style personalities in Los Angeles. And that was B. Mitchel Reed. But Reed was already quite happy on the FM band. It would take some persuasion on Stevens' part to get Reed to go back to AM where he had been a legend, before, in 1967, "changing with the music," and becoming a pioneer of "underground" FM and "progressive" music.

Reed was first known to Los Angeles listeners when he was on KFWB in the days even before "Color Radio" in the mid-1950s, as "The Boy On The Couch." When Charlie Brown created the KFWB "Color Radio" format in January 1958, Reed was retained by KFWB to be part of Brown's "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen," in the 6 to 9 p.m. slot.

B. Mitchel Reed, or B.M.R., as he called himself, was one of the fastest talking disc jockeys in the history of Silver Age personality radio. He frequently used bells and horns, and called himself "Your Leader B.M.R.," "The Fastest Tongue In The West" and "The Big Apple On The West Coast." Reed being a New Yorker, (real name: Burt Goldberg) moved back to New York in 1963, and left his 6 to 9 p.m. shift at KFWB. But after a year and a half, Reed was lured back to KFWB in his old 6 to 9 p.m. shift, where he remained until becoming KFWB's morning-drive man in late 1965 and 1966, before, in mid-'66, moving back to evening hours.

It was at this time that Reed got into the "new music" that was happening in the world, played by Dave Diamond at KBLA from high atop the Verdugo Mountains. The more

"progressive" sounds of The Doors, or Ravi Shankar, or Jimi Hendrix were now being heard. Reed could see that that is what he wanted to play, instead of the TOP 40 music and "Fastest Tongue In The West" -image. In early 1967, as Diamond on the other station, Reed started playing these "progressive" songs on KFVB in his 6 to 10 p.m., and later 7 to 11 p.m., shift. Reed called his program "B.M.R. - Better Music Radio."

It was at this time in 1967, that Reed wanted to leave AM radio entirely, and do his "progressive" sounds on FM. There on FM was all the freedom and free form that he wanted. FM was virtually a clean, blank slate. What Reed did, was to team up with "The Father Of Underground Radio," Tom Donahue. Donahue already had been a pioneer of this new music in San Francisco. Reed teamed up with Donahue to program this music on KPPC AM and FM.

KPPC was the first "underground" station in Los Angeles. While primarily an FM station 24-hours a day, KPPC also was on the AM dial at 1240, on Wednesday and Sunday, from the twin transmitter towers atop the newspaper building next door. Reed could get into his new music for the AM audience as well.

So Reed joined KPPC playing his own records from home, and this new "progressive" music, in late 1967, before moving over to KMET the next year in 1968 with Tom Donahue during its "Underground Sunshine" format. Reed was there on "progressive" FM right from the start. His reputation in Los Angeles was well-known. Reed's reputation as an early proponent of FM "progressive" music was quite legendary.

Reed knew that FM was the band of the future. AM music radio was dying out. That's why Reed was on FM. FM radios were now becoming more in demand. Before that, FM was primarily the radio band for serious music purists and classical buffs. Rock music was just not played on FM.

When rock music changed after the Monterey Pop Festival and "Sgt. Pepper," and became more serious with heavier lyrics than boy meets girl - boy loses girl, and where longer L.P. cuts were recorded such as "Revelation" by Love, or the long version of "Light My Fire" by The Doors, AM radio stations, with their heavy commercial load, didn't want to play long album cuts. So consequently FM, which had a better "sound" for music, filled that void. Since there was such an open canvas on FM, Reed and others could see that FM was the wave of the future. AM music radio was dying out.

These serious music listeners didn't want to hear funny "Emperors," or "world famous," high-impact personalities with this heavier music, but air talent who knew the music, and had more to say than just the time and the temperature.

Reed was indeed a pioneer to FM radio. Stevens felt that Reed was just the "box office" name he needed to have people realize that KRLA really did change, and was a totally "progressive" station with an FM album-oriented, rock format, on the more accessible AM band.

At this time, in fall 1971, AM radio, by sheer numbers of receivers, was still the main band. FM was still new, and not as widespread. There were still more AM radios. For people who didn't have FM receivers but wanted "progressive" music, and less TOP 40-oriented air personalities, KRLA would be that alternative. This was Shadoe Stevens' plan.

Reed was convinced that if he could reach a bigger audience, than what he had on FM, it would be worth it. Reed wanted to "share this new music" with as many listeners as possible, and AM, still, was the main band on most radios at least for the time being, in late 1971.

So Shadoe Stevens signed B. Mitchel Reed to KRLA. Because of Reed's maturity, and the fact he would be the oldest jock at the station, it was felt by Stevens that Reed would be most effective middays. Reed was moved into the Noon to 3 slot. Jay Stevens was exiled to Midnight to 6.

Even though Jay Stevens tried to change his TOP 40-image, trading in his old black horn-rimmed glasses for gold wire-rims, Jay Stevens was still too much a reminder of the TOP 40-style that Shadoe Stevens wanted to get away from. So to make room for Jay Stevens on the Midnight to 6 shift, "World Famous" Tom Murphy was released from KRLA.

This was a sad event in KRLA's history because "World Famous" Tom Murphy truly had been one of the brightest spots in the KRLA lineup. As morning man earlier that year, Murphy truly was a hit, and star on the rise. But Murphy, more than anyone else (having "too much personality"), did not fit the style that Shadoe Stevens wanted. "World Famous" Tom Murphy was now out entirely. Murphy deserved better, considering he was one of the best of "The Eleven-Ten Men" in its entire history. But Murphy was another relic of TOP 40. One by one, those era personalities would be dropping off the lineup.

The next part of the lineup was in place. The KRLA lineup, at this time in late 1971 and early 1972, was Don Burns 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes 9 to Noon, B. Mitchel Reed Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, Lee Simms 6 to 9, Dave Diamond 9 to Midnight, and Jay Stevens Midnight to 6.

However, out of this lineup it was clear that the strongest man at the station, at this point as a "progressive" AM, was, without a doubt, B. Mitchel Reed.

Because of his "box office" possibilities, and the fact that he made the station legitimate (If he was there, well, the station must be legitimate!), Stevens decided to go back to one of the "first commandments" of radio. Stevens put the strongest man in the morning show. Don Burns was moved to Noon to 3, after serving his purpose as the "transition" morning man of this new format. Burns was extremely "FM-sounding" in the morning, and certainly created the mood that Shadoe Stevens wanted, moving away from the "World Famous" Tom Murphy high-impact personality orientation of the TOP 40 format.

B. Mitchel Reed, as the new KRLA morning man, was very successful. He was the "box office" big name, and also the most respected at KRLA from his involvement with "progressive" radio right from its start in Los Angeles. The listeners could trust Reed. For example, on one show he warned his listeners about "bogus" Rolling Stones concert tickets, that were printed and sold as real.

Reed also had encouraged his listeners to go on a "Donut Run For The Beamer," as he called it. Listeners would go to the Winchell's Donut Shop on Huntington Drive and Garfield in Alhambra (now a Pizza Hut delivery outlet), and buy boxes of donuts. Then, they would drive to the nearby studios at The Huntington Hotel to give them to Reed. These "Donut Runs For The Beamer," lasted for his entire run as the KRLA morning man. Sales of donuts at that Winchell's outlet soared, as listeners would hope that Reed would eat their donuts and talk about it on the air, as he always did.

Reed was a very strong morning man, even though the station was totally different, being all-"progressive." He was definitely the strongest air talent at the station. Reed also was probably the best "progressive" disc jockey of that era, or even today. B. Mitchel Reed was really the "anchorman" of this whole new "progressive" format. Reed was an excellent morning man for that format. Stevens must be commended for that. The decision was a good one.

By this time in late 1971, KRLA was still heavily "progressive," and Shadoe Stevens wanted its personalities to be that way, too. The next casualty to KRLA was replacing Dave Diamond with Mikel Hunter in the 9 to Midnight show. Diamond already had been moved out of his 6 to 9 p.m. show in a trade with Lee Simms (who, by the way, had dropped the "Lee BABI" tag, and now was just "Lee Simms," which was less TOP 40 sounding.)

Mikel Hunter (real name: Mikel Herrington), a "progressive" FM jock on KMET, was a very good "progressive" air talent. Mikel Hunter was best known to Los Angeles listeners at KLAC-AM, sharing its transmitter towers with KFWB, off of Soto Street, where he was part of the M.O.R. chicken-rock format, which featured former "Eleven-Ten Men" Charlie O'Donnell and Gary Mack, in 1970. Hunter told us he also had been at KFI, La Mirada in 1969, as well. But by this time in late 1971, Mikel Hunter was totally "progressive," and perfectly suited for the 9 to Midnight hours.

"Hot Rocks Hunter," or "Motorcycle Mikel," as he called himself, was very "progressive" - oriented. One trademark of Hunter was always doing "Whew!," as he gave his comments between records. (He sometimes called President Nixon, "Dick-son.")

Also, at this time, in the new Shadoe Stevens "progressive" era of KRLA, a new relief and part-time voice would be heard from the El Monte pasture. John Rydgren, calling himself "Brother John," had been an ordained Lutheran minister, and was actually heard on KRLA back in 1968 during its Sunday morning Christian-oriented "Silhouette" show, that KRLA had subscribed to.

Rydgren had a very mellow-deep voice, and smooth style, and was quite good as a "progressive" personality at KRLA. As he did on the "Silhouette" show in 1968, Rydgren frequently read semi-religious, non-denominational poetry, on his show, that he wrote himself, that was very introspective. Rydgren would be heard in a variety of substitution shifts, and also a prominent voice on KRLA productions, helping "fill the void" left by Jim Meeker, who exited KRLA toward the start of the "progressive" era.

Rydgren, also before coming to KRLA in 1972, was the solo voice of KABC-FM's (later KLOS) "Love Radio" format back in 1968. That was one of the first attempts for mainstream FM stations to go "underground" or "progressive."

So KRLA entered 1972 with its new heavier music format and FM-sounding air voices. Since the Midnight to 6 time slot had been a "dumping" ground, or exile, for the TOP 40 jocks that Stevens was phasing out one by one, as expected, the next to go was Jay Stevens. Jay Stevens would be replaced from Midnight to 6 by another FM-oriented jock. And that's the addition of Greg Shannon to the Midnight to 6 shift. Shannon had been jocking at KDAY in that station's "progressive" music format, so jumped over to KRLA, to continue his "progressive" sounds, at Shadoe Stevens' offer. KRLA was still the place to be.

Jay Stevens, even though he tried, did not fit in to the new format. It was just a question of time when Jay Stevens, exiled to Midnight to 6, would leave. For someone who had been a morning man on KRLA for almost two years, it was a sad departure. During the first two years of college, we woke up to Jay Stevens and his "duck" on our clock radio, and driving to P.C.C. on Del Mar in Pasadena. Jay would be missed.

But Jay Stevens was just not a "progressive" FM-style personality. So Jay Stevens left KRLA during this period in early 1972. However, Jay would turn up soon in May 1972 at KIIS-AM from the Montecito Hills, playing soft-rock, a much better format for his talents. Then when KROQ-AM signed on in September 1972, from high atop the Verdugo Mountains, Jay would join the Johnnie Darin-programmed KROQ-AM along with other big names such as former "Eleven-Ten Men" Sam Riddle, Jim Wood, and Jimmy Rabbitt, and future "Eleven-Ten Man" Charlie Tuna, in a high-talent TOP 40 format.

But by this time in 1972, KRLA was still heavily "progressive," and Shadoe wanted the "personalities" to be non-TOP 40. So at this time in early 1972 we have B. Mitchel Reed 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes 9 to Noon, Don Burns Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, Lee Simms 6 to 9, Mikel Hunter 9 to Midnight, Greg Shannon Midnight to 6, and John Rydgren part-time and relief.

As stated before, Stevens called this new format "Phase 1," when the programming "officially" changed in mid-September. Months later in July 1972, it was time to move into "Phase 2." All regular programming was stopped, when "Phase 2" was introduced. What Stevens did was as follows.

First, promo announcements were made on "Radio Eleven-Ten" that "Phase 2 Is Coming." Listeners were asked to send away for a "program," that would list what "Phase 2" was all about. The "programs" were drawn in a psychedelic style. The cover was olive green, with the following drawing/lettering: "More excitement! Fun. Celebrations. Can you dig it? Introducing the Wonderful World of Phase 2."

Inside, on buff paper, was the following:

"KRLA, Eleven-Ten AM, invites you to listen to the gala introductory celebration at 5 o'clock, Friday afternoon, July 28th. Enclosed is a program to allow you the opportunity of following along at home."

The program itself was a psychedelically drawn listing of all 36 new KRLA "progressive"-style "jingles." Such names as "The Huntington Sheritan (sic) Volunteers," "The El Monte Legion Stadium Choral Group," "The Oak Knoll Jazz Brigade," and our favorite, an inside "dig" to General Manager Hal Matthews, "Harold Mathews (sic) and the Las Lomas Community Orchestra."

An L.P. record was also available as a "Phase 2" promotion, to those lucky enough to get a copy. (We thank our associate, Mike Devich, for ours.) The L.P. was on the "Touch, Unlimited" label. On the plain, white cover was the inscription, "the most unique station promos in the history of radio."

One side of the record featured all the jingles, "banded" for radio station air play. But on the flipside, was the entire for-on-air "production," with Shadoe narration, that was played-in-full over the KRLA South El Monte airwaves at 5 p.m. on Friday, July 28th, 1972, stopping regular programming.

The "Phase 2" special was an on-air "showcase" of all the station's new jingles played back-to-back, very "progressive" sounding, and not slick Drake-like, as had been under the P.D.-ship of Cox, Darin and Sainte. The voice of Shadoe Stevens was heard introducing the "jingle" music. Also, parts of the classic X-rated motion picture, "A Clockwork Orange" soundtrack was heard in the background, to give a futuristic, "progressive" atmosphere.

Shadoe Stevens' voice was even electronically distorted like a "computer speaking on low batteries." The "voice" encouraged listeners to call a 24-hour number to "talk" to this "computer voice" to give suggestions or comments. KRLA had never sounded anything like this before! ("Uncle Bob" and "Jerome" were the two voice "characters" created by Shadoe Stevens on this spectacular "program.")

Some of the "Phase 2" jingles were sung by R. and B. soul singers. Others sounded like "Southern White rockers." Most were downright unconventional. But "Phase 2" on KRLA now was very unconventional. These new jingles complemented the heavier music and "progressive" image.

Even though, during the Shadoe era of KRLA, there were few printed "promotional" pieces, as the "Music In Los Angeles" record survey folders had been discontinued when Dick Sainte left the Program Director chair, besides the "Phase 2" programs and L.P.s, another outstanding KRLA printed promotional piece also came out, during the "progressive" era, that deserves mention here. Shadoe Stevens, as the new Program Director, had KRLA print up

"certificates," drawn in a somewhat "underground comic" psychedelic style, that KRLA listeners could send away for. These certificates read as follows.

"Actual certificate dedicated to: your name here: (and below, a cartoon head-and-shoulders of a KRLA mascot-type character), ...founder of the Spudopelia Foundation, Milton Oak, science fiction writer and world authority, and a Spudopelia sufferer himself. Thanks to KRLA, I helped conquer Spudopelia. Spudopelia, (spoo-doe-peel-eeaa), a condition resulting from deep seated anxieties concerning matters of personal etiquette and unnecessary distress due to the indecision and uncertainty of the acceptability of public consumption of baked potato peels."

As this whole outrageous idea was part of the new Shadoe Stevens direction for KRLA, in a small box on the "certificate," the name "Shadoe Stevens" appeared, showing KRLA listeners who was now at the KRLA controls, and Stevens' new imprint on "Radio Eleven-Ten" 's "progressive" -oriented image. The character shown on the certificate, "Milton Oak," and the whole "Spudopelia" idea overall, shows Shadoe Stevens' exceptionally creative and hip ideas, hip humor, and new direction for the now album-oriented "Radio Eleven-Ten," and how Stevens painted the KRLA canvas with new shades of creative psychedelia, to illustrate KRLA's new "progressive" direction.

"Milton Oak" was a long ways away from the rather innocent-by-comparison "Sgt. Red Pepper," of the Dave Hull morning-drive era, or Bob Hudson's "Commando" certificates of 1964. But just as KRLA listeners had been doing in their own lives, KRLA was definitely maturing and growing up. Shadoe Stevens continued to make KRLA's image album-oriented, "progressive," and away from the days of the Johnnie Darin and Dick Sainte TOP 40 format.

Soon-to-be-introduced Shadoe era jock, China Smith sent us some Shadoe Stevens era "artwork," that surfaced during the "progressive" era of KRLA. China sent us four "greeting cards" that he believes were drawn by Shadoe. On the front (cover) of each "card" is a different "mug" (China's word for "face.") Next to each "mug" is a balloon bubble (as seen in comic books or strips) where the sender can write in their own "caption" that the face would be saying.

The faces do not appear to be caricatures of any recognizable-to-us real people. However, China thinks one of them "looks just like Rebel Foster."

In January 1991, we had the pleasure of talking to Mikel Hunter via telephone. We had never met Hunter before, so it was a real pleasure for us, as we always admired his versatility (from KLAC-AM, an M.O.R. music station, to KMET-FM, "down the hall," a "progressive" one.) Hunter described to us the main promotion KRLA did put out during the Shadoe era. Billboards were constructed all over town, Hunter recalled, featuring a bright, smiling face, that looked something like Mad magazine's famous, smiling character, and the words, "Rock For Those Who Know Better. KRLA 1110." Hunter told us this "face" was also on KRLA promo t-shirts during that era. We thank Mikel Hunter for this "lost memory" of this important KRLA era, that, unfortunately, is one of the least documented.

There were really no other KRLA "collectibles" at this time. No record survey folders. No newspaper ads. Because of no real "printed" memorabilia from that period, the "progressive" era is one that today is the least documented or preserved. It's too bad very little really "came out" during that time to "historically document" through memorabilia this important era of KRLA. Part of the reason was money. KRLA did not have all the mainstream advertisers they once did. Less money was coming into the station. Therefore, the promotional budget was not like it had been under Darin and Sainte in 1970 and 1971.

It was during this "progressive" era, that another voice was heard on KRLA. Pete Moss (real name: Lester Lee) was best known to Los Angeles listeners from his 7 to Midnight and weekend early evening shows on KGBS, Lynwood and Flint Peak, during the Bill Ballance and Hudson And Landry era, of late 1972 and 1973.

Moss had a very excellent deep voice, and had a very slow-paced conversational, philosophical style. Moss also very rarely gave his name on KGBS. It added to his intrigue. Moss was quite a "philosopher." He had a style that was totally unique. We're surprised he never "made it big" in L.A. radio after KRLA and KGBS. He deserved it, due to his unique talent and original style. We were unable to pinpoint the exact time or shifts that Moss was on KRLA, but he was said to be on the station in weekend overnight shifts during the early-to-mid 1972 period.

Joining "The Eleven-Ten Men," in this period, was China Smith (real name: Tom Rohrabacher.) In February 1991, we had the pleasure of talking with China Smith via-telephone from his Northridge home. Smith had currently been jocking in the important morning-drive time slot at KTWV-FM, and recalled reading the first edition of Dream-House in 1989. Smith gave us some added information from his KRLA memories.

Smith had originally jockeyed under the name "Wayne Thomas," back East, before coming to KCBQ, Santee, in 1970, to join Lee Simms at that TOP 40 fortress. Thomas wanted to eventually come to Los Angeles after KCBQ, and especially wanted to join KRLA, as Thomas had "always had a dream" to, one day, be part of "The Eleven-Ten Men."

However, since there already was a booth announcer at KHJ-TV, in Los Angeles, named "Wayne Thomas" (who also appeared on-camera, once in a while, on Channel 9), Thomas wanted to start using a new handle in Santee, that he could also take with him to Los Angeles, his goal down the road. He also felt "Wayne Thomas" was too common, and generic, a radio name.

KCBQ Program Director Gary Allyn ("The World's Tallest Midget") told Thomas that he always wanted to have a jock named "China" on his air-force. Thomas was intrigued by this idea, as he already was a "disciple" of Oriental philosophy, that had been trendy in the late '60s/early '70s. But Thomas also felt that it was important to have an American sounding name to go with "China." Thomas knew that "Smith" was as American as apple pie. So at KCBQ, Wayne Thomas became "China Smith," and, as they say, the rest is history.

Smith told us some of his most pleasurable times in radio was when he jockeyed at KRLA, joining his former KCBQ colleague, Lee Simms, who had joined KRLA the year before Smith came to "Radio Eleven-Ten." After leaving KCBQ, Smith did come to Los Angeles to jock at KDAY, during its "progressive" era in 1971. But when Shadoe Stevens needed some legitimate "progressive" -oriented jocks to replace the TOP 40 holdovers at KRLA, Stevens snatched Smith away from the Echo Park-area AM, where Smith had already been developing strong numbers.

First, Stevens made China Smith a weekender, where Smith could be heard on "progressive" -era KRLA, during weekend afternoons. Stevens, anticipating that Reed (and Hunter) might be leaving KRLA, had Smith "wait in the wings."

Then, after Hunter, (and then B.M.R.) left KRLA to go back to FM, Stevens promptly moved China Smith into the 6 to 9 p.m. shift, where he first became recognized as a "starting lineup" member of "The Eleven-Ten Men." Smith's dream had indeed come true!

At KRLA, Smith also joined Greg Shannon, as mentioned before, another former KDAY "progressive" jock. Smith told us, that to this day, he was grateful and thankful to Shadoe Stevens for bringing him to KRLA. Being loyal to Stevens, Smith would "follow" Shadoe Stevens over to KROQ-AM ("Mother Rock") in March 1973. But that's getting ahead of our story. At this time, in 1972, "The China Man" was one of the more authentic "progressive" era KRLA jocks, who was an important part of Shadoe Stevens' "Phase 2" lineup.

However, as visionary and innovative that Shadoe Stevens was, unfortunately the "progressive" era FM-style format was not working as planned. KRLA was losing some mainstream advertisers. Some of the commercials heard now were for stereo shops, water bed stores, and of course, "progressive" rock concerts. These type of advertisers were the ones KRLA's new "progressive" listeners patronized. But the old listeners who preferred the former TOP 40-oriented KRLA, switched to KHJ, or the new KKDJ on FM.

There were new listeners to KRLA who liked the "progressive" era. But these listeners who were "into" the music also had stereo systems at home, and most important, had FM radios.

And there was the problem. This more serious "progressive" music sounded better on FM. Why listen to AM to hear music that could be heard on FM's KMET or KLOS?

It was turning out that KRLA was defeating itself by phasing out strong high-impact personalities. In the past, people would listen to their "favorite deejay." Now, KRLA was music oriented. True, it had some great "progressive" personalities. B. Mitchel Reed was clearly the best. It's true people would buy B.M.R. donuts. But the fan worship that, say, Dave Hull or Dick Biondi experienced, wasn't there with Reed. People listened to Reed's music. They respected him and what he played. He was one of the best. But those listeners wanted music. They were more "into" the music than the disc jockey. They didn't tune on KRLA to hear The B. Mitchel Reed Show, but to hear heavy music played by "The Beamer"! There's a difference.

And that "progressive" music still sounded better on FM. Because of that, FM was growing stronger. FM receivers were being ordered for new cars. Even G.E. came out with small FM/AM radios that people (even former 10-years-olds from Arcadia) could carry. And take that FM "progressive" music with them. People simply wanted to hear their "heavier," "more serious" music on FM.

At this time, some radio observers in the industry were predicting one other thing. As soon as auto manufacturers started putting FM radios in all cars, with stereo capability, AM would someday be no longer any type of music force except for talk, traffic, news, business, and sports. FM would be the home for music. And people would buy FM radios to hear their favorite music

better!

The old KRLA listeners drifted away at the start of the "progressive" era. The new ones stayed for a short time to hear Reed or Hunter, but preferred the sound of the music on FM. Soundwise, KRLA could not compete with FM. But KRLA, as an AM TOP 40, could compete with KHJ. And did very strongly under Darin and Sainte. It is true that the times were changing. Some felt that maybe KRLA would have eventually "died" if it had remained TOP 40.

Our research shows that this probably wouldn't have happened in 1971. KHJ, as an AM TOP 40, was still popular right to the end of the '70s decade, and into 1980. KTNQ (formerly KGBS AM) as an AM TOP 40 was very high-impact, from its 6th and Don Julian location in the City Of Industry, from 1976 to 1979. Even in the early 1980s, AM TOP 40 was quite formidable on south-of-Tijuana's powerful XETRA, "The Mighty 690." KRLA had a very, very strong jock lineup when Stevens took over as P.D. "World Famous" Tom Murphy was a very popular, and super strong, morning man on the rise in Los Angeles. He was destined to be a superstar probably in a couple of years. The others were very strong, too. As strong as KHJ's "Boss Jocks." Some even stronger.

It came down to this. When the format changed to "progressive," the old listeners, who weren't really into heavy music or "progressive" comments, left. The new listeners eventually went back to FM where the physical "sound" was better. When the "progressive" listeners went back to FM, there was really no one left to listen to KRLA. The 1959 - 1971 continuity of KRLA being a longtime TOP 40 voice, that people had been extremely loyal to, had been broken.

KRLA on AM playing album-oriented music just could not compete with FM. KRLA really never ever had a chance against KMET or KLOS. With FM coming in cars, people who wanted "heavier" music would be able to keep their dials on FM both at home, and in their cars, and even on the beach with portables!

KRLA had lost its 11-year continuity. For overall listeners, KHJ was still on top in the late summer and Fall of 1972. People knew what KHJ was. They either liked it or hated it. But knew what it was. KRLA had lost that identity by changing formats when Sainte left.

The "progressive" era of KRLA was a noble experiment. It was a common perception at that time that TOP 40 was an out-dated format to the new "progressive" attitudes of that period. KRLA wanted to stay on top of things. On paper, it seemed that a "progressive" AM would work, and would be more "in touch" with the times. Ron Jacobs tried it at KGB-AM, San Diego. But that only lasted two years.

KRLA news reporter Jon Silvius was in college with us in 1971 and early 1972, and did a radio show on KPCS-FM in Pasadena with "Bill Earl" also on that lineup. Silvius told us that he expressed concerns about going to this format, and not change a station that was a strong TOP 40, with "World Famous" Tom Murphy anchoring a dynamite lineup, into a "FM-on-AM" experiment that really wouldn't have a long range chance against growing FM.

Shadoe Stevens does deserve special credit for exposing the AM listeners to something they probably might not have heard otherwise. The album-oriented heavier "progressive" music, Stevens made available on AM for those who didn't have FMs. And that was a good service.

At this time in late summer and early fall 1972, KMET and KLOS on FM playing "progressive" were on the way up. KHJ on AM playing TOP 40 was still a popular station. KRLA was dropping from the top tiers. At about this time, Mikel Hunter would leave KRLA in the late Summer of 1972 to go back to FM. That was the sign that the handwriting was becoming visible on the wall. Replacing Hunter 9 to Midnight was Lee Simms, moving back into his old late-night shift from where he started. China Smith would now move into the 6 to 9 p.m. slot.

The lineup now was B.M.R. 6 to 9 a.m., Johnny Hayes 9 to Noon, Don Burns Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, China Smith 6 to 9, Lee Simms 9 to Midnight, and Greg Shannon Midnight to 6. John Rydgren did weekends and relief, and was the main voice of KRLA production.

However, B. Mitchel Reed, as Mikel Hunter before him, would also be moving back to KMET-FM, where the future appeared to be. (Mikel Hunter actually was the one who "re-hired" Reed back to KMET on the FM band.) Reed would stay on FM, where he, over the years, before his untimely death in 1983, would surface on both KMET and KLOS. Reed, like Hunter, could see that an FM format on AM couldn't really compete with stereo FM. So after a great year at KRLA where he really was a very, very good morning man in that format, Reed left the 6 to 9 a.m. shift.

At this time, Johnny Hayes would become morning-drive man for the first time in KRLA's history, in the 6 to 9 a.m. spot. Hayes already was on midmornings, so the move up to morning-drive wouldn't be that drastic for the listeners. John Rydgren would move into the regular lineup into Hayes old 9 to Noon shift, followed by Burns, Stevens, Smith, Simms, and Shannon.

Coming on board, at this time toward late 1972, would be a new air talent for KRLA. Since John Rydgren moved to 9 to Noon when Reed left, there was now a vacancy in the relief ranks. So Johnny Michaels joined KRLA in the Autumn of 1972 to work weekends, and do substitute shifts.

As Hunter and Reed before him, now Don Burns exited KRLA. Greg Shannon would move up into the Noon to 3 shift from overnight, certainly better hours, and a step up in visibility for Shannon. Returning to KRLA in the Midnight to 6 show was Russ O'Hara. Overnights for O'Hara was a long way from just three years ago as the star morning-drive man. But KRLA was in a transition period, and there were concerns expressed on the station's direction. With Hunter, Reed, and now Burns gone from KRLA, it was clear that KRLA, and its "progressive" format, was starting to desolidify. There were concerns about the loss of pre-1971 listeners, and the defections of new ones to FM. There were concerns about possible revenue loss from advertisers, that were choosing mainstream stations like KHJ over "progressive" album-oriented KRLA. KRLA's format was still considered "progressive," but now going even more esoteric with non-commercial sounding album tracks. No mainstream "hits," just unconventional rock music. The days of TOP 40 were long gone.

KRLA did not have at this time a real focus. Right about the time O'Hara rejoined KRLA in the Midnight to 6 spot, another name from the past came back to KRLA. But not as a jock. This KRLA alumnus would be brought back to help put the station on the right track, and to "consult" the station on its programming direction.

At this time in 1972, Rebel Foster, past Program Director of KRLA from the '60s, reentered the once-upon-a-time dream-house behind the scenes. Coming on board with Foster was Steve Brown. Brown was an air personality on the lineup with Foster at KISN in Portland, in the early '60s, when Foster was known as "D.J. Dennis James" on that station. Brown would not be doing any jocking work at KRLA at this time. Both Brown and Foster would be trying to fine tune the station somewhat, and to find out just what was going to work.

Since Rebel Foster came back, Bob Dayton who had left KRLA in September 1970, ironically to make room for Shadoe Stevens, now rejoined KRLA in November 1972 to be a relief and weekender. Dayton, a personal friend of Foster, was first brought to KRLA by Foster in June of 1967. Coming aboard now, it was clear that KRLA would be entering a transition period between the Shadoe Stevens' "progressive" era, that appeared to be winding down, and into what direction Steve Brown and Rebel Foster might take it. But very few noticed. KRLA did not really have a committed audience anymore. The mainstream audience hadn't been listening to KRLA in a long time.

The lineup on KRLA, at this time in late autumn 1972, was Johnny Hayes 6 to 9, John Rydgren 9 to Noon, Greg Shannon Noon to 3, Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6, China Smith 6 to 9 p.m., Lee Simms 9 to Midnight, and Russ O'Hara Midnight to 6. (O'Hara, earlier in 1972, by the way, was heard on the new FM stereo KKDJ, which was continuing its audience buildup with new ripples on the TOP 40 radio scene.) Johnny Michaels and Bob Dayton were heard on the weekends.

This lineup was about as strong as it could be under the circumstances, but the focus of KRLA was diminishing. People really didn't know just what KRLA was playing now. It had really no stalwart audience anymore. Later, John Rydgren would leave the lineup, and 9 to Noon shift, creating a vacancy for Bob Dayton to move into.

Finally in December of 1972, there would be one last attempt to get people to "take another look" at KRLA. Steve Brown, in 1989, told us that this "new direction" for KRLA was primarily his idea. Also, Buddy Budnik, formerly a jock on KMEN, on Baseline in San Bernardino, where he was best known, was involved in this next direction for KRLA behind the scenes, too. (Buddy Budnik's biggest jocking radio years were from 1965 thru 1967 at KMEN.) This new direction and idea was called "Future Rock."

A very popular paperback book out in 1972 was Future Shock. As a tie-in, the KRLA logo was changed to the same futuristic computeresque graphic style that was featured on the cover of the Future Shock paperback. For the first time in over a year, KRLA would try to promote itself with several newspaper ads that might just try to turn the station around, and let people know that KRLA still existed. (Brown told us that one of these ads is framed on the wall of his home.)

Also, at this time, a new KRLA jingle was heard. "K-R-L-A" was sung to the "theme" of "2001: A Space Odyssey" movie, in keeping with the "future"-oriented format. ("K-R-L-A- We Are L.A.!") The problem was no one really knew what "Future Rock" was. It was really not clearly focused to anyone. But there were still feelings that a TOP 40 AM was a thing of the past, with KKDJ now a "new pioneer" on the TOP 40 FM scene, and that KRLA needed to have a different rock music-oriented direction. With KKDJ's initial "ripples," it was rumored that now, other TOP

40 FM's would soon be joining KKDJ on the stereo FM dial.

The first promotion for "Future Rock" was a full-page newspaper ad in December 1972. It featured the heading "Future Jock," and showed a picture of Buffalo Bill Cody. The ad went as follows, to try to explain what "Future Rock" was:

"Just out ahead of the rest of the party, finding the best of what lay ahead, rode the scout. They depended on him to find the right path to better things. The scout was the discoverer, the inventor, the astronaut. In today's L.A. radio, there's a new path being charted at 1110 on the dial. New music before it's entombed for months on a Top 30 chart. New and satisfying music before it's burned-out like another campfire. With the respects to Buffalo Bill, Leonardo De Vinci and Neil Armstrong, we present our scouts . . . The Future Jocks of today's music. Hayes ... Dayton ... Shannon ... Stevens ... Smith ... Simms ... O'Hara. Future Rock ... It's something you can get into today. By KRLA 1110."

Another ad went:

"At KRLA in addition to the music of today, we're featuring music by established contemporary artists just in advance of the 'chart,' album cuts before you hear them anywhere else, new releases before they sell a jillion copies. Give Future Rock a try ... It's something you can get into today."

Not many did. "Future Rock" lasted only until March 1973. Shadoe Stevens, China Smith, and Greg Shannon would all leave KRLA at about the same time. (Smith told us that he could have stayed on in the upcoming "all-two man" format, but declined.) Stevens and Smith would go to KROQ in Glendale, on 1500 AM, and FM (the former KPPC), to do "Mother Rock," a "progressive" format similar to what Stevens did at KRLA in 1971 and 1972, but even more heavier. These channels were said to be a better canvas for Stevens' ideas and experimentations.

Ironically, in the late 1980s, Shadoe Stevens found his biggest fame in radio as the new host of the coast-to-coast syndicated program originated by Casey Kasem in 1970, American Top 40. So, for a man who turned KRLA away from TOP 40 in 1971, it was ironic that years later, Shadoe Stevens would be the nationwide host of, of all things, a TOP 40 countdown show, and that a TOP 40 show would give Shadoe Stevens his biggest national radio fame!

Now, in March 1973, KRLA was faced with what to do now. It was a different radio landscape than in early 1971 in the Dick Sainte era, back in the days when KRLA was neck-to-neck with KHJ. By this time in March 1973, KKDJ on FM had just hired Jay Stevens to be its biggest "name," along with former KMEN jock, T. Michael Jordan. KKDJ was serious about its goal to be a TOP 40 champion in FM stereo.

KHJ still was on top with the mainstream audience, but now, due to KKDJ's inroads, another FM station was about to challenge KHJ, and switch to a TOP 40 format. KIQQ had just been born out of the ashes of Country music station KFOX-FM. KIQQ had former KRLA, KFWB, KGBS, KBLA, and KHJ legend Roger Christian anchoring its deejay lineup, from Noon to 3. The 100.3 FM channel was also, like KKDJ, taking dead aim at KHJ. Both KKDJ and KIQQ were in stereo. KHJ, in AM "mono," was looking vulnerable.

At this time, so was KRLA. Even though just a few years earlier, KRLA had the TOP 40 audience "in its hand," and was "The (once-upon-a-time) Station Of The Stars" in KRLA's Number One days, the thought of a TOP 40 format on FM in stereo, hadn't even been seriously considered. FM radios, in that earlier era, were a speciality item, and sort of a novelty. The mass public (and biggest available audience) didn't own an FM radio, except maybe a band on a big "console" in the living room, hardly ever played.

But now with TOP 40 FM's KKDJ and KIQQ coming on the scene, it was thought that if KRLA tried to go back to its TOP 40 format, it just wouldn't work anymore. In early 1971, KKDJ and KIQQ didn't exist. They did now in March 1973. And they appeared to be the first wave of FM TOP 40 stations of the future. So KRLA could not go back to a TOP 40 format. Had it stayed TOP 40 in 1971, it might have been able to hold on, because it would have had unbroken continuity, and the momentum of 11 years of the same consistent format. But the continuity had been broken. Ironically, as the most popular song of 1971 went, "it's too late."

CHAPTER 10

RIDIN' WITH ROY

In March 1973 when we were in college, we had a part-time job working for a security agency that would send us to various sites. Some were where we just sat in our car for hours to watch a site and, being a student, to study.

One cold, late afternoon in early March of 1973, we were sent to a produce field next to the Texaco refinery on Durfee Avenue in South El Monte, just east of Rosemead Boulevard. And just two blocks away, was the KRLA transmitter site and six antenna towers on Lexington-Gallatin Road. While we were sitting in our car under the big power-line structures, we were studying for our classes at California State University, Long Beach. However, it was almost sunset. The sun was starting to dim. The 1972 red Chevy II we were sitting in, was parked facing northeast. We could see the KRLA transmitter towers ahead in the near distance.

Being under big power-line structures in this produce field, we knew those structures, that looked like giant Erector sets, might cause interference to our car radio. We turned on the radio. Mostly static. KHJ couldn't come in. The sun was going down. We couldn't study anymore. The dome light on the Chevy II wouldn't be bright enough. Because KRLA was just a block or two away, and we were in sight of the radio towers, we figured KRLA would probably come in clear, and that the electrical power-lines might not interfere that much with the 50,000 watt signal just a block or two away. Having the radio on would make the lonely shift go much faster.

We turned on KRLA for the first time in several weeks. The first song we heard was "Tie A Yellow Ribbon 'Round The Old Oak Tree," by Dawn! We then knew KRLA must have had a format change. A song like that would never have been on the KRLA playlist last year!

KRLA did have a format change. Rebel Foster, the new Program Director, and Steve Brown as consultant, decided that KRLA should pretty much forget about TOP 40. It was too late. Instead, KRLA would be a rather pop-sounding soft-rock facility leaning toward current "pop" sounding hits, rather than to TOP 40, and away from the truly esoteric "Future Rock."

An over-25 adult audience was what KRLA was going to go after. The same audience that liked "Lohman And Barkley" on KFI. And "Hudson And Landry" on KGBS (featuring former KRLA legend Bob Hudson). Foster felt that this was the available audience that might welcome KRLA again. Some of these listeners may have listened to KRLA as teenagers. Rebel Foster and Steve Brown agreed that that audience really was the only one left right now for a music-oriented KRLA.

We continued to listen from the front seat of the Chevy II. The transmitter towers were in clear sight on the other side of the lake, Legg Lake, right next to us over the fence. The next song we heard was "Bitter Bad" by Melanie. I wonder who the jock is? Is it still Shadoe Stevens 3 to 6 p.m? "Bitter Bad" came to an end. We listened closely.

The next thing we heard was a "live"-sounding disc jockey team, "Dayton And Foster." "Dayton And Foster"? Now partners? What we found out the next day was that Rebel Foster and Steve Brown decided to turn KRLA into an "all-two man show" station! Because Foster and Bob Dayton were old friends, it was "Dayton And Foster" from 3 to 6 p.m. "Hayes And Simms" would be the new morning team in morning-drive. From 9 to Noon it would be Steve Brown, now on-the-air, along with Russ O'Hara, "Brown And O'Hara." At other times it was "Simms And Michaels." In other words, every show at KRLA was a two-man show.

The best seemed to be "Dayton and Foster." They really were a good team! Because of their friendship, they truly seemed to enjoy each other, constantly cracking the other one up. It sounded like two old friends in Joe Jost's (Anaheim Street in Long Beach) Bar. The reason "Hayes And Simms" was in the mornings, was that Johnny Hayes already had been morning man, and it was thought not to make another change in that important time slot.

Because this "tied up" the lineup, by cutting their possible spread-out time in half, by having two men on together at a time, the station repeated these shows during various other parts of the day. Pre-recorded. The disc jockeys were told to say,

"It's 20 minutes before the hour," rather than identify the hour, because these shows would be used in various nighttime hours of the day or on weekends. You could hear "Brown And

O'Hara" from 9 to Noon, and then hear the exact show from Midnight to 3 in the morning. The same day!

The KRLA lineup consisted at this time of Johnny Hayes, Bob Dayton, Lee Simms, Russ O'Hara, Johnny Michaels and a new on-air member of "The Eleven-Ten Men," Steve Brown. Steve Brown was one of the best personalities on KRLA since "World Famous" Tom Murphy. Brown seemed to be the one star on the rise. Steve Brown was an excellent personality, reminiscent of "World Famous" Tom Murphy two years before. Brown had great on-the-air potential. Brown was actually the high mark of this whole lineup. Here was a personality with a lot of potential and good humor, and seemed like a superstar in the wings. Next to Dayton, Steve Brown was the best.

KRLA, under the direction of Rebel Foster and Steve Brown, was now "all-two man" radio. KRLA even got press coverage on this format in articles in the Los Angeles Times.

For a while, they decided to "mix and match" the disc jockeys. For example, if "Hayes And Simms" didn't work, how about "Simms And O'Hara"? Or "Brown And Michaels"? Or "Hayes And O'Hara"? The possibilities seemed endless.

However, the main problem was in recording these shows and then playing them back at various other times of the day. Sometimes the "tapes" would not played at the correct times. You'd hear the disc jockeys say, "It's 23 minutes after the hour," when it was actually 10 minutes before the hour. These snags seemed to happen more often than they should.

But at this time of KRLA's history, there were not too many listeners then, due to all the format changes since the late Summer of 1971. Most people no longer listened to KRLA during this time in 1973 as they once did.

This "all-two man" experiment did not last long. In May 1973, KRLA went back to traditional one-man shifts. And finally KRLA put the strongest man in the morning-drive show where he should have been six years earlier. Bob Dayton finally became the morning man from 5:30 to 9:30 a.m! (It was about time!)

Following Dayton in the 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. spot was Rebel Foster. 12:30 to 3:30 was Steve Brown. Johnny Hayes was 3:30 to 7:30 afternoon-drive, which seemed to be a good "box-office" time slot for this KRLA veteran. The two drive-times with Dayton in the morning and Hayes in the afternoon, were a good combination! Lee Simms was 7:30 to 12:30. Russ O'Hara was 12:30 to 5:30.

On weekends and relief was Johnny Michaels, but suddenly not calling himself "Johnny Michaels" anymore, but his real name "Johnny Laurello." One day it was "Johnny Michaels." The next day it was "Johnny Laurello." No explanations at all. But no one really noticed. The listeners just weren't there anymore. It didn't seem to matter, because no one seemed to care anymore.

Shortly after this one-man show lineup started, Rebel Foster left his 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. show to devote more time to P.D. duties, and was replaced by Johnny Laurello in those midmorning hours. So by the end of May 1973, KRLA had a soft-rock lineup of Bob Dayton 5:30 to 9:30, Johnny Laurello 9:30 to 12:30, Steve Brown 12:30 to 3:30, Johnny Hayes 3:30 to 7:30 and Lee Simms 7:30 to 12:30. Russ O'Hara was 12:30 to 5:30 all-night hours. Rebel Foster did reliefs and a weekend shift or two. This lineup was quite good, and was "all-live" at this point, at least during the week. The music was not TOP 40, but more adult contemporary pop soft-rock hits targeted to an older audience, not teenagers anymore like in the halcyon days.

But even though this was a noble attempt, and a decent lineup of good strong personalities, especially Dayton and Brown, the station by June 1973 could no longer afford to have the high-priced array of disc jockeys. So in June of 1973, at a time when very few people were listening to KRLA anymore, Bob Dayton, Johnny Laurello, Steve Brown, Lee Simms, Russ O'Hara and Rebel Foster left the station, and all that was left was Johnny Hayes and, now returning to the station, Greg Shannon. Rebel Foster and Steve Brown did really try with programming experiments, but the audience was no longer there, and the latest solid lineup of talent was too costly at this time of KRLA's history.

It was now total automation on KRLA, that Summer of 1973, with just voice-overs by Hayes and Shannon. No personalities whatsoever. No shows. This was bare bones radio, very cheap to operate. But the station was virtually broke, very few commercials anymore, no real audience, and as 1973 was about to roll into 1974, even Greg Shannon would drop off the lineup to join Shadoe Stevens at "Mother Rock" KROQ from Glendale.

Now, the only voice heard on KRLA was Johnny Hayes, day after day, 24-hours a day. Hayes, at this time was just used as a disembodied voice. No "Johnny Hayes Show," just his voice announcing song titles, promos, spots, or commercials when there were some.

So now as we move to the end of 1973, KRLA was all-automated with just Johnny Hayes' voice tracks and the lowest point in the station's history ever. The music wasn't TOP 40 anymore. No real hits, just soft/mellow-rock type programming. KRLA, at this time, really was sad, as the radio station had truly faded as any type of mainstream force in L.A. radio.

Budgetary problems caused KRLA, at this time, to have no more control room engineers in Pasadena, just an engineer person on duty during daytime hours to just be there for production, or for whatever technical reasons. Now, the transmitter engineer in South El Monte was the one who actually put the carts in the cart machine, and played those tape carts over and over from a playlist that was delivered to South El Monte daily.

The days of the engineer sitting in the transmitter building in South El Monte and fixing a scrambled egg in the kitchen looking out the window to the horse pasture and the Pomona Freeway, were long gone. Now, the engineer actually was quite busy, loading up the various cart decks, and following the schedule of cart order for the cart decks, now installed on the desk in the main room of the transmitter building.

A new shelf was built right inside the door of the transmitter building in the middle aisle of the room, with umpteen number of carts stacked high. Another one was built covering up the window directly to the right inside the "shop," where the once full-length window was now covered up with a huge array of these cartridge tapes. KRLA was still barely making it with hardly any advertising and still without a license. What happened?

It was clear that beginning in summer 1971 and the many format changes afterward, "Future Rock," All-two man shows, All one-man shows, All-Hayes and Shannon, and now All-Johnny Hayes, that the station simply lost its core audience, and failed to keep new ones with format changes. Now in 1973, KRLA completely stopped being a voice of any importance in Los Angeles radio. Think of it this way. If KRLA had kept its spring 1971 format with Dick Sainte at the controls through 1971, 1972, and 1973, would KRLA have amounted to this, this very low point in 1973?

Who can really say. But our research shows that it wouldn't have come to this. KHJ in 1973 was still very successful, with Charlie Van Dyke in the morning, and a full team of talent. KRLA, in 1971 had just about "caught up" with KHJ, and was ready to overtake the tiring "Boss Radio." (A side note: KHJ would drop the logo "Boss Radio," in early 1971, as it seemed "dated.") "World Famous" Tom Murphy would have certainly been a stronger morning man on KRLA than Charlie Van Dyke was on KHJ, and would have easily trounced Van Dyke in the morning-drive ratings.

Now, KRLA was dying a very, very slow death. It still didn't have a license. And it not only was still turning over all profits to Public Television and U.S.C. At times it actually was losing money.

Johnnie Darin told us, in 1989, that he believed that certain "sinister forces" in station management actually wanted KRLA to fail, and not overtake KHJ, as it, most certainly, was about to, with "World Famous" Tom Murphy anchoring a super-strong talent lineup.

These unnamed individuals, in behind-the-scenes management, were said to have felt that if KRLA was a "ratings failure," then other interested parties would not want to "go for" the station's license, and, therefore, these "insiders," in KRLA management, would have an uncontested, "inside-track."

We were unable to verify if this theory was completely true. Others we've talked to, about that subject, told us that they "couldn't remember," "couldn't recall," "do not remember," or "have no recollection whatsoever."

We do know this. If KRLA did overtake KHJ as the new TOP 40 mainstream Number One, in 1971, in a Murphy-led winning "air force" as expected, there would be a lot more "interested applicants" wanting the station license. That's for sure.

(Note: Murphy told us, in September 1991, that he suspected that one, unnamed-for-publication, behind-the-scenes individual, "dicked with the books.")

By this time, Johnny Hayes needed someone else besides himself to cut the voice tracks. At that time, Johnny Hayes brought in Evan Haning to do productions and some on-air pre-recorded song introductions in late 1973. Haning's voice sounded very much like Hayes. Since at that time in late 1973, no disc jockey names were given, just song titles only, with the similarity in the voices with Hayes and Haning, most people did not realize that Haning was "on KRLA" at that time. At this time KRLA was called "Radio Karla," especially by Haning, in reviewing some Haning airchecks from that period.

In late 1973, KRLA would give itself one last attempt to try to save the radio station. One man felt that maybe he could do something. One man who had sentiment for KRLA because he

had been one of the very-first-year "Eleven-Ten Men" in 1959. KRLA had nothing to lose and everything to gain. At this time, this former "Eleven-Ten Man" would try to salvage the radio station.

It would not be easy. He would probably have to use automation, at least at first. But he had a vision for KRLA, to try to make it a credible voice again as perhaps a mellow-rock M.O.R. station.

KRLA decided to do something different than the stagnant sounds of All-Hayes and Shannon, All-Johnny Hayes, and All-Hayes and Haning. It was now Roy Elwell's turn to try to salvage the dream-house. KRLA was now going to go "ridin' with Roy" in the P.D. chair.

As discussed in Chapter 6, Elwell had been last heard on KRLA in December 1968, doing a recorded 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. show until January 1, 1969 when replaced by William F. Williams. Before then, Elwell had been heard on various other stations in Los Angeles, including a drive-time 4 to 7 p.m. talk show at KLAC. Elwell also had been seen on Channel 9 television, hosting a television talk show called "Tempo," one of the several "Tempo" shows that ran simultaneously on KHJ-TV. But last heard on L.A. radios in December 1968, Roy Elwell was now back on KRLA as Program Director, but with a more mellow, less political, attitude than in 1968, and had some new ideas for the KRLA he was about to take over.

The direction Elwell took KRLA was toward continued automation, but so slickly done that only a close listener could tell that it was automated. Elwell had a machine installed at the transmitter building in South El Monte where he, and the other taped announcers, would record every minute of the day in order, "It's 6:01," "The time is now 6:02," "Clockwatchers take note of the time at 6:03," and so on. So whenever the time was to be announced, usually and primarily in the drive-time hours, the voice of Elwell or whoever, would come on in a taped fragment that went around 24-hours a day, sounding out the time, minute by minute, until the engineer pulled a switch and the time blurb was heard over the air. It was quite foolproof. This machine was kept right near the floor to the left in the KRLA transmitter main room.

The first thing that Elwell did upon arriving at KRLA, was develop somewhat of a program schedule, which didn't really exist with the alternating unidentified voice tracks. But, by this time, it didn't really matter who left KRLA, or who stayed. Very few people listened. The teenagers were not listening at all, and the station had no real core of listeners who cared anymore. KRLA was the happy memory station of listener's past. It no longer was part of their current lives.

As following the time-honored tradition of putting the strongest man on in the morning-drive shift, Elwell decided to put himself in those hours, in a pre-recorded voice track show. Elwell, as you remember from Chapter 1, was one of the first-year originals at KRLA, and certainly was one of its best in those early days, before becoming "Scott Bridges" at Richmond's KEWB, then coming back to Los Angeles in Talk radio. But Elwell, at this era of KRLA, still had his very pleasant "smile in his voice" and was really a pleasure to hear again, as he was a link to the "Radio Eleven-Ten" of the early '60s.

Elwell put himself in the morning 6 to 10 shift, pre-recorded. Johnny Hayes' pre-recorded show was from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For the 3 to 7 p.m. afternoon show, a brilliant piece of casting was done by Elwell. From the "traffic" department at KRLA, who always did some sort of air work in the past, being "Daphne" on the old "Emperor Hudson" adventures, and even doing a Sunday night show in June 1962 being the first female disc jockey in Los Angeles, Sie Holliday was now made a full-fledged "Radio Eleven-Ten" personality, becoming the afternoon 3 to 7 p.m. drive-time show talent. As Holliday already was on the staff, this was more economical than bringing in someone else from the outside. She continued her duties behind the scenes, as well as recording her voice tracks. Holliday always had the kind of voice one could never get tired of. Sie Holliday was a delight in the 3 to 7 p.m. show.

The two drive-time shifts were occupied now by KRLA veterans, Elwell and Holliday. The two of them in those hours really made KRLA sound good. For the 7 to Midnight show, Elwell scheduled Evan Haning, who now had his own pre-recorded show, and finally identified himself on the air.

It was Elwell 6 to 10, Hayes 10 to 3, the delightful Sie Holliday 3 to 7 and Haning 7 to Midnight. For the all-night show, KRLA had solid automation, cartridge tapes played by the transmitter engineer back to back. In fact, all of KRLA's programming was pre-recorded and played at the transmitter. The old, historical disc jockey booth in Pasadena was now used as the room to make the tapes from. It was sad to see no "live" shows from that famous window where such legends had sat before.

Also during this time, Elwell had resurrected only one old KRLA jingle. And that was the super, sexy ultra-classy "KRLA Gives Great Music" from the Shadoe Stevens package, that never

really was used much during the "progressive" era. This jingle had a lot of class. It really fit in to KRLA's more M.O.R. image, now tilted toward me low-rock sounds. Elwell also had a contest, during this time, where he would award prizes to listeners,

"Here. (long pause) Have a Zenith cassette recorder."

This lineup continued on KRLA for the first few months of 1974.

At that time in 1974, we were finishing up B.A. requirements at California State University, Long Beach. In order to fulfill the requirements of a Radio-TV course, we decided to do a visual-audio project on KRLA, bringing in KRLA memorabilia. At the same time, we would talk about, to the class, what KRLA was doing today. We already were known to some of the KRLA staff from the Fall and Winter of 1969, when as a Freshman at Pasadena City College, wrote the first 10 years of KRLA into an 80-page thesis.

In the Spring of 1974, we, along with a very attractive female classmate partner from Paramount whose name is long forgotten, drove up to the KRLA transmitter in South El Monte. We interviewed the engineer on duty, and were given a tour of the KRLA transmitter. The whole automated tape system was explained for our class project. Upon a solo visit by us alone to the KRLA studios in Pasadena to gather more information, a very delightful experience occurred.

We were introduced for the second time to Roy Elwell, who we had met back in the Summer of 1968, and also saw through the glass at 11-years-old. When we explained to Elwell what we were doing, he asked us about what we thought of KRLA today.

We honestly told Elwell that we thought the station sounded the best it had in at least a year, since the days of Bob Dayton's morning-drive show, and Hayes' afternoon-drive show in the Spring of 1973. Elwell, delighted by our response, took us into a side room and said,

"Bill, would you be willing to say, what you just said, on tape, and we'll play it over and over on the air?" We were quite flattered, because, in all the years researching KRLA, our name was only on the air once, when back in junior high school we called Dick Biondi to request a song.

Elwell had us sit in a comfortable chair and turned on a portable Zenith cassette recorder. Elwell then gave this for-on-the-air introduction,

"Listen to Bill Earl, about to graduate from California State University, Long Beach, and The Unofficial KRLA Historian, on the subject of KRLA today."

We started rather stuttering, since we were ad-libbing and caught unprepared, but still flattered that five years after our 80-page thesis, that KRLA would want our opinion. We said something to the effect,

"I think that KRLA today is the best it's sounded since, maybe, the days of 'The Station Of The Stars,' as Casey Kasem once called it." We then talked about how much we like hearing Sie Holliday and so on. We suppose we had forgotten the Bob Dayton morning show era from the year before in 1973, but that was so short-lived, and we had no time to carefully prepare an answer.

Elwell introduced us to the very classy Sie Holliday, and thanked us for our comments. He said they would be heard in a few days, and be played probably every three hours or so.

The finished product was heard by us from our apartment at Brooks College overlooking Clark Street in Long Beach. Our voice beamed loud and clear from the six big transmitter towers from South El Monte. It was neat to be finally recognized for our earlier 80-page thesis, and as "The Unofficial KRLA Historian."

The spot lasted about one minute. It was Elwell's introduction, followed by our response with the sound effect of ocean waves breaking in the background under our voice. At the end of our comments, Elwell had spliced an old KRLA jingle from the 1959-1961 era, "KRLA!" It was a classy spot. As promised by Elwell, it popped up on KRLA's programming every three hours for the next few weeks.

To this day, we thank Roy Elwell for his recognition of our research, and for bestowing on us a title that was long overdue. It would not be until October 1981, that the honorary title of "Bill Earl" would be "Official KRLA Historian." By that time it was clear that "Bill Earl" was as official a historian that KRLA was ever going to have.

This last lineup on KRLA was a good one, by having two all-time favorites in both morning and afternoon-drive, Elwell in the morning, and Holliday in the afternoon. Elwell and Holliday were both good, but Elwell could see that the popularity of Sie Holliday was higher than his own.

Elwell then put the strongest talent in the morning. He moved Sie Holliday to mornings 6 to 10, and himself 3 to 7. This was actually a very good move because Sie Holliday became the first major female personality to have a morning drive-time show at a 50,000 watt radio station in Los Angeles. History had been made. Again, Sie Holliday at KRLA made history.

It should be noted that during all this time at KRLA, Sie Holliday still continued her office duties at KRLA behind the scenes, and coupled this with a morning-drive show that was certainly something Holliday could be proud of. In comparison to today's many women over-achievers, Sie Holliday was the one of the first. Sie Holliday now was the morning-drive at KRLA in a pre-recorded voice track show. Because of her superior classy style, Holliday was a pleasure to wake up to. In fact, she was actually one of the stronger morning personalities at KRLA. She had an identity, a super pleasant style, a sense of tradition, and was a definite asset as the strongest jock at the station.

Roy Elwell now moved into the 3 to 7 p.m. afternoon-drive and sounded excellent. Elwell always had a smooth, smile-in-his-voice delivery, and in afternoon-drive Elwell actually found his perfect niche, at least at an M.O.R.-oriented KRLA. He was a "name." And Angelenos would go "ridin' with Roy" on their afternoon drives home in his pre-recorded voice track show.

Spring 1974 KRLA had virtually the same lineup as a few months before, but with several chairs reversed. But by the Summer of 1974, Elwell teamed himself and Sie Holliday together to do the 6 to 10 a.m. shift (pre-recorded voice tracks) and the 3 to 7 p.m. shift (pre-recorded voice tracks) as a team. Elwell told us he was "living out the manager's fantasies," when asked about his team show with Holliday. The other two air shifts, with Hayes in middays and Haning at night, stayed the same.

It was also about this time that Elwell devoted a quarter of the broadcast day to a taped out-of-town show called "Nightcap," with Herb Jepko, out of Utah. This program was heard on "Radio Eleven-Ten" during the Midnight to 6 hours during the Summer of 1974. It was sort of a "happy vibes" call-in show. It sounded like people from "South Succotash," with virtually nothing else to do, would call in, and in so many words, say how grateful they were to be alive, and on and on and on.

"Nightcap" with Herb Jepko was "played" via tape every night. This last lineup that Elwell put together lasted until November 1974, when Elwell decided to fine tune the station and try to make a more conventional M.O.R. soft-rock station. What Elwell did now was to go away from the "Sie And Roy" split shifts, and go back to a more traditional schedule.

The new lineup with Elwell's air force in November 1974 was to once again have Sie Holliday by herself in the mornings, but in a 5 to 9:30 a.m. shift pre-recorded voice-track show, followed by a former KRLA newsman, who now had turned into a KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" jocking personality, Thom Beck. Beck, who had been a founding member of "The Credibility Gap," back in 1968, and the chief male announcer on "The Pop Chronicles" in 1969, now was a midmorning disc jockey, playing the mellow-rock KRLA sounds between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Beck did have the voice and maturity for those hours and did a good job in that shift.

One day in the early Spring of 1975, we called Thom Beck, on one of his few weekend "live" shows, about gathering information on KRLA for possibly a future book, as we had previously given Beck a copy of our old 1969 thesis. Beck gladly read our request over the air. Beck was always nice to us, and it was nice to hear him as a disc jockey, even though it was clear he sounded more comfortable as a newsman.

Following Beck from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., Don Burns, formerly of the Darin/Sainte/Shadoc days, came back to "Radio Eleven-Ten" in a very M.O.R. -style afternoon show, again like Beck, with pre-recorded voice tracks. For a while, both Beck and Burns did a two-man show with pre-recorded voice tracks, but this arrangement did not last for very long.

Following Burns was Roy Elwell himself, back to afternoon-drive from 3:30 to 7:30, and Johnny Hayes from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Both Elwell's and Hayes' shows were pre-recorded with voice tracks. Automation followed from 11:30 p.m. to 5 a.m.

This lineup lasted until May 1975 when we, on our way to Disneyland, turned on the car radio for The Sie Holliday Show. Holliday was on vacation. We heard, for the very first time in two years, "live" programming, and "live" voices from KRLA.

The voice was very familiar. But the name he gave was "Matthew Frail." "Matt Frail." "Dr. Matthew Frail." "Old Doc Frail." He claimed he was a veterinarian from Simi Valley, and lived with his wife, Twilight, who he has known since he was 13, and has two sons, Matthew and John. He drove his old pickup truck to KRLA from Simi Valley to do his disc jockey show! A veterinarian as a disc jockey? In the immortal words of Sie Holliday from 1965,

"You're putting me on!"

This had to be the ultimate put-on. There was no "Matt Frail." It was actually Lee Simms, who had returned to KRLA to substitute for Sie Holliday on her morning show "live" on KRLA.

The idea for the name, "Matthew Frail" we were told by Lee Simms, in a phone interview, in August 1991, came from the slightly built KRLA General Manager, Hal Matthews. Roy Elwell

earlier had told us that Matthews did not want Simms to use the handle "Lee BABI" on the air. As a chop to Matthews, Simms created the whole persona "Matthew Frail."

In the case of Lee Simms, most listeners knew they were listening to Simms, and it was all a giant put-on. In a way, this really did work, because it was so bizarre, it actually was funny. But most important, Elwell decided to initiate "live" programming once again for the first time in years on KRLA. This was truly a pleasure to hear. When Sie Holliday came back, Lee Simms, known now as "Dr. Matthew Frail," became the new morning man due to his incredible popularity during Holliday's vacation.

One feature of Simms' new morning-drive show was where he turned the mike up very loud to pick up very sensitive sounds. Simms then proceeded to drop coins from his pocket, his own loose change, on the desk. The listeners were to guess what each coin was, in comparison to the others, by hearing each one drop. Then, they would phone in and win Simms' change. In contrast to other station's "million dollar" prizes, this actually was funny. It really worked.

One of the more surreal things about Simms' morning show was where he sang over the song, that was popular at that time, "I'm Not Lisa." Simms sang over the song, and remember, he now called himself "Old Doc Frail,"

"I'm not Lee Simms. My name is Matthew. Lee Simms left you . . . years ago." Again, Simms was totally bizarre at times, but actually funny, unlike his earlier, more straight jocking days in 1971.

Simms never did acknowledge that he was actually "Lee Simms" and not "Doc Frail." But the audience did not seem to mind, because they were in on the put-on. For the first time in years, people now were starting to listen to KRLA again. Whether it was because of Simms, or because of "live" programming, or because of both, KRLA suddenly was sounding better in the mornings again as the lead-off to the rest of the day. The "live" sound of KRLA really was better. Lee Simms returned to KRLA, and was signed to the "live" morning show (as "Doc Frail") 6 to 9:15 a.m.

The next slot in this new program schedule was from 9:15 to 12:30, occupied by the delightful Sie Holliday. Again, this was "live" radio. The sight of seeing the attractive Sie Holliday through the glass, doing her show "live," was a really a treat. Holliday never sounded better. She really reached her broadcasting peak during these midmorning shows.

Following Holliday from 12:30 to 3:45 was a newcomer to KRLA, Johnny Magnus. However, this was not the first time slot that Magnus was heard on KRLA. During Sie Holliday's vacation, when Lee Simms did the morning-drive "live," Magnus first opened the KRLA microphone in May 1975 in a 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift directly after the "live" Simms show. This was just a temporary single-shot arrangement. When Sie Holliday got back from vacation, she was moved out of morning-drive, and into the new 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. hours.

Magnus had been best known to Los Angeles listeners, and most famous, as being one of the long-time jocks at KMPC, North Hollywood, on Burbank Boulevard next to L.A. Valley Junior College. KMPC had been a station where the disc jockey turnover was very, very rare. At that time, if you made it to KMPC, you were pretty much set for life.

But Magnus had tired of his 9 to Midnight show at KMPC, and had felt he had been passed up for a daytime shift too often. So he left KMPC in the early 1970s, replaced by Clark Race. KMPC was never a "competitor" to KRLA because of its older M.O.R. audience. With Johnny Magnus now joining KRLA in "daytime" hours, Magnus seemed to find a new groove.

Magnus originally was first heard on L.A. radio at the soul R. and B. KGFJ, from The Odd Fellows Hall on Adams in South Los Angeles, around 1963, before moving to KMPC, the real big time. But after leaving KMPC, Magnus had not really scored an important shift in Los Angeles radio. The Johnny Magnus Show on KRLA was quite a refreshing change. To top it off, again this was more "live" programming.

One feature of his show, was where Magnus had a portable chalkboard in the booth with him. Before playing a record he'd say,

"Will our next guest enter and sign in?" (Shades of "What 's My Line?") At that point you'd hear the "chalk" on the blackboard, as Magnus wrote the name of the performer. This was creative, original radio. This was a trademark that Magnus used very, very well. The music was still soft, mellow-rock.

The other Magnus trademark was "Weather With A Beat." Magnus would read the weather forecast from all over the United States with an instrumental jazz record playing in the background. Again very classy. Magnus had a style all his own, sort of a jazz-type of patter. Magnus was very knowledgeable about the music, frequently giving credits to the sidemen

session players on the various records. Magnus was of the old school, a knowledgeable disc jockey, and highly creative talent, who copied no one else. He was truly an original.

Before the next major talent to join KRLA at this time, Roy Elwell was in a temporary position, where listeners could do their "ridin' with Roy," during the afternoon-drive from 3:30 to 7:30, and Johnny Hayes handled nights. For a short time, Hayes' show was called "Spirit In The Dark" where soft R. and B. music would be heard.

For this new schedule, and for afternoon-drive in the Spring of 1975, Roy Elwell brought in a legendary Los Angeles Middle-Of-The-Road air talent, Paul Compton. "New Beginnings For Paul Compton," was how the station announced Compton joining KRLA. Again, as with Magnus, Compton knew the music, was very knowledgeable about Frank Sinatra music in particular, and may be best known to Los Angeles audiences as one of the last personalities at the old KHJ 930 AM ("Radio 93") in March 1965, right before it prepared itself to become "93/KHJ" and "Boss Radio."

Compton was not picked up to remain at KHJ as a "Boss Jock," (he would certainly have been a good one) so in March 1965 left KHJ. Compton had a rather jazz-like persona, and again was quite distinguishable and certainly had a style all his own.

Hayes followed from 7 to Midnight. From Midnight to 5:30, according to the Los Angeles Times radio logs, was listed "Valerie." Our research was unable to determine if this was a "live" show, or voice tracks, or even syndicated. But this listing did occur in Los Angeles newspapers. On weekends, KRLA featured, during this time, "live" programming with Thom Beck doing a midday M.O.R. show, and also a "live" Sunday night show. One of our aircheck associates called Beck during one of Beck's Sunday night shows. Because of no control room engineer, this call could not be put over the air. Beck's comment when our associate, Bob Maslen called him,

"I thought we only had one KRLA Historian!" Thanks, Thom.

Also during this time, Les Perry, best known to Los Angeles listeners as a Gold/TOP 40 air talent at KIEV 870 AM from Glendale (a Los Angeles family-owned suburban station, that also featured former 1959-1961 era KRLA newsman/turned KIEV disc jockey and P.D., Ed Perry, and also Frosty Harris, KRLA star from 1959 to 1962, also surfacing on KIEV during the early 1970s period) used to "sit in" on some of Thom Beck's "live" shows, once in a while. We were unable to document if Perry did any solo on-air shifts as well, but we were told his voice could sometimes be heard on Beck's "live" programs, as sort of a "junior partner."

It needs to be said, at this point, that during the resurrection of "live" shows, all the actual "records" (tape carts) were still played by the engineer at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte. The air personality would "talk" to the unseen engineer over the phone from the booth in Pasadena. The engineer would still follow the script as far as the record order, etc. KRLA was once again "live" for at least most of the day, and again proved that "live" radio sounds better.

It should be mentioned now that in late 1975/early 1976, KRLA added a show that seemed rather out of place, considering that the station was playing current mellow soft-rock sounds. KRLA programmed on weekends a show broadcast from the old Ciro's night club in Hollywood, now an "Oldies But Goodies" club, catering to the English-speaking Mexican-American audience. It was hosted by a man who had always been a proponent of "Oldies But Goodies," Art Laboe.

Laboe had been heard on Los Angeles airwaves at primarily KPOP from Cortland Avenue in Lynwood, which would later become KGBS. Laboe never was a major mainstream disc jockey in Los Angeles. But he always had a following on the "fringe" stations that specialized in R. and B. "Oldies But Goodies." Laboe had also put out his own series of records, "Oldies But Goodies," and had hosted R. and B. "Oldies But Goodies" concerts at the now-demolished El Monte American Legion Stadium.

It needs to be said that Laboe didn't favor all past hits from the Billboard charts, such as late '60s psychedelia, or The Beatles, but certain select records that were indeed from the past charts, but the type of soul R. and B. that was so heavily favored by his high-minority audience such as "Angel Baby," as an example. If the record didn't have that "Oldies But Goodies" sound (primarily R. and B.) or wasn't a hit in the Mexican-American community, Laboe usually didn't play it.

Laboe's show was heard on KRLA on weekends during this late '75/early '76 period of KRLA. Since he owned the old Ciro's nightclub, now called "Art Laboe's" (later, The Comedy Store), and did remotes from the second level in his night club, it was also a natural promotion vehicle for publicity for his "Oldies But Goodies" albums.

Even though we had been following Los Angeles radio since 1961, we had never heard of Art Laboe until December 1969, when during KRLA's "Rotten Record Of The Decade" shows,

"Eleven-Ten Men" such as Johnnie Darin would parody a screaming, shrill "Art Laboe" soundalike hawking his records -for-sale over the air. The next time we heard of Laboe, actually the first time we had ever heard Laboe on the air, was the excellent program Laboe did from XEPRS (formerly XERB) from Rosarito, Mexico. From Midnight to 3, or so, in the morning, Laboe bought those hours as a paid commercial, where he played selections from his "Oldies But Goodies" records, in the Summer of 1971.

The frequency 1090 was a very ultra-powerful one, labeled at 50,000 watts. But since the station and transmitter towers were in Mexico, on the east side of the main highway overlooking the beach, the power of that station was probably much stronger. It was said that 1090 could be heard in the entire Western United States, similar to the old Dr. Brinkley shows at XERA in Ciudad Acuna, Mexico, south of Del Rio, Texas, back in the 1930s.

The programming of XEPRS was R. and B. soul music in 1971, and even though a Mexican station, played American music with American personalities such as Roger Christian, formerly of KRLA, Ted Quillin, also a KRLA alumnus, and Brad Edwards, who had been famous from his days on the chicken-rock KGBS from Lynwood (and FM on Flint Peak, Glendale). But it was this post-Midnight show of Art Laboe that really had a classy sound. Even though it was pre-recorded, it still sounded almost surreal, with an omnipresent mystique. (Here's this voice from the past, coming from a station in Mexico!) It reminded us of the radio station in the movie "American Graffiti."

Laboe would record his shows at his Original Sound recording studios in Hollywood. Then they would be shipped (or driven down) to Rosarito, Mexico in Baja, California. The show would be played via tapes from the transmitter and sent out from the three big transmitter towers at the 1090 site to, as said before, half the United States, Canada and beyond.

In 1971 when 1090 was XEPRS, "The Soul Express," we first heard the Laboe show while driving on Del Mar in Pasadena coming home from our at-the-time girlfriend's (Mary Crain, 8/70 to 3/73) house. The show had an element of excitement, mystery and intrigue! What's this Anglo guy doing down in Mexico playing "Oldies But Goodies"? Art Laboe. He really does exist after all. This was exciting radio. The airchecks of those shows are a true delight to hear.

KRLA had Art Laboe from his club on the weekends, along with the other M.O.R. programming, as KRLA had made it into another year, 1976. Another feature that KRLA had in early 1976 was former KFI, La Mirada, and Pre-"Boss Jock" KHJ personality Robert Q. Lewis interview celebrities in pre-recorded spots, which would be played during the various shows. "Robert Q. Lewis In Hollywood" was a regular feature throughout the broadcast day. Again, it gave KRLA some more class. The use of interviewing on KRLA's programming seemed to be on the increase. On Roy Elwell's pre-recorded weekend shows on KRLA in early 1976, Elwell would interview various "celebrities," and integrate these celebrity interviews into the KRLA programming.

However, in early 1976, KRLA still had financial problems by not having its own license, and by having to turn over its profits to U.S.C. and KCET, as per orders of the F.C.C. back in 1964. The cost of having such big names as Simms, Elwell, Compton, Magnus, Holliday, Beck, and Lewis, was quite staggering to the station as the commercial load was way down.

The station was at a crossroads. Something had to give. In early 1976, Lee Simms, Roy Elwell, Paul Compton, Johnny Magnus, Sie Holliday, Thom Beck, and Robert Q. Lewis were released from KRLA. Their shows became a thing of the past. The M.O.R. format that Elwell had initiated in late '73, even though a noble attempt, was too costly without a whole lot of return.

The management of KRLA in 1976, virtually up against the wall, and with very little revenues into the station, decided that the whole thing had to go in favor of something from Drake-Chenault, a total all-automated format, where the programming would be "bought" programming from a syndicator. This appeared the way KRLA was going to, except for another last-minute possibility that existed.

The person who had the most highly-rated program on the station approached KRLA management. He said he would put his own money into the station to bail it out, become part of KRLA management itself, and save the station from going under.

What KRLA decided to do was to virtually turn over the station programming to the KRLA air talent whose show had the highest ratings at the station, and see if he could do what others couldn't.

CHAPTER 11

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

KRLA, the once great "Station Of The Stars," was broke in early 1976. It could barely pay its bills. The station had a strong lineup of mostly Middle-Of-The-Road personalities. But even that was not enough to draw in the audience, or advertisers. They weren't there anymore.

Roy Elwell really tried to make a "go" of this format. He did have big names like Lee Simms, Johnny Magnus, and Paul Compton. But a Middle-Of-The-Road, esoteric, jazz-M.O.R. format, just wasn't what would pull in an audience on AM radio at this time. Elwell's format was an interesting one. But many found it hard to define, and certainly different from the famous TOP 40 days, and heritage, of this once-upon-a-time legendary station.

KRLA was losing money. The salaries of Simms, Magnus and the others were quite steep. The station just couldn't afford them anymore. Even though it was supposed to turn over all profits to public television, and educational radio, as a condition for its interim license, it could no longer do that because the station was barely able to pay the electricity for its Pasadena studios, and South El Monte transmitter. There was talk that maybe KRLA might have to go off the air, due to lack of money to keep it in operation. The station was forced to lay off the entire announcer staff, except for only two, Johnny Hayes, who since August 1971 had been solidly entrenched at KRLA, and the weekend show host from his nightclub in Hollywood, Art Laboe.

KRLA almost bought a Drake-Chenault syndicated format for a total automation format. Instead, it decided to use the man responsible for the most popular show on the station. KRLA decided to take Art Laboe up on his offer to save the station, by putting his own money into it, and, in doing so, became Program Director, and a part of management.

Laboe agreed to save the station. But never in KRLA's history has the influence of one man been so great, as in the five-plus years that KRLA was programmed by Art Laboe.

The call letters would remain the same, but the station would not. KRLA had a fantasy Emperor, at one time, with Bob Hudson. This time, KRLA would have a real king, Art Laboe.

Laboe would make the entire 50,000-watt, once mighty radio station over, in his own direction and demographics. New memories from El Monte would be made from the KRLA transmitter towers standing tall in their South El Monte pasture.

Part of Laboe's "deal" to bail out KRLA was to have total control of the programming. With the station barely able to pay its bills, management could see Laboe as, maybe, the only hope.

To many, Laboe seemed to be somewhat mythical. We had always, somehow, "heard of" Laboe, but his first impact was about 1956, before the days of 24-hour TOP 40 radio in Los Angeles. Laboe's original "peak" was two years before the start of "Color Radio." (We were just 5-years old!)

However, Art Laboe had always been a big, giant star in the English-speaking, Mexican-American communities, by his involvement in "fringe" radio stations, which targeted some of its "block" programming to this audience, who liked the so-called "Oldies But Goodies."

One would think that "Oldies But Goodies," regarding records, would be anything that was a past hit on the Billboard chart. But when "Oldies But Goodies" are defined to Art Laboe's audience, it is clearly records that have a strong R. and B., Black, romantic-type flavor.

(One of the best songs of the decade of the '80s, that KRLA made popular during the Art Laboe era, was "Together," by Tierra. This record, even though, at the time, a "current," certainly was a good example of an "Oldies But Goodies" -sound record.)

An "Oldies But Goodies" song to Art Laboe's audience would be "I Do Love You" by Billy Stewart, "Wishing On A Star," by Rose Royce, or "Angel Baby," by Rosie And The Originals. This is what Art Laboe featured as the core playlist on KRLA. No Flower Power. No late '60s. No Beatles, even though that music was very instrumental in building up KRLA to be the greatest radio station in the country, once-upon-a-time.

Laboe had been featured years before on KXLA in the early 1950s before the days of KRLA (see Chapter 1). But Laboe achieved most of his popularity from remote broadcasts on KPOP (later KGBS) on Cortland Avenue in Lynwood, where the remotes were from a '50s-era drive-in restaurant.

Laboe also had put out a 15-record album series, called "Oldies But Goodies." These featured mostly R. and B., and soul acts, targeted to Laboe's core audience. Laboe even presented concerts at the now-demolished El Monte American Legion Stadium. The song, "Memories Of El Monte," was written and recorded about this legendary music palace. The dances at the El Monte American Legion Stadium were a cultural tradition.

We first met Art Laboe in 1972, while Laboe hosted a request and dedication show at the old KPPC, AM and FM, in their studios on Chester in Pasadena, after they left the Pasadena Presbyterian Church. We recall one "homegirl" who requested and dedicated "Let's Stay Together," by Al Green.

The unique thing about Art Laboe is that he was probably better known than most of the mainstream air personalities at the major stations. Many TOP 40 listeners in the Silver Age never heard Laboe, (as he wasn't heard on KFVB, KRLA, or KHJ, the main "Baby Boomer" stations-of-choice), but always knew of him. The term "Oldies But Goodies" was created by Laboe, with his 15-record albums with those titles.

What makes Laboe even more unique, is that even though Laboe was not Mexican-American himself, (real name: Arthur Egnoian), he had that complete and total loyalty from that audience that transcended all ages. Laboe realized that the type of music that would fit the "Oldies But Goodies" direction, had such a strong, emotional attachment to his audience.

Laboe had a tremendously loyal core audience that followed him to the various fringe stations that Laboe's show was heard on over the years. However, taking over KRLA held a special fascination for Laboe.

Here's why. The water-cooled KRLA transmitter had been built back in 1955, back when the station was KXLA. The transmitter was getting old. Over the years, the signal of KRLA was weak, especially at night. In 1976, the signal had gotten much weaker than from its days in 1965 on the Dick Biondi and Bill Slater request shows. The station always had reduced power at night, 10,000 down from 50,000 watts, but at this time, in 1976 the signal, day and night, had been increasingly weak.

It is a common fact, in radio reception, that the closer one gets to the transmitter towers, the louder and clearer the reception will be. Therefore, if one lived in El Monte, South El Monte, Montebello, or Pico Rivera which were almost in the "shadows" of the KRLA antenna towers at that time, KRLA would be their "clearest" and "loudest" station on the dial.

Because of this, Laboe would program his music for the high-minority community, and demographics, in which the South El Monte transmitter was then located. Since the transmitter towers were right there in South El Monte, the surrounding demographically targeted community would embrace KRLA as their station, right down the street from Legg Lake, in the Whittier Narrows Park Area, where so many locals spent their weekends with "pinata" parties, and "menudo" cook-offs. And coming from most of their radios in the park, would be their favorite kind of music, now available just one block away, clearer than ever before.

Laboe felt that the marriage of his programming, on South El Monte's very own KRLA would be a terrific hit. And it was. KRLA did thrive during this period, and actually, at one point, became the Number One music station on AM. We were told of Laboe's plans by Sherman Cohen, who Laboe had signed as one of his assistants. Cohen called us, on February 26, 1976, and told us that Laboe would be starting his programming the following day, on February 27, and to be sure to listen. What we heard was this.

As we have said before, all the music on KRLA was actually put over the air by the engineers at the KRLA transmitter site in South El Monte. The "live" announcing was from Pasadena. But the actual collection of recorded programming, such as spots, commercials, and promos, and, of course, the collection of "records on cart," the music, was right there in the transmitter building, on Lexington-Gallatin Road.

When Laboe took over the programming on February 27, Laboe had a brilliant idea to initiate his format to KRLA. Laboe would broadcast the morning-drive show "live" from the KRLA transmitter building, right there in South El Monte. Laboe would be actually operating the "cart machines" himself, and having a hands-on, literally, control of the music. In 1989, Laboe told us, because he also was a holder of a radio engineering "first class license," that he wanted to get involved with the technical operations of KRLA at the transmitter site. A microphone was rigged up right there in the middle room of the transmitter building. Laboe actually did a "live" show from the KRLA transmitter for the first time in the station's history.

As we have discussed in earlier chapters, there was always an emergency tape reel at the transmitter that would go over the air "live," if the lines were temporarily severed from the

transmitter to the Pasadena studios. Several times, this tape had to be played. But this was the first time in the station's history that the air talent would actually conduct a show "live" from the KRLA transmitter! During that show, and several shows after that, Laboe kept making references to the fact that he was broadcasting "live" from the KRLA transmitter in "your town and community" South El Monte.

The community responded in full. Tales were said of the locals actually bringing Laboe "huevos," from their nearby homes, right there in the South El Monte area, right next to the transmitter building, one block away from Legg Lake. This was reminiscent to us of the loyal fans who made "The Donut Run" for B. Mitchel Reed in 1972. Suddenly Laboe's demographically targeted audience and community embraced KRLA as their own station. All thoughts of the old KRLA had disappeared, as the old listeners who grew up with "The Station Of The Stars" weren't listening to KRLA anymore.

Laboe also initiated other new programming devices to KRLA, as he took over the station in 1976. First, there was no more mention of KRLA as "Radio Eleven-Ten." Laboe now made sure KRLA was "Hit Radio 11." Jingles were made of "Hit Radio 11-KRLA" with Spanish-accented vocalists on this jingle. Secondly, Laboe had another idea that proved very successful. Laboe knew that many in the Mexican-American community rode the R.T.D. buses. So, big KRLA banners would be placed on the sides of the buses, some of the first radio advertising on public buses, which today is very common.

So when Art Laboe gave KRLA its new direction in 1976, and, coincidentally, because KRLA also was in El Monte, just really down the street (Tyler -Santa Anita) from the old El Monte American Legion Stadium, Laboe's presence in this community went full circle. Art Laboe would now bring new "Memories from El Monte" - KRLA in El Monte.

To continue KRLA's new direction, a new logo of KRLA was implemented by Laboe, with the "K" and "R" of KRLA dropping below cursively, below the other letters. Also, Laboe would not only play "Oldies But Goodies" (selected R. and B. soul, mostly) but, also, blend in some new records, too, that fit the KRLA demographics. A weekly record survey playlist would be now printed, and available in stores every week.

But the most successful Laboe innovation was the KRLA "Hit Man" contest. Blue-and-white paper bumper stickers would be available at local merchants. Listeners would be encouraged to put these stickers on their cars. If a KRLA promotion employee ("Hit Man") pulled a "listener" over in their car, and if their radio was tuned to KRLA, they would win \$100.00. (We recall one Spanish-accented listener, after winning \$100, for a station promo say, "Benjamin Franklin, man, my favorite President.") The original "KRLA Hit Radio 11" bumper stickers were blue paper, with white print. The later ones were made of vinyl, with yellow letters on a blue background. Suddenly, these stickers were all over town, and people started to talk about KRLA again.

KRLA also purchased, during the Art Laboe era, an expensive "trailer" mobile studio for newscasts, that would be located at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa. This mobile studio could also be moved around the community, and used for remote broadcasts, getting the station right into the community. Also, another programming innovation by Laboe was called "Mini-Concerts," where two or three songs by the same artist would be heard back-to-back. Or, when "Hit Men" in the field would allow listeners to announce records from in-the-field tape recordings.

As far as the on-the-air programming, Laboe usually did the 5 to 9 a.m. show "live," at least at first, with the rest of the day "taped," except for evenings after 7 p.m. Johnny Hayes would do a "live" request and dedication show.

Also, Laboe would initiate a new feature called "The Big Eleven Countdown." One particular year would be highlighted, during the Noon to 1 "lunch hour," counting down the top 11 songs from that particular year. This program would be broadcast "live." The stories that Laboe would tell, on this Noon show, were reminiscent of the "stories behind the stars," made famous by Casey Kasem at Noon, all those years ago.

So after Laboe took over KRLA in 1976, the schedule was tentatively like this: Art Laboe would be "live" 5 to 9 a.m. 9 to Noon would be automated with Laboe voice tracks. Noon to 1 would be "The Big Eleven Countdown Show," "live," with Art Laboe. From 1 to 7 p.m. would be automated with Laboe voice tracks. From 7 to 11 p.m. would be the request show with Johnny Hayes, "live." From 11 to Midnight, Laboe would initiate a show called "Love At Eleven," where "Oldies But Goodies" love songs would be played for one hour. Later, "Love At Eleven" would be replaced by "The Elvis Hour," where each night following the alleged "death" of Elvis Presley, in August 1977, one-hour from 11 to Midnight, would be devoted to all-Elvis music. From "Elvis

To Elton" was Art Laboe's slogan for his new KRLA.

But from 1976 to August 1977, "Love At Eleven" with voice tracks by Laboe and also his assistant, "Jack The Hit Man" Roth, would be heard pre-recorded. All-night from Midnight to 5 would be more pre-recorded music, and voice tracks by Laboe.

So it was, no overstatement, in many ways, KRLA was now virtually "All-Art Laboe" radio, with Laboe's own voice being heard from Midnight until 7 at night, 19 hours out of the broadcast day!

Also, about this time, in 1976 and early 1977, Laboe used the services of former 93/KHJ "Boss Jock" Billy Pearl, and his partner Tom Greenleigh. Pearl would even do some "live" shows in the evenings himself, in early 1977, as "Jack Cheese." Pearl and his partner developed many of the promotions on KRLA in these early years of Laboe's involvement, and were very instrumental in helping establish this new format.

The only other "air talent" that was heard on KRLA during these early Art Laboe days, were "Jack The Hit Man" Roth, who would fill in for Laboe once in a while on the morning show, calling himself just "Jack The Hit Man," and also "Mike The News Man" Horn.

If someone were to think of KRLA, it would be "Art Laboe," rather than a team of "Eleven-Ten Men," as KRLA had in its halcyon days of "The Original Beatle Station," and "The Station Of The Stars." Laboe did not want to have any other "names," as it was Laboe's idea to just have his own name in the forefront of KRLA as the main "box office" attraction. Any other voice on KRLA, with the exception of Johnny Hayes, would just be a low profile voice.

Jack Roth rarely used his own last name; it was always "Jack The Hit Man," or with Mike Horn it was "Mike The News Man." Once in a while, they let slip their own last name, but very seldom. Laboe had a very strong autocratic control of the radio station. And since Laboe had such an important financial and management influence on the station, no one questioned Laboe's programming.

Later, Laboe did bring in one air talent who probably was the best one that Laboe would sign. Johnny St. Thomas, (real name: John Newton), would be another on-the-air voice, and also worked behind the scenes with Laboe's management. St. Thomas also did various substitution air shifts, such as the Noon to 1 "Countdown" show, once in a while.

But, at this time in KRLA's history, Laboe was at the controls, and he could do virtually whatever he wanted. He was pulling in the ratings. He had a personal financial stake in the station, and he was in charge.

However, one major change would take place in these early days of Laboe's reign at KRLA. Johnny Hayes had been doing the nighttime request and dedication show, from 7 to 11 p.m. As many of these Mexican-American callers had "nicknames," such as "Harpo," "Droopy," "Sleepy," etc., (however, no Doc, Bashful, or Grumpy) it was thought that Laboe would be more "sensitive" to these nicknames, as Johnny Hayes, a Southerner and an Anglo unfamiliar with that culture, at times might say some names in jest, or not pronounce the name right.

So Laboe would take over the nighttime dedication show himself, 7 to 11, and Hayes would move to the Noon to 1 "Countdown" show. And Laboe would pre-record his morning-drive show, at this time, with "live" news updates from "Mike The News Man." Hayes was better suited to the nostalgia-oriented lunch hour "Countdown" show, and Laboe was a bigger "box office" draw for the Mexican-American community calling him up at night.

Finally, in the Summer of 1977, after we had urged Mike Horn for many months, who had close ties to Laboe, to do something with The Beatles on KRLA, to at least broaden the base, (to get KRLA more like it used to be in the era of "The Station Of The Stars"), a Beatles record was about to be heard for the first time in the Art Laboe era.

Even though Art Laboe did not like The Beatles, or this music era, one weekend Laboe allowed Horn, after much lobbying from us, to do something with The Beatles. So Horn asked us to supply airchecks, and old KRLA Beatle jingles, to Pasadena studio engineer Phil Little, who made dubs of the KRLA Beatle jingles, and KRLA Beatle interviews, we had saved in our archives from 1964, and incorporate these into KRLA's Beatle programming that weekend. We were excited to try to get this era back for KRLA.

According to Horn, it took a lot of pressure to finally get a Beatles record played on Laboe's programmed KRLA. But the weekend did go over in the Summer of 1977. It was a pleasure for us to hear such happy "Fab Four" vibes on KRLA again. The Beatle interviews were heard, but sadly Dave Hull's voice was edited out. The only other salute to The Beatles during the Art Laboe era, was on a KRLA survey playlist sheet distributed in record stores in December 1980. On the back of the sheet was a very touching display box from a station that was "The

Original Beatle Station" a long time ago. "John, We Will Miss You Always." That said it all.

But that one weekend in the Summer of 1977, that saluted The Beatles, turned out to be a one-shot deal. The Beatles were not heard again on KRLA during this era of Art Laboe's programming.

During the Disco fad of 1978 and 1979, Laboe also instituted a certain amount of Disco programming, on the "live" 7 to 11 p.m. show.

But probably the most important milestone in the Art Laboe era was KRLA, in 1979, finally achieving its regular F.C.C. license, no longer an interim license station, as it had been for so many years. The stability and profit-making that Laboe brought to KRLA certainly was a factor to be considered in the station, finally, since 1964, at last being awarded a regular station license.

For further information on the license situation of KRLA, we recommend former KRLA engineer Don Beem's college thesis on KRLA, on the shelf of Cal State Fullerton's library.

Also, it should be mentioned here, that sometime in 1979 or 1980, a car crashed into the field where the KRLA transmitter towers were standing proudly in South El Monte and demolished one of the antenna towers. Shortly around this time, a "7th" radio tower was added to the KRLA transmitter tower field. Also, because of changes in the F.C.C. requirements, not all the KRLA red antenna tower lights had to be turned on at night, as before when all lamps had to be on after dark. So before, when four radio towers were lit with their impressive red lights, now only two or three were actually required to be illuminated at night. For those of us who always used those transmitter towers as a landmark, it was a major change in a spectacular sight.

However, when the workload got too strong for Laboe to do the 7 to 11 p.m. show every night himself, because of Art Laboe's many interests and "Original Sound" recording studio in Hollywood, Laboe brought in two others to do the request show, 7 to 11 p.m., Rick Morales in September 1980, who had fame earlier in Los Angeles as "Mucho Morales" on 93/KHJ in the waning days of that station, and later, in March 1981, Manny Pacheco. Morales started as "Rick Morales," but later went back to his KHJ name, "Mucho Morales." Again, having these two select air talents was an important link in Laboe's bringing KRLA closer to the Mexican-American community.

In October 1981, the presence of Art Laboe at KRLA was greatly reduced by management decisions. We first read about a change at KRLA in the newspaper, that Art Laboe would be giving up his morning show.

Rege Cordic, a mature-sounding former KNX-AM Columbia Park in Torrance (El Nido) M.O.R. personality from the mid-'60s, would be taking over the morning-drive. "Jack The Hit Man" Roth would be the new Program Director. We contacted KRLA about the changes. After all, no one can write an 80-page thesis on a radio station, and not take an interest in the station's direction. We were put in touch with Roth, who said,

"Bill, I need you to come down, to KRLA! I've got some big news for you."

We told him we'd be down and were interested in what was happening. Roth knew that we had written a thesis on the station back in 1969, about the days of "The Station Of The Stars," and the Johnnie Darin era. We went down to the station at The Huntington Hotel, and were invited to lunch with Roth, and General Manager Bert West, at the hotel's restaurant. The plan was put to us. Bert West asked us at the meal table.

"Bill, what do you think of Dave Hull?" We were surprised that Dave Hull's name came up, because Art Laboe did not like the Dave Hull era of KRLA, and The Beatles. We recall saying that we have kept in touch with Hull, that we remember student-teaching at Highland Oaks School in Arcadia, where Hull's daughter, Lisa, was in the fourth grade, and had met Hull's son in an Arcadia High School shop class in the Fall of 1978, when we continued to do work for that school district.

We told him very straight,

"Nobody's better than Dave Hull." We then told the story of how Hull was at the top of the ratings, in January 1969, when being "rudely interrupted" by being fired by KRLA, and replaced in the mornings by William F. Williams.

After lunch, Roth took us into his office and said,

"Bill, we're going to bring back Dave Hull."

Roth not only told us that he was going to bring back Dave Hull, but also sign to KRLA, Harvey Miller, who had been doing airshifts at KUTE-FM, Glendale, playing Disco-soul, geared toward an "urban" audience. Roth said that he had to retain Rege Cordic in the morning shift, so Cordic's shift was set. Hayes would continue a mostly pre-recorded midday show, with the "Countdown" feature, Noon to 1, "live." Hull would be signed for afternoons, 3 to 7 p.m.

Roth told us he was going to move the station toward the direction of the '60s, where

KRLA had not been sounding in many, many years. Roth wanted to bring back Hull and Miller, because they both had the '60s-era built-in audience.

But the biggest news of all, that Roth hit us with, was that,
"Bill, for Halloween weekend, we're going to bring 'em all back!"

Roth then told us he was going to have something similar to what was so successfully done by KMET in November 1972, nine years earlier, when they brought back all the KFVB "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen" for one day, to salute the old KFVB glory days. Roth said he was going to top that, by having this "KRLA Reunion Weekend," all weekend, Saturday, October 31, and Sunday, November 1st. He was going to bring back an array of the personalities most associated with KRLA from the "peak" years, 1964 through 1966.

He said that for Saturday, Bob Hudson would be 6 to 9. Johnny Hayes, 9 to Noon. Casey Kasem would come back at Noon, but only for one hour, as Kasem had not done "live" radio in many years (since KRLA in 1969), and only wanted to do an hour, as it would be a challenge enough in itself.

From 1 to 3 he was going to bring in Ted Quillin. Quillin was a great radio personality that really was heard on "Radio Eleven-Ten" before KRLA hit its peak in 1965, but, just the same, would be back 1 to 3 p.m. "live." For 3 to 6 p.m. would be Dave Hull. Dave Hull told us he thought that this reunion, and his return to KRLA, should have been billed as "Home For The Holidays."

Roth also was to have Harvey Miller, 6 to 9 p.m. for his first show on KRLA. Because Miller was going to stay on the station after the weekend, that was appropriate, even though he was not a KRLA alumnus.

For 9 to Midnight, that Saturday, Roth signed Bobby Pickett to come back, and do a revival of his 1964 Halloween show, 17 years later. But for Midnight to 6 on that Sunday morning, it would be just more taped programming, no disc jockey alumni, just automation. We recommended Bill Slater, Pat Moore, or Bobby Dale.

The following day, there would be a special public affairs-type show right before 9 a.m., that would have interviews with some of the returning alumni. 9 to Noon would be Charlie O'Donnell. Noon to 3, Dick Moreland; and 3 to 6, Rebel Foster, who would, once again, "do" "Maude Skidmore."

For the evening hours, KRLA would play a pre-recorded voice-tracked Bob Eubanks show, from 6 to 9, and voice-tracked Dick Biondi, 9 to 11. Eubanks apparently did not want to do "live" radio, as he hadn't been on the air "live" since 1967, and Biondi was currently back East.

At that point, Roth asked us what we'd like to do, as he wanted us to have some part of the festivities. We told Roth about how in 1974, Foy Elwell had called us "The Unofficial KRLA Historian" and how we did the one-minute spot on the air.

This is what we proposed to Roth, and his assistant P.D., Johnny St. Thomas. Our idea was for us to do a series of, about, maybe 10 spots, about 1 to 1- 1/2 minutes long, where we'd recall some key moments of KRLA during those halcyon years, 1964, through early 1967.

In the background, while we would be talking about KRLA, the instrumental record, "That's Where It's At," by The T-Bones would be played, as it was the KRLA theme music made into a record. Roth said for us to do a sample "audition tape," and let him hear it.

We recorded a sample at home. The next day we brought the tape to St. Thomas. St. Thomas said it was good, and to go into the middle booth between the control room and the disc jockey booth, to cut the carts. This was very exciting for us. Here we were sitting in the booth, and doing promo spots for KRLA.

One last thing. We asked Roth if we could change the "Unofficial" to "Official," in our honorary title, "Official KRLA Historian," as due to our extensive collection of airchecks and printed memorabilia, it was only fitting. If not us, who else?

So, that one day, in October 1981, we cut the series of spots. To the background of "That's Where It's At," by The T-Bones, the spots, which we wrote ourselves, were as follows:

"The '60s are back on KRLA. Hi, this is Bill Earl, The Official KRLA Historian. In January 1967, Bob Eubanks was heard 9 to Noon, the KRLA Beat was in its fourth year, and The Pat Moore Show was heard every morning, Midnight to 6, with "Moore music"! KRLA. We were there in 1967, and 14 years later we're still right here with you in 1981. This is Bill Earl, The Official KRLA Historian." (End of spot).

We made about 10, or so, of those. All were used except for one. The one that wasn't used went as follows:

"The '60s are back on KRLA. Hi, this is Bill Earl, The Official KRLA Historian. In May

1965, KRLA welcomed Johnny Hayes to KRLA on weekends. With the exception of a few months in late 1968, and for 8 months in early 1971, The Johnny Hayes Show has been heard on KRLA solidly since August 1971, and Johnny is the longest running KRLA personality in the history of the station! KRLA. We were there in 1965, and 16 years later we're still right here with you in 1981. This is Bill Earl, The Official KRLA Historian."

Roth also told us that he would be asking Dave Hull to do a sort of practice show, one afternoon in mid-October, substituting for Johnny Hayes on the "Countdown" show, from Noon to 1 "live." So on Monday, October 19, 1981, Dave Hull, clearly the all-time favorite in the history of KRLA, was once again heard on KRLA at Noon. His show began.

"Now let's see, where was I, when I was so rudely interrupted back in January 1969." It was a classic line from "The Hullababoer."

Dave Hull sounded somewhat stiff, as he had not been heard on L.A. radio since 1979 on KMPC, North Hollywood, where he did the late night "Love Line" show. But as the show progressed, Hull got better, and the magic was heard again. The combination and chemistry of Dave Hull on KRLA was a dream come true. Unfortunately, this Dave Hull warm-up show had not been publicized ahead of time, and unless one just happened to turn KRLA on, or knew ahead of time, like we did, it was, unfortunately, missed by many.

So Dave Hull was back. Art Laboe was no longer on the air, but still had some limited involvement with the station. October 1981 moved forward to the reunion weekend.

The best on the reunion weekend was Bob Hudson. Hudson sounded better than he had in years. Hudson had not really done a "live" one-man show since 1971, when at KGBS, Lynwood, before he teamed with Ron Landry. So hearing Hudson do the morning show on Halloween really was a treat.

The first of our "Official KRLA Historian" spots was heard on Hudson's show. After the spot, Hudson said,

"Okay, thank you, Bill, now here is the way out of the station . . . you go through this door . . ." and then one could hear a sound effect of someone crashing down, or opening up a closet where everything falls on them. After that sound effect, Hudson said,

"Bill, that's the wrong door!"

We thank Bob Hudson for making that spot sound even better. Radio was "the big screen" then.

Johnny Hayes went on "live," with the shutters open on the glass window in the studio, from 9 to Noon. This was the first "live" show that Hayes had done for more than just an hour in years. Hayes never sounded better. His recollection from KRLA Beats, that he read from during his show, was a nice touch.

Casey Kasem, Noon to 1, was way too short. Kasem wasn't given enough time to able to get back into the swing of things. Kasem sounded out of practice in doing a "live" show, and several on-the-air errors were made. It's unfortunate that Kasem couldn't have done a full show to really warm up the way he had in 1966 and 1967, our favorite Kasem KRLA years.

Ted Quillin from 1 to 3 p.m. had some great "doubles." But it was Dave Hull, 3 to 6 p.m., when the "magic" really happened. During his show, the KRLA lobby was reopened, and coming into the station were the lost legions of "Porch People," women in their 30s, now married and grown up, who first used to come to the lobby to see Hull years ago. This was somewhat bittersweet to see those loyal fans come back to the station of their youth - KRLA - the home for heroes, and their very special hero, Dave Hull.

After Hull played our "Official KRLA Historian" spot, Hull said:

"Did you hear that? Bill Earl? Yes, he's still here at the station carrying around this, huge scrapbook! The world's full of them!"

(Thanks, Dave?)

After Hull, came Harvey Miller, once again calling himself "Humble Harv." Next, Bobby Pickett, during his 9 to Midnight show, actually brought in a large metal ash can, just like the old days, to do his Halloween show with actual taped segments from the shows he did 17 years before.

The following day, Charlie O'Donnell came back to "Radio Eleven-Ten." "The Jolly Lean Giant" did one of his best shows, reminiscing, and sounding as polished as ever, as he did back in 1967. Dick Moreland returned to the lineup from Noon to 3 on Sunday. Moreland had been suffering from "pyorrhoea," a dental problem, and it was obvious, in his show, that his pronunciation and enunciation suffered, due to the loss of some of his teeth, and gum problems.

An interesting note on Moreland's show. Ian Whitcomb had come by the KRLA studios to

chat with Moreland. Whitcomb was the "British Invasion" singer whose most memorable song, "This Sporting Life," was heard on KRLA during its 1964 and 1965 heyday.

Moreland announced over the air that Whitcomb was writing a book about KRLA. We, upon hearing that, thought, maybe, we lost our scoop. But when Whitcomb's book came out, only a couple of pages mentioned KRLA briefly, and several names of the "Eleven-Ten Men" were given incorrectly.

Following Dick Moreland, on the reunion Sunday, was Rebel Foster at 3, for his 3 to 6 p.m. "live" shift. This time, Foster brought back "Maude Skidmore," who finally was allowed to break loose. The first words heard at 3 p.m., on Foster's show, were the "voice" of "Mrs. Skidmore" exclaiming,

"This is Maude Skidmore. I'm a twat, and you're not!"

Us Foster fans waited years for that bit of classic radio.

An interesting side note. During Foster's show the last remaining turnable in the booth was put to use by Foster playing a copy of "Mr. Rebel," which was not on cart at the South El Monte transmitter where all the other records were played during this special weekend.

It was a real treat to see a legendary "Eleven-Ten Man" actually cue up a record from the booth. Hearing "Mr. Rebel," (which was supposedly written for Rebel Foster), was an added bonus. Foster sounded brighter than he had in years.

Following the Rebel Foster return, were the voice-tracked recorded show of Bob Eubanks 6 to 9 p.m., and Dick Biondi 9 to 11 p.m. Pre-recorded voice tracks (and records), of Eubanks and Biondi, were played from the South El Monte KRLA transmitter.

The reunion weekend was a major event in KRLA's history. Camera crews from television stations came into The Huntington Hotel studios to film the reunion, the big luncheon a few days before, the disc jockeys on the air, and the festivities. Even we were interviewed for the eleven o'clock news, on the history of KRLA, and for "2 On The Town," a local television magazine show popular in 1981 (but sadly the footage of us ended up on the cutting room floor). A newspaper ad with caricatures of The Beatles was used in promoting this reunion weekend.

So KRLA with this reunion weekend did the first successful break from the era of Art Laboe. We even answered some of the phones at KRLA during the weekend. People who hadn't listened to KRLA in years were, suddenly, once again, turning on KRLA, and having a new excitement in the station, that hadn't been felt in years. Suddenly, for just a weekend, some of the magic of the glory days of KRLA was, once again, there.

The first regular day following the reunion, KRLA opened with Rege Cordic from 5 to 9 a.m. Cordic was an old-school, M.O.R. personality, who was already known to Los Angeles listeners as Bob Crane's replacement, in the Fall of 1965, on KNX-AM, Torrance (El Nido), from Columbia Park, off Hawthorne Boulevard.

Following Cordic was Johnny Hayes, who had his regular pre-recorded show, except for the one-hour "live" "Countdown" show. Following Hayes at 3 was the return as a regular daytime personality everyday, Dave Hull.

To keep with the spirit of the '60s, that Roth tried to instill at "Radio Eleven-Ten," on Hull's first show back was about a 1/2-hour phone call to Beatle Ringo Starr. Starr plugged his new record, which was played right after the interview. This was magic hearing Dave Hull, "the 5th Beatle" in Los Angeles interview Starr where Hull asked Starr questions that had been phoned in to Hull's show, before the call to Starr was made. There was no doubt that there was a chemistry there, with Hull talking to Starr. It seemed even the things about The Beatles, that caused Hull to break with them in 1966, seemed a thing of the past, and long forgotten.

Clearly the strongest man in the lineup was Dave Hull from 3 to 7. On Hull's afternoon show he created a character called "Miss Goodbody," who was supposedly the station's "censor." When Hull would say something rather "naughty" (much, much more than he ever had been from 1963 to 1969), one could hear the sound effect of a body falling over, the illusion that "Miss Goodbody" would faint at the sound of something "blue."

Dave Hull continued to be the biggest "box-office" draw to KRLA's coming "home for the holidays." Listeners, who hadn't really been listening to KRLA in years, were now reliving happy memories, driving home with "The Hullabooer."

Before we talk about the next two shows on KRLA's lineup in November 1981, we need to look at the visual side of KRLA, since Roth's changes from the era of Art Laboe, before. "K-R-L-A," which had used the certain slant-style graphics under Laboe, was modified somewhat. The Laboe labeled "Hit Radio 11" was dropped, and replaced with "KRLA AM 1110," with the same slant-style letters slightly altered. Also, for the first time in years, KRLA actually had rotating

ads in the newspapers, featuring sketch drawings of the head and shoulders of Hull, Hayes, Cordic and the next regular addition to KRLA, Harvey Miller.

Harvey Miller first came into Los Angeles radios as the midday voice, high atop the Verdugo Mountains in Glendale, (Burbank license), when that station went to "live" disc jockeys in 1965. When Miller first joined KBLA he just called himself "Harvey Miller." After a while, the nickname, "Humble Harv," became his signature, and the surname "Miller" was dropped almost altogether.

KBLA had never been a very rating strong station due to its weak signal, even though its personalities were first rate. In early 1967, rumors took over KBLA, that the station would soon be changing to a Country music format that year. 93/KHJ could see that KBLA had a lineup of personalities in which they could skim off the top, the best KBLA "Super 'In'-tertainers," to join KHJ. All the KBLA staff would probably be looking for new stations to go to very soon.

Miller was, by far, the most popular personality at KBLA, in his 9 to Midnight show. Miller, without a doubt, was the "star" of the KBLA lineup. So, in early 1967, Miller was lured away from the soon-to-be-gone KBLA, which would switch to Country in June. Miller joined the 93/KHJ lineup as a "Boss Jock."

Because of Miller's massive popularity at KBLA, when it was announced on KHJ that Miller was now a 93/KHJ "B.J.," KHJ, went all out in its introducing Miller to the 93/KHJ audience. KHJ staged a big "Welcome Humble Harv" party at The Hollywood Palladium. This featured not only KHJ radio personalities, but movie stars, the press, fans, and V.I.P.s. Miller's popularity, as the "biggest frog" in the small pond at KBLA, really was a catch for KHJ. KHJ went all out behind promoting Miller at the party.

The featured food, at this extravaganza, was hamburgs called "Humbleburgers." Miller continued at 93/KHJ, from his joining in February 1967, in various time slots, usually in the evening, except when moved to afternoon-drive, when Don Steele briefly left in a contract dispute. Even though Miller was not as loose as he had been at KBLA with a much looser format, he did sound good behind the KHJ microphones.

The deep, soulful voice of Harvey Miller from the twin transmitter towers of KHJ, at Venice and Fairfax, was one of the best in KHJ's lineup, as Miller had a style all his own. Many times you could hear Miller shout "Stones!," or "Motown!," or "Psychedelic!," before the appropriate song.

Another feature on Miller's KHJ show was the "Humble Harv Astrological Forecast For Tomorrow," where Miller would give a particular Zodiac sign forecast, with sitar music in the background. Miller was quite a star on 93/KHJ, and was always a Los Angeles radio personality in the top tier.

Suddenly, Miller disappeared from his nighttime KHJ show in May 1971. And then from Los Angeles airwaves. He didn't resurface again, in Southern California radios, until KKDJ-FM in early 1974. Miller had a major "comeback" when that station became KIIS-FM along with KIIS-AM ("K-Double - I-S") and had an exciting blend of talent, featuring Miller in its lineup prominently.

After an almost three-year absence, it was a reward to Los Angeles listeners to hear Harvey Miller again. His loyal fans stayed with him during his absence from Los Angeles radio. They followed him over to KUTE-FM in 1981, where he was last heard before being tapped by KRLA, and Roth, to do the 7 to 11 p.m. show, in November 1981.

Following Miller's show on KRLA at 11 p.m. was Roth's replacement for Laboe's "Elvis Hour," and that was "The Beatle Hour." Music from The Beatles as a group, and as individuals, was heard for one solid hour, with the pre-recorded voice tracks of Dave Hull commenting and reminiscing about "The Fab Four." This was certainly an excellent show, even though pre-recorded, and reminiscent of Dave Hull's "Saturday Night Special" in the Summer of 1964, where Hull played mostly Beatle records.

So the new " '60s-oriented" lineup was in place with Cordic 5 to 9, Hayes pre-recorded 9 to Noon, and 1-3 p.m., and "live" Noon to 1, Hull 3 to 7 "live," Miller, 7 to 11, "live," and the pre-recorded, voice-tracked "Beatle Hour," 11 to Midnight, followed by more pre-recorded programming Midnight to 5.

As discussed earlier, we had been given several involvements by Roth during this revival of KRLA in the Fall of 1981. One involvement that was given to us was for us to be the solo special guest on "The KRLA Connection," Sunday night/Monday morning, from 11 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. This program was the main Talk show on KRLA, and was a carryover from the Art Laboe era when it started.

We were supposed to do the show the last night of the reunion weekend on Sunday, November 1st. Because of previous scheduling commitments, "The KRLA Connection" with

"Bill Earl" did not get scheduled until a week later, when all the momentum of the weekend had evaporated. We did the show with Mario Machado on the next available Sunday night in November 1981, but were handicapped by no promotion whatsoever, and the fact that it aired after when it was supposed to have been on the reunion weekend.

("The KRLA Connection" was primarily a call-in public affairs show. The topics usually ranged from minor community involvement issues, to current affairs.) The show we guested on was memorable for two big things.

First, we had put together an aircheck collage tape of selected big moments of KRLA, from 1964 through 1967, that engineer Chris Hayes played on-the-air from the control room, along with one of the "This is Bill Earl - Official KRLA Historian" promos, from the reunion weekend. Hearing the old KRLA via airchecks over the big antenna towers from South El Monte that night was really *deja vu*.

That aircheck collage featured important moments on KRLA from the heyday, such as "Valhalla," Bob Dayton, the 1967 firing of Dave Hull, and other big events that were broadcast over KRLA, from Research Archives' aircheck library.

One caller called in, and said that KRLA "stunk," and didn't like the programming. Machado said something to the effect of sending some "big, tough" KRLA staff members to the listener's home, to "take care" of him for criticizing the station, all in fun, of course. Our line on the air was,

"Mario, I've got a better idea. Let's send Humble Harv over!"

This program would have been a good show had it been promoted and put on the KRLA reunion weekend. But it never was, and so very few listeners even heard the show.

Shortly after the reunion weekend and this show, KRLA programmed two outstanding weekends of merit, "The British Invasion" weekend, and the "All-Beatle weekend." For the "British Invasion" weekend, even Charlie O'Donnell was called back to do promos, and hourly IDs.

"The Beatles Weekend" actually used old Beatle interviews from the KRLA archives. KRLA actually put out a brochure, sent to listeners, that featured the bold KRLA (KRLA 1110 AM) new logo, replacing the slanted-letter modified Art Laboe one. This was, in many ways, a direct throwback to the halcyon days of KRLA in 1965.

Another new addition joined KRLA in November 1981. That was the return of Russ O'Hara. Russ O'Hara rejoined KRLA in November 1981 as a relief personality, filling in for one or more nights, when Harvey Miller was unavailable for his show. O'Hara became the permanent "substitute" for Miller. (No more "How's your head~")

Also, rejoining KRLA in December 1981, as a relief and once-in-a-while personality, was Rebel Foster, who, once again, had "retired" his famous "Maude Skidmore" character.

One of the major contests of late 1981 was a contest featured proudly on the back of a KRLA weekly music list giveaway, that featured the headlines, "The Beatles Are Coming." Listeners could win a trip to England. These record survey sheets, as since 1980, had continued to be given away by KRLA every week, via record stores. They never had a picture of Dave Hull, Rege Cordic, or Harvey Miller on the back, but did get around to featuring the promo sketch of Johnny Hayes on the back on a very attractive buff paper with orange ink issue, in early 1982.

We want to conclude 1981 with probably a milestone for KRLA, that showed that KRLA could be a major powerhouse again, if only for one night. KRLA decided that for New Year's Eve, from 3 p.m. on December 31st, to 5 a.m. January 1st, that it would park its mobile studio trailer (which, up to then, had been an "Orange County Newsroom" parked at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa) on the northeast corner of Garfield and Colorado in Pasadena, for New Year's Eve 1981, on the parade route for the Rose Parade. One could watch the deejay through three glass windows on the front end of the trailer.

Hull did a terrific show from 3 to 7 p.m. "live" from that trailer. It was reminiscent of the days when all sorts of fans used to gather around the big, glass window at The Huntington Hotel in 1965. Following Hull, from 7 to 10 that night, was Harvey Miller who left the trailer between records, (which were still played on carts from the South El Monte transmitter), and mingled freely with the fans. Some present, outside the trailer, were surprised to see "Humble Harv out on the street."

But the real star of this special programming arrived from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. in three of the most exciting hours heard on KRLA in recent years. Dick Biondi, who had not been heard on KRLA since August 1967 in a "live" show, had been flown out from the Midwest. Biondi was to resurrect his traditional New Year's Eve traditional show, which he had done for two years in a row, back in 1965 and 1966.

Biondi was great. And not only that, those people who gathered around the trailer simply were overwhelmed. A lot of these people, too young to have remembered the KRLA of years before, simply couldn't believe how fantastic Biondi was.

Biondi invited the people outside the trailer into the mobile unit to say "Hi," on-the-air. Biondi, with his confidence and professionalism, handled these three hours with a fantastic style and pace. Also, some of the old "Porch People" who had sat on the steps for Dick Biondi back in the '60s were coming to the trailer site to see Biondi, once again, in person. We saw people in their '60s down to children in their early years, fascinated by this "skinny disc jockey with horn-rimmed glasses." Biondi was no doubt a star.

During this 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. show, which, at Midnight, broke in the New Year, 1982, Biondi invited us into the trailer, after mentioning us being outside the trailer many times before, to have "the Official KRLA Historian" say New Year's greetings into the mike.

Following Biondi from 1 to 5 a.m. was Russ O'Hara, "live" from the trailer on the parade route. O'Hara was as good as he's ever been, and did probably one of his best shows with a "live," "party" audience. He even resurrected the "Russ O'Hungry" nickname by saying that he was,

"Always hungry, always hungry ... for a pizza!"

This was a fantastic way for KRLA to end 1981.

However, an interesting development took place about this time in regard to the " '60s" direction, that Roth had moved the station in. Roth recalled going to a KRLA promotion. Roth was dressed up as a character from the Art Laboe era, "Big Louie," sort of a Prohibition-era gangster costume. One rather tough-looking Mexican-American listener in the crowd, suddenly came up to "Big Louie," and exclaimed,

"Man, you guys have taken away our radio station, Homes!"

It was true. Mexican-Americans did not relate to The Beatles, or "British Invasion" weekends. They wanted to hear their Art Laboe "Oldies But Goodies."

When Roth could see that the Art Laboe-based listeners were tuning out KRLA and felt their "station was being taken away," Roth made some major decisions.

Roth wanted to bring back the old loyal Mexican-American audience that had been the core of KRLA's audience, from 1976 to 1981. Roth was afraid that this old audience wasn't seeing much programming for them on KRLA, after it came "home for the holidays."

When the "British Invasion" weekend did not attract as many listeners as "Oldies But Goodies" weekends, the " '60s" -oriented KRLA was modified, as KRLA moved into 1982, by more early rock and roll, and "Oldies But Goodies" preferred by the Mexican-American audience, along with its mix of selected current hits as well.

The Cordic, Hayes, Hull, Miller, O'Hara, and Foster air force continued on KRLA until February 1982, when on Monday, February 8, Rege Cordic left KRLA. We had hoped for Bob Hudson, who would have been a very strong morning man, to take over the morning-drive chair, but apparently a "telegram" letter, Hudson had sent to management, diminished his chances.

It was reported to us that even Charlie O'Donnell had been offered the morning show, but because of his television commitments, O'Donnell declined.

So, for the next week, KRLA would "audition" two of its part-timers in that spot. For the week of February 8, the morning show was given to Russ O'Hara. On Friday, February 12, KRLA "auditioned" Rebel Foster in the morning show for one day, but this was mainly keeping the seat warm for who would be signed by Bert West, General Manager of KRLA to do mornings the following Monday, February 15. Johnny St. Thomas, and "Jack The Hit Man" Roth were still also on the weekend lineup, (St. Thomas, Sundays 9 to Noon, and Roth just once in a while), but were involved in management and busy behind the scenes.

Terry McGovern, signed for mornings, was a favorite of Bert West, from McGovern's days in San Francisco years before, where he had been a moderately successful personality in the early 1970s. McGovern took over the 5 to 9 a.m. show "live," and had a low-key, witty mellowness.

So KRLA passed up big names from its reunion weekend, and brought in a total unknown, as far as Southern California. McGovern seemed likeable, and was quite "honest" with his listeners.

McGovern had one memorable feature on his show. "Rude Awakenings," was where he would call listeners at random, and wake them up. Probably the most memorable feature was where McGovern would do a Marlon Brando "Godfather" impersonation. McGovern, in the "Brando voice," would take calls from listeners, and pretend to do them favors.

One noticeable feature of The Terry McGovern Show was McGovern's own brother, signed to do KRLA sports. Tim McGovern had called himself "Sports Fan." He "did sports" from a total fan's point of view, rather than as a cozy, insider-Stu Nahan-style.

Terry McGovern, also, had a local comic call him up, and do traffic reports as "Reynaldo Impala." McGovern, also, relied heavily on comedy cuts from comedy albums. On his very first show on KRLA, the first record he played was the National Lampoon's version of a parody of Les Crane's "Desiderata." As Crane had been a big name in San Francisco at KYA as "Johnny Raven," this was inside "Northern California humor."

In early 1982, KRLA decided to call itself, "The Heart And Soul Of Rock And Roll." New white, with black bold letters with the new KRLA logo, bumper stickers began appearing all over the Southland. Similar ones were placed on the windows, or glass doors, of merchants, who gave away the stickers. The stickers featured a red KRLA "heart," which became a new KRLA trademark.

KRLA record survey sheets were re-designed to feature this new logo, and masthead, with a "heart" at the top, and became the new look for KRLA. Also, about this time in 1982, KRLA came out with a "Heart And Soul" record album, put out by Rhino Records, with liner notes about the history of KRLA. We were not consulted on the liner notes, but they were reasonably accurate, but very abbreviated. A KRLA "Heart And Soul" bumper sticker was included in this package.

It was in the Summer of 1982 that KRLA did decide to bring Bob Hudson back on the air. Hudson came back for two weeks, that Summer of 1982, for vacationing Terry McGovern, who had gone to Ireland.

Bob Hudson did a good job substituting for Terry McGovern. Hearing Hudson in the morning, even if it was just substituting, and Hull in the afternoon, was really another example how KRLA did come "home for the holidays."

KRLA ended the year 1982 with its lineup of Terry McGovern, 5 to 9 "live," Johnny Hayes "live" from Noon to 1, and pre-recorded voice tracks from 9 to Noon, and 1 to 3, Dave Hull, "live" 3 to 7, Harvey Miller 7 to 11 p.m. and pre-recorded programming from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m.

In early 1983, KRLA would have another change in the lineup. Terry McGovern, would leave KRLA after his last show on Friday, January 21st, and just concentrate on his work in television, and in commercials.

So on Monday, January 24, 1983, KRLA, to replace Terry McGovern in morning-drive would do what it did back in August 1967. The strongest man would move into the morning show. Dave Hull was now back in his morning-drive chair that he had left in January 1969. "Music Power '69" was long forgotten.

Hull would be heard "live," from 5 to 9 a.m. Johnny Hayes followed from 9 to Noon "automated," Noon to 1 "live" with the "Countdown" show, and then from 1 to 3 p.m. with pre-recorded voice tracks again.

For the week of January 24, KRLA signed Russ O'Hara to do afternoon-drive from 3 to 7 p.m., as sort of an "audition" for that time slot, to see how he'd sound. Actually, O'Hara sounded quite good, very fast paced, and slick. It was clear O'Hara wanted that shift, due to his excellent "audition" that week.

When Harvey Miller left KRLA, at this time, in January 1983, Roth brought back to "Radio Eleven-Ten," Mucho Morales, who had already been in the Art Laboe era pre-1981. It was thought that Morales would be able to be a "draw," to get more Mexican-American listeners back, who remembered Morales from the Art Laboe era, so was put into the 7 to 11 p.m. shift.

Because Roth wanted to continue his back-tracking to the Art Laboe era, along with his new audience that liked Hull and O'Hara, Roth, at this time, dropped "The Beatle Hour." Instead, he brought in from 11 to Midnight, "The Oldies But Goodies Hour," which featured in a pre-recorded hour, the pre-1964 R. and B., and early rock and roll.

So it was no surprise when "The Beatle Hour" finally was replaced. There were not enough "Beatlemaniacs" anymore to make up KRLA's core audience. The station had moved away from its '60s focus, and back toward the music popular during the Art Laboe era,

So Hull was set in morning-drive, and Hayes continued in middays. Even though O'Hara was excellent during his week in the 3 to 7 p.m. shift, instead of making O'Hara permanent, as expected, the following week, KRLA decided to try out Rebel Foster, in the 3 to 7 p.m. shift, where Foster reigned "live" for the whole week in early February 1983.

Also, at this time, KRLA was experimenting with "AM Stereo," and made references to the fact that if one had an "AM Stereo" receiver, one could enjoy KRLA's personalities and

programming now in stereo. Unfortunately, not too many did. However, we had a Sony "AM Stereo" unit in 1983, and KRLA did sound excellent with this system. KRLA, also, gave directions how to hear KRLA "AM Stereo," using two regular AM radios, at this time in 1983, which brought the great "AM Stereo" sound to "The Land Of Eleven-Ten."

For the third week without a regular 3 to 7 afternoon-drive jock, in February 1983, KRLA seemed to be unsure who it wanted in those important drive-time hours. KRLA also was concerned about the high cost of having either O'Hara or Foster there, which would be a sizeable salary, as both men are "names." As a cost-cutting measure, KRLA decided to use neither. Instead, KRLA would do some "creative" programming on the schedule.

Dave Hull would be "live," 6 to 9, and taped 5 to 6, and 9 to 10. Johnny Hayes would be pre-recorded with voice tracks for five daytime hours 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The "Countdown" show would be dropped from the Noon to 1 spot, it had been heard in for the past few years. Johnny Hayes would then go on the air "live" from 3 to 7 p.m., and do the "Countdown" show, "live," from 6 to 7 p.m., instead of from Noon to 1.

The idea of moving the "Countdown" show to 6 p.m. we felt was a great idea. This hour was always a pleasure to listen to, during the "years" 1964 through 1968, when Hayes would always have a KRLA Beat, or two, in the studio, and read articles from it. Also, sometimes, Hayes would pay tribute to "The Eleven-Ten Men" of old, by mentioning names, or lineups, on-the-air.

This 6 to 7 p.m. show was a much more accessible hour for the "Countdown" show. It was neat to hear a relatively, pretty good show, during prime-time, as not everyone had Noon to 1 as a lunch hour, and could very easily have missed the show. Putting this strong show into a prime-time hour was a good move on paper.

However, the audience didn't like it. So within a week, or two, of the "Countdown" from 6 to 7 p.m., it was suddenly, without explanation, moved back to the Noon to 1 slot. The schedule at KRLA changed again, with Hull in the morning, as before. Johnny Hayes would be pre-recorded from 10 to Noon. The "Countdown" show would be back from Noon to 1, "live." Johnny Hayes would be voice-tracked pre-recorded from 1 to 3 p.m., and "live" for afternoon-drive, from 3 to 6 p.m. Mucho Morales would now be heard from 6 to 11 p.m., followed by more pre-recorded automation from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

In April 1983, KRLA, for two weekends, brought back, on two Saturdays in a row, Bob Eubanks. Unlike the 1981 reunion shows, where he "pretended" he was back in the halcyon days of 1966, this time, Eubanks spoke as sort of an "Elder Statesman D.J." about his involvement at KRLA, and with The Beatles. One of those Saturdays, in April 1983, Eubanks did an all-Beatle show, where he reminisced about "The Fab Four," and his involvement in promoting the three Beatle concerts, from 1964 through 1966.

However, these programs were not heavily promoted on KRLA. One would have had to just turn on KRLA on those two Saturday afternoons to hear this example of such quality programming from one of the legends in KRLA's history. On one of the shows, Eubanks even saluted us, by referring to a young man who "wrote a college thesis" on the history of KRLA.

Also, in 1983, two other voices entered the KRLA scene, during this time. Dick Hugg, who had been similar to Art Laboe, working at "fringe," second-tier, R. and B. stations, in the Los Angeles area for many years, as "Huggy Boy," and had ties to the Mexican-American listening audience, was signed by Roth to handle the 11 to Midnight show with pre-recorded voice-track automation. This move, in early 1983, was designed to further increase the Mexican-American audience, which Roth desperately tried to win back to KRLA, during its sudden about-face from '60s orientation in early 1982.

Canadian-born, longtime "journeyman" Bakersfield jock, Jim Diamond, (real name: Gerald Aylmer Whitehead), told us this great story about Dick Hugg. Diamond, and his then-wife, Tina, had gone to the KRLA studios at The Huntington Hotel, in the early '80s, to meet, and visit with, Hugg.

Hugg invited them into the deejay booth. Hugg had been drinking a can of Coca-Cola, and, also, smoking cigarettes, while doing his show.

As Hugg was talking to Diamond and Tina between records, Diamond noticed Hugg began using the Coke can as an ash tray for his cigarettes. His wife, Tina, also used the can as an ash tray, like Hugg, for both ashes and filters, as no other ash tray was in the booth. As Hugg continued his talking to the couple, Diamond told us what he observed next.

"I had been watching Dick and Tina use this Coke can as an ash tray. Then, to my amazement, Dick then picked up the Coke can, and took a big swallow out of it, finishing the dregs of Coke in the can, sort of a 'bottom's up.' He then continued talking to us, completely unaware of

what he had just done. It was mind-blowing, to say the least!"

The other voice to join KRLA was former KMPC and KFI personality, Sonny Melendrez, who filled in for Dave Hull, during a short time in mid-1983. With Melendrez in as a substitute morning man, the Mexican-American audience had three personalities at KRLA to identify with, Melendrez, Morales, and Hugg.

However, the next major change to occur at KRLA was in August 1983. "Jack The Hit Man" Roth left the station and P.D. post. Both Russ O'Hara, and Rebel Foster, also exited KRLA, at about the same time. The "Jack The Hit Man" Roth era came to an end at "Radio Eleven-Ten." The door now opened to a new breeze, from Princess Blue Sky, of a somewhat different direction.

CHAPTER 12

FREEBASING TANG

Joining KRLA in August 1983, Jim Pewter took over as Program Director. Pewter was best known from his days in the early 1970s at KRTH-FM. Pewter also did a pre-recorded weekend show on KRLA at this time.

Coming on board with Pewter were Michelle Roth, the second female disc jockey in KRLA's history, and the return to KRLA of a voice not heard from the transmitter towers in South El Monte from many, many years (since 1961) Roger Christian, who was a friend of Pewter, and worked with Pewter at KRTH in the early '70s.

Pewter immediately adjusted the KRLA lineup by moving Michelle Roth into the afternoon 3 to 7 p.m. show "live," and trimming Johnny Hayes' "live" involvement to just Noon to 1, with 10-Noon and, 1-3, pre-recorded, as before, with just voice tracks. Michelle Roth, in the 3 to 7 p.m. drive-time show, was quite a change from the all-male lineup for so many years. Roth was blonde and attractive, and a favorite of Pewter. Once in a while, Roger Christian filled in on The Michelle Roth Show during afternoon-drive "live." Christian was a legendary Los Angeles radio voice, and solid personality, important in the early days of KRLA's history.

However, Christian, during this time in 1983, never was part of the starting lineup. It was a surprise to longtime L.A. radio observers that Pewter didn't put Christian on every day. Christian had a famous close to his shows that is a classic in radio.

"That's all she wrote - sleep warm - later, lover!"

So the lineup for late 1983, and early 1984, showed Hull in morning-drive, Hayes in middays, Roth, afternoon-drive, Morales, now back to 7 to 11 p.m., Hugg, recorded 11 to Midnight, and on weekends: Johnny St. Thomas, Roger Christian, and, sometimes, Jim Pewter himself.

But probably the most important development to KRLA programming, in the Summer and Fall of 1983, was to bring back a show that had not been heard on KRLA since 1970, the repeat year-long airing of "The Pop Chronicles," in exactly the same time slot it was featured in during its long run from 1969 to 1970. The only change was a disclaimer, recorded by John Gilliland, who created the series for KRLA in 1968 and 1969, that nothing has changed from the original shows, and that there may be references to names and people who are no longer with the station.

The reason these shows were never altered was that Gilliland wanted the shows to sound exactly as they were first heard, and, "after all, you can't change history." Hearing these programs each Sunday from 6 to 7 for over a year on KRLA, concluding finally in August 1984, was a real treat for those of us who may have missed some episodes, when first aired all those years before.

In early 1984, Roger Christian would depart the KRLA lineup. The replacement on weekends for Roger Christian, in, around, March 1984, was none other than the man to first open a microphone at KRLA, all those years ago, back in 1959, Jimmy O'Neill.

After O'Neill left KRLA, way back in September 1962, O'Neill went into local television, hosted a nationwide television show, twice a week, on ABC-TV, "Shindig!", and had been a radio personality at KFWB, and more recently at KDAY, in 1969 and 1970, where we interviewed O'Neill, in December 1969, for the 80-page KRLA college thesis.

Because 1984 was the year KRLA would celebrate its "Silver Anniversary" of 25 years (1959-1984), Pewter wanted to have O'Neill back, to be involved in special KRLA programming during the Labor Day weekend of 1984.

So KRLA in the Summer of 1984 featured Dave Hull "live" 6 to 9, Johnny Hayes "live" Noon to 1, Michelle Roth "live" 3 to 7, Mucho Morales "live" 7 to 11 p.m. and the rest pre-recorded automated programming with voice tracks, also Dick Hugg, and now a syndicated show with Wolfman Jack.

Two very memorable events took place on KRLA in the Summer of 1984. The first, was on The Dave Hull Show, on August 23, 1984. This was the "20th Anniversary" of the first Beatle Concert, that KRLA had brought to Southern California. This was one of the best shows that KRLA had featured in a long time.

Hull reminisced generously about the Beatle concert, and his involvement, and played

the actual tape of The Beatles' performance that night at The Hollywood Bowl. It was a treat to hear Hull discussing such an important event which shaped KRLA's history.

The other main event, in the Summer of 1984, was over the Labor Day weekend, when KRLA celebrated its "Silver Anniversary." Jimmy O'Neill, in a pre-recorded voice track show, counted down the very first KRLA "Tune-Dex" from September 1959, on a Saturday afternoon in September 1984. O'Neill not only played the records off that playlist, but also reminisced about the early KRLA from that era, its disc jockeys, and its contests.

O'Neill even played part of an aircheck of himself and of Sam Riddle, also an "Eleven-Ten Man" from the early years, long before the days of "The Original Beatle Station," and "The Station Of The Stars." And to top off this program, KRLA had actually printed up goldenrod, exact replicas of the very first KRLA record survey, from September 1959.

It was in December 1984 that we, who had been working for Frosty Harris, (one of the first "Eleven-Ten Men" in 1959) at the El Monte Adult School, were told by Harris, that KRLA had been sold. Bert West, the General Manager, and representative of the owners of the station, which included Bob Hope, had been in negotiations to sell KRLA to be absorbed into a corporate structure.

It was announced in December 1984, that Greater Media, an East Coast broadcasting company, which was running KHTZ (ironically the former FM frequency of KGBS, with facilities on Flint Peak, Glendale, the home for several former "Eleven-Ten Men" in the years past) would be adding KRLA-AM, to make a combined combination AM and FM team in Los Angeles. KHTZ was a soft rock outlet, featuring morning man Charlie Tuna. When the station's sale was to be inked, KRLA would be moving out of its long-time studios at The Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, and even closing down the real "heart" of KRLA, its South El Monte transmitter site.

When Harris told us, it was quite a shock. It was hard to comprehend a KRLA without studios in Pasadena, and transmitter in South El Monte. Since 1941, the "Radio Eleven-Ten" channel (KPAS, KXLA and KRLA) had been located in those locations.

The other news, was that the current KRLA array of personnel both on and off the air, would be selectively laid off, as the station is absorbed into the corporate structure. Some of the current KRLA on-the-air staff would be laid off. Many of the behind-the-scenes staff would be gone, too.

We checked out this news. Yes, KRLA was sold. Yes, it was closing its Pasadena Huntington Hotel location, and also relocating the transmitter site, its home since 1941, sadly bringing to an end, the antenna towers proudly standing tall below Princess Blue Sky, in South El Monte. We found out that the KRLA transmitter site was going to be moved to a former landfill site in Irwindale, right on the Arcadia-Monrovia border, adjacent to the corner of Myrtle and Longden. Plans were put on the drawing board to build an expensive broadcast facility on that lot. The reason that the South El Monte location, at the corner of Santa Anita Avenue, bordering the Pomona Freeway, would not be kept, was that when the station was sold, that pasture property would not be part of the deal.

Finally in early 1985, it was announced that Don Steele would be the new afternoon-drive man at KRLA. Former KIIS late '70s jock, Mike Wagner would be the new Program Director, and, most likely, also do an airshift, and that KRLA would acquire a "heavyweight" big name to be morning man, to replace Dave Hull (who chose not to stay on with a "pay cut.") but could not announce the choice yet.

When we called Dave Hull, during early 1985, for information on the "new breeze" at "Radio Eleven-Ten," Hull said to us, that he knew who the new morning man would be. He said that it was someone that we liked. That's all that was said.

In doing some "Kolchak-like" investigative work, we uncovered that Bob Hudson would be signed as the new KRLA morning man. Hayes and Steele would be the midday and afternoon personalities. The evening show was still up in the air.

We also found out that Michelle Roth, Johnny St. Thomas, and Mucho Morales would not be retained as KRLA on-the-air personalities. Jim Pewter would still be heard, in a very limited capacity. So would Jimmy O'Neill, staying on in a weekend capacity. Hearing that Bob Hudson would become the new morning man was exciting. Had it not been for a famous "telegram letter" he had sent to management in early 1982, Hudson probably would have been morning man then.

Finally, it was announced that Friday, March 1st would be the last day of KRLA, under the old owners. Saturday, March 2nd, would be the new KRLA, in its new studios on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles. (Because of the Pasadena license, an office would be located at The Hilton Hotel in Pasadena.) The transmitter site in Irwindale would be built, the following year, in

1986. The transmitter site in South El Monte would be gone in January 1987.

Again, unknown to the public who only knew of KRLA from its location on the radio dial, this new change was quite sweeping, and would be a major change in the history of KRLA. Also, on Saturday, March 2, the format would change. KRLA, which since 1976 had been a blend of both selected current hits and past classics, would be now an all-Gold station.

The KRLA music lists which had been printed for at least the past five years would be discontinued. The final issue? A photograph of Dave Hull sitting in the Pasadena disc jockey booth. The end of an era, and the end of any printed KRLA record "survey." An all-Gold station would have no need for a weekly record survey of hits.

Jimmy O'Neill told us an interesting story during the original writing of Dream-House. O'Neill had said that P.D. Jim Pewter, several weeks before the station was sold, wanted to replace Dave Hull in the morning-drive with O'Neill, and that would have happened, had the station not have been sold. (O'Neill had originally been "cast" as morning man, from 7 to 10 a.m., back in August/September 1959.)

O'Neill did become the KRLA morning man for just one day, on the last day of the "old KRLA," Friday, March 1st. The station had fired Dave Hull the day before. They thought that Hull would use "blowing up" sound effects to Don Steele, and other "preview" spots, of the new KRLA coming up. Actually, Hull was quite professional in his final week, and even played comedy cuts he made with the new morning-man-to-be Bob Hudson, from their "Hudson And Hull (Judson)" album. This was a classy touch on Hull's part, as it gave listeners a nice transition.

But management was concerned about what Hull would have said on the last Friday, so Hull was replaced by O'Neill for that one day. No mention of Hull was heard on O'Neill's Friday morning-drive. O'Neill, did salute "Bill Earl," who called him that morning.

Friday, March 1st, would be the last day of KRLA at The Huntington Hotel. A farewell celebration was held in the station's lobby. Former KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men" Dick Moreland and Roger Christian were present during this celebration. Also, Buddy Budnik was there, too. During The Michelle Roth Show from 3 to 7 p.m., we were invited into the deejay booth by Jim Pewter, to say a few words over the old KRLA microphones, as "The Official KRLA Historian."

We said goodbye to the old KRLA over its microphone, and then sat in the lobby. We watched fans, groupies, listeners and others, roam freely through the facility as "everything" had to be given away by Midnight, when the doors would be locked forever. Nothing from the early days was still around. Just tons of Art Laboe era t-shirts, stickers, old Art Laboe era record surveys, and key rings.

None of the real old memorabilia, like KRLA Beats were on the premises, as having been long, long gone by all the changes on "Radio Eleven-Ten" over the years. We did find, given to us, an old "Rubber Baby Buggy Bumper Sticker," from 1967. We still have it. The last real souvenir from Pasadena.

At Midnight, all the people left. The studios and offices at 1401 South Oak Knoll, in the hotel's old "Carriage House" were closed. At the end of The Mucho Morales Show, a tape was played, produced by KRLA production man, Doug Brown. It was quite a memorable one, that was very reminiscent of the tape played back on December 31, 1969.

The last record played on KRLA was a special one as KRLA, was "The Original Beatle Station." And no song could be more appropriate than a Beatle song. It was by Beatle George Harrison from 1970. The song? "All Things Must Pass." With the lines about how all things must pass away, to an instrumental background, the voice of newsman Richard Beebe was heard, saying how "Radio Eleven-Ten" had been located at The Huntington Hotel since 1941, and was about to come to a close.

Beebe mentioned how KRLA started as KPAS, and had been a major station in the lives of so many people, who heard the station over the years. Then, after a brief history, the voices of all the old KRLA staff members said goodbye, one after another, the personnel who would not be joining the "new" station.

Among those voices were Dave Hull, Johnny St. Thomas, Michelle Roth, and Mucho Morales. After all these voices were heard, one by one with a farewell goodbye, a very appropriate song was played.

It was Bob Hope, who was one of the owners of the old KRLA, singing "Thanks For The Memory." This record was played in full. At the end of the record, at Midnight, a new voice was heard. The voice was that of Don Steele, announcing that KRLA would be signing off the air for a few hours, and would be back on the air, early Saturday morning at daybreak, and to listen then to the "new" KRLA.

So at Midnight, the end of an era occurred. KRLA had been sold. The Pasadena

studios had been closed forever. Miles away in South El Monte, in the nighttime field, seven big transmitter towers stood proudly, with the antenna red lights glowing from three of them, like an eternal vigil candle in a church. Even though the transmitter towers in South El Monte were standing tall, nothing was heard on "Radio Eleven-Ten."

At sunrise, KRLA went back on the air, with new jingles, and a new location, where the weekend's recorded programming would originate, from the Wilshire Boulevard studios.

No more music carts played by the engineers in South El Monte. The South El Monte transmitter was back to the way it was in early 1973. The engineer just "sat transmitter."

The equipment and studios at The Huntington Hotel were beginning to be removed. No sound of KRLA came out of Pasadena. However, because KRLA would still be licensed in Pasadena, an office was set up at The Hilton Hotel. No studios. Just an office, to satisfy the license requirement.

The studios were in Los Angeles. The transmitter would still be in South El Monte. As long as the transmitter was in South El Monte, KRLA was still KRLA. After all, the antenna tower location where listeners actually, physically receive the station is what counts. But that would be short-lived. Over the next two years, a new transmitter location would be built in Irwindale, on land selected by outgoing Chief Engineer, Don Beem, who was also not picked up by the new owners. So KRLA, on March 2nd, was half old and half new.

The programming that weekend consisted of total automation, on that Saturday and Sunday, with promos of Bob Hudson's show, to start the following Monday, and voice tracks pre-recorded by Don Steele, who would be doing a "live" show on Monday, also. The new upbeat jingles set the scene for the new KRLA. A lot of anticipation was how the "live" shows would sound the following Monday.

On Monday morning at 5 a.m., the new KRLA on Wilshire Boulevard began its "live" programming. Bob Hudson sounded great, 5 to 9 a.m. His first caller? An old-time fan named "Bill Earl."

9 to Noon was Mike Wagner. Wagner's show was fast paced, and bright, in those hours. He was a fresh voice to "Radio Eleven-Ten," and certainly helped round out, and update, the "classic jock" sound of the others. (As far as the music mix, KRLA was now playing all Gold. No current hits, as with the old format, and owners, the week before.)

Following Wagner, Noon to 4, was Johnny Hayes, now "live" for four hours a day. Hayes had been doing a mostly pre-recorded show. It was a real pleasure to hear Hayes "live" every day now. Hayes sounded very upbeat, turned on, and fast paced, reminiscent of his first days at KRLA back in 1965. The "Countdown" feature still continued in the Noon to 1 time block.

From 4 to 8 p.m. was Don Steele. Steele, (real name: Don Revert) calling himself, as always, "The Real" Don Steele, sounded exactly like he did back on 93/KHJ in April 1965, as if no time had elapsed. Steele, a classic "screamer" air personality, gave this afternoon-drive a hot, fast energy. Steele was an original with his "Tina Delgado Is Alive!," and other trademarks.

From 8 to Midnight, and to keep the Mexican-American audience that KRLA had built up since 1976, KRLA brought back Art Laboe, "live." Laboe's show was just like his last ones in 1981, with a heavy dominance of music preferred by his more ethnic audience.

From Midnight to 5, KRLA continued its automated pre-recorded Wolfman Jack show, that KRLA had "bought" for those hours. The following weekend, KRLA was loaded with weekenders.

John Rydgren, last heard on KRLA in 1972, during the "progressive" era, was back as "Brother John," in a pre-recorded format 6 to 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday. He was not "live," because of a serious stroke, several years before, which prevented him from doing a tight, "live" radio show.

Jimmy O'Neill, who was a carryover from the old owners, did a "live" show from 3 to 7 p.m. on Saturday. Harvey Miller ("Humble Harv") was brought back from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday. Val Valentine would be "live," Sundays, 2 to 5 p.m. Dick Hugg ("Huggy Boy"), a holdover from the old owners, continued to do his show, Saturday 7 to Midnight, and Sunday nights, 6 to 10 p.m. Hugg, an Anglo, had great appeal in the Mexican-American community from his days on KRKD (later KIIS-AM), a fringe station in Los Angeles, in 1965 and 1966, and also XEPRS in Rosarito, Mexico in the early '80s. All the weekend programming, except the all-night show, Johnny Hayes' Saturday show, and John Rydgren's were "live."

When Jimmy O'Neill left KRLA, shortly after the "March change," Harvey Miller was given the 3-7 p.m. Saturday afternoon-drive show. Val Valentine's show on Sunday afternoon was expanded from 2 to 6 p.m. afternoon-drive.

On Bob Hudson's April 1st show, as an April Fool's treat, old KRLA promos were played, over the air. The most memorable one was an old promo from 1962 where the voice of Bob Eubanks was heard asking the listeners to hear him "every morning 6 to 9" Ironically, it was Hudson who replaced Eubanks during that morning-drive slot back in 1963.

Also in April, Hudson had called up rival morning man on KMGG-FM, Robert W. Morgan (one of the original 93/KHJ "Boss Jocks" in spring 1965). While waiting for Morgan to come to the phone from hold, Hudson put over KRLA's airwaves the entire programming right off the air of KMGG including jingles, commercials, etc.

The following day, a memo was given to Hudson. In so many words, management did not appreciate Hudson's actions, and Hudson might be "disciplined." Hudson read this memo over the air, in disapproval of it. Those of us who can remember William F. Williams' "IFIAFFI," had a sense of deja vu. We called Hudson, on the air, that morning. We mentioned to him, on the air, about William F. Williams, many years earlier, reading memos over the air.

Hudson, the following day, was not heard during his 5 to 9 a.m. show. No mention was made by Harvey Miller, during that morning-drive, that he was filling in for Hudson. Listeners, we were told, then "jammed the switchboards," asking what happened to Hudson. Hudson returned the following day.

The new KRLA was only two months old in May 1985, when Harvey Miller left the KRLA weekend lineup. Miller was replaced by Rebel Foster, who returned to KRLA, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sundays, and Saturday afternoon-drive 3 to 7 p.m.

It was also in May 1985, that Johnny Hayes celebrated the "20th Anniversary" of his first show on KRLA. Hayes did a one-hour special "Countdown" show, featuring records he played on KRLA, on his first day back in 1965. Two special guest in-studio visitors to that "Countdown" show were Casey Kasem, who congratulated Hayes over the air "live," and also Charlie Tuna from KBZT (formerly KHTZ), KRLA's FM sister station "down the hall."

The next day on Saturday, Hayes did a four-hour "20th Anniversary" of his first show, with old promos and pre-recorded salutes from various KRLA alumni over the years. There even was a salute from "The Official KRLA Historian," Bill Earl. Hayes had personally called us late one night, several weeks earlier, and asked us to record a tribute for him.

Moving into June of 1985, Bob Hudson partially resurrected his old "Hudson's Commandos" by having breakfasts for winners of KRLA contests. Hudson would be featured at the head of the table with a huge buffet breakfast, with lots of fruit, and a big gourmet spread.

Souvenir "shot" glasses were given away at those breakfasts, featuring the KRLA logo, and "Hudson's Commandos." Also, that Summer of 1985, Hudson did his show "live" from Main Street at Disneyland, as part of an anniversary celebration of the amusement park.

An interesting event did happen though, in September 1985, during Hudson's time slot. Hudson was absent from his show, one day in September of 1985. Apparently no one was available to substitute for him on his show from the regular staff of weekenders and reliefs. So KRLA brought in, for just that one day, an excellent personality, who was working in production for KBZT "down the hall," Don Murray, who we met when we recorded our "20th Anniversary" comments for Johnny Hayes' show in the spring.

Don Murray (real name: Grant Carlson) had a style, very reminiscent of Don Mackinnon at KFVB in 1965. Murray was funny, bright, irreverent, and in some ways reminiscent of another great KRLA morning man of the past, "World Famous" Tom Murphy. This was a lost gem in KRLA's programming. Those of us who were fortunate enough to hear Don Murray that day got a real treat.

Shortly after Hudson came back, it was decided to "streamline" and "tighten up" The Bob Hudson Show. Management felt that Hudson needed a "partner" to play off of, and to do on-the-air skits. It was decided to team Hudson up with Rebel Foster (who worked with Hudson on KRLA back in 1963) and have a "Hudson And Foster" show, even though it was never called that. Hudson just said that "...this is Bob Hudson, along with Rebel Foster in the 'buddy seat.'" With Foster out of the weekends, and into the two-man morning shift, Harvey Miller was brought back to the weekends.

It was in October 1985 that Mike Wagner, who had been Program Director, and 9 to Noon personality, was given greater responsibilities behind the scenes. So Harvey Miller took over the 9 to Noon show, and also became Program Director, in the months ahead, for a short time. Wagner continued to work behind the scenes, do occasional reliefs once in a while, and continued to be heard doing various promo announcements during this time, most memorable as the "voice" of a Thanksgiving turkey ("gobble, gobble.") Mike Wagner is a great turkey!

However, as the year was ending, Rebel Foster left KRLA, and was replaced in the

"buddy seat" by Buck Buchanan. Buchanan had worked with Hudson in the early '80s in Hawaii. Buchanan also was the son of the situation comedy actor Edgar Buchanan, most famous from the "Petticoat Junction" television series.

Buchanan had earlier supplied the "voice" of John Lennon's ghost on some of Hudson's earlier shows in '85. The team of "Hudson And Buchanan" was a funnier pair than "Hudson And Foster." (Again it was not called "Hudson And Buchanan," but "Buck Buchanan in the buddy seat.") There seemed to be a better chemistry with "Hudson And Buchanan." We were hoping they would have done an album. They were that good a team.

However, in early December, John Rydgren, who had been doing the Saturday and Sunday 6 to 10 a.m. shows pre-recorded, would leave KRLA for medical reasons. He was replaced by Gary Marshall. Marshall hadn't been heard on "Radio Eleven-Ten" since 1970. Besides the weekend drive-time shift, Marshall would also be involved in KRLA production behind the scenes, and be the voice of various promos and spots.

Don Steele was so initially popular in the 4 to 8 p.m. afternoon-drive shift, that KDOC-TV in Orange County, resurrected Steele's old dance television show, with frequent promos for KRLA on the show.

However, KRLA would suffer a severe setback in early 1986. It would change the morning-drive show which, as we have stated many times, should be the strongest, most stable "box office" show in the lineup. In December 1985, it was reported that singer Rick Nelson was killed in a plane crash, supposedly from a fire started on board the plane, that some speculated (incorrectly) had to do with freebasing cocaine. Also in January 1986, the U.S. space shuttle had blown up, causing two major aviation disasters in the news, during the same few weeks.

In February 1986, "Hudson And Buchanan" had performed a skit on the morning show. It was announced that the reason the space shuttle blew up, was because the astronauts on board were freebasing Tang (the orange drink powder that astronauts, in the past, had taken on various other space missions.) The joke was funny. But apparently station management and listeners' negative comments were so outraged, that "Hudson And Buchanan" were both taken off the air immediately.

Station management thought the joke was in poor taste. Negative mail responding to the joke was enough to cause management to feel that "Hudson And Buchanan" should go. Hudson told us he actually was only commenting on all the negative reports about Rick Nelson. Those rumors of cocaine on the plane he felt were unfair to the memory of Nelson and his family. He also didn't like the repeated showings on television of the space shuttle blowing up.

So "Hudson And Buchanan" were "suspended" from the air. But as days went on, and Hudson's contract was up on March 1st, it was clear that the morning team was not coming back. Replacing them, in the morning show, was former KRLA morning man, from 1969-71, Jay Stevens. Stevens was only back as a temporary fill-in, until it was decided what to do with the morning show.

Stevens was signed to handle the important morning show, due to his experience as a classic "Radio Eleven-Ten" morning personality of the past. Stevens was very successful with his voice-over work, and production company, Oregon radio station ownership, and consulting service, and did not expect to stay on as morning man, due to his important other commitments.

Also, on a temporary weekend basis at this time, from April through June, KRLA brought in Mark Denis (real name: Denis Melbourne.) Denis was best known from his work at KMEN, on Baseline east of Sterling, in San Bernardino. In the early '60s, Denis was heard during the same era at KMEN, as future KRLA alumni William F. Williams, Buddy Budnik, and Johnnie Darin. Denis coined his famous expression, that is a classic in radio,

"Denis, anyone?"

A very famous portrait of Mark Denis was taken for KMEN. Denis would look very philosophical, holding his glasses to his chin. We had the pleasure of having lunch, in 1984, with Denis at Nickodell's on Melrose.

As stated earlier, Jay Stevens was put into the morning-drive show on a temporary basis. By the Summer of 1986, KRLA took a slightly different turn. KRLA wanted to continue to re-solidify its Mexican-American base. So it moved over, from KBZT "down the hall," Danny Martinez, to be the new morning man.

It was thought that Martinez would be a big "box office" draw for the Mexican-American audience that KRLA wanted to continue to re-solidify. Martinez had been best known to Los Angeles audiences as being a 93/KHJ "Boss Jock." (Martinez's picture was on the very last "Boss 30" folder in 1980.)

In the past, Danny Martinez was a pretty straight "Boss Jock." But at this time, Martinez

did seem to exhibit a free-rein style. He brought in comedy and humor, and such characters as "Cousin Cochina" and "Juan Moretime." Martinez was heartily promoted by KRLA, in a 1/2 -page ad in the Herald-Examiner, in July 1986. He did try very hard in the morning-drive. In a station that still did broadcast from those big transmitter towers in South El Monte, a predominantly Mexican-American community, it was nice to see KRLA serve that community, by having as its morning man, the top shift, an air personality named "Martinez."

With Danny Martinez as morning man, Jay Stevens went back to doing some weekend shifts at KRLA, before dropping off the schedule entirely, with his consulting business, and Oregon radio station ownership, his main concern. (Stevens, at that time, was the voice of "The Wherehouse," and "Paul's Big Screen Televisions.")

One day, in July 1986, we, and our girlfriend, Rosemary, were driving down Longden Avenue headed east. Suddenly, we saw what we had been expecting, since we first heard the news in December 1984. Five beautiful, strong, clean, red-and-white transmitter towers were reaching toward the sky ahead of us, east on Longden Avenue.

It was a hot summer day. The foothills of the nearby mountains looked dry. But the antenna towers before us were mighty. Longden Avenue became like The Road To Oz, and Yellow Brick Road. Instead of an Emerald City and castle, we drove forward to explore this new "dream-house" ahead.

We approached the corner of Longden and Myrtle. Since early 1985, we had frequently visited this site at 277 East Longden Avenue in Irwindale. Very slowly, the land was cleared for a new construction development.

Upon investigating the site, a new "bomb shelter" -style (no windows) transmitter building was being built. Part of the building was a large garage for KRLA's mobile studio trailer. Right inside the new transmitter building, an emergency studio was being built for possible "live" broadcasts from Irwindale. We were given a tour of the soon-to-be completed facilities.

KRLA continued, in late summer and early fall 1986, to fine-tune its evening schedule. Dick Hugg was brought in to do an 8 to 10 p.m. weeknight show. This was followed by two pre-recorded hours, Art Laboe from 10 to 11, and Harvey Miller was heard 11 to Midnight. Miller continued to be the 9 to Noon personality, at approximately this time in 1986, as his maturity and deep voice were well suited for a female audience.

The evening programming changed again in late summer 1986. KRLA scheduled Wolfman Jack, who had been already heard on KRLA in a pre-recorded syndicated all-night program, in the 8 to Midnight shows, "live" from his home.

However, in September 1986, KRLA decided to try something new in the morning-drive shift, as Danny Martinez would leave KRLA at that time. Earlier in 1986, the legendary Los Angeles radio team "Lohman And Barkley" broke up.

It was a brilliant idea, in September 1986, to team up Al Lohman with former/suspended KRLA morning man, Bob Hudson, in a "Lohman And Hudson" experiment. Both men were "funny men" from the two most famous Los Angeles radio teams, "Lohman And Barkley," and "Hudson And Landry." The experiment was quite good, with some legendary comedy spots about avocados, and other classic bits.

Also, at this time, Harvey Miller left KRLA to go to Seattle. Miller was replaced by Mike Wagner, calling himself "Midday Mike" now, and now in a shortened 10 to Noon show. Wagner needed more time for management duties off the air.

However, a change at KRLA's FM sister-station KBZT, caused a short end to the "Lohman And Hudson" experiment. Charlie Tuna had been the morning man at KBZT (earlier KHTZ) in a light music/less talk format. KBZT changed over in the Fall of 1986 to KLSX, playing "Classic Rock" (early "progressive"), a much more heavy-style music, being classic-album-oriented-rock. It was decided, since Charlie Tuna had been under contract already, to move Tuna over to KRLA "down the hall," where he was better suited. Charlie Tuna (real name: Art Ferguson) was the strong morning man that KRLA needed at this point, after all the changes to the morning-drive show.

Tuna had been heard on various radio stations in Southern California, from KHJ in Los Angeles, to KCBQ, Santee, then in 1972 to KROQ (the old KBLA), to KKDJ, to KIIS, back to KHJ, then to KTNQ, KHTZ, KBZT, and now KRLA, nine different call letter combinations in the Southland. Charlie Tuna, as the new KRLA morning man, became highly popular with his loyal fans following him over to "Radio Eleven-Ten."

Shortly after Tuna was signed to the morning show on KRLA, in October 1986 Tuna did an excellent remote broadcast personal appearance at Larry Parker's Diner in Beverly Hills. A variety of "Tuna Omelettes" were sold at the restaurant for only \$1.10.

We, (and our fiancée, Rosemary), were present at that personal appearance. At one point, Tuna interviewed us over the KRLA airwaves about the legendary 80-page thesis we had written about KRLA in 1969, and the array of KRLA memorabilia in the Research Archives morgue. Again, we enjoyed talking over the KRLA airwaves "live" as "Bill Earl, The Official KRLA Historian." Tuna, that day, even autographed our own Starkist "Charlie The Tuna" rubber character doll.

So with Charlie Tuna now in the mornings, KRLA had a good, big name draw. Now the KRLA lineup in September 1986 was Charlie Tuna 5 to 10, "Midday Mike" 10 to Noon, Johnny Hayes Noon to 4, Don Steele 4 to 8, Wolfman Jack, from his home, 8 to Midnight "live," and on the weekends with Gary Marshall, Art Laboe, Harvey Miller again returning to KRLA, and also Manny Pacheco, who had been at KRLA all along, in the public/community affairs department.

Manny Pacheco who was last heard on KRLA in the Art Laboe era, continued promotion work, and also was a community link to the Mexican-American community at "Mexican fairs" (such as in El Monte.) Pacheco also did some air shifts, at this time, on his own, or substituted for Laboe, back in 1985. (Pacheco was Laboe's producer in summer 1985.) Pacheco would also host the Sunday morning-drive, 6 to 8 a.m., "KRLA Connection" public affairs call-in show, up to almost October 1989.

Also joining "The Eleven-Ten Men," for a very short time in an overnight weekend shift, was former KGBS-FM (Flint Peak) personality, Bob Morgan. Morgan was one of the best of the KGBS air personalities during the 1972-1974 era. Morgan, we were told, was actually a part-time suburban police officer, but one would never know it from Morgan's highly comedic and exciting KGBS shows. Morgan usually was heard during the Midnight to dawn hours.

We recall listening to Morgan during the spring 1973 period, when we had a part-time after-college job, near the old horse auction site in El Monte, on Gilman Road, south of Ferris, in a multi-windowed "fishbowl shack," where Morgan really was an example of high-personality radio, with fast pace and lots of "drop-ins." Morgan was also heard on the old KHTZ when it briefly played Country music, after the letters KGBS-FM were changed in mid-1979.

However, Morgan was actually only on KRLA just one or, maybe, two weeks, as for some reason, "it didn't work out," we were told. Bob Morgan could have been a great addition to "The Eleven-Ten Men" if he had stayed on, and been given "free rein," as he had in 1973 at KGBS.

However, by the end of 1986, a big, big era in KRLA's history was about to come to an end. During the Fall of 1986, the new KRLA transmitter building, and five big antenna towers in Irwindale, was finally being completed. For a while, some of the programming would be sent out over the Irwindale transmitter towers for testing purposes. Others were "sent out" from South El Monte many times on the same day.

By the end of 1986, in December, the transmitter in South El Monte would be shut off forever. Right before the first of January 1987, all KRLA transmissions would come out of Irwindale. We recall driving by the KRLA South El Monte transmitter site in January 1987, seeing the seven big radio towers now silenced, and standing almost like giant vertical tombstones. The KRLA transmitter building was empty and abandoned. KRLA was now 24-hours a day from Irwindale, California.

Then, one day in January 1987, the end of the old KRLA really hit home. A group of trucks were spotted by us in the horse pasture, underneath the KRLA transmitter towers. Workmen started to dismantle the now-silent giant antenna towers, one by one.

One day there was seven. Then five. Then two. Then one. Finally, one day in January 1987, all transmitter towers were gone from the field. The only sign that antenna towers were ever there, were the concrete stumps to the radio towers' bases, reminiscent of the stumps of giant trees that were cut down for "progress." Two of the oldest transmitter towers, at the western edge of the field, were not even dismantled. The guy wires were cut. The antenna towers crashed down to the field, in a tangled mess of broken metal.

The caretaker of the pasture, Bob Navarro, allowed us to go out into the field. The twisted wreckage of the transmitter towers were in a mangled pile. A clean, radio tower metal-bar, off the oldest KRLA transmitter tower, was given to us by one of the workmen. Now cleaned up and painted, it is a sad memory of what KRLA was. But it is a piece of KRLA. Great sounds came from that piece of metal.

During the time that the KRLA radio towers in South El Monte were being demolished, not one television station, camera crew, or reporter came out to the pasture, to watch, or record, the end of KRLA, "The Station Of The Stars." A truck came, and took all the unsalvageable broken, twisted former transmitter towers away. The field was now clear.

No antenna towers reaching up to Princess Blue Sky. The pasture had an eerie silence.

Navarro also allowed us to have one last walk-through in the now-abandoned "dream-house," the now-vacant KRLA transmitter building, at 825 North Lexington-Gallatin Road. We took a series of photographs for Research Archives before the building was torn up from the insides, water-cooled transmitter consoles removed, and the building ready to be demolished, sometime in the future.

Walking through the empty transmitter building, seeing the once mighty water-cooled transmitter consoles now silenced and dry, was a sad sight. The old KRLA had gone. The era of South El Monte had ended. The transmitter building was just a shell of its past greatness.

When that building was built in April of 1955, it was state-of-the-art. Now, 31 years later, it was just an empty, abandoned building. We walked through the rooms. We sat in the kitchen where the U.P.I. news machine, now covered with dust, once gave news "over the wire" every minute. We looked out the window into the pasture in back. No more antenna towers. Just concrete stumps. The concrete stumps, that once supported the magnificent transmitter towers, appeared almost like tombstones standing silently in the serene pasture. And in a way, they were. The old KRLA really, really was gone. The "dream-house" was just empty walls.

It would take some getting used to. KRLA was about to move forward ahead into 1987. No more Pasadena. No more South El Monte. Irwindale, at the base of the foothills, was now where the heart and soul of KRLA was proudly beating.

In 1987, KRLA would continue its Gold format in a pretty much steady direction. KRLA, as a promotion, came out with a record by Dick Dale, called "One Double One, Oh!" The lyrics would salute the KRLA lineup. Also, on the back of the L.P.-size cover, were nice pictures of "The Eleven-Ten Men," in the center of record discs. The song proudly mentions the names of the weekday "Eleven-Ten Men."

The only real change to the KRLA lineup, at this time in 1987, was Manny Pacheco taking over the evening show with his producer, Vic Slick (real name: Vic Corral.) They played a mix of Gold, and now even some selected currents, and programming popular to the Mexican-American audience. At that time, the "All Oldies" logo was changed to just "Oldies - KRLA 1110 AM" on promotional stickers, and "Oldies But Goodies" on the new jingles. This experiment of adding currents to the nighttime show did not last too long. The station eventually went back to an All-Gold format. Vic Slick, we were told, also did some jocking on KRLA during nighttime hours at this time.

Also, in 1987, The Johnny Hayes Show was enlarged to 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. "live." Don Steele would now be 3 to 7 p.m. Later in the year, Harvey Miller would, once again, return to KRLA, in the 7 to Midnight show. (Mike Wagner would drop off the midmorning show for more management duties.) And KRLA would feature Val Valentine, rejoining the KRLA lineup, in a Midnight to 5 show "live," geared toward the Mexican-American audience.

One other show of merit, on KRLA in 1987, was in November. Charlie Tuna had a "20th Anniversary" show of the 20-year anniversary of his first show in Los Angeles. Tuna had originally started in Los Angeles in November 1967 at 93/KHJ. We missed this tribute broadcast. But we heard it was one of Tuna's best. Also, KRLA took out newspaper ads commending Tuna for being in Southern California (L.A. area and Santee) for 20 years.

As KRLA moved into another year, on April 1, 1988, KRLA did probably its best piece of programming in many years. For it was this "April Fool's Day," 1988, (April 1st), that KRLA would become "A Thing Of The Past." On Charlie Tuna's morning-drive show that morning, Tuna interviewed "live" on-the-air, former KRLA alumni over the phone, Dave Hull, Casey Kasem, Charlie O'Donnell, and current KRLA legendary jock bridging the KRLA eras, Johnny Hayes. Also on that broadcast, Tuna talked to us, on the phone over the air, "Bill Earl - The Official KRLA Historian."

The reason Tuna interviewed all those various KRLA alumni? From 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. that day, KRLA really did become a "thing of the past." From 9 to Noon, KRLA became KFVB, April 1, 1958, with the old jingles, and the return of Ted Quillin. KRLA pretended it was the old KFVB of April 1958! This was just like what KMET had done back in 1972. Suddenly you heard three hours of KFVB again, with all the music of April 1st, 1958. Quillin, "live" in-studio, never sounded better. His "doubles" were as good as ever, too.

The jingles that KRLA used of the old KFVB, were in mint air-quality shape, right from the master tape. They were a sheer delight to hear. An "echo" effect on Quillin's voice was used to help recreate the era.

From Noon to 3, Johnny Hayes re-created the KRLA of 1963, loaded with references to all the old "Eleven-Ten Men" of that era. To top even that, from 3 to 7 p.m., Don Steele re-created 93/KHJ, and "Boss Radio," from April 1, 1968! Steele sounded exactly the same as he

did then. His timing was perfect. It was great to hear those classic, 1965, Johnny Mann "93/KHJ" jingles.

This was a great day in KRLA's programming! These programs were so highly critically praised, that the "best" of Quillin's and Steele's shows were played on a Saturday morning a few weeks later. That day, April 1st, 1988 was truly the high mark of KRLA's programming for 1988.

In the Summer of 1988, it was announced that legendary KRLA air talent from the past, (1961 to 1969), Dick Moreland had died of cancer. Even though it had been almost 20 years since Moreland had been a member of "The Eleven-Ten Men" (he did return in November 1981, coming "home for the holidays.") Hayes saluted this KRLA legend, by dedicating a "Countdown" show, that summer, to Moreland as a tribute, playing old airchecks from the 1981 reunion. There were old promos from before, and telephone salutes from others who knew Dick Moreland. We were in New York at the time. But we heard an aircheck of this show. Hayes should be commended by saluting one of KRLA's most respected personalities, that had so much of an influence on KRLA, for so many important mid-'60s years.

Hayes was becoming quite known as an "Elder Statesman D.J." of L.A. radio. The year before on local television, Johnny Hayes was shown on-camera, hosting several weeknight shows on early rock and roll. Hayes looked very good on camera.

As KRLA moved further in 1988, KRLA broadcast a pre-recorded two hours by Bob Hudson, on late Sunday nights. It was called "The Emperor's Gold." Hudson "paid for" the show with his own commercials for "playing cards" that Hudson made up for the California lottery Lotto game. Various Zodiac signs were on the back of the decks. One would order their own "sign." Then one would deal themselves six cards, with hopefully lucky numbers. This show reminded us of a pre-recorded show that Hudson did on XEPRS, back in late 1981, and early 1982, in another "commercial" show, at that time, for record albums.

KRLA had now shifted into 1989. The most notable change on KRLA in early 1989, was the new slick production of Johnny Hayes' "Countdown" show. Not only would Hayes count down the top records of that day in a designated year, but new jingles were added. ("Number One!"), ("Extra!") Hayes now pretended he actually was there on that date, with present tense references to KRLA "Eleven-Ten Men." Actual promos, jingles, and even some old airchecks were used. The "Countdown" show never sounded better. Pretending it's all happening in the present tense gave the show a great illusion. And the "news" on that show (from the past) was from KRLA (and former KFXM) news legend, Adam J. DeMarais. A classic voice! DeMarais was best known from KFXM, San Bernardino, in 1965, but later did news on KRLA in the later '60s.

In 1989, Charlie Tuna continued to do excellent shows in his important morning-drive hours, 5 to 10 a.m. Even though Tuna did not use his memorable "This Date In History," from the '70s (our favorite), Tuna did use his famous features, over the years, "Breakfast Serial," (comedy L.P. cuts), and the "Wake-Up Story."

However, Tuna was always at his best with interviewing. In February 1989, Tuna had, as an in-studio guest, Stan Freberg, the man responsible for the "Sonny Bono Wig" promos on KRLA, back in late 1966, that we discussed earlier. Freberg had his autobiography on sale at that time, and gave some rare interviews to promote it. (We met Freberg, promoting his book, at a book-signing personal appearance, during that season.) Tuna always had very good talents as an interviewer, and was at his best with his various phone interviews with authors and people in the news.

However, Tuna was never better than on this in-studio interview with Stan Freberg, who is an absolute genius, and who we've quoted many times in Dream-House. Hearing Tuna and Freberg, that morning in February 1989, was a classic broadcast. Especially when Tuna and Freberg discussed Freberg's consultant contributions to KRLA from the past. It was a real pleasure to hear those "Mr. Hardrock" promos, again on KRLA, after all those years.

It was announced on March 28, 1989 that demolition had begun on tearing down The Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, the beautiful landmark in which the old KRLA was part of its grounds, in the adjacent "Carriage House" annex. There were no plans to demolish the building that housed the old KPAS/KXLA/KRLA studios, but the picturesque hotel main building, restaurant, and adjacent "Tap Room" bar, would be. The same building that we had lunch with Bert West and Jack Roth in 1981, and visiting with Roy Elwell, back in 1974.

The hotel building, in October 1985, was declared unsafe, as far as withstanding an earthquake. A "replica" of the building would be built, as soon as the old one would be demolished. Because of all these changes at the hotel site, in 1989, we visited the site of the old KRLA studios in the annex of The Huntington Hotel. The window in the lobby was still there.

The shutters, put up in 1970, were closed. The "man in the sun" surface was still on the lobby floor, installed in 1970, a reminder of past glories.

We had not visited the old KRLA site, since the last day that the station broadcast from that location, in March 1985. The old KRLA offices had not been leased. We opened the door to where the disc jockey booth was. Debris. And one big room. The control room and booth had been ripped out. All that remained was the window, where so many times we had watched the "Eleven-Ten Men" for all those years. Electrical wires fell loosely from the ceiling. No sign that a radio station ever was there. Major remodeling to that building was on the drawing board.

On Friday, March 31, we were given a tour of the KRLA transmitter building in Irwindale by Chief Engineer David Ping, and Transmitter Supervisor, Chris Hayes. We had not been inside this "broadcast city" since it was built in summer '86. It was a real pleasure to see how state-of-the-art it actually was.

Right inside the door, we saw a small foyer, which was the Chief Engineer's office to the left with several desks. But all the way to the left, in the northwest corner of the building through a white door, we saw one of the most state-of-the-art "disc jockey booth"s that we've ever seen. All brand new turntables, cart machines, and several wood-grain overhead speakers, made this booth as modern as it could be. All that was lacking was a picture window in front of the "board," where the disc jockey could look out at the impressive nearby foothills. For security reasons, no window existed. (But what a view if!)

As we looked forward from the front door, we saw the large transmitter room itself, with state-of-the-art consoles all along the north and east walls. On the south wall, we saw a stove and refrigerator, so the engineers (or air talent) can fix meals.

On Saturday, April 1st, 1989, KRLA repeated its "stunt" of the year before. Once again, KRLA became "a thing of the past." But instead of all day like the year before, KRLA would be "a thing of the past" for only three hours, 9 to Noon.

At a few minutes before 9 a.m., the voice of P.D. Mike Wagner was heard giving the introduction of what we were going to be hearing. From 9 to 10 would be special guest D.J. Bill Ballance, who was one of the original "Color Radio" "Seven Swingin' Gentlemen," re-creating KFWB from April 1, 1959. Following Ballance from 10 to 11, would be Dave Hull, re-creating KRLA from April 1, 1964, 25 years ago that date, during the heart of the "Beatle Invasion." And then from 11 to Noon, two actual airchecks, unscoped, would be played of "Humble Harv," Harvey Miller, from 93/KHJ.

Bill Ballance, from 9 to 10 in his pre-recorded hour, did a great job bringing back KFWB memories. Ballance has always had a great command of the English language. After all these years, Ballance proved he was the ultimate pro. He sounded as if KFWB had never left. Old aircheck spots were used during this hour. Our associate, Bob Maslen, supplied KRLA with most of the airchecks used for this special programming.

But when 10 a.m. arrived, hearing Dave Hull again was a dream come true. If anyone ever had a doubt as to the greatness of Dave Hull, this hour really summed up Hull's legendary status. Hull hadn't sounded this good in years, even during the 1981-1985 era. This time, Hull really broke loose.

The highlight of Hull's pre-recorded hour, was when Hull's friend from his old KGBS, Lynwood days, who used to make hilarious telephone calls to him on the old "Dial-A-Date" afternoon-drive, "called" Hull up, to discuss the worst-tasting breakfast cereals in the world! It was hilarious. Hull just broke up in stitches!

An old "Music Man" contest aircheck was used, and the night this show was recorded, Mike Wagner and Hull had phoned us at home, for us to play the part of the contestant. But, unfortunately, we were out, and a substitute was used for us instead.

At the end of Hull's hour, Hull's friend Richard Beebe, former KRLA newsman, and at that time, KMNY, Pomona, newsman, did a news broadcast. Hull's hour was the highlight of the special. Hull did radio as it should sound!

An interesting treat from 11 to Noon. Instead of Harvey Miller "re-creating" KHJ from 1969, KRLA used two actual "Humble Harv" airchecks from June 1969, when Miller was doing afternoon-drive, when Don Steele was away in the now-famous contract dispute, along with Robert W. Morgan. These were two actual airchecks KRLA had obtained from our associate, Bob Maslen. The only changes were adding in a re-created newscast from former 93/KHJ newsman J. Paul Huddleston, now in the financial business in Texas. Also, some new commercials (in place of some of the old) were added to the aircheck that was played.

In mid-April 1989 for the all-night show, Midnight to 5, to replace Val Valentine, KRLA brought in a new "Eleven-Ten Man," Rick Diego. Diego was a strong link to the Mexican-

American audience. Rick Diego was a personal favorite of KRLA's owners and parent company. Diego had previously been in the mid-'80s, a light-music/less-talk jock at the old KHTZ.

Another strong "draw" to the Mexican-American community was Dominic Garcia, another new member of "The Eleven-Ten Men." Garcia could be heard on the Sunday morning Midnight to 6 show, playing requests and dedications on Rick Diego's "night off." Both Diego and Garcia were highly popular in the Mexican-American listening community, and kept KRLA strong in those loyal demographics.

We were also told that Barry Winesett, who was involved in KRLA in behind-the-scenes "production" capacities, was used as an all-night substitute jock during late 1989, and early 1990. Even though Winesett was not really a "KRLA personality," he still opened a mike on "Radio Eleven-Ten," and that's reason enough to be included here.

In May of 1989, KRLA had a one-day treat during the afternoon Don Steele drive-time hours, between 3 and 7 p.m. Instead of Steele, KRLA presented for one-day, another legendary Los Angeles radio voice. Machine Gun Kelly was best known as 93/KHJ's afternoon-drive "Boss Jock" in the mid-to-late '70s, after Don Steele had departed KHJ.

Machine Gun Kelly, or "The Gunner," as he called himself, would have an extended "shout" on the last syllable of his name, as sort of a trademark ("This is Machine Gunnnnnnnnnnnnnn!!") which would last well over 15 seconds. Did he really hold this note that long, or was it a tape loop trick?

As KRLA was about to enter summer, one weekend in the late spring, KRLA again would have an All- "British Invasion" weekend, that really made KRLA sound like it did in the days of "The Jolly Lean Giant" and "Hullabalooer."

Don Steele, for example, reminisced about how he did "The Freddie" (wild dance craze) back in the '60s, probably remembering the legendary television debut of the 93/KHJ "Boss Jocks" in their "Boss Blue Blazers," on KHJ's television station sister, Channel 9. Steele sounded happy at the old thoughts of "The Freddie," kidding newsman Adam J. De Marais about how De Marais was out in San Bernardino at KFXM during the "Freddie" craze, while Steele was at the big-time 93/KHJ, and on Channel 9, that one night.

As KRLA entered summer, "surf sound" jingles were now heard over the Irwindale airwaves. "The Summer Of KRLA " gave great anticipation into just what KRLA was going to award its listeners, in anticipation of the 30-year anniversary of the K-R-L-A call letters, coming up on the Labor Day weekend.

In August 1989, KRLA, on the Noon to 1 segment of The Johnny Hayes Show, had on the "25th Anniversary" of the first Los Angeles Beatles concert, Bob Eubanks, as a special guest, in a pre-recorded segment. Eubanks reminisced about how he brought The Beatles to Los Angeles all those years ago. Articles about Eubanks in the Herald-Examiner, and a color spread in Sh-Boom magazine, reinforced to the public those happy memories of the first Los Angeles Beatles concert.

The KRLA "Steele Radio Towers From Irwindale," with the shining red lights on the tops of three, stood impressive. At night, three of the five transmitter towers are illuminated. Imagine each antenna tower, with the red beacon on top, representing 10 years. 1959 to 1969. 1969 to 1979. 1979 to 1989.

The three "Steele" transmitter towers from Irwindale, after sunset, are standing. The red lamps on the tops are glowing like giant candles on a birthday cake.

CHAPTER 13

CANNED TUNA

During this summer, it was announced over KRLA "Irwindale airwaves," that listeners could buy tickets to KRLA's "call letter birthday party" on Catalina Island, and that KRLA had "rented The Casino" for this event, and that it was "sure to be a sell-out." It later was announced that there would be a KRLA on-the-air reunion, featuring the return of past KRLA alumni. Upon checking, we were told that many KRLA alumni over the past 30 years would be invited.

Finally, in late August 1989, KRLA began to run a series of promo spots, where if listeners were to write in to KRLA, and tell the station their "favorite memory of KRLA," a copy of the first, original, edition of Dream-House, would be sent to them, as a prize. (Copies of Dream-House were supplied to KRLA, for promotional consideration, upon the street date of its release, June 1, 1989, coinciding with the "22nd Anniversary" of the street date of "Sgt. Pepper.") Some of these spots were pre-recorded. Others were read "live" over the air by "The Eleven-Ten Men."

It was truly a pleasure for us to hear the words "dream house" on the KRLA airwaves, and that the limited-run, first edition of Dream-House was going into the hands of listeners all over "The Land Of Eleven-Ten." Some of the letters were quite sentimental and moving. For example, forty-year-old mothers writing about how they spent so much time around the KRLA studios idolizing their heroes through the KRLA glass deejay booth window at The Huntington Hotel.

On Friday, September 1st, 1989, the Labor Day weekend arrived. It was publicly announced in the newspapers in a KRLA ad, with a tentative alumni-D.J. lineup, to supplement what KRLA had been announcing for the past few weeks, "They're coming back!" KRLA was bringing back, for this holiday weekend, selected KRLA alumni to do airshifts, to salute the "30th Anniversary" of the KRLA call letters.

Commemorative "programs" for the weekend were printed on bright yellow paper, featuring a short thumb-nail history of KRLA, and a reprint of a back of a 1965-era KRLA Beat with only Johnny Hayes' profile face remaining. A nice touch.

We were told several weeks before, what would be happening on Friday, September 1st. The plan was for "Bill Earl" to be the "special in-studio guest" on The Charlie Tuna Show. It was planned for us to discuss the first edition of Dream-House, and the history of KRLA, as we have researched it.

Then, at a few minutes before Noon, KRLA would re-create the "birth" of KRLA, by having a mock KXLA sign off, and re-create the transition that took place all those years ago in 1959. Cal Worthington, a noted car dealer, had been a Country music personality at KXLA in 1959. Worthington would "sign off" KXLA at Noon, and then Jimmy O'Neill, the first voice of KRLA, would "sign on" KRLA.

We were especially excited about what was penciled-in to happen next. From 3 to 7 p.m. Dave Hull, the most popular KRLA alumnus of them all, was penciled-in to do a "live" Friday afternoon show, reminiscent of his great afternoon-drive shows in the '60s. Following Hull, Art Laboe would re-create his 1976 to 1981 "era" of "Oldies But Goodies," and Mexican-American-focused direction, from 7 to 11 p.m., along with his disciple, Manny Pacheco.

Unfortunately, negotiations to get Dave Hull to come back this weekend fell through. So the most legendary "Eleven-Ten Man" of them all, was nowhere to be heard that weekend. It was truly a loss, and Hull's absence was very sadly missed - and noticed by listeners. ("Where Dave Hull?" was asked throughout the Southland by loyal listeners.)

An interesting side note on that. Some of the voice tracks recorded by Charlie O'Donnell and others, were recorded earlier in the summer, when it was expected that Dave Hull would be back on KRLA, along with the others. Actual references to "The Hullabalooer" were kept in those tracks, as they already were recorded and it was too late to change.

As it turned out on Friday, September 1st, we (and Rosemary, "Mrs. William F. Earl"), did make our appearance on The Charlie Tuna Show, (ex-KRLA newsman Richard Beebe was brought in to read news during that shift), where we talked briefly about Dream-House, and we "world premiered" our follow-up, the first volume of our D.J. and radio scrapbook series, When Radio Was Boss, with the November 1970 "photo-drawing" of Jay Stevens, proudly smiling on the

day-glo green cover. One of the callers (off the air) to KRLA that morning, came from "Desert Rose" in Oxnard. We were in-studio for about a half hour.

The pre-recorded Cal Worthington "sign off" of KXLA took place at Noon at the start of Johnny Hayes' "Countdown" show, but the real highlight was Jimmy O'Neill being "live," in-studio, as Johnny Hayes' special guest from Noon to (even running after) 1 (the usual end of the "Countdown" show). This was a perfect example of how excellent "live" radio can be, with O'Neill's crystal clear reminisces. Even a congratulatory telegram from 1959 - 1960 "Eleven-Ten Man" Perry Allen, just sent to KRLA, was read. The dialogue between Hayes and O'Neill during the hour was excellent radio. O'Neill even saluted Dream-House on the broadcast, the only "Eleven-Ten Man" to do so that weekend. Thanks, Jimmy.

Regular programming took place from 1 to 7 p.m. The absence of Dave Hull, that afternoon-drive, was deafening. At 7 p.m., Art Laboe came in to do a "live" request and dedication (and contest) show, to salute Laboe's era of KRLA, from 1976 to 1981. Manny Pacheco also was on the air along with Laboe. This being a rare Art Laboe "live" show (he usually was only pre-recorded on the weekend) was a delight, and sounded so un-sterile.

It needs to be mentioned at this time that Casey Kasem declined to do a regular jock airshift. Instead, Kasem would be the "host" of the weekend by giving the introductions to each personality in a brief bio-sketch, as to what time they were on, what year, etc. We were pleased that Mike Wagner called us, and asked us to write those "introduction" continuities for Casey Kasem. It was a pleasure for us to hear our written words (with a few minor changes here and there from our original copy, made by someone at KRLA) read by Casey, a classic radio voice.

The following day, Saturday, September 2nd, KRLA had scheduled Bob Hudson to do a "live" show to "kick off" the weekend, from 7 to 10 a.m. According to Program Director Mike Wagner, Hudson would be the only "live" jock during the Saturday-Sunday-Monday weekend of alumni. All the rest would be pre-recorded voice tracks, played in two hour intervals.

The reason for this, according to Wagner, was that Wagner wanted "The Eleven-Ten Men" alumni to sound at their best. If they were allowed to do "live" shows, that could result in miscues or downtime that would detract from the fast, tight pace that Wagner wanted. Wagner realized that some of these alumni had not been actively jocking on the air in years. Wagner felt, that in doing voice tracks, there could be more "quality control" on the production.

We need to mention that while these voice-tracked shows were heard this day on Saturday, September 2nd, KRLA was having its reunion party on Catalina Island. We declined to go to this promotional event, so we could aircheck the entire day's programming in an unscoped form. We were told afterwards, that KRLA alumni Johnnie Darin, Russ O'Hara, "World Famous" Tom Murphy and Jay Stevens were present, and, of course, current KRLA personalities such as Johnny Hayes. The Saturday broadcasts were a nice start to the weekend, the best being "Hudson And Forzonn," and Charlie O'Donnell, that sounded especially good.

So at 7 a.m., the voice of Casey Kasem was heard introducing (from our continuity) the first KRLA alumnus for the weekend, Bob Hudson. However, Hudson, who had become to rely more and more on a partner in recent years to play off of, this time brought in for his "partner" for three hours from 7 to 10 a.m., Pam Forzonn.

Forzonn was the female "smoky" voice heard during Bob Hudson shows back in the '60s, doing promotional drop-ins for Hudson. But this time, Forzonn was "promoted" to full place "partner" in a sort of "Hudson And Forzonn" show, the latest in the line of "Hudson And Landry," "Hudson And Pickett," "Hudson And Hull" (Judson), "Hudson And Foster," "Hudson And Buchanan," and "Hudson And Lohman."

This show was obviously "live" by its fresh, unrehearsed, rather improvisational style. The combination of Hudson, now with a female partner, was a daring, interesting one.

From 10 to Noon, it was previously announced that Rebel Foster would be heard in those hours. But at the last minute, Foster was said to be "not up to" doing the voice tracks. So Jimmy O'Neill was used instead, from 10 to Noon pre-recorded. From Noon to 2, was one of the weekend's best. Charlie O'Donnell, "The (once-upon-a-time) Jolly Lean Giant," sounded as good from Noon to 2, as he always had been - slick, professional, smooth, and never missing a beat.

One highlight of these shows were vintage KRLA promo spots from the old KRLA, that somehow had resurfaced after all those years, that were mixed in with the music and voice track segments. Some of them hadn't been heard in many, many years.

Next on Saturday's lineup was Wink Martindale from 2 to 4 p.m. Martindale was much more subdued in contrast to his old days on KRLA and KFWB. He was no longer "The Winker" or "The Sassy One" (as B.M.R. used to call him) from the '60s, with rubber squeeze toys. Instead, Martindale stuck to "stories behind the stars" for his voice tracks. We were hoping

Martindale would have reminisced about his old P.O.P. Sea Circus Arena dances. Johnny Hayes did a "live" breakthrough remote report, during Wink Martindale's segment, between 2 and 4 p.m. It was refreshing to hear "live" radio from Catalina during this otherwise relatively sterile, and heavily "scripted," two hours.

From 4 to 6 p.m. was another pre-Beatle era KRLA alumnus, Sam Riddle. Riddle sounded full of energy, surprisingly, as Riddle had not done radio since 1973 on the now-defunct KROQ-AM. (Riddle was the producer and off-camera announcer of "Star Search," a popular television show at that time.) Riddle's "high energy" style sounded good, for this 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday afternoon-drive slot.

Another Catalina remote "breakthrough" took place that afternoon on Sam Riddle's segment, featuring "World Famous" Tom Murphy reporting from the Avalon Casino. This "live" remote only proved how quick-witted Murphy is! Murphy "stole" the broadcast!

Moving into Saturday evening, Jim Meeker came back to "Radio Eleven-Ten" from 6 to 8 p.m. Meeker was especially subdued in contrast to the exciting, dynamic Jim Meeker of 1970 and 1971, and from his days as afternoon-drive on KEZY.

From 8 to 10 p.m. was Jim Wood. Wood's voice had changed considerably from when he was last heard on KRLA in 1968. We were told later, that Wood had some health problems in 1989, which may have affected his "sound." Wood still had his "blue-eyed soul" -style down, and at times reminded us of his original glory days in Los Angeles radio on KGFJ (1230 AM) on his old 1 to 4 p.m. show in his 1966 heyday. The old Odd Fellows Hall on Adams, really shook with a lot of soul rhythm, when Wood was heard from that legendary architectural palace. (His success at KGFJ was what got Wood to come to KRLA, in the first place, in August 1967.)

From 10 to Midnight, and to wrap up Saturday's reunion shows, Frosty Harris was once again heard over the "Radio Eleven-Ten" airwaves for the first time since 1962. Harris had not done any jocking in L.A. since KIEV in Glendale switched to a Talk format in the late 1970s. Before that, Harris did an exciting radio show at KIEV in their successful Gold format.

The following day, Sunday September 3rd, started off at 6 a.m. with the public service "KRLA Connection" show, hosted by Manny Pacheco. Pacheco's "live" in-studio guest was none other than Casey Kasem, who talked about early KRLA, but mostly on his efforts to lobby the government for housing for the homeless, and how Arabs should be more realistically represented, and non-stereotyped, by the media.

From 7 to 8 a.m., we were invited to be the "live" in-studio guest, but we declined, due to airchecking commitments, and instead recommended a long-time KRLA fan, and former "Porch Person," who substituted for us as the in-studio, in-person guest from 7 to 8 a.m. However, we were hooked up to the show via phone from where we were airchecking the weekend.

We talked about Dream-House, and our other research book on classic radio, When Radio Was Boss, Volume 1, and also our involvement in KRLA research in particular.

Following this "live" two-hour public affairs program, the pre-recorded KRLA reunion weekend alumni voice tracks continued. From 8 to 10 a.m. was Ted Quillin.

From 10 to Noon was Shadoe Stevens. Stevens, this time, was not playing his "progressive" era programming that marked the end of the KRLA TOP 40 days in 1971. Instead, Stevens, like all the others, "played" the regular early-Gold records all mixed together, as the entire weekend was programmed. In other words, the alumni did not just only stick to the music that was on the charts when they were first there, that would have been more of a time trip. Shadoe Stevens always had a real talent for poetic, alliterative phrases, and that was always a Stevens trademark that was something to look forward to.

From Noon to 2 was Bob Eubanks, sounding the best he's sounded in years, very smooth, polished, slick, and again, Eubanks has kept his youthful charm. (Eubanks had not done a "live" radio show since 1967.) However, the next show was one of the best of the weekend.

It started out at 2 p.m. with an old aircheck played from February 1971. (We were hoping more airchecks would be played that weekend, but this was the only one.) The aircheck was of then-Midnight to 6 "Eleven-Ten Man" Johnnie Darin, closing his overnight show, and introducing the new KRLA morning man that was about to debut, one of the most high-profile and high-impact personalities in KRLA's (and Silver Age radio's) history, "World Famous" Tom Murphy.

After this classic vintage aircheck, "World Famous" Tom Murphy was once again heard on "Radio Eleven-Ten." Murphy showed through his mildly sarcastic humor and wit, that history just might have been altered, if Murphy had been allowed to continue as KRLA's TOP 40 morning man in 1971, before the "progressive" era of KRLA replaced the long-time TOP 40 format. Murphy's segment was excellent.

Following Murphy from 4 to 6 p.m. was Russ O'Hara. However, the board engineer on

duty somehow did not play Kasem's introduction for O'Hara, which we wrote, and O'Hara's segment started rather abruptly.

From 6 to 7 p.m., for only one hour following O'Hara, was Jay Stevens. Stevens, due to a full schedule and other commitments, could only find time on his agenda to cut voice tracks for only one hour rather than the penciled-in two. Stevens, always the pro, sounded excellent, and we enjoyed hearing him make reference to "Moby Duck" (his legendary rubber duck companion) that Stevens said is "probably now on a tire heap somewhere."

From 7 to 9 p.m. was Jim Pewter (last heard during the final days of the old Huntington Hotel KRLA location, from 1983 to 1985.) We had been really looking forward to hearing Bob Dayton, who was scheduled to be heard from 9 to 10 p.m. But when Dayton's health (he had been recovering from an earlier stroke, at his home on Long Island) prevented him from cutting voice tracks to his satisfaction, the 9 to Midnight hours were used for somewhat "filler" programming.

From 9 to 11 p.m., this time was used to replay the memorable Charlie Tuna show, where Stan Freberg was his in-studio guest, back in February 1989. (This was edited down to an hour, and the time references were edited out, also.) Also, during this Sunday night block, KRLA replayed the Johnny Hayes "Countdown" tribute, from August 1988, to Dick Moreland, who had passed away from cancer that summer.

From 11 to past-Midnight, was one of the best programs KRLA has featured in years. KRLA featured an hour "group discussion" show, hosted by Johnny Hayes, chatting around a "big table" with the legendary anti-establishment "news" team, "The Credibility Gap," featuring Richard Beebe, David L. Lander, and Harry Shearer. The three, former KRLA "newsmen" played some of the best of their sketches, including the "Cardinal Heel-KPAX sketch," and other greats from 1969 to early 1971. Even though pre-recorded, this "live" panel discussion was excellent radio that was not only highly entertaining, but very informative on this legendary KRLA news group that we miss today.

The following day, Labor Day Monday, began at 7 a.m. with the pre-recorded William F. Williams voice-tracked show. Williams sounded very happy to be back on the air, and even told about how he carved "IFIAFFI" into the spot notebook holder, above the KRLA board, all those years ago, in early 1969.

Williams "teased" listeners throughout the show, promising at the end to tell what "IFIAFFI" meant. However, he did change it from its original meaning. Whether Williams did this because it was a "family" radio show, or because, maybe, Williams' philosophy just might have changed, we were unable to confirm by press time. But Williams' new 1989 interpretation of "IFIAFFI" as "If it ain't fun, FAKE it," still is a philosophical message that deserves looking at. William F. sounded like he was having a great time being back on KRLA, and we're glad he came back, if only for two hours. His original 1969 run was way too short.

From 9 to 11 a.m. was the return of one of our personal all-time favorites, Johnnie Darin. Darin, at that time in 1989, had been doing business-and-financial news over the mighty 950 AM channel XEKAM, south of Tijuana, with antenna towers overlooking the beautiful Pacific Ocean, and powerful transmitter console from the pink stucco "house," on the east side of the Baja California tollway.

Johnnie Darin hadn't been heard on KRLA since August 1971. Once in a while, Darin called himself "John Darin," the air name he uses to do the news. At one point, Darin announced the "time." However, it was the time from the clock in the studio, from the day, several weeks before, when Darin cut the voice tracks! A minor gaffe, but it did break up the otherwise sterility of the pre-recorded weekend. Darin sounded excellent as always, even though more mature sounding, with an "older" more serious approach, than from his days of 1969 thru 1971. Darin hadn't really done any "jocking" in a music format since the late 1970s at KGIL, Mission Hills. Darin moved into financial reporting in the early 1980s. Darin had a great line about how he, and the other "Eleven-Ten Men" from his era (1969 - 1971) had "grown up and grown older." Darin followed that with this on-the-air observation, "All but Russ O' Hara. He just grew older."

Following Darin, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. was Dave Diamond, who sounded as contemporary as he did back in 1971, like he really had never been away. Diamond in 1989, was teaching broadcasting at the college level in the Midwest.

From 1 to 3 p.m. KRLA brought back Roger Christian. Christian, we were told, had some dental problems in 1989, which caused him to have difficulty speaking, and pronouncing words. Christian, in his prime, was one of the smoothest jocks in Los Angeles radio, but for this reunion broadcast, Christian did really try his best, and the fact he cut the voice tracks at all, in spite of not in the best health, was something to be admired.

From 3 to 5 p.m. Monday afternoon-drive was another high mark of the reunion weekend, Dick Sainte. Sainte, always one of the highest-energy KRLA jocks, did one of his best performances in his pre-recorded "drive-time" hours. Sainte, who had been Program Director during KRLA's final days as a mainstream TOP 40 giant, had been working, we were told, in university radio instruction in Portland, Oregon. Sainte was always one of our favorites, and we're glad KRLA brought such an important person from KRLA's past, back home.

To conclude the reunion weekend from 5 to 7 p.m., KRLA featured one of its most beloved alumni, Dick Biondi. As Biondi was always one of KRLA's biggest names, and most popular favorites, it was only fitting to have Dick Biondi, "The Ugliest And Skinniest Disc Jockey In The World," wrapping up the celebration for the final voice-tracked segment.

During the Fall of 1989, a fire had broken out at the Wilshire Boulevard office building, causing the fire department to evacuate temporarily the tenants of that building, including the jocks at KRLA and its sister FM, KLSX. When that took place, David Ping, the Chief Engineer, who lived close to the Irwindale transmitter site at Longden and Myrtle, quickly drove to the usually unmanned KRLA transmitter site, under the five big antenna towers. Ping went into the state-of-the-art studio, and played "Oldies But Goodies" C.D.s that are stocked in that D.J. booth, just for occasions such as that one.

Ping told us, he actually "opened the mike" to give station IDs, but he told us he did not do any "jocking patter," as his job was primarily to keep the station on the air. We missed this classic broadcast, but it would have been neat to hear how smoothly Ping carried out his short-time combo duties. As the evacuation was not very long, regular programming from the Wilshire Boulevard studios resumed soon after.

During the Thanksgiving weekend, it was announced that KRLA would have a "replay" of some of the best "Eleven-Ten Men" pre-recorded shows from the Labor Day weekend, for those who might have missed some of the programming from the September weekend, if they were at Catalina enjoying the KRLA island festivities.

However, not all "The Eleven-Ten Men" alumni shows were replayed. Noticeably absent without explanation were Jim Meeker, Frosty Harris, Roger Christian, Jim Pewter, and Jay Stevens. When we called David Schwartz, KRLA programming rep, to check on why those particular jocks were not going to be replayed, we were told it was "Mike's choice" (meaning the Program Director, Mike Wagner.) However, a special treat on that weekend was more rare, old, vintage KRLA promo spots that were inserted into the programming, to replace "The Summer Of KRLA" spots that were heard over Labor Day, and were outdated by Thanksgiving.

KRLA, for this Thanksgiving weekend, re-edited the Bob Hudson and Pam Forzonn three-hour "live" show from September 2nd, down to just two hours, de-emphasizing Forzonn, and tightening up Hudson.

Some of the other shows were played during different hours than on the Labor Day weekend. For example, "World Famous" Tom Murphy was heard from 7 to 9 a.m. as morning-drive, and Johnnie Darin was now heard with new "live" traffic reports from KRLA's contract traffic service, interspersed with Darin's previously recorded voice tracks, from 4 to 6 p.m. in the important afternoon-drive slot. However, the infamous "time check" Darin gave in September, was noticeably edited out on the replay, and also Darin's in-fun observation on Russ O'Hara. And, unfortunately, "The Credibility Gap" special was not repeated, truly a loss, as it was one of the best panel discussion programs that KRLA had produced in years.

The "Reunion Replay" was a great weekend treat, and the new vintage KRLA spots that came up every once in a while during the shows (that were different than from the September ones) were a new special bonus. Also, it needs to be mentioned that Manny Pacheco, by this time, would leave KRLA's "Connection" show to join the new KKBT-FM.

As KRLA continued to move toward the end of 1989, Don Steele was released from his afternoon-drive show, and left KRLA after over 4 years. Replacing Steele, in November 1989, was Harvey Miller ("Humble Harv") moving into the 3 to 7 p.m. shift, allowing Dick Hugg to take over the 7 to 11 p.m. shift on a regular nightly basis. Large 1/2 page ads in the Los Angeles Times, featuring the pictures of Miller and Hugg in their new time slots, were proudly featured to let listeners know of KRLA's major change in the afternoon-drive shift, the first change in that shift since the new owners took over KRLA in March 1985.

We were also told at this time, that former KHJ "Boss Jock" from the early 1970s, Barry Kaye, had popped up doing some jocking at KRLA in weekend graveyard shifts, but this was unable to be officially confirmed. However, a major change took place on KRLA in late December 1989.

We were told that Charlie Tuna had accumulated a lot of vacation time from his 3 years

as KRLA morning man. According to a KRLA spokesman, he told us that right before Christmas (approximately December 15), Charlie Tuna decided to use that time for some time off. However, Tuna's contact had been up September 30th (he started on KRLA on September 30, 1986), and Tuna had been working without a contact for the past 3 months.

At first, during Tuna's absence, Gary Marshall sat in, telling listeners that Charlie Tuna would be back after Christmas. When it became clear after Christmas that it did not look like Tuna and the station were able to "renegotiate" a new contact, and since Gary Marshall was just a temporary substitute, KRLA needed to bring in someone from the outside to take over those morning-drive hours starting January 2nd.

KRLA management brought back a former KRLA "Eleven-Ten Man," from all the way back to the beginning in 1959, Jimmy O'Neill. O'Neill had been morning man for one day back in March 1985 after Dave Hull was terminated. O'Neill had also been a "name" morning man at KDAY in 1969 and 1970 on Alvarado near Echo Park, when that station had its TOP 40 format, and, of course, was a recognized "name" as the "first voice of KRLA." Management felt that a more-music-and-less-comedic-talk-from-the-morning-man might tighten the morning-drive shift somewhat. There was speculation that management felt there was too much "talk" in the morning show under Tuna, with his interviews, phone calls, and comedic features, and that a "more music in the morning" approach was the way they wanted to go, at that time, in January 1990.

O'Neill announced at first that he was simply "sitting in" for Tuna, until Tuna was awarded his "star" on the Hollywood sidewalk later in January. Actually, O'Neill would be "easing" his way into the morning-drive chair, so it wouldn't be that much of a shock to listeners when they finally would realize that Charlie Tuna was not coming back.

O'Neill, later proudly announced that he would be the new KRLA morning-drive personality. O'Neill also tried to diplomatically explain to Tuna's listeners, on-the-air, that Tuna wasn't coming back, and that it would be "On The Go With J.O." from then on, 6 to 10 a.m. ("with fun and adventures, musically speaking!")

The next change to the KRLA lineup came about in the Spring of 1990. Russ O'Hara again rejoined "The Eleven-Ten Men," first as a weekend "graveyard" jock, but also a vacation relief personality, most noticeably substituting for Harvey Miller in the early summer from 3 to 7 p.m.

On April 1st, 1990 we were hoping that KRLA would continue its "tradition" of re-creating past L.A. TOP 40 radio, and maybe bring back other past KFWB or KHJ greats to re-create the great days of Silver Age radio as an April Fool treat. However, listeners only got a rerun of Ted Quillin from April 1, 1988 (just one hour of that three-hour show) and Bill Ballance from April 1, 1989 in his one hour re-creation. We were told that because April 1st fell on a Sunday, where the listening audience was "supposed to be" not as strong, a new "stunt" was discarded in favor of reruns.

Frequently throughout 1990, KRLA continued, on a semi-regular basis, to drive its mobile studio from its Irwindale garage at the transmitter building on Longden, to various sites in the greater Southland area, "The Land Of Eleven-Ten." KRLA jukebox -soft vinyl key rings, saluting the 30-year legacy of the KRLA call letters, (and multi-colored ones, the following year, in 1991) were a special collectible of KRLA memorabilia. Also, Wolfman Jack returned to do his pre-taped show on KRLA, in the Fall of 1990, sent from Nashville, but by September 1991, would again drop off the lineup.

KRLA continued to utilize its "hot black" mobile studio throughout 1990. True, the days of the window at The Huntington Hotel, where we used to watch the air talent do his show, were long gone. For security reasons, most radio stations no longer have their deejay booth visible to the public. But when KRLA's mobile studio is out in the community, with its 3-sided glass window at the front of the "trailer," fans could still watch their favorite jock "talk on the radio."

KRLA did many remotes in 1990, but one of the more memorable ones that we made sure we were present for, took place on Sunday, October 28. It was a remote that a radio historian couldn't pass up. The reason? The KRLA mobile studio was parked in the Whittier Narrows County Recreation Area in South El Monte, just a few hundred feet away from the former site of the KRLA antenna towers "all those years ago," right off Santa Anita Avenue, just south of Lexington-Gallatin Road, in the middle of the park section just directly south of the old KRLA transmitter building, still standing. As this was a "past meets present," never-before-done "blurring of the eras," we felt it was important to KRLA's history - and its legacy to South El Monte.

The reason that KRLA was in the park, was that it was the site of the first annual "Arts And Crafts Festival," (sponsored by The City Of South El Monte) and with the mostly Mexican-

American customers that roamed through this outdoor "swap meet"-type event, it was a natural for KRLA to reach out to this loyal, Gold-loving, base of support. Most of the people at this remote were not around back in the days of "The Station Of The Stars" and did not realize as they stood looking at the mobile studio, that right behind it in the near distance, one could see the old "dream-house" former transmitter building on Lexington-Gallatin Road. It was only a coincidence, but for radio historians, an important connection to KRLA's history.

KRLA's morning man, Jimmy O'Neill, was under the canvas "roof" of the KRLA booth right next to the mobile studio R.V. where Russ O'Hara, now a regular KRLA weekender, was conducting a "live" show from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the trailer, visible through the deejay booth's windows. O'Neill was emceeding a music trivia quiz for the swap meet customers, who wandered by the booth. Russ O'Hara, who we had not seen since 1981, but who had called us in August 1989 about the original edition of Dream-House, saw us through the studio window of the R.V. and invited us into the deejay booth.

Jimmy O'Neill was giving away "scratch pad" sheets with his picture on it. On the one he gave us, he thanked us for our "wonderful books" on radio (the original edition of Dream-House, and the first volume of the When Radio Was Boss scrapbook series.)

O'Hara, in the booth, was not playing music "carts," as they were all done at the studio by a board engineer, and the booth was not designed for "cart" playing, but was doing an exciting "live" show full of the energy O'Hara has always given. It was a real pleasure to hear "This is Russ O'Hara live' from KRLA in South El Monte, right off the Santa Anita exit of the Pomona Freeway," reminiscent of when Art Laboe did his "live" shows from the transmitter in early 1976 and, in a way, a salute to the real origin of KRLA for all those years, from 1959 thru December 1986.

We reminded O'Neill that the old KRLA site was just a few feet behind him, and he did recall that it was close by. After all, it was from that site, just a few feet away, that O'Neill was the first voice of KRLA in 1959. O'Neill was the link that tied KRLA from 1959 to 1990 together, an important one.

Later that day, KRLA gave its listeners a real treat. We always felt that the outstanding Johnny Hayes "Countdown" portion (Noon to 1) of his midday show, where Hayes played the top songs for that day of a particular year, should be heard by a wider audience, and for those that couldn't listen to the radio from Noon to 1, were missing quality programming that was so rare, at that time in 1990, on the radio.

What KRLA did that Sunday, and we were told would be a regular weekend feature, was from 6 to 7 p.m. (in the old 1969-1970 "Pop Chronicles" time slot) was to "replay" one of Hayes' hours from earlier that week. Even with disclaimers stating that it was "an encore performance," it was a delight to hear Hayes' quality show at a time where more people could hear it.

Also, by this time in October 1990, The Jimmy O'Neill Show was "trimmed" to 6 to 10 a.m. "live," where, for several mornings during the week, a recorded hour of Gary Marshall (in October 1990, Marshall called himself more regularly "The Marshall") was heard from 5 to 6 a.m. right after the "live" Rick Diego request and dedication show from Midnight to 5. It was a nice gesture to give Gary Marshall his own "weekday show" for the first time in KRLA's history.

On Halloween night 1990, as it did in 1989, KRLA brought back former "Eleven-Ten Man" Bobby Pickett to conduct another Halloween-oriented evening show with his "Boris Karloff" impersonation and "Monster Mash"-oriented-act for a Halloween audience.

KRLA was now moving into 1991. The only noticeable change to KRLA's on-air shows, in early 1991, was the unpublicized, pre-recording of the first two hours of Johnny Hayes' show, from 10 to Noon, with voice tracks. Then, at Noon, the "Countdown" portion would begin "live," as always, followed by a "live" 1 to 3 p.m. segment.

But clearly, the most exciting and innovative event, that KRLA presented in early 1991, took place on April 1st. We first heard about it several weeks before, in early March, when a female KRLA staffer called us, and asked if we could supply archival photos for the following KRLA alumni: Bob Hudson, Charlie O'Donnell, Rebel Foster, Bob Eubanks, Casey Kasem, Dave Hull, and Dick Biondi.

She was delighted that we had all those photos in our morgue. She told us what they were needed for: large newspaper ads in local suburban "throwaway" papers, a small ad in the Los Angeles Times, and a full-page ad in The Recycler want-ads publication, announcing the April 1st, 1991, "New D.J. Lineup," KRLA's annual April Fool's stunt.

In fact, for a little over a week, before April 1st, announcements were made over KRLA airwaves, that a "change" was going to come to KRLA on April 1st, giving naive listeners (some actually called up Jimmy O'Neill "protesting" the "change") the impression that KRLA was going

to change format, and have all-new D.J.s, etc.

What KRLA did, on April 1st, was to devote from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., 13 hours, to "reconstructed airchecks" of past KRLA classic jocks of the mid-'60s. Our associate, Bob Maslen, had already told us that he had supplied KRLA with some classic airchecks earlier in March. Some of the "unscoped" airchecks (records not edited out) would be played over the KRLA airwaves in full.

(A side note: The first time classic KRLA airchecks were played on KRLA was back in October 1981, when on "The KRLA Connection" talk show, we played about 15 minutes of aircheck highlights from the KRLA Silver Age. Aircheck fragments have been played since early 1989 on the Noon "Countdown" show introductions.)

The newspaper ads came out in the local "throwaways" (i.e. Norwalk, Downey, etc.) on the Thursday before April 1st (which fell on a Monday in 1991.) The ads featured a cartoon "bulletin board," with the photos that we supplied KRLA, featuring the faces of the classic jocks, whose airchecks would be heard, "pinned" on it. In fact, the head-and-shoulders shot that we furnished of Rebel Foster, that was used in the ad, was exceptionally "rare," being published by KRLA only once before, in KRLA Teen Set magazines, in late 1967.

So, for 13 hours, all regular KRLA programming was stopped. It was solid airchecks all day long! For Bob Hudson's 6 to 9 a.m. morning-drive, bits and pieces from various Hudson airchecks, some we had never heard before, were heard. All the Hudson airchecks were from the years 1964 thru 1966.

What was very impressive, was how when the "record" stopped on the aircheck (on "scoped" airchecks, the songs are always omitted after the first few bars), the rest of the song was skillfully edited back in! Because the airchecks were several generations from the original in most cases, when the "reconstructed record" was put back in between the "scoped" aircheck fragments, the result was a delight to listen to: going from a low fidelity "aircheck" fragment, to suddenly the "center" of the record, in KRLA "AM Stereo"! It reminded us of the "Star Trek" 'Cage' pilot, where the screen shifted from black-and-white, to color, and then back to black-and-white again.

KRLA also tried to match the "time checks" heard on the aircheck fragments, to the actual time broadcast that day. In other words, when Hudson, for example, said, "It's fifteen after eight," that fragment, even though recorded 25 years before, was played at exactly the same time!

The only flaw on the Hudson portion, was when the distinguished, recognizable, opening bars of "You'd Better Come Home," by Petula Clark (probably her second best single, in our opinion) came on, it suddenly switched to "Wonderful Summer," by Robin Ward.

However, from 9 to 10 a.m., KRLA really pulled out all the stops, by playing in its entirety, the entire 8 to 9 a.m. hour, from Friday, June 16, 1967, of Charlie O'Donnell's show, (the same day as the opening of the legendary Monterey Pop Festival!) This aircheck hour used no "reconstruction." Instead, the hour was played in full, with just the "time" references edited out (as least most of the time.)

From 10 to Noon, we heard "reconstructed" Rebel Foster airchecks. From Noon to 1, KRLA played airchecks of Bob Eubanks. Again, some of these Bob Eubanks fragments did not come from the usual "aircheck sources," as quite a few we had never heard before!

From 1 to 3 p.m., Casey Kasem airchecks were played, some in their entirety! One of the airchecks was from early 1968, when KRLA was playing such classic nuggets of early psychedelia, as "A Question Of Temperature," by The Balloon Farm!

Many other rare, early 1968, KRLA past hits were heard from this early "psychedelic" KRLA period. Many have never appeared on Gold station consultant-suggested play (it safe) lists. We were told afterwards, that Casey Kasem actually phoned the station, during his 1 to 3 p.m. segment, and demanded that the station immediately stop playing Kasem airchecks. Kasem apparently felt that using his voice for two hours, and the way he used to sound, without his "blessing" or whatever, could not be tolerated. We were told that the station said to Kasem, in so many words, that, "Sorry, Casey," but the airchecks were presented as "antique material," and can be broadcast without the classic jock's "blessing."

However, the best part of the April Fool's stunt was saved for the 3 to 6 p.m. afternoon-drive hours, where, again, for the most part, unscoped airchecks of Dave Hull, from June 1965, were broadcast mostly intact!

Again, old commercials were heard in full, old promos and contests (like "Beatleball") were broadcast, and even aircheck newscasts were played in full! The Dave Hull 3 to 6 p.m.

segment was, without doubt, the high mark of the day. It showed, without question, just why so many KRLA listeners-of-the-past, think of Dave Hull as the one person overall that represented the excellence, innocence, and greatness that KRLA, once-upon-a-time, was.

Following Hull, from 6 to 7 p.m., to close out the "stunt," was an unscoped Dick Biondi hour, also from 1965. At 7 p.m., regular programming went back on.

Outside of die-hard "collectors," most average radio listeners who remember classic KRLA have no "airchecks" for their own collections, and listening.

As airchecks are usually obtained only through the "grey market" (in other words, not sold in stores), such as George Junak's "California Aircheck" service in Lemon Grove, many listeners haven't had a chance to hear the old KRLA again. This aircheck day was a great service that KRLA needs to be commended for!

And because the records (music) were "edited back in," even collector-types like us, who already had a lot of the old, scoped aircheck fragments (some we actually made ourselves, back then), now have reconstructed shows to listen to-in complete form, over and over.

Since this programming worked out so well, and with so much critical acclaim, KRLA, in the future, could "re-construct" the other eras, such as the early '70s, and play airchecks from Johnnie Darin, Dick Sainte, Jay Stevens, "World Famous" Tom Murphy, Lee Simms, and Don Burns, to name a few, that also are available on the "aircheck circuit" for broadcast again! Some of the early '70s "Eleven-Ten Men" airchecks are even in greater quantity.

In late April/early May 1991, Richard Beebe, former KRLA newsman alumnus, rejoined "Radio Eleven-Ten," as the morning newsman, during Jimmy O'Neill's morning-drive. Beebe left KRLA in March 1985 when the station "changed hands." It was nice to hear a classic KRLA News voice back home where he belonged.

In June 1991, KRLA newscasts experienced a change. Joining Richard Beebe was Lou Irwin, another original "Credibility Gap" founding member. Irwin had not been heard on KRLA since approximately 1970, so this addition of another "KRLA News" veteran was a positive one.

Also "KRLA News" was moved to 20 minutes before, and after, the hour, during drive-times, and also getting a new name: "KRLA 20/20 News." L.A. radio observers remembered that it was KHJ, in 1965, that pioneered this style newscast under the exact name, "20/20 News." (Note: Chris Charles, a.k.a. Chuck Christensen, told us, in 1974, that it was he who invented, and gave Bill Drake, the news handle name, "20/20 News.")

In Early September 1991, subtle changes took place on "Radio Eleven-Ten." To our delight, more '70s music, specifically '70s soul music, was added to the KRLA music mix - a step in the right direction.

The first sign of this was in the earlier part of the summer, when, for an entire weekend, the hits of "The Summer Of '71" was heard for the entire Saturday and Sunday period. Ads for this "Summer Of '71" programming, featuring a jukebox drawing from an old KRLA Beat with a cartoon character from that period, was printed in many local, suburban newspapers.

Also, in early September, Rick Diego left the all-night show to move into programming management, to work with P.D. Mike Wagner. Diego would do some weekend, or relief, jocking. This created a vacancy on the Midnight to 6 shift that was filled by KRLA's new overnighiter, Dominic Garcia, a strong magnet for the Mexican-American audience, and, also, Mike Daniels (real name: Mike Sirotzki) working several of the weekend graveyard shifts. Daniels had been Don Steele's "producer" at KCBS-FM, and sometimes "escorted" and "supervised" visitors to Steele's KCBS-FM show.

Both Garcia and Daniels are proudly to be included in the "Radio Eleven-Ten" jock hall-of-fame. Garcia had been doing some relief shifts for Rick Diego, but in September 1991, became an official full-time member of "The Eleven-Ten Men."

Also, in early September 1991, KRLA had commissioned a new logo for the station. This new logo would be hot-pink block letters with sharp rectangular angles, with the "L" and "A" connected at the bottom. A black box, to the right of the hot-pink letters, would have the words, "All Oldies 1110 AM," in day-glo green.

This new logo would be "unveiled" at the L.A. County Fair in Pomona, at the KRLA booth. The booth would have four big banners with this new KRLA look, for the '90s. We were told that bumper stickers, letterheads, "bio" sheets, etc. would be coming out shortly afterwards.

It was also announced in early September 1991, that the original KRLA transmitter site property, in South El Monte, was the "frontrunner" to be the site for a new L.A. County Hospital. (The pasture would have to be "built up" for the hospital construction, as it, at press-time, was still a flood basin.)

Also, at this time, a strong rumor was heard through "The Land Of Eleven-Ten" that

afternoon-drive jock Harvey Miller was about to "jump ship" to another L.A. radio station, when his contract ended in mid-September, and that Russ O'Hara would be given the nod to be the new 3-7 p.m. "Eleven-Ten Man." Gary Marshall, and expanded Art Laboe voice-tracks, would be the replacement for O'Hara for the weekend shifts. However, September 9, 1991 was about to arrive, and our deadline for the "50-year mark" had to be held.

On September 9, 1991, the "Eleven-Ten" frequency, on Southern California radio dials, turned 50-years old! For it was on approximately September 9, 1941, that ground was broken, in a South El Monte pasture, for the new "Radio Eleven-Ten" for Los Angeles, and the Southland. From KPAS, to KXLA, to KRLA, the "Eleven-Ten" spot has always been there, for half a century.

"Radio Eleven-Ten," on September 9, 1991, was pulsating from 277 East Longden Avenue, just east of Myrtle, and the five, powerful, mighty transmitter towers along the Irwindale foothills. We drove, in our Chevy Cavalier, by that site, as we traveled down Myrtle as it changed into Peck Road, to our last stop, on this September morning. For half a century, "Radio Eleven-Ten" was heard, from the '40s, to the '50s, to the '60s, to the '70s, to the '80s, and into the '90s, as well. We continued to listen to KRLA, on our car radio, as we traveled south.

We listened to KRLA's Gold format, as the Irwindale legend, in September 1991, was still there, one of the last non-Spanish all-music radio stations on the once-upon-a-time, powerful AM dial. We were on our way to the pasture site in South El Monte. On this September morning, the site would still be a pasture. Princess Blue Sky still is above the South El Monte site, and can still be seen on windy, clear days hovering over Lexington-Gallatin Road and Santa Anita, our next destination.

We crossed over the Pomona Freeway. The serene pasture was on our left. We decided, on this morning of September 9th, to make this one last pilgrimage to the old South El Monte transmitter site, as it was this special geographic spot, that brought the Southland the great programming of "Radio Eleven-Ten," for so many years of our life.

As we parked our Cavalier by the lake, we looked over to the vacant pasture. We recalled the mighty transmitter towers that once soared to the sky. We recalled all the flashbacks that this site had once represented to us, starting with our first memories of seeing the antenna towers from the Sunday afternoon rides, in the '50s, to the Delta Rest Home, to the "Frosty" night in 1961, seeing the same radio towers from the Hastings Ranch shopping center parking lot.

We also recalled memories from the Summer of 1969, when we started Pasadena City College, that we studied for our first college course, a telecommunications class, hearing Johnnie Darin on KRLA, on those summer afternoons, sitting in the park on an Indian blanket, seeing the transmitter towers above us. We remembered hearing Johnnie Darin's show, on our G.E. transistor radio.

We also recalled that forever-memorable "jingle song," played proudly through "The Land Of Eleven-Ten," in 1969. We remembered that those lyrics directly inspired us, back in our Freshman year of college, to write that long-lost 80-page thesis on the "history of KRLA," for Dr. Gregory.

On that morning of September 9th, 1991, we once again thought of those words, as we walked from our car, to the edge of the pasture fence, contented ---knowing this 50-year history book would soon be turned over to the publisher, to be preserved for future generations to know why KRLA was so important, that an entire book would be written about it. We recalled the spirit of Princess Blue Sky above, and the special words that we could almost still hear, through the South El Monte breeze, on this half-century milestone day.

Down from the foothills to the ocean,
KRLA is a four-letter word,
Like love of the stars whose voices are heard.
Stars are a witness to KRLA,
In the groove where Los Angeles travels all day.
So reach for the Southland,
It's truly your dream.
It's KRLA,
Just doing our thing.
KRLAmen.

AFTERWORD

A LOVE YOU CAN AFFORD

As we already have moved into the 1990s, a sad realization has come to light. Could anyone (or would anyone) 35 or 50 years from now, write a history of a radio station that is popular today? Is there anything that special about radio today that a 10-year-old would want to follow, and chronicle, for the next 30 years, or so, of their life?

Unfortunately, the business of radio has changed. Radio has moved away from broadcasting, and instead, toward narrowcasting. Stations today only want one targeted, small, over-researched, specific, demographic sliver of the audience pie.

We can recall a KRLA aircheck, in our morgue, from 1966, where we heard in the following order, "Got To Get You Into My Life," by The Beatles, followed by "Strangers In The Night," by Frank Sinatra, followed by "The Phoenix Love Theme," by The Brass Ring.

That kind of full-service radio, with its spectacular variety is gone. "Rock and roll" would be on a "Contemporary Hits" station, an adult ballad would be played on an easy-listening channel, and instrumentals, like The Brass Ring, are hardly played at all.

As an example, at the time this edition of Dream-House went to press, in the greater Los Angeles area, there was only one station that played "easy instrumentals," and that was KJQI, with transmitter towers along the east side of the I-15 freeway in Hesperia, in the Upper Desert! And KJQI, being a Hesperia station, couldn't be heard in large pockets of the basin. And being on AM, at 540, how many music listeners choose to listen to AM in the first place?

We purchased a Sony "AM Stereo" portable radio back in December 1983. Why aren't these receivers available anymore? Why hasn't the F.C.C. decided on one "AM Stereo" format and gone full speed ahead on allowing millions of "AM Stereo" receivers (radios) to be sold?

Until "AM Stereo" is narrowed down to one "format," and until millions of these units are sold in mass-market stores such as K-Mart, or Target, and included as standard equipment in most popular-priced import and domestic automobiles, the AM band, once the home of heroic personalities and radio dream-houses, will continue to be the "band-of-last-resort," and filled with non-music formats such as news, sports, information, business, traffic, and Talk.

The F.C.C. should make this innovation a top-of-the-list priority to save the AM band from music extinction as it's being driven toward. Music on "AM Stereo," to us, sounds as good as "FM Stereo," on our Sony unit. It's unfortunate that more radio listeners haven't had the opportunity to experience the sound of "AM Stereo" for themselves.

We feel sad to report that radio programming in the early 1990s is at the lowest point in history. And it's getting worse. Compare airchecks from the Silver Age of radio, (late 1950s to early 1970s) to today. Which era did one want to listen to for a longer stretch? Which era had stronger personalities? Which era was more fun? Which era had a greater commitment to news and the public interest (on the public airwaves)?

Who is to blame? To start, we can indict the station owners who have put excess profit over excellence in public service. Also to blame is the F.C.C.'s deregulation which has all but lost its past commitment to making sure radio operates in the best public interest that it can. We also can blame ourselves, the passive listeners, who have allowed our public airwaves to be filled by commercial radio stations with narrowcasted, sterile automation, misleading satellite services, downplayed call letters, over-researched computer printouts, and mistake-free voice tracks.

One of the most influential-to-us college professors, that we were so fortunate to have studied under, was Dr. John Gregory at Pasadena City College. (Our original 80-page thesis on KRLA, that Dream-House is an expansion of, was written for Dr. Gregory.) Dr. Gregory stressed that radio should operate in the public interest because, after all, radio stations are licensed on the public's airwaves. Because of F.C.C. deregulation it is sad to report that commercial radio does not have the public interest commitment that it once did- and was required to.

For example, as you have read, KRLA had one of the finest, most award-winning news departments in Los Angeles in 1966 and 1967, then again under Leo McElroy in 1970-71. The KRLA news department was staffed with real news "reporters," some who had a background in

print journalism, who actively dug for stories, and wrote their own copy. Some actually "broke" stories on the air. And radio stations had usually two serious newscasts an hour. Every hour. Every day.

No more. We are lucky to hear any news commitment on a "Contemporary Hits" music radio station now because, due to F.C.C. deregulation, stations don't have to. So they don't. It breaks format," is the most common excuse from station management and owners who seem to see the radio station only as a profit-making business investment, and not primarily as a voice of service, information, and entertainment as in the Silver Age. (Stations did make profits in the Silver Age and still offered superior programming.)

Of course, we now have C.N.N., and also "all-news" stations (thanks to Gordon McLendon and his trail-blazing XETRA, "Extra News," from south of Tijuana, Mexico, back in the early '60s) that do give a strong commitment to news.

But we, as listeners, used to be able to "have it all." We could have music, entertainment and news, all on the same station hourly, every hour, every day. We never had to change the station. That's one reason we listened to KRLA so religiously. KRLA had everything we needed. Now, if we want music, we turn on a music channel. If we want news, we push a button for an all-news channel. That is the sad result of narrowcasting over broadcasting. No more full-service radio stations, such as KRLA, and others, as existed during the Silver Age.

That's one reason why Dream-House was written, and also why the companion Silver Age scrapbook series, When Radio Was Boss, was published. It's important to not forget that once-upon-a-time, radio was something to write books about, and that it doesn't have to be a pre-recorded, voice-tracked, automated "jukebox." Radio was never meant to be a "jukebox."

We hope that Dream-House has been able to inspire radio industry movers-and-shakers to bring radio not necessarily back - but forward. To a new, perhaps, "Platinum Age" of radio, where stations again can be something for future historians (and today's 10-year-olds) to want to write books about. We have 15 recommendations for a new "Platinum Age" of radio.

1 - First, radio stations should bring in real personalities - the underused supply of classic jocks. Not joke service readers, like so many prominent morning-drive "talent" (quotation marks intended) in Los Angeles, but real personalities.

Jay Stevens told us in 1989, he would like to see a major market format of current TOP 40 music, jocked by classic Silver Age jocks, sort of like what Shadoe Stevens does on American Top 40, and Casey Kasem, on Casey's Hot 40.

Real talent isn't dated. Real talent can be as contemporary today as it was during the Silver Age.

So our first recommendation for the new dawning of a "Platinum Age" is bring back these classic jocks who are still around, and put them back on the air where they belong. Program Directors shouldn't be afraid of their independence. They should welcome it. Use these classic jocks as the role models for the next generation of radio stars.

There are actually jocks working today who have never heard "World Famous" Tom Murphy, Dave Hull, or Bob Hudson, when they were at their peaks. Many jocks today, in their '20s, are too young. That's not their fault. But, unfortunately, even if these current jocks hear airchecks of these great legends, they still need to be allowed to have all the freedom they need to be the next generation of radio star "personalities" on the air. Program Directors should worry less about "breaking format" and interrupting their "50-Minute Music Sweeps." Instead, give this new generation of air talents "free rein" to be the next generation of real "Platinum Age" personalities.

Today's "jocks," could do much more than repeat the same, "researched, consultant - written" slogans after every song, over and over and over. Whatever happened to communication? Why not let current air talents just talk to the audience?

After all, we got to know talents, like the great Dr. Don Rose of KFRC (Berkeley/Emeryville) because he did talk to the audience about himself, his wife, his family, and his "dog" (who he fed the exact same food that the family ate each meal.) Of course, that would "break format" and interrupt the "50-Minute Music Sweeps." But, why not? Where is the human communication that Silver Age radio had?

The newsmen were not airheads who only know how to "rip and read," and deferentially laugh at the jock's "humor" (quotation marks intended) from the next chair, but instead were serious news journalists who wrote their own news copy, reported it, and considered news too

serious, and their role as a "newsmen" too important, to lower themselves to being an audio "shill," laughing hysterically at the disc jockey's tepid one-liners. Bring the journalists back to radio newsrooms. Let them keep their dignity from the newsroom - not the next chair in the disc jockey booth.

2 - The second recommendation for a new "Platinum Age" should be the return of a strong, strict F.C.C. with a renewed commitment to regulation, that will make stations really accountable for their licenses - or be subject to losing them.

3 - Discontinue voice tracks forever. There were no voice tracks in the Silver Age. Automation really wasn't tried until about 1968 (remember Chapter 6, "Those Filbert E. Yarborough Blues"?) Radio was meant to be "live" in which other mediums, like television or film, just couldn't. When one turns on the radio, one should hear a "live" voice. For example, if one wakes up at 3 a.m., one shouldn't have to hear a voice-tracked show that was made in the middle of the afternoon, two weeks earlier.

It's true that there are no mistakes on voice tracks. But that's not real. Human beings do make mistakes. That's part of the spontaneity that radio should have. Voice tracks are perfect. So perfect that they are, in most cases, sterile, boring, and inhuman. If this practice isn't stopped, who's to say that we may someday hear non-human "computer generated" voices (like "Uncle Bob" and "Jerome," back in Chapter 9.) Of course, "Uncle Bob" and "Jerome" were satire, and were created for hip fun. But are voice tracks what we really want to have to listen to? Radio should be a companion. Radio should be somebody's friend. Isn't "live" radio really more listenable?

We should hear someone who is there right with us at that moment. A "live" human voice that is alive at the same moment that we are. We realize "promos," "spots," and "records" will always be pre-recorded. But can't the "host" be "live" in-studio making it all come together? A good example, we can think of, is Bobby Dale during his all-night shows at KRLA, in late 1964 and early 1965. Late-night intimacy ----- and music, too.

4 - As we said before, let air talents just "talk" to us. Not read slogan cards thought up by a research tank of consultants, but just talk to us.

5 - Go back to hourly (and maybe even twice-an-hour) newscasts. Get away from "50-Minute Music Sweeps," and allow room for newscasts every hour, every day, as in the Silver Age. Let us have our cake and eat it, too, again, on one channel.

6 - Go back to broadcasting, and away from narrowcasting. If an audience has variety, as they did with the broad music mix of full-service radio stations of the Silver Age, who's to say "they'll tune out." Did the research people ever think that just maybe listeners might listen longer because they won't get bored? A case in point. How many radio listeners even make airchecks today for the sheer joy of doing it? Is a "50-Minute Music Sweep" worth taping and saving in aircheck archives? A commercial pre-recorded music cassette from Tower can serve that purpose better. Our point has been made.

7 - Broaden the music lists. Bring variety back to playlists. Play the entire TOP 40 or even better, how about playing the entire Billboard TOP 100 in a rotation-type basis? Why not? Why can't we hear songs 41 thru 100? Why can't we ever hear the "lower 40?" Right now, the only way we can hear songs 25 thru 40 is to get up at 5 a.m. on Sunday morning to hear Shadroe Stevens at KIIS-1150 AM (Los Angeles) on American Top 40. There are good records that never have a chance because stations don't include them in the rotation. Remember, in Chapter 3, KRLA, at that time in 1964, had 80 different songs on the "Teen Toppers" playlists. And they all got played, too.

8 - Right now, radio advertising budgets are spent mostly on television and placards on the sides of buses. Consequently, where are the "collectibles" of today's radio for radio archivists? Where are the TOP 40 record survey folders today with rotating jock pictures? We haven't seen one in Los Angeles in years. For the most part, they no longer exist. Radio should be preserved thru print memorabilia - including today's era - even though at a low point - it's still "future history" and did happen.

9 - At the time this edition of Dream-House went to press, there was a television station in Los Angeles with call letters, "K-C-A-L," and in the San Bernardino area, a radio station was on-the-air with the exact calls "K-C-A-L." The television station and radio station had no connection to each other. Each was owned by a different outfit. Yet, they both had the same calls. To us, this is misleading to the public. This shouldn't happen now, and it wouldn't have happened under

regulation. In San Francisco, a radio station exists with the calls "K-C-B-S." Clear down the state, in Los Angeles, both a television and an FM station have the exact same calls, "K-C-B-S."

We believe that if call letters are already being used somewhere, that they cannot be used at the same time by a different station, in another market. There are plenty of combinations that are not taken. We have only deregulation to blame for this confusing and misleading-to-the-public, situation. (Bob Harlow's KKSJ, in Portland, actually calls itself in print, and on the air, "K-I-S-N," which actually belong to a radio station in Utah!)

10 - If a broadcasting company has both an AM and FM station in a market, then they both should be programmed with completely different programming. Not simulcast as now. Cases in point. KKLQ (the old legendary KOGO) in San Diego, and KIIS in Los Angeles. The FM programming is simulcast on their AM channels (1150 in Los Angeles, and 600 in San Diego.) Either they come up with separate programming for their weaker AMs, or allow other broadcasting groups to take over those channels. The public should be given the widest amount of listening choices available. Both KKLQ-AM and KIIS-AM should have their own separate programming from the FMs. If not, the F.C.C. should give those channels to other applicants which, we feel, will better serve the public interest. Again, deregulation is to blame for this situation which limits our public airwaves to fewer listening selections.

11 - Develop a radio station around a team of "personalities" (like "The Eleven-Ten Men") - not just put all the publicity into the joke service-reading morning "talent" (quotation marks intended). In the Silver Age of radio, every jock, every three hours was as good, in his own way, as the others. How many listeners today even know the names of the jocks heard at non-morning-drive shifts? But that's exactly what station management wants today.

It used to be, in the Silver Age, to develop a station around personalities. Now stations want to develop themselves around a non-human "format," "slogan," or narrowcasted "sound." Stations are afraid to bring in real talents, because if they did, the talents could threaten to "jump ship," and take their audience with them, down the dial.

Remember, in Chapter 4, Dave Hull in May 1967 at KRLA, how the station had to bring him back? Stations today do not build themselves around their jocks. They do not allow their jocks to have a following, for that reason. It's sad to say that the only real personalities left today are on "Talk Radio." For our "Platinum Age," bring in people who can communicate, and let them not just "talk" to the radio audience, but play records, too.

12 - Discontinue satellite-format services. In the Summer of 1990, we visited WQXI-AM in Atlanta, Georgia, at their historical transmitter tower site on Cheshire Bridge Road. Guess who we heard thru the door of the locked building? Danny Martinez, formerly of KRLA. (See Chapter 12.) Was Martinez sitting in that elevated white building playing M.O.R. Gold? No. Martinez was sitting in a satellite-format studio in Hollywood, California, clear across the country.

Now, is that really fair to the people of Atlanta who hear WQXI and think that Martinez is jocking right there on Cheshire Bridge Road, under the transmitter towers? Is it fair to the out-of-work Atlanta jocks, or young Atlantans wanting to break into the radio business? Don't Atlantans know their own city better than "satellite voices" from clear across the country? It's a slap on the face to Atlantans for allowing this to continue on their local airwaves.

Satellite services take away the small "training-farm stations" where young radio talent can develop and grow from. In the Silver Age, there was always those outlying stations that were sort of like "farm clubs" in baseball. For example, KMEN, on Baseline near Sterling, in San Bernardino, California (Highland area), was a "stepping stone" to Los Angeles, for such Silver Age stars as Jim Mitchell (Jim Lawrence), Donn Tyler, William F. Williams, Johnnie Darin, Buddy Budnik, T. Michael Jordan, Chuck Christensen (Chris Charles), Brad Edwards, Mark Denis, and Russ O'Hara. Now, KMEN is a satellite format station using "bought" programming. So is the old KMAK in Fresno, (now KKAM.)

So, a station that years ago was sort of a training ground, doesn't serve that purpose anymore. As long as there are satellite services, more and more small market stations will choose the relatively inexpensive satellite services, rather than hire young jocks, invest in a library of music, and let these rookies learn and grow in the business. Where, besides broadcasting school, are these young talents supposed to start out today if 90% of small market stations use satellite services?

College broadcasting professors like John Hart, of Fullerton Junior College, (also, a noted KFVB "Color Radio" historian) who knows, and personally remembers, how radio was, and should be, can do their part in directing young, "future talents" to the right track.

Satellite services should be phased out as "radio formats" and re-g geared toward "industrial, public address-type" non-broadcast services, like one can hear at Thrifty Cut-Rate Drug Stores, or Toys R Us. But not to be broadcast over our radio waves. It's our public airwaves. We deserve "live," local programming. There's enough talent out there to do radio programming locally to better serve the public interest. The F.C.C. needs to get regulation back to radio (the stations have had self-regulation for years, and look at the product now, compared to the regulated Silver Age), to insure that the audience is no longer misled (thinking the satellite jock is right in their own town), and is no longer shortchanged.

13 - Stations should go back to using their call letters as their main, primary identification. Call letters should be said proudly - and regularly. Not just on the hour. If its AM's KFRC, say them proudly. The station has a great heritage. "Magic 61" doesn't do that heritage justice. That legendary Bay Area AM station only uses those KFRC calls once an hour.

In the Silver Age, stations built their identity around great, legendary calls. For our new "Platinum Age," bring that attitude back. If necessary, bring back 3-letter calls, if that's what it will take. The trend toward slogans, and catch phrases, thought up by research tanks and consultants, replacing legendary calls as station IDs has really gotten out of hand where listeners, many times, don't even know the call letters of the station that they're listening to. KRLA never was "R-11." It was proudly K-R-L-A. The F.C.C. can make this happen again, if it wants to.

14 - All stations should be required, as a condition for their license, to identify themselves by where we're actually, physically hearing them from. The antenna tower site location. You've read, here in Dream-House, that as a child, we used to have a little G.E. transistor radio. We always knew where an AM station was, because, as we rode in the back seat of our parent's car and saw a set of transmitter towers along the highway, we'd "spin the dial" until the loudest signal came out - or one that "bled" onto adjoining signals.

We knew KFWB was in Lincoln Heights, as we rode by the "Color Radio" transmitter towers off Soto. KFWB lept right out of the radio! If KRLA is in Irwindale, then say it. "KRLA, Irwindale," or "Serving Southern California from Irwindale, KRLA." (Or, in the Silver Age, "Serving Southern California from South El Monte, KRLA.") If KFI is in La Mirada, say it.

In other words, the F.C.C. should require the transmitter tower site location to be the city of license. KFI, Los Angeles, is misleading. Sure, the studios are in Los Angeles, right off Wilshire. But we're not receiving KFI from Los Angeles. We're receiving it from La Mirada, right on the border of Buena Park in Orange County. Actually, KFI's transmitter tower is closer to the center of Orange County than to the center of Los Angeles County! KNX is in Columbia Park in Torrance (El Nido.) Why not "KNX, Torrance"? We're really hearing KNX from Torrance, not Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood.

15 - Gold stations need some substantial changes, too. Today's Gold format stations seem to be stuck in the late '50s and early '60s. To us, a Gold station should play anything that is a past charted hit record. Anything off past Billboard charts from, say, a year ago on back, should be considered as "gold."

If a listener went to high school, or college, from 1972 thru 1976, or from 1976 thru 1980, where are "their" TOP 40 songs? If their favorite song of their years of school was "Kiss You All Over," by Exile, then why isn't that record being played somewhere? We haven't heard that particular record on the radio in years.

There seems to be no station for TOP 40 '70s hits that are non-classic rock (album) oriented. Gold stations should put into heavy rotation the excellent Rhino series, "Have A Nice Day" (Volumes 1 thru 15), "Didn't It Blow Your Mind" (Volumes 1 thru 15), Billboard Hot Hits 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, and 1979, all from the '70s, and heavily play those tracks as "gold."

Why can't "My Sharona," by The Knack, or "Night Fever" by The Bee Gees, be considered as "gold"? (An All-Disco Gold station is also badly needed!)

Just how many times do we have to keep hearing the same tired, played-to-death "Oldies But Goodies" from 1955 thru 1963? Bring in the '70s, to Gold stations, and also the '80s. "Him," by Rupert Holmes, from 1980, is going on 15-years old! (Isn't that "gold" enough?) Or how about "Jessie's Girl," by Rick Springfield, "Kiss On My List," by Hall And Oates, "Dreaming," by Cliff Richard, or "Jenny (867-5309)," by Tommy Tutone? Songs like those bring "happy flashbacks" to us. We haven't heard those songs played on the air in years.

Change the philosophy of Gold stations to anything one-year old on the Billboard TOP 100 on back. Sure, that's a lot of records. But we all lived those years. It's our past. That music is the soundtrack to our lives.

In the Silver Age, radio stations did a superior job than what we're being offered today. Maybe the stations should save the umpteen thousands of dollars that are being paid to the research consultants, ("expensive seat covers"), with their 75-page computer printouts, and instead, use their intuition, their talent, and their guts. (Should a computer be sitting on the desk of a Program Director?) Be creative. Play not only the hits, but how about every track on L.P.s (or C.D.s, c'mon, let's get contemporary, Bill!) in rotation. Play "sets" of records based on themes. In some ways, free-form radio when it didn't get "too hip," was maybe a way to program a station that should be looked at again. It certainly was superior to the "researched, computerized" tight lists of today that are boring, repetitive, and way too restricted.

We challenge anyone who is in a position to program a radio station, (Bob Harlow: It's your move!), to take a chance to make radio something special again. Drop the satellite services. Instead, hire "home grown" talent who grew up in your market. Discontinue the voice tracks. Get a jock to open a mike "live," and take a chance on the joy of spontaneity. And drop the research and 75-page computer printouts. Bring in classic Silver Age talents, like "World Famous" Tom Murphy, to show the next generation of air talents how radio should be done - with current music! A current TOP 40 format with classic jocks is one that radio is in need of right now. And we're going to come right out and say it: there should be no such thing as any radio air talent with too much personality. Radio today badly needs all the personality it can get!

Remember the poem at the beginning of the FOREWORD? It's only fitting to give it an encore, at the end. And realize that radio can be a "home for heroes," again. Let's hope that there can be a dawning of a "Platinum Age" where radio personalities can again be heroes. And where young 10-year-old listeners can pick up the torch where we've left off, like King Arthur and the young boy at the end of "Camelot." And allow these 10-year-olds in the 1990s to have their own heroes, as we had ours here in Dream-House.

Make radio a "home for heroes" here in the 1990s and beyond, a radio product for them to someday want to write about. If it doesn't exist now, then it is up to those in the industry to make radio "dream-houses" exist again.

Radio can be great again. The talent is still out there, classic jocks not being used, or untapped new talent not allowed the "free rein" that radio needs. It's been said that the darkest hour is right before the dawn. Radio is in its darkest hour. A new dawn of a "Platinum Age" can happen. And, maybe, poems like this one can be written again about how great radio can be, if it does change. No longer handwritten on a scroll, like on the outside back cover of Dream-House, but, maybe, futuristically laser-encoded in platinum.

Those words from 1967 can come true, and happen again. But it's up to those in the industry to let it.

Enter the dream-house, leaving your
Debts asleep, your history at the door:
This is the home for heroes.

A love you can afford.



BILL EARL, M.A.
AUTHOR OF DREAM-HOUSE

KRLA

1967

Music to strengthen your heart,
to soothe your soul,
to give you a new perspective on life,
that's the KRLA sound.