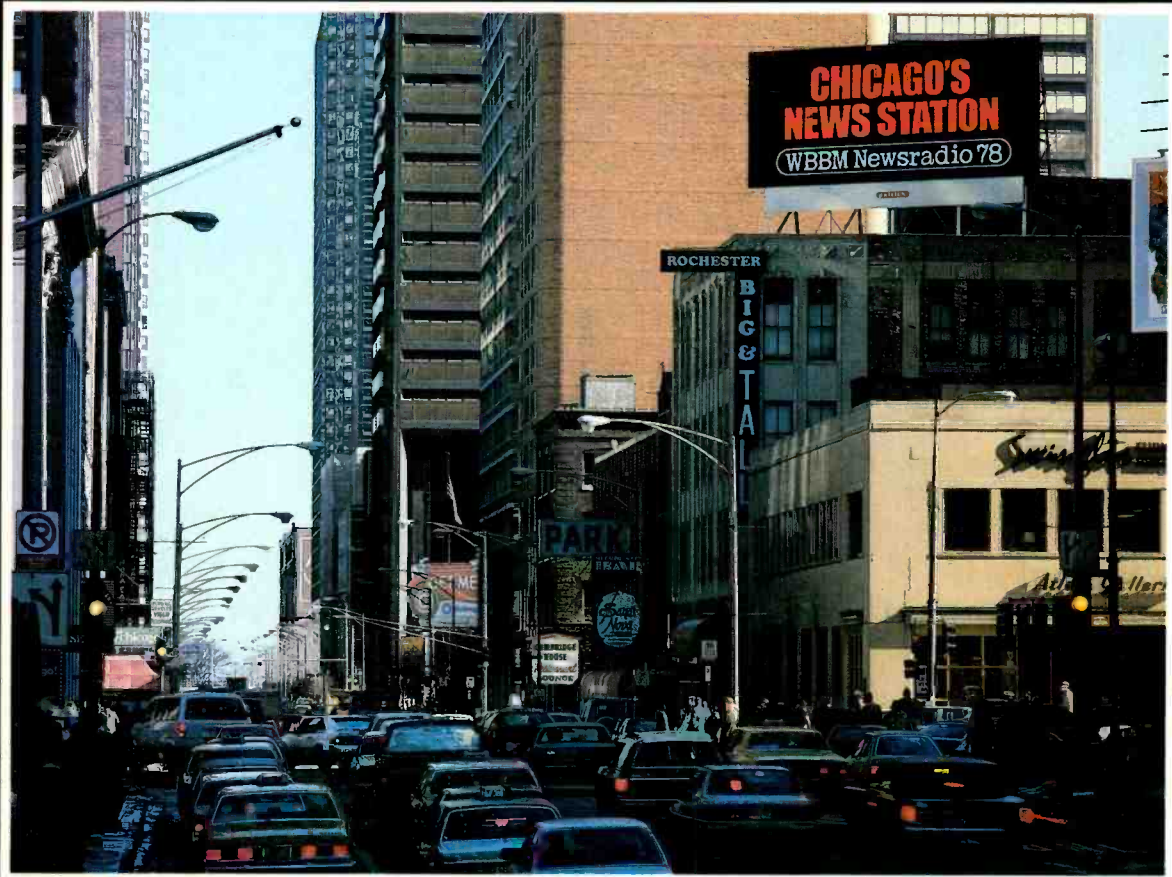




WBBM RADIO *Yesterday & Today*

CHUCK SCHADEN



WBBM RADIO

Yesterday & Today



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Designed by
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INTRODUCTION



WBBM Newsradio celebrates *two* milestones in 1988. It is the station's 65th anniversary and 20th year in the Newsradio format.

The thread that connects WBBM's past to the present is broadcasting innovation. The past includes only four major programming shifts. From 1932 to 1950 the station was known as the *WBBM Air Theatre*. From 1951 to 1964 WBBM became *Chicago's Showmanship Station*, evolving into *The Talk of Chicago* from 1965 to 1968. On May 6, 1968 *WBBM Newsradio 78* was born.

Only 14 of the country's approximately 10,000 radio stations have more than one million listeners each week. And WBBM is one of those—with 1.3 million listeners in the Chicagoland area alone. Because of its powerful signal the station is also heard at night in 41 states and in several Canadian provinces.

The following words and pictures will take you from WBBM's first broadcast from the basement of a family home to its current status as one of America's most respected and influential radio stations.

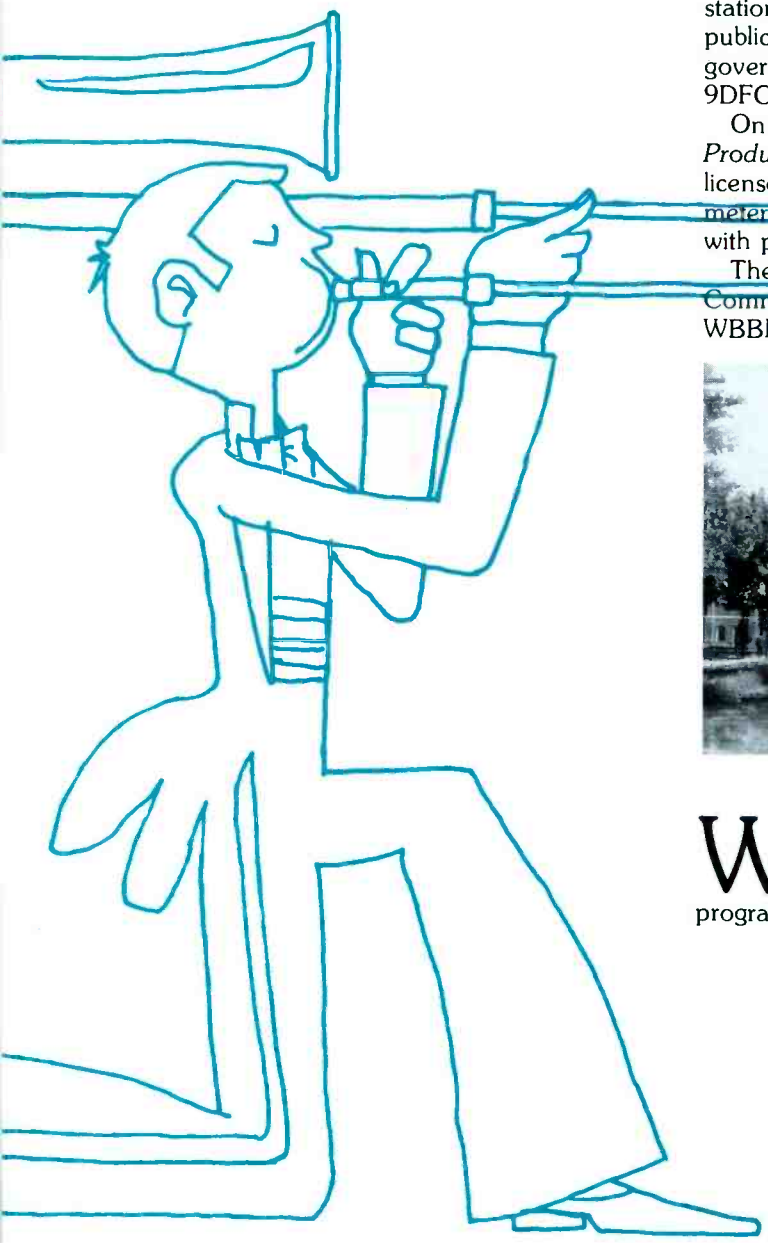
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregg Peterson". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Gregg L. Peterson
Vice President, General Manager
WBBM Radio

1911-1926:



THE BEGINNING



HALFWAY BETWEEN PEORIA AND Springfield in the center of Illinois is the small town of Lincoln.

In 1911, two young men, boys really, began operating an amateur radio station in their Lincoln home. The "spark" (voiceless) station, 9DFC, was built and run by 17-year-old Les (H. Leslie) Atlass and his eight-year-old brother, Ralph.

The amateur station proved to be a popular and time-consuming pastime for the Atlass boys and over the years their interest in radio grew, although they were asked by the government to cease operations during World War I for security reasons. In 1921 the station resumed operation with an amateur license and a 200 watt vacuum tube transmitter.

In the fall of 1923, Les, age 29 and well-established in the family business, and Ralph, 20, decided they would switch their amateur station to one that would broadcast to the public at large and so they applied to the government to cancel their hobby-like station 9DFC.

On November 14, 1923, the *Frank Atlass Produce Company*, (the family business) was licensed as a broadcasting station on the 226 meter wavelength (equal to 1330 kilocycles) with power of 200 watts.

The Radio Division of the Department of Commerce assigned the station the call letters WBBM.



Lincoln, Illinois shortly after the turn of the century.

WBBM'S FIRST FEW MONTHS OF operation were experimental, but it was not long before the station's first program went on the air, with little fanfare or

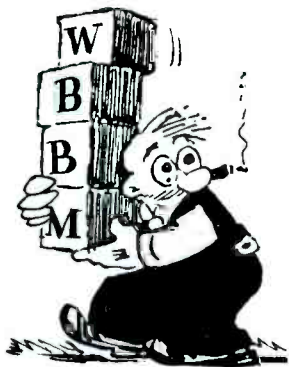


publicity, from the basement of the Atlas family home at 110 Park Place in Lincoln, Illinois, on April 14, 1924.

At about this same time, the boys' father sold the family's successful produce business to *Armour and Company* and moved the family to Chicago. Les and Ralph applied to the government requesting that the radio station be "abandoned" in Lincoln and asked that the WBBM call letters be retained for future use. These requests were granted on September 26, 1924.

After residing for a while at the *Edgewater Beach Hotel* in Chicago, the Atlas family moved to a fine home at 7421 Sheridan Road, and once again the basement became the headquarters for a radio station operated by Les and Ralph.

The government approved the station's move to Chicago and WBBM went on the air with an increase in power to 500 watts, although the government had authorized an increase in power to as much as 1500 watts. During the fall and winter of 1924-25 the station was on the air Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings beginning at 8 pm. Programming consisted primarily of recorded music. The first record ever broadcast over WBBM was *Barney Google (with the goo, goo googlie eyes)*, but it was mostly jazz music of the time that was



Barney Google

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Top: WBBM's first broadcasts originated from the basement of the Atlas family home in Lincoln, Illinois.

Right: Home of the Frank Atlas Produce Company, Lincoln, Illinois.

heard by the relatively few listeners out there in Radioland.

ON FEBRUARY 25, 1925 THE NAME on Les and Ralph's broadcast license was changed from *Atlas Produce Company* to *Atlas Investment Company*. By April, as more and more radio stations were being authorized by the government, WBBM was ordered to begin sharing its 1330 frequency with a new Chicago station, WIBO.

The Atlas brothers were by now anxious to move their radio station out of the basement of the family home and into more appropriate quarters. On June 4, 1925, WBBM began broadcasting from a new site, the *Broadmoor Hotel*, located at the corner of Howard and Bosworth in the Rogers Park area of Chicago's north side.

The transmitter was located atop the hotel and the WBBM signal was sent out from a new inverted "L-type" antenna system, suspended between two steel masts, each 75 feet high. E. C. Paige was in charge of technical operations for WBBM while Ralph managed the station and Les became Vice President of *Atlas Invest-*



ment Company.

LES ATLASS WANTED LIVE ENTERTAINMENT rather than recorded music on WBBM every night, so he combed the Chicago area for talent. Among the personalities he brought to WBBM was a singer by the name of Charley Huey who was known as the *Washerwoman of the Air*.

Atlass also wanted a WBBM staff orchestra and he found one when he visited the fashionable *Birchwood Country Club* and heard *Sturdevant's Birchwood Country Club Orchestra*, a six piece aggregation featuring Clarence Schwarz at the piano, John Froelich on alto sax, Donald Winans on tenor sax, Roy Pietsch on trumpet, Wayne Osborne on the banjo and guitar, and Charles Abbott on the drums.

All WBBM broadcasts originated in a small, glass enclosed studio in the lobby of the *Broadmoor Hotel*. When the WBBM orchestra performed, as it did every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 8 to 11 pm, Les Atlass and his brother beamed as they peered through the glass to see the announcer seated at a small table in one corner, the pianist at a Gulbransen Baby Grand piano (with a microphone sitting on top to pick up all the music), the trumpeter squeezed between two sax players and the drummer with his rig, and the banjo player with his back to the far corner. The ensemble was crowded, but effectively arranged to get the best musical effects over the air.

DURING THE *BROADMOOR* DAYS, WBBM was the only Chicago station to air popular music on Sundays. It was said to be sacrilegious, but the show was very well liked.

The three-hour musical program regularly consisted of impromptu numbers by the orchestra and songs by visiting song pluggers, some stage and opera stars, and others who wandered into the hotel to display their talents for free on the exciting new medium known as *radio*. On "bad days," when no "free" talent showed up at the *Broadmoor*, announcer Charlie Garland and singer Kay Davidson had to do the same songs over and over since Charlie, who doubled as a pianist of sorts, could play only in the key of C.

Teenager Jean MacDonald of Evanston



Broadmoor Hotel at Howard and Bosworth in Chicago.

played a piano duet with her brother at the *Broadmoor* studio. She recalls, "They just put a mike on the piano and we played, with many boo-boos, I'm afraid. I think they were desperate."

In the early days at the *Broadmoor*, WBBM broadcasts were unrehearsed and spontaneous. But this practice would soon change, for it wasn't long before the Atlass brothers decided they needed to make the public more aware of their broadcasting efforts. In late 1925, they started publishing their schedule in the newspapers. To do this, programming had to be planned in advance. As the newspaper ads began bringing more listeners to the station, programming hours were expanded and a few sponsors were attracted to the station. Years later, Ralph Atlass remembered, "We were the first station in Chicago to take radio ads. Our first three accounts were *Yellow Cab*, *World Storage Battery Company*, and the *Chicago Mercantile Company*, a hatmaker. For \$250, an advertiser got three hours of time, which included an orchestra, an announcer, about a dozen spot ads, and other expenses." These sponsors quickly felt the rewards of advertising on WBBM, which began using the motto, *We Broadcast Broadmoor Music*.



One of WBBM's first sponsors was the Yellow Cab Company.

In those infant days of commercial radio, however, the Atlass brothers found it difficult to line up sponsors for their programming, a necessity for commercial success, especially since costs had climbed significantly with the move to the *Broadmoor*.

SO, IN 1926, LES AND RALPH LEASED their broadcast time to the *Stewart-Warner Speedometer Corporation* in what would be termed a "time brokerage" arrangement today.

Stewart-Warner provided all the WBBM programming in an effort to increase sales of automobile and bicycle speedometers. The ownership of the station was retained by the *Atlass Investment Company*, but it was *Stewart-Warner* that became their sole sponsor, and it was *Stewart-Warner* that produced the programs.

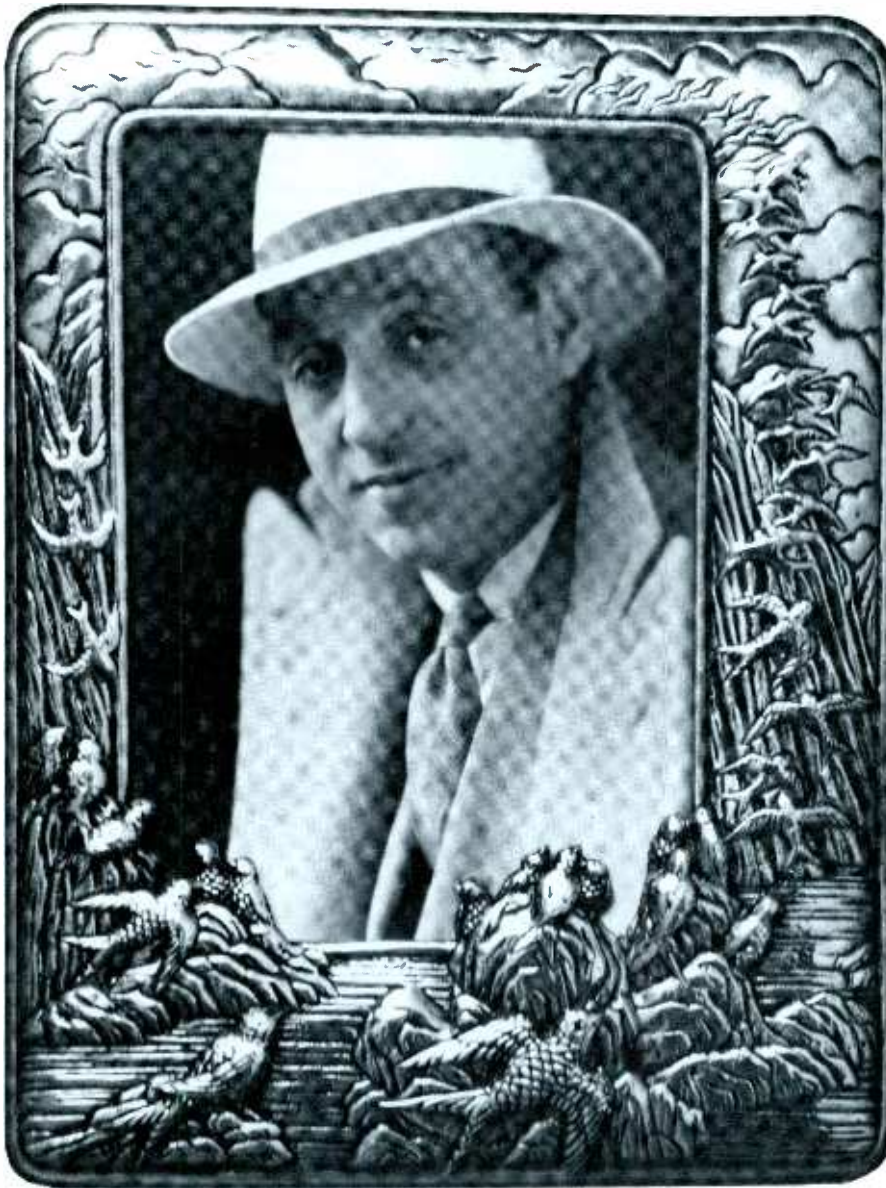
WBBM maintained the studio at the *Broadmoor Hotel*, but the *Stewart-Warner Corporation* was not satisfied with the tiny, glass-enclosed facility the Atlass brothers provided and so they constructed a much larger one of their own at their plant on West Diversey Avenue. The walls of the *Stewart-Warner* studio were covered with acousti-celotex, a substance made from sugar cane fibers which absorbed fifty-five percent of outside sound while eliminating vibrations. Studio equipment consisted of two grand pianos, a harp, and an announcer's desk which was an exact replica of the desk used by George Washington during his presidency.

By July 1926, WBBM's motto was *Stewart-Warner Air Theatre*.

HANG THIS ON YOUR TELEPHONE

The quickest way to get a
Yellow Cab
in your neighborhood
is to call direct to
Independence 1240
Station- Route and License
[Between 3 a.m. and 7 a.m. call collector 9000]
(Over)





H. Leslie Atlass.

REMEMBERING LES ATLASS

H LESLIE ATLASS WAS A GIANT IN the field of broadcasting, a radio pioneer who knew what he wanted and whose style of leadership brought the results he strived for.

He was born on November 29, 1894 in Lincoln, Illinois. He attended Lake Forest Academy and during World War I he served overseas as a signal corps officer in artillery

operations. After his military service he rejoined his father's meat packing business in Lincoln and soon became president of the *Frank Atlass Produce Company*. In June, 1917, he married Harriet Marks, also of Lincoln, and they lived about a mile from the Atlass family home. Les and Harriet had three children: H. Leslie, Jr., Frank, and Harriet.

The brothers Atlass: Les and Ralph.



After several years of operating an amateur radio station in the basement of their family home, and believing in the future of radio as an entertainment medium, Les and his brother founded WBBM in 1923.

H. Leslie Atlass took the leadership role in the station from the beginning. And he continued to manage the station even after *Columbia Broadcasting System* purchased it in 1931. He possessed a sharp feel for innovation and he had vision. He originated remote broadcasts from ballrooms and hotels and brought entertainment to the living rooms of Chicagoans. As programs originated from different points across the city, he called on his technical staff to develop remote control lines which eventually ran from one end of Chicago to the other.

His philosophy was "nothing but the best for WBBM listeners" and he believed in taking them via their radios to wherever things were happening in Chicago. He originated remote broadcasts of Sunday morning church services. And the first airing of a West Coast football game was heard on WBBM with sportscaster Pat Flanagan at the microphone.

Atlass was able to make decisions clearly and rapidly and he knew how to allocate authority to responsible people. Those who worked for him put their hearts into their jobs and he commanded the respect of everyone.

He always demanded freshness in programming, a prime ingredient which paid dividends

to WBBM and the *Columbia Broadcasting System*. He endorsed honesty in programming and believed that extra fuss and trimmings were unnecessary when real talent was available. He thought big and always employed the best talent he could find, accepting no substitutes.

AT LASS LISTENED CONSTANTLY to his station. Whenever an error occurred, the responsible party was summoned to the telephone immediately, even if it was three o'clock in the morning.

He rewarded loyal employees and was often described as "a man who walked the store." He usually was the first to arrive in the morning and he developed a ritual of carefully placing a fresh flower in the bud vases on the desks of every receptionist and secretary.

His sense of humor was vibrant and contagious. Frank Johnson, former building operations manager for WBBM, spent 40 years at the station, most of them working closely with Les Atlass. He recalls Atlass' sense of humor:

"He had health problems, heart problems in later years. The doctors would caution him about drinking and smoking. One doctor even suggested that he not drink before five o'clock



Les Atlass relaxes aboard his yacht.

in the evening. So those of us who worked around him were all presented with watches that read five o'clock all the way around!

"He also had a few little tricks he liked to pull," remembers Johnson. "Les Atlass would go through the station in the *Wrigley Building* and he would throw a paper clip into a light fixture and then he would keep track of how long it was 'til they got washed. He wanted the place immaculate and he got it that way. It was a good place to work.

"He insisted on proper dress at all times by everyone. He said the reason they paid for air conditioning was so people could wear shirts and ties and coats. He was a man of great propriety.

"Les Atlass was very fond of yachting," said Johnson. "He had a boat—a very large boat with a six man crew. On a nice day he would come into my office and say, 'Let's take one of the departments out to lunch today. Who do you want to take out today, the accounting department, the sales department, or what?' We would decide, then take them out for an afternoon on his boat.

"He had a great deal of autonomy. He was an extremely clever man and workaholic. He just had a tremendous drive to succeed in anything that he did. He had a mind that worked very rapidly. He was one of a kind. I've never worked with anybody or met anybody like him since.

"He would travel through the building at least once a day and sometimes up to several times a day and check with technicians or the pageboys or the mailroom people or sales. He was involved with the station thoroughly. He was there and he knew what was going on. And the employees liked him. He'd see a technician trying to fix a television monitor and he'd say, 'Well, you missed the most important thing. The first thing you should do is kick the set!' The technician would laugh and they'd have a good rapport."

LES ATLASS WAS A VERY CLOSE friend of cowboy star Gene Autry, whose program for *Wrigley's Gum* occasionally originated in Chicago from the WBBM studios in the *Wrigley Building*.

Frank Johnson recalls that Atlass was an advisor to Autry, who also became very suc-

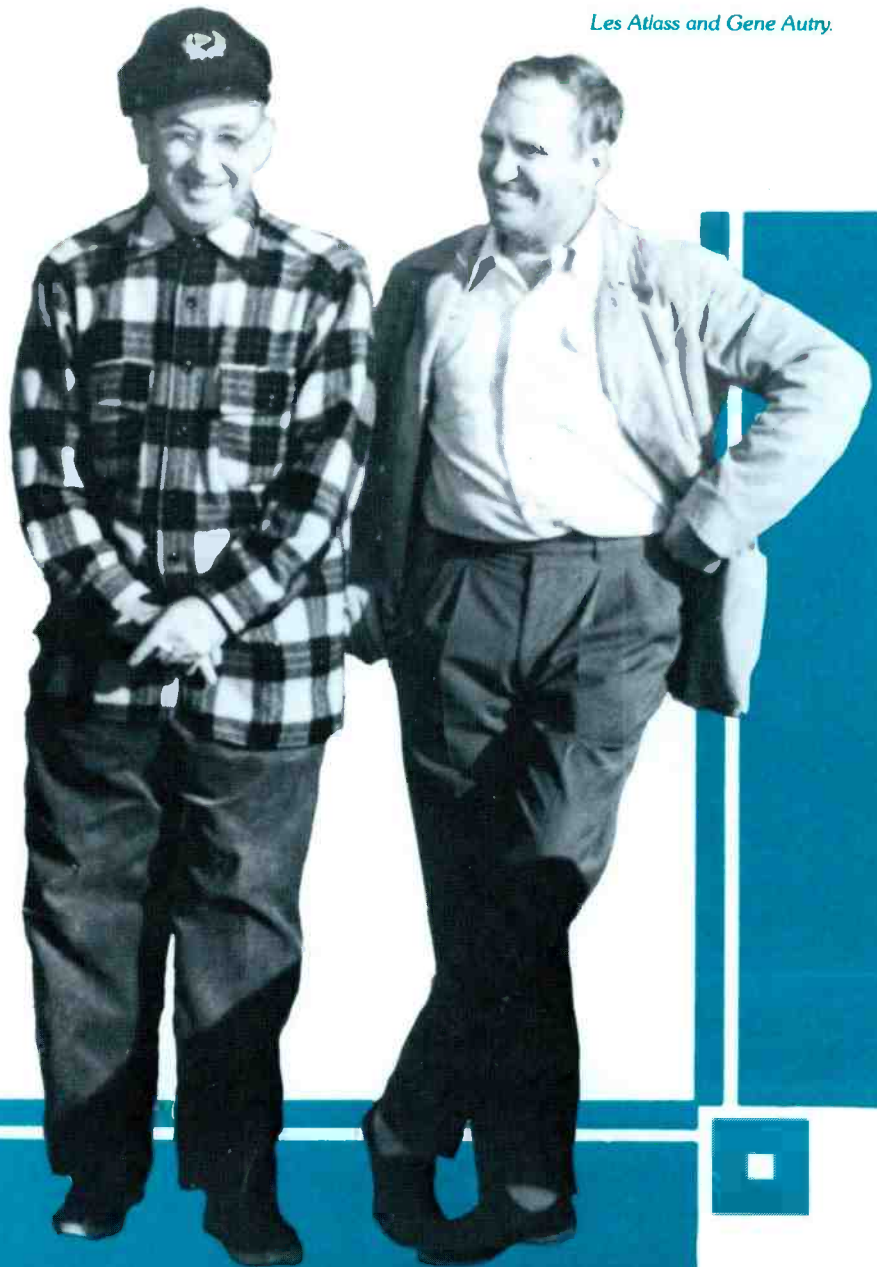
cessful in radio and television ownership. "They shared the same philosophies," he says. "Hire the best you can hire and pay them more than they're worth, and you'll succeed.

"Under Les Atlass," says Johnson, "WBBM was always considered the Cadillac of the business, even by the advertising agencies. When he did something, he did it first class."

Atlass was credited with showcasing dozens of nationally known entertainers by their appearances on WBBM. In addition to Autry, the Andrews Sisters, Ben Bernie, Fran Allison, Patti Page, Jane Froman, Buddy Clark, Dale Evans, Pat Buttram and Pat Flanagan were among the performers who got a start or a boost at the station.

Under his direction, WBBM became one of the most profitable stations in the country. In the early days of its affiliation with the *Columbia Broadcasting System* as an owned and

Les Atlass and Gene Autry.



operated station, it was H. Leslie Atlass who constantly came through with the key sales that kept the network solvent.

According to writer Les Brown of *Variety*, the show business publication, it was through Atlass' "ability to make money for the network, while at the same time spending lavishly for programming, that he acquired his power. That power reached its peak in the thirties, when he controlled the entire midwest for CBS."

BROWN CALLED ATLASS "ONE OF the original 'Think Big' boys and his freedom with the buck was legend. But not the least of his talents was his knack of finding and developing future elder statesmen for the network. The pattern of their apprenticeships was nearly always the same. Atlass would baptize them in sales, move them up eventually as his assistants, and then farm them out to either Minneapolis or St. Louis stations as General Managers. New York grabbed them from there."

As for Atlass himself, according to Brown, "He was content to remain in Chicago, where he was untouchable as far as the network was concerned. He maintained a yacht, the largest in the Chicago yacht complex, at company expense, and he ruled his shop as a king. Few loved him in the trade," said Brown, "but he was universally admired as a businessman and broadcaster."

H. Leslie Atlass sold his ownership in the station to CBS in 1931, but stayed on in various senior management positions until he retired from WBBM and CBS in November,

1959 when he reached the company's mandatory retirement age of 65. He died a year later after suffering a fatal heart attack on his yacht which he had skippered down the Mississippi River to Florida. Before his death, Atlass had suffered five heart attacks in the previous five years.

ON THE EVENING OF HIS DEATH, November 18, 1960, WBBM Radio produced a documentary tribute to the station's founder and longtime leader. During that broadcast, newsman-sportscaster John Harrington, who had worked with Atlass for 25 years, recalled the day he met the legendary Mr. A:

"I well remember the day he hired me in St. Louis. He had come down on one of the first *American Airlines* scheduled flights into St. Louis, and the airplane heat had gone out and it was about minus 20 degrees up where they were flying. Then, to make matters worse, after arriving at the St. Louis airport, he immediately got into a taxicab with no heat. So by the time he got to the Mart Building where Mr. Jack VanVolkenburg, who was one of his proteges, and I were waiting, he was so frozen stiff, that he came running into the office and jumped up onto the radiator. While he was standing on the radiator, Mr. VanVolkenburg said to me, 'John, I would like you to meet the Boss. Here he stands.' I had to reach up and shake hands with him. He looked at me and he said, 'Hmmm, you're a sportscaster, huh?' 'Well', I said, 'I'm trying to be one.' He said, 'Well, report in Chicago on Monday morning.' I asked what time and he said, 'Anytime before noon.' That's the way I was hired, by a man standing on a radiator in the office of Mr. Van Volkenburg, who at that time was general manager of KMOX which was part of Mr. Atlass' Central Division of the *Columbia Broadcasting System*."

Harrington recalled how it seemed that everyone "the Boss" took an interest in went on to bigger and better things. He said that Gene Autry owes much of his success to Atlass. "Mr. A. once told me that the way he got to know Gene Autry was when Will Rogers made a stop here in Chicago and was talking to him about a cowboy he had heard out west. Rogers said, 'I heard a telegrapher out there, who was



Les Atlass catches a big one.



John Harrington

in a small railroad station, who thought he could sing. I think he has some possibilities and I think you ought to write him a letter and ask him to come in and sing.' Mr. Atlass did write to him and from that came the famous Gene Autry.

"Of course," said Harrington, "there was another story too, about the Boss. When he found out that Gene Autry was taking music lessons, he said, 'You'll have to quit that or be fired, because you're going to spoil it, if you try to take singing lessons and learn to be a singer.' I think Gene stopped taking singing lessons right then and there."

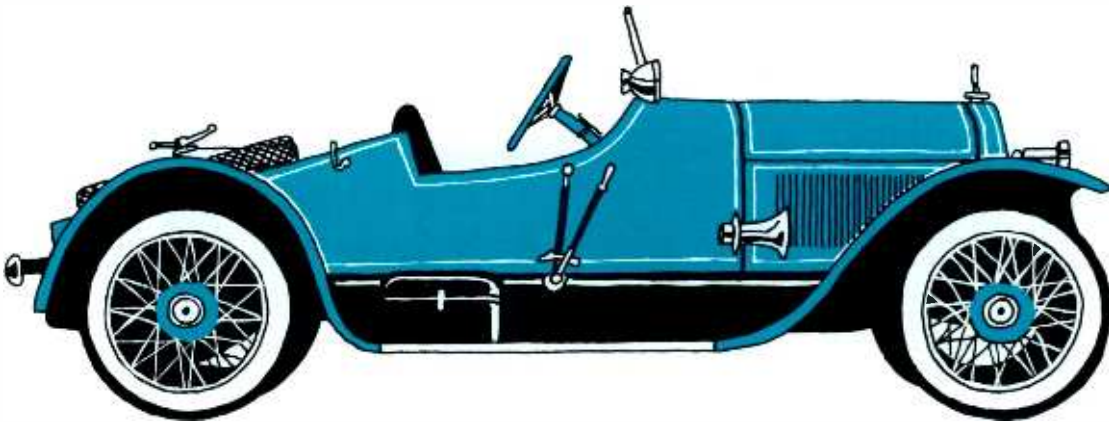
DURING THAT SAME WBBM broadcast tribute to H. Leslie Atlass, WBBM salesman Don Mann spoke of Atlass, the man he had known during his last

accomplishments."

Caesar Petrillo, WBBM's long-time music director, hailed Atlass as a pioneer in broadcasting. "He loved being a part of it. He loved show business and the people in it. He always surrounded himself with the best in entertainment. He loved and insisted upon live entertainment. He believed that his listeners deserved much more than canned entertainment and he gave it to them. It was an honor and a privilege to have been associated with him."

Newsman John Harrington recalled another Les Atlass story, one that happened many years before when Atlass was driving through a small town in his *Stutz Bearcat* automobile:

"Exceeding the speed limit somewhat, and that's an understatement, he was stopped by the constable when he had to wait for a freight train at a crossing. When taken to the police station, the Justice of the Peace told him it would cost him \$50 for going so fast through town. Mr. Atlass handed the amazed man a hundred dollar bill and replied, 'You better take the hundred 'cause I'll be coming back through here in about four hours!'"



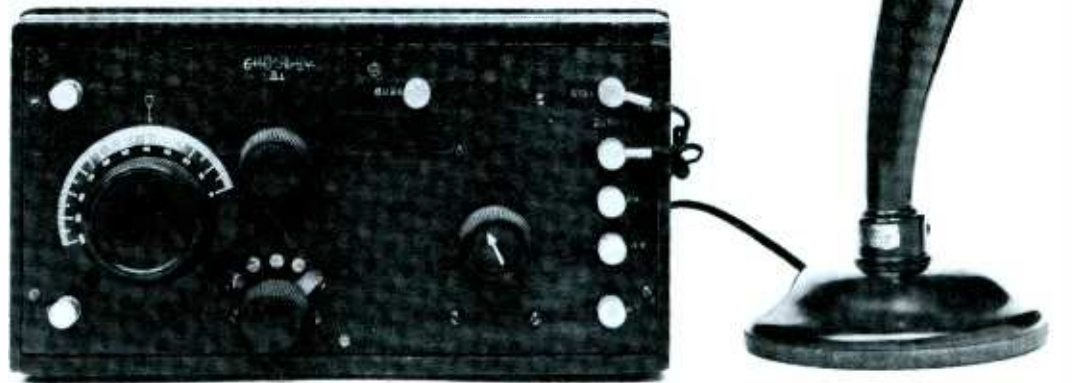
Stutz Bearcat, 1921.

decade as General Manager and Vice President of WBBM. "He was one of the last rugged individualists in America. He never asked for any quarter nor gave any. He made many contributions to radio and television and was truly a perfectionist. Perhaps his greatest innate ability," said Mann, "was the fact that when he retired, the organization did not flounder or fall apart. But rather, as the record shows, the organization went on to greater heights and

H. Leslie Atlass was to his employees and competitors alike, a controversial leader. In the business of radio he was a man who knew a good trend even before it started. He was not a conformist. He was, in fact, considered by many a maverick in the friendliest sense. Regarding his business acumen, it has been said by many that Mr. Atlass was wrong only about one tenth of one percent of the time.

That may have been grossly exaggerated.

1927-1931: THE EARLY YEARS



WBBM INCREASED ITS TRANSMITTING power to 1000 watts in the early months of 1927. In mid-year, by the time the arrangement with the *Stewart-Warner Speedometer Corporation* came to an end, WBBM had been moved from its 1330 position on the dial and had been reassigned to 770 kilocycles. The government also transferred radio station WIBO to another spot on the dial and ordered WBBM to share its new frequency with station WJBT, which had been granted a license to broadcast in June, 1926.

WJBT was licensed to John S. Boyd, secretary of the Union Stock Yards of Chicago, who had been operating an illegal (unlicensed) station for several months before being granted his official broadcast license. WJBT was assigned 500 watts of power at 640 kilocycles and when he went on the air legally, Boyd moved his transmitter "temporarily to the roof of the *Broadmoor Hotel*, adjacent to WBBM's antenna." By April, 1927, a Federal Radio Inspector's report indicated that "WJBT has not operated for more than 48 hours in its existence" and that its owner "desires the license for speculating purposes only, in hopes that it might be valuable later." The newly empowered Radio Commission told WJBT, in effect, to start broadcasting regularly or lose the license. The Commission reassigned the station to 770 kilocycles in June, 1927, and it began sharing time with WBBM. By the end of the year, WJBT was airing programs of the Chicago Gospel Temple.

WBBM's transmitter was moved from atop the *Broadmoor Hotel* building to a new site near Glenview, Illinois, 20 miles northwest of Chicago and power was raised to 5000 watts when the transmitter was first put into service in September, 1927. The station had applied for a power increase to 10,000 watts, but would have to wait for that wattage jump.

AT THE SAME TIME, AN ADDITIONAL studio facility, *Studio Two*, was being constructed for WBBM in downtown Chicago at Kimball Hall, 159 N. Michigan Avenue, while regular programming continued to originate from *Studio One* in the *Broadmoor Hotel*.

While WBBM retained its original time-share of the 770 frequency, WJBT was ordered to

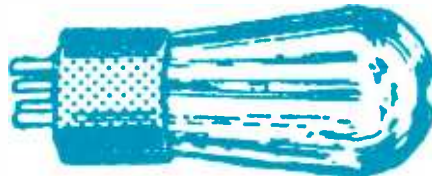
share its portion of that frequency with still another Chicago station, WAAF.

WAAF went on the air in May, 1922 and was licensed to *Corn Belt Publishers*, publishers of the *Dover's Journal*. Original studios were located in the Chicago Stock Yards and were later moved to the Palmer House, then to the LaSalle-Wacker Building in Chicago.

WBBM, having moved its transmitter to Glenview, in November, 1927, moved its studio from the *Broadmoor* to 306 S. Wabash Avenue, a downtown Chicago location not far from Kimball Hall. (WJBT also moved its studios to this site at about the same time.)

BY THIS TIME THE *BIRCHWOOD Country Club Orchestra* had moved on to other challenges. The station carried many band remotes from various cafes around the city. The popularity of these remotes once led the Atlass brothers to a conflict with the local musicians' union which stopped just short of violence. Ralph Atlass reflected on the situation some years later:

"We had to have a house band on the payroll whether they played or not. If we didn't do this, we couldn't pick up performances of the big bands, which were unionized. So we had a band on the payroll which we didn't even use, and then one day in about 1927, we



decided to use them and found out they couldn't even read music. My brother appeared before the musicians' union board and there was a fracas caused by one band member. Later the president of the union came down to the station with some of his sluggers. This was a common thing in the industry at the time, and we were ready with some Pinkerton men. The presence of the Pinkerton boys was enough to keep a fight from breaking out, and eventually the non-music reading musicians were replaced by another 'house orchestra'."

WITH A LIMITED BROADCAST DAY (due to the time-sharing with WJBT and WAAF), and a limited budget, WBBM provided both jazz and classical music, tenors and baritones, sopranos and altos, soloists and instrumentalists, pianists, and a constant parade of entertainers—mostly talented, mostly unpaid—who performed for listeners.

As far back as 1925, WBBM had an announced program policy which called for 95 percent musical entertainment, either vocal or instrumental. This policy was the result of thousands of letters sent to the station expressing a preference for music. And the policy was so well carried out that WBBM was called by listeners, the “station of the dance bands.”

DURING THE STATION'S INFANCY, two of WBBM's “hit” programs were *The Nutty Club* and a children's program, *Joy Diggers Club*.

The Nutty Club originated at the *Granada Cafe* on Chicago's south side and was heard each Saturday night from midnight until three in the morning. Celebrities took an informal part in this entertaining session which included both music and comedy. Among those who appeared on the program were Paul Whiteman, Helen Morgan, Guy Lombardo, Olsen and Johnson, and almost every other popular performer of the day who happened to stop in at the Cafe.

The Nutty Club boasted a listener membership of hundreds of thousands who wired in musical requests.

WBBM's *Joy Digger Club* was one of the first children's programs on the air. The motto of the Club was, “Dig a little joy out of everything each day; it's there if any of you dig deep enough.” The Club was conducted by Nate Caldwell, who was known at the time for his peculiar style of “whisper singing” and his eccentric ditties.

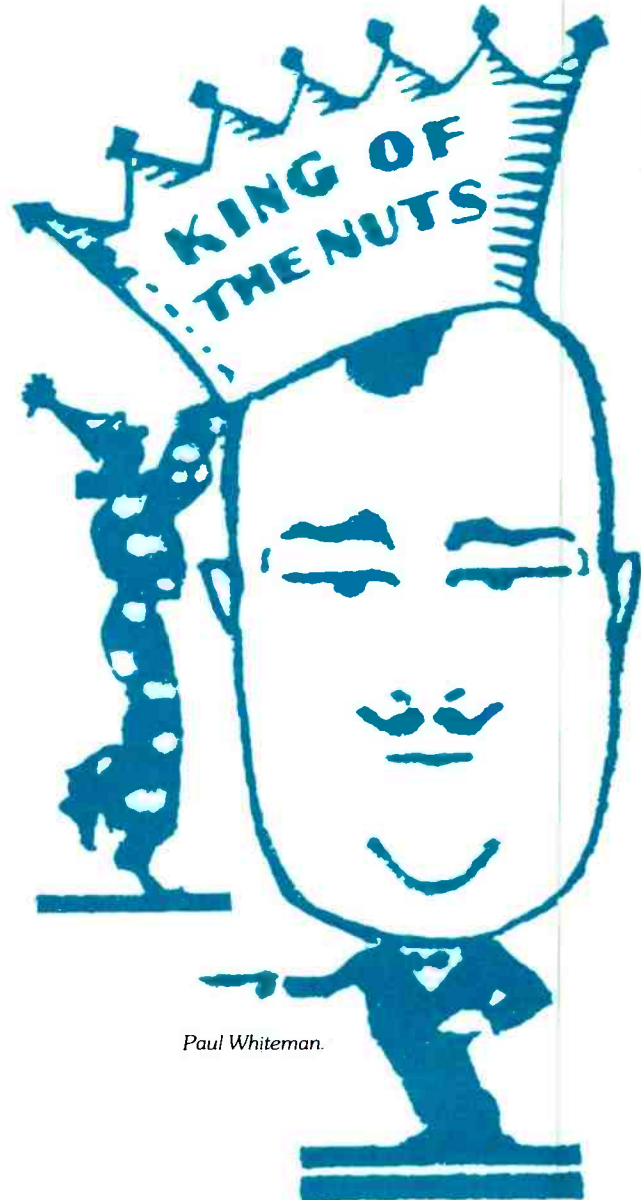
THE PROGRAM CONSISTED OF songs, stories, and instrumental numbers, some of which were performed by children who were members of the Club. Boy Scouts took over the program once a week, and from time to time, prominent people gave short talks on subjects of interest to youngsters.

Membership cards were sent to listeners who wanted to join the Club. Dues consisted of one letter a month from each member.

Musical Comedy Memories was another early WBBM show. It was written by announcer Bob Brown, who prepared librettos for the show, which featured Belle Forbes Cutter.

Don Amaizo, the Unknown Violinist was a daily show which featured a narrator telling a continuing story of the adventures of a handsome young violinist. After each episode, *Don Amaizo* played a musical piece on his violin, a selection that tied in with the story.

WBBM became an additional Chicago affiliate of the *Columbia Broadcasting System* on September 27, 1928. WMAQ, the *Chicago Daily News* station, was an affiliated station of the *Columbia Broadcasting System* from September 18, 1927, the date of *Columbia's*



Paul Whiteman.

charter network broadcast, until November 1931 when it joined the Red Network of the *National Broadcasting Company*. For a period of about three years, both WMAQ and WBBM carried *Columbia* network programming.

NOW, IN ADDITION TO LOCAL PROGRAMMING, WBBM was able to provide listeners with network broadcasts. The majority of these originated from New York, and consisted of popular music, but occasionally the station carried other *Columbia* affiliates whose various regional programs added to the variety.

Also in 1928, as more and more radio stations were being licensed, WBBM in Chicago and KFAB in Lincoln, Nebraska joined forces to solve a reception problem.

At night, when AM radio waves travel farthest, the signals of the two midwest stations, each sending out 5000 watts of power at 770 kilocycles, interfered with each other, distorting reception for listeners residing between the two cities.

In Iowa, for example, where people could hear both stations particularly well, especially after sundown, a problem developed with an echo effect during the evening hours. According to station engineers, it took network programs 34 milliseconds to go over network lines between Chicago and Lincoln, Nebraska. Listeners in between those two points would hear the WBBM broadcast first, then an instant later, the signal from Lincoln.

LES ATLASS AT WBBM AND THE automobile dealer who owned KFAB decided to share nighttime programming in order to provide a clear signal. Under this arrangement the two stations synchronized their late night programming each evening from sundown to 10 pm (when KFAB signed off).

The synchronization system was devised to eliminate the echo effect. WBBM engineers built a series of 19 amplifiers, coils, and condenser units through which the network feed was piped and which effectively delayed the program some 35 milliseconds. With network programming going to the WBBM transmitter through this delay system, taking about the same amount of time it took the network shows to get to Lincoln, the problem was solved.

Plush WBBM studio in the Wrigley Building.



770 Kc.—WBBM—389.4 M.
CHICAGO
 (WBBM Air Theatre—25,000 Watts)
 (Daytime)
 6:45 a. m.—Farm Information.
 6:55 a. m.—Musical Time Saver.
 7:30 a. m.—Christian Science Churches of Ill.
 7:45 a. m.—Musical Time Saver.
 8:00 a. m.—CBS—Little Jack Little.
 8:45 a. m.—CBS—Reis & Dunn.
 9:00 a. m.—CBS—Luxembourg Gardens.
 9:15 a. m.—Chicago Dental Society.
 9:30 a. m.—Burnham Beauty Chat.
 9:45 a. m.—CBS—Organ Melodies.
 10:00 a. m.—Al & Pete. Songs.
 10:15 a. m.—Galaxy of Stars.
 11:00 a. m.—CBS—Geo. Hall's Orchestra.
 11:15 a. m.—Gene & Charlie & Virginia.
 11:30 a. m.—Evans Fur Fashion Parade.
 12:00 p. m.—CBS—Billy Hay's Orch.
 12:15 p. m.—Local Markets.
 12:30 p. m.—Chicago Flour.
 1:00 p. m.—Eddie & Fannie Cavanaugh.
 1:15 p. m.—Jerry Sullivan's Old Songs.
 1:30 p. m.—BASEBALL BROADCAST
 Cubs vs. Brooklyn.
 3:30 p. m.—Harry Steele's News Flash.
 4:00 p. m.—CBS—Villet's Paris Orch.
 4:15 p. m.—CBS—Syracuse Spotlight.
 4:45 p. m.—CBS—America's Grub Show.
 5:00 p. m.—CBS—Skippy.
 5:15 p. m.—Villet's Parisian Orchestra.
 5:30 p. m.—CBS—Jack Armstrong.
 5:45 p. m.—Frank Westphal's Orchestra.
 (Evening)
 6:15 p. m.—"Growin' Up"—Drama.
 6:30 p. m.—Al and Pete. songs.
 6:45 p. m.—CBS—Boake Carter.
 7:00 p. m.—Dress Parade.
 7:15 p. m.—Flanagan's Sport Review.
 7:30 p. m.—Harry Pick. Songs.
 7:45 p. m.—Ted Lewis' Orchestra.
 8:00 p. m.—Paul Harris' Orchestra.
 8:30 p. m.—Hour of Romance.
 9:00 p. m.—Johnny Hamp's Orch.
 9:15 p. m.—Toot Gerun's Orchestra.
 9:30 p. m.—Harriet Cruise & Quartet.
 9:45 p. m.—Tea Lewis' Orchestra.
 10:00 p. m.—Oh, he A' until 1:00 A. M.
 Johnny Harap's Orchestra.
 Don Gerun's Orchestra.
 Tom Ferraro's Orchestra.
 Tom Gerun's Orchestra.



THERE WAS, OF COURSE, THE ADDITIONAL problem of the period of time between network shows used for local station identification. The network allowed 30 seconds of time between each CBS show. WBBM took half of that and KFAB the other half. Following the conclusion of each network broadcast, usually with the announcer saying, "This is the *Columbia Broadcasting System*," theme music would play for an additional 15 seconds. During that 15-second period, KFAB would do its station break while WBBM simply carried the extended theme. Then, during the final half of the 30-second break, WBBM would give its call letters and station identification while KFAB simply carried dead air.

WBBM, incidentally, paid KFAB to sign off at 10 pm (after network programming had concluded for the evening) so WBBM's local programs could be heard without "competition" from KFAB, and listeners throughout the Midwest could tune in without interference to the many band remotes the station carried.

The *Federal Radio Commission* became interested in this project in 1933 and made an exhaustive study of the synchronization of the two high-powered broadcast stations, by this time each carrying duplicate *Columbia Network* programming. The entire engineering cost of the experiment was borne by WBBM and all of the facts pertaining to the operation were supplied to the Commission on a monthly basis.

In November, 1928, WAAF was reassigned from the 770 spot on the dial, leaving only WJBT to share that kilocycle position with WBBM.

A FEW MONTHS LATER, IN MARCH, 1929, WBBM received permission from the government to increase its power to 10,000 watts at the station's Glenview transmitter. At this time, the station physically moved all of its studio facilities to the prestigious *Wrigley Building* located at 410 N. Michigan, on the west side of Michigan Boulevard at the Chicago River, just north of the Boulevard Bridge.

The Atlas Investment Company, Inc. purchased station WJBT from John S. Boyd, also moving that station's studio to the *Wrigley Building*, and by mid-summer relocated WJBT's transmitter from atop the *Broadmoor Hotel* to the site of WBBM's transmitting plant in Glenview. WJBT's power was increased to 10,000 watts, but the station was on the air only a few hours each week, using WBBM's technical facilities, yet still retaining a separate license.

ON MARCH 13, 1930, STATION WJBT was consolidated with WBBM to form one full-time station, called WBBM-WJBT. (Most station mergers or consolidations in the 20's and 30's used hyphenated call letters.)

WBBM-WJBT settled into a varied program format that included many locally originated programs of music and variety plus much of the *Columbia Broadcasting System's* network offerings. These CBS shows featured *Guy*

Guy Lombardo.



Right: "Is Everybody Happy?" Ted Lewis on WBBM-CBS.

Helen Morgan.



Lombardo and his Royal Canadians (on the air for *Robert Burns Cigars* every Monday night at 9); Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra (for *Old Gold Cigarettes* each Tuesday at 8 pm); tenor Morton Downey (four times a week at 6 pm); Tony Wons' *Scrapbook* (poetry readings weekday mornings at 7 am); H. V. Kaltenborn with the news (three times a week at 7:15 pm); *True Detective Mysteries* (broadcast Thursdays at 8 pm); and the *Lutheran Hour* (Thursdays at 9 pm).



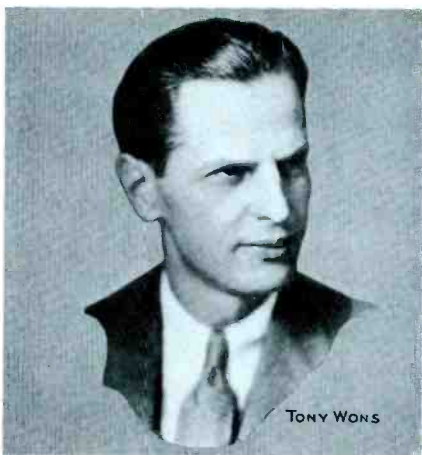
News-caster-Commentator
H.V. Kaltenborn.

Arturo Toscanini

Maestro Toscanini.

Sunday morning services from a number of Midwest churches were broadcast on WBBM-WJBT, and on Sunday nights listeners tuned in to hear *Columbia* network offerings which featured controversial Catholic priest Father Francis Coughlin and evangelist Billy Sunday and his *Back Home Hour*.

SANDWICHED IN BETWEEN THE Sunday serving of religious programs, was the *New York Philharmonic Orchestra* conducted by Arturo Toscanini (who later joined NBC) with a weekly two-hour concert.



Tony Wons.

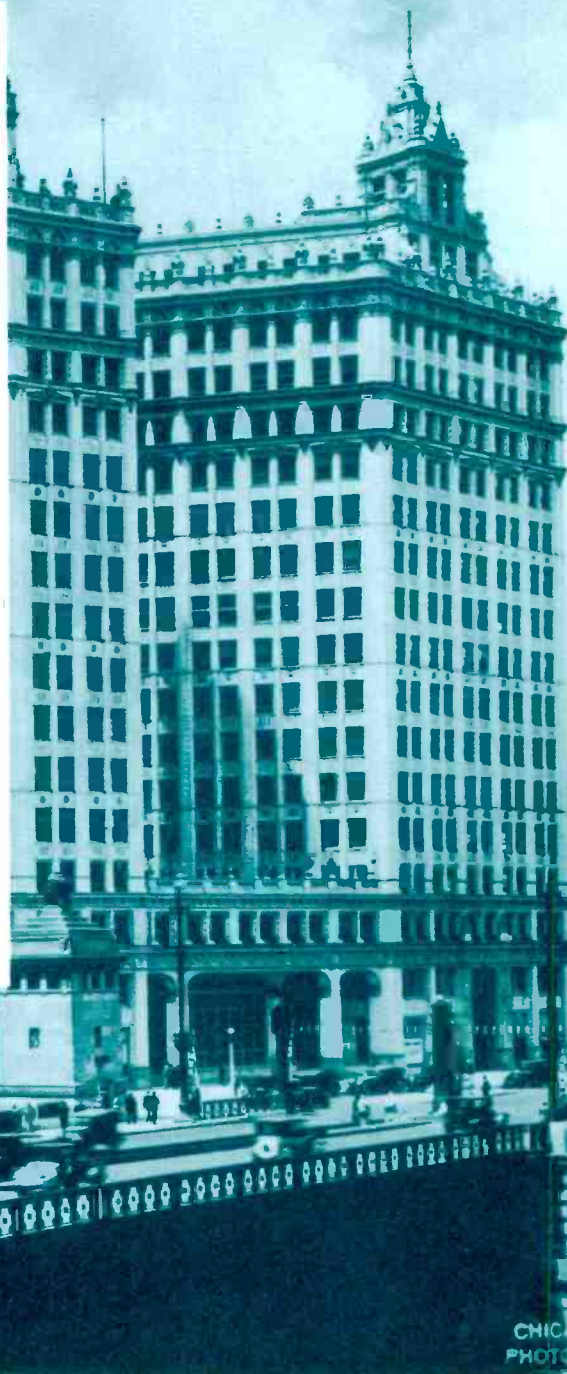




On weekdays, listeners tuned in to WBBM-WJBT for the *Adventures of Helen and Mary*, the *DuBarry Beauty School*, the *Women's Radio Institute*, and *Evangeline Adams* with a thrice-weekly astrology program, all *Columbia* network offerings.

THE NETWORK HAD ACQUIRED ITS first station, WABC in New York, in 1928 and was now seeking to expand by purchasing significant stations across the country. WBBM-WJBT was a major station in the Midwest and *Columbia* president William S. Paley entered into negotiations with H. Leslie Atlass to bring the station into the ownership of the network. In early 1931 the *Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.* purchased WBBM, and Les Atlass was retained to manage the station as Vice President for CBS in Chicago. He was guaranteed a lifetime job as part of the original transaction. At about the same time, Ralph Atlass left WBBM and acquired part ownership of a station in Gary, Indiana, WJKS, which later became WIND.

In the fall of 1931 *Columbia* dropped WMAQ from its roster of affiliates. (WMAQ had been sharing CBS programs with WBBM, but now switched its allegiance to NBC.) By April, 1932, the hyphenated call letters WBBM-WJBT were discarded. The new *Columbia Broadcasting System* station in Chicago was now known as WBBM, with the slogan, *World's Best Broadcast Medium*.



Technician Paul Heyn retired from WBBM on April 18, 1987, "44 years, 5 months and 10 days" after he came to the station on November 8, 1942. He was Chief Engineer for WBBM from 1963 to 1969.

Prior to joining WBBM, Heyn had worked since 1940 for WMBI, the *Moody Bible Institute* station in Chicago. He was about to be married, the war had begun and he was classified 4-F for medical reasons. With his forthcoming marriage, Heyn knew that he needed to improve his salary from the \$125 a month he was then earning. A friend told him of a possible opening at WBBM, so he applied and was hired at \$49.50 per week.

Heyn's first WBBM assignment was to engineer remote broadcasts. In the following account, Paul Heyn recalls his years with WBBM and the changes he saw while employed there.

PAUL HEYN REMEMBERS

I WAS TAKEN AROUND TO VARIOUS remotes and we had to carry along a portable amplifier and, in some cases, the power supply. The amp and the power supply each weighed about 25 or 30 pounds and you carried them one under each arm to balance the load.

My first assignment was with a fellow by the name of Christy Flynn. We went over to an interview with someone in one of the buildings in the Old Post Office area. We had to go up several flights of stairs carrying this gear, but I was a young buck then and able to handle that sort of thing without too much trouble.

We used to be sent down to the *Home Arts Guild* with Harold Isbell. This was a company that promoted various home products, and they would hold a luncheon and Isbell would



Paul Heyn.

Harold Isbell.



Barbara Luddy.



Les Tremayne.



interview the various women who attended. The program was piped back by line to the *Wrigley Building* and was recorded directly on a disc there. We had to coordinate with the fellow who was doing the recording which would eventually play on the air later. It didn't go on the air directly. This was one of WBBM's many local programs.

I remember airing a program with Fran Allison before she ever got involved with *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* on TV. She played the piano and sang. I remember engineering a soap opera up there in *Studio Nine*, in the control room behind the glass. I usually filled in for one of the regulars who was on vacation. We had plenty of time to learn the show. We had rehearsal periods all the time.

THE WBBM AIR THEATRE HAD quite a number of broadcast studios. Master Control was in the basement of the *Wrigley Building* and there was *Studio Three*, another basement studio adjacent to Master Control. It had a pipe organ and eventually became the music library. But at the time I joined WBBM it was an organ studio—a large studio, M-7, where the announcers stationed themselves for network breaks when we carried network programs.

On the first floor we had *Studio Ten*, a large audience studio seating perhaps 150 people. It had a balcony with a control room. There was also a series of clients' booths at the back end of the balcony. Each had a loud speaker

and they were isolated from the general noises of the studio, except for whatever was picked up by the microphones. I used to do a number of shows out of there.

Two of the shows that originated from *Studio Ten* were *That Brewster Boy* and *Jobs For GI Joe* with Paul Harvey when he was just starting in the business. This second show was a job-seeking program for GIs who had been discharged from the Army and were looking to reestablish their lives. They would come on the program and describe their qualifications, and employers seeking this type of individual would call in. It proved to be very effective. We would also air the *Gene Autry Show* whenever he was in town and for a while, I believe, we did *First Nighter* out of there.

I HAD A LOT TO DO WITH SETTING UP the audience studio for a broadcast. In those days the microphones were always returned to the shop and stored in canvas bags. They simply didn't let them stay around the

Paul Heyn.



Caesar Petrillo.

studio. That became one of the jobs for the technicians when setting up the studio. The microphones were brought up from the shop and set up on stands. We hardly ever had any table microphones, but we had microphone booms. We could rig microphones up on those booms and then set up perhaps one or two mikes for the orchestra, depending on what we had, and one for sound effects, one for the announcer, and another for the dramatic pieces. Usually eight to ten mikes would take care of a good-sized dramatic show. We would also have a microphone for the audience, hanging overhead and patched into the control booth.

It would take about half-an-hour to set up *Studio Ten* for a full audience broadcast; I was always given plenty of time—several hours. After you set it up, the director would get the cast assembled and then do a little orchestra rehearsal. We would get a microphone balance on the orchestra, seeing where the mikes would be best placed. Caesar Petrillo, the staff band director, would look that over and have the orchestra play for him to hear what the pick-up sounded like.

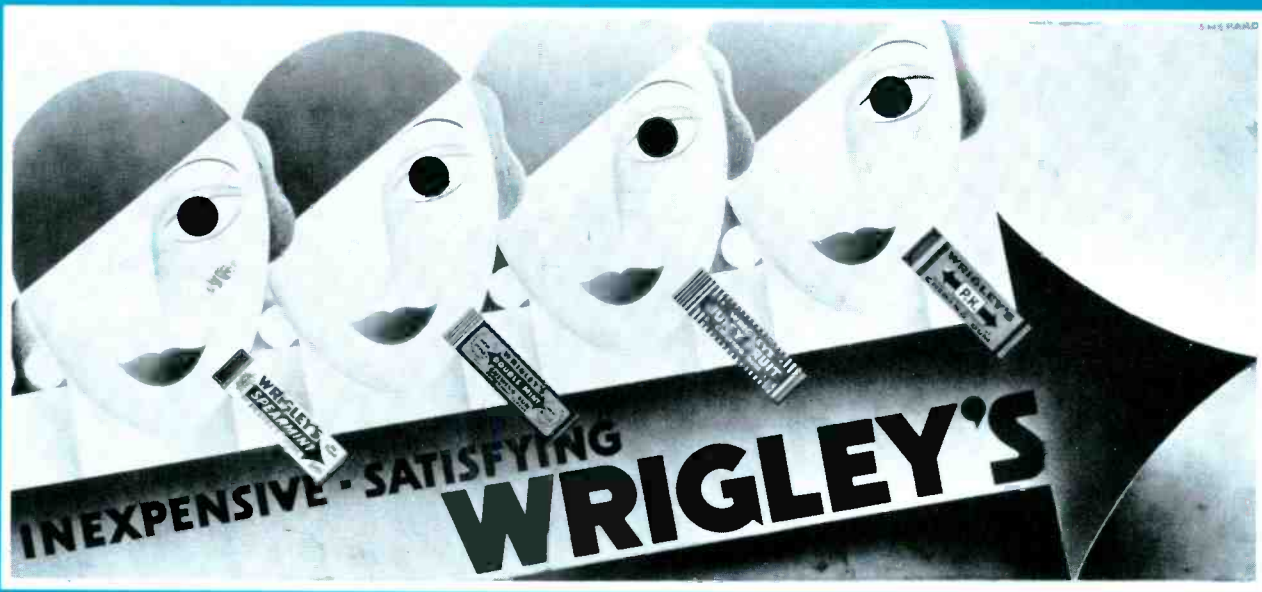


Ben Bernie,
the old maestro
and all the lads.





Blueprint of the WB3M studios and offices in the Wrigley Building



PURE
QUAKER OATS

MANUFACTURED BY

The Quaker Oats Company
ADDRESS - CHICAGO, U.S.A.

QUAKER

ROLLED

WHITE OATS

THE QUAKER OATS COMPANY
MILLY, ILLINOIS, U.S.A. TORONTO, CANADA ST. JEROME, MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

Quaker Oats

Use in Soups
Quaker Oats is especially smooth-tasting and flows in small quantities. A large spoonful for each portion is enough. It is the most nutritious of all cereals and a valuable addition to your menu.

For Luncheon or Supper
1 cup Quaker Oats
2 cups Water
1 teaspoon Salt
1 cup Raisins
1 cup Applesauce
1 cup Sugar
1 teaspoon Vanilla

Bring water to a boil and add salt. Add cereal and sugar mixed to a paste with boiling water. Heat slowly on the stove. Cook 20 minutes. Add raisins, applesauce, sugar, vanilla, hot or cold, with cream. Refrigerate, if used, moulded and served in slices.



Storyteller John Nesbitt

Early Sponsor

During World War II I did a show called *America In The Air*, a dramatic presentation of the various battles that had been going on in the Pacific and elsewhere. It was a lot of boom! boom! with the sound effects, and the orchestra adding the various accents to the dramatic scenes. On this show I recall working with Mike Wallace in 1944 and there was another chap who used to show up, Buddy Clark, who was a vocalist. He would take bit parts. A lot of acting parts were available at WBBM.

For *America In The Air*, we would rehearse all afternoon and then the show would go on the air around five or five-thirty for half-an-hour. It was directed by a chap by the name of Les Weinrott, a rather well-known producer in Chicago at the time. He was a good director, an ace, a real professional. I enjoyed working with him. This show was also fast moving. It was a technician's nightmare, though. You'd have to use 10 microphones!

After the show we went out for dinner. Caesar Petrillo and a number of the fellows in the band were Italian and so we'd go to some Italian restaurant on Taylor Street. Scrumptious food! Then we'd come back in the evening and repeat the whole show for the West Coast, live. It was not a matter of recording it and then playing the recording for the West Coast.

CAESAR PETRILLO AND THE WBBM staff orchestra would play all the big shows, but would also be on stand-by to play for sustaining shows on the network when the network didn't have any sponsored programs. Caesar was the brother of the president of the Musicians' Union, James C. Petrillo.

Sometimes, particularly at night, we would maintain a few members of the staff orchestra in case the dance band remote line failed. If that happened, we would bring in the orchestra to fill in.

Playing recordings on the network was taboo. And we really didn't start doing that until we had Daylight Savings Time.

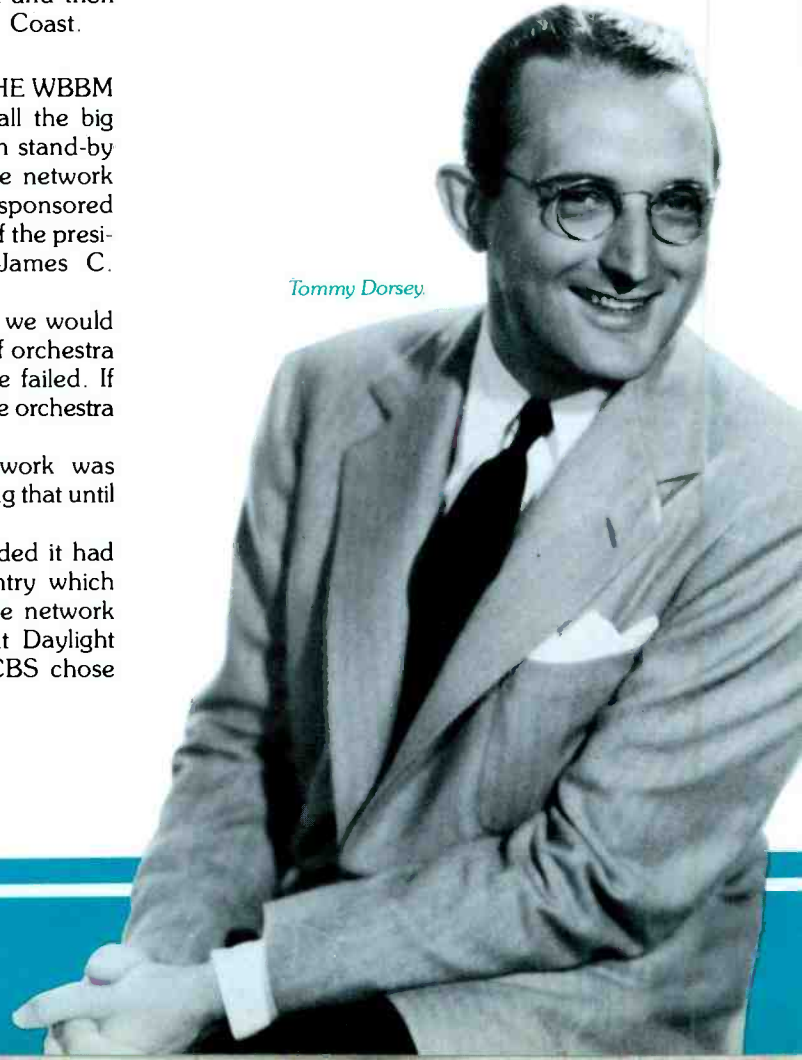
Shortly after the war, CBS decided it had a problem with areas in the country which stayed on Standard Time while the network programs were being broadcast at Daylight Time. So there was a shift and CBS chose

WBBM as a recording point. The network programs were all fed into 'BBM and recorded first on 16-inch transcription discs. We had a separate little room and we'd record them in duplicate. We had four lathes on which to record the continuous programs throughout the day. And, as we recorded, we would take the discs to the outside hall where we had eight turntables situated for a Musicians' Union man to play back to the network. Eventually we went from disc recording to *Ampex* tape and then we replaced all the machines with tape machines for recording and playback.

I worked many of the dance band remotes. I worked in the evening from five until one, or from six to two in the morning. They really needed me only for the dance band remotes starting around 10 pm. I'd usually go to one remote site an evening, places such as the *Melody Mill Ballroom*, the *Latin Quarter*, the *Pump Room*, the *LaSalle Hotel*, the *Band Box*, the *London House*, the *Drake*, the *Aragon*, and the *Milford Ballroom*.

ONE OF THE THINGS THAT WBBM management used to tell us was that when you go into a hotel with your amplifier, you should get a bellboy to carry the

Tommy Dorsey



amp into the ballroom or wherever the program was being performed. They did not want us to tote that big, heavy amplifier through the lobby. The reason for that was simple. If you brushed up against somebody, carrying that amplifier, and perhaps they'd be injured or bruised or something like that, they would come after CBS. It was better to pay the bellboy, and if he had any accidents, running into people in the lobby or something, it was the hotel's problem. So we were given an expense account and you would put down "Bellboy tip" or "carrying the luggage." I can still see that amplifier box, a bruiser, about 18 inches long and six or eight inches square, in a lead-lined case which also contained several vacuum tubes and so forth.

I was usually the only technician at a band remote. The announcer stayed back at the studio. I carried three or four mikes, and the microphone stands were usually kept at the hotel. The amp was battery-operated and we had a storage battery system kept in a huge box, which was usually parked permanently at the remote location. You had to set up the cords and place the microphones in the various positions around the band, then hook up the amplifier to the telephone line and then call in to the station. We had a small, ringing amplifier that rang in the Master Control room.

Then we would check in with the booth announcer and go over the numbers. We had a clearance sheet that we presented to the orchestra leader, showing the numbers that were scheduled to be played on the air. We would have to get all that information straightened out. We were required to be set up half-an-hour before broadcast.



THERE WERE TWO BROADCAST lines from the remote site to WBBM, a program line and a cue line. They had a system of relays at the studio that permitted you to hear your own program coming back from the studio. After it went to the studio, it filtered through the board and then came down the cue line. I could hear the announcer at the studio introduce the number, then I would point to the orchestra leader to pick up the cue and he'd start playing. I worked with Tommy Dorsey, Ray Pearl, Wayne King and many others.

The band remotes were on practically every night. They would start about 11 pm with perhaps a network show, then we'd take over from 11:30 to midnight, perhaps feeding to the network. After midnight, there would be no more network, but we would carry on for another hour or so.

There were close to 40 people on the technical staff, including seven guys who were out at the transmitter. They had two fellows on duty all day long at the transmitter, seven days a week. But late night hours they would have only one guy out there, after the station's commercial responsibility was over. If anything happened out there, no one was ever permitted to enter the transmitter cubicles or touch any of the gear inside, unless another man was there.

Those were fun, rewarding days. Never a dull moment.



Wayne King.



1932-1950: THE WBBM AIR THEATER

Sophie Tucker.



WBBM WAS VERY MUCH AT home with studios and offices in the *Wrigley Building*, the illuminated Chicago landmark at the foot of the Magnificent Mile of North Michigan Avenue.

By mid-1932, in Glenview, WBBM's transmitter utilized a "T-type" flattop antenna system supported by two, 305-foot towers.

The *Columbia Broadcasting System* and WBBM were good for each other and the station thrived under the capable direction of H. Leslie Atlass, who was a "hands on" manager. He knew the intimate operation of every department from sales to engineering to programming. He had grown up with the station and knew how it worked and what made it work.

Particularly interested in programming, Atlass had developed (with the financial resources of the *Columbia* network) a fine staff of local announcers and performers who gave a richness to WBBM that few other stations in Chicago and across the country could match. In the early 1930s, the WBBM announcing staff included Harlow Wilcox (who went on to become one of the nation's premiere announcers, most notably as the *Johnson's Wax* salesman on *Fibber McGee and Molly* broad-

casts), Norman Barry (who later joined the NBC staff in Chicago), Jean Paul King, Harold Fair, Holland Engle (who in later years was a fixture at WGN) and news commentator Harry Steele.

PAT FLANAGAN WAS THE RESIDENT sportscaster and he reported the play-by-play action to listeners of Chicago Cubs games on WBBM. During the baseball season *Walgreen Drug Stores* sponsored Flanagan's *Sports Hunches* program for 15 minutes before each game and during the 15 minute intermission between double headers.

WBBM, of course, had its own studio orchestra and Howard Neumiller was musical director with Billy Mills and Joe Ainley, who were musical production men. (Billy Mills had worked for the Isham Jones band as arranger and had his own orchestra in Chicago in the early 1920s. He later went from WBBM to the *Columbia Broadcasting System* on the West



Eddie Cantor.



Billy Mills.

Coast as general musical director of the Western Division of CBS. In 1938 he became the band leader for *Fibber McGee and Molly* on NBC.)

Among vocal talent presented to WBBM listeners during the early and mid-1930s were Jack Brooks ("Song Souvenirs"); Lee Morse ("Decorative little red-haired singer of Musical Comedy fame"); Jack Burnette ("Dark and handsome tenor with the high-pitched voice"); Billy Scott ("The Southern Gentleman of Song"); Italian baritone Mario Fiorella; Harriet Cruise ("That shy little girl from Nebraska"); and the Masqueraders (a "Quartet of young College men" which included William Ross, University of Chicago, first tenor; Roger Robinson, Northwestern University, baritone; and Winford Stracke, University of Iowa, bass. Win Stracke later ventured forth on his own as a folk singer of some reknown and appeared in the early 1950s on Chicago and network television on *Stud's Place* and *Hawkins Falls*).

JUMPING ON THE WBBM BAND wagon were a cavalcade of big-name orchestras, all broadcasting from remote locations in and around the Chicago area. Ace Brigode was on the bandstand at the *Merry*

Gardens and Husk O'Hare, the "Genial Gentleman of the Air" beamed his special brand of music to listeners from the *Canton Tea Garden* during luncheon and late evening broadcasts. *Johnny Hemp and his Orchestra* and *Clyde Lucas and his California Dons* were heard from the LaSalle Hotel. *Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians* and *Ted Lewis and his Orchestra* would broadcast frequently from the Wisconsin Dells. (Lombardo was featured on the *Columbia* network every New Year's Eve with a remote from the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City).

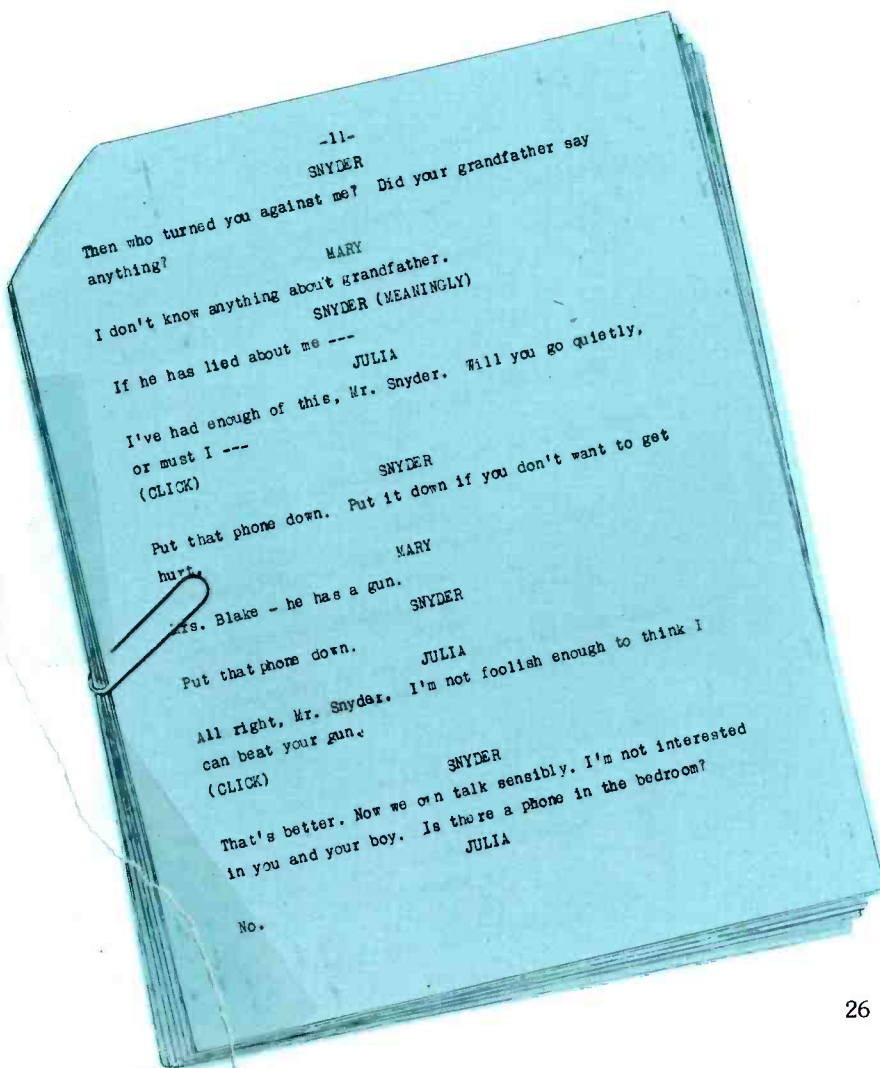
Sophie Tucker, *Last of the Red-Hot Mamas*, was the featured headliner on a special WBBM broadcast on July 13, 1933 while the popular entertainer was appearing in the Windy City. Also that year, in another special program, this time from the *Century of Progress World's Fair*, WBBM presented a quarter-hour portion of the *Grand Army of the Republic Day* at the Fair, with speeches and musical entertainment provided by the *Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs' Chorus*.

But there was more than music on H. Leslie Atlas' station, now called the *WBBM Air Theatre* broadcasting from the *Wrigley Building* in Chicago.

ACTOR HUGH STUDEBAKER WAS the star of a weekly program for children entitled *Mufti, the Man of Magic*. It was about Mufti's experiences in the Himalayan Mountains, where the "crazed inventor" of "Wings of Doom" was the source of mystery and trouble. (Studebaker went on to become the leading character, Dr. Bob Graham, in the long-running daytime serial *Bachelor's Children*, and as a host of other characters on other radio programs including *Captain Midnight*, *Fibber McGee*, *Guiding Light*, *Right to Happiness*, *Road of Life*, and *Woman In White*.)

Growin' Up, a Monday through Friday radio serial of "modern youth" was based on the exploits of young teenagers in a "modern day American city." *Johnson & Johnson Products* sponsored this "ever-fascinating story of youth finding its way in life."

Crazy Water Crystals was the sponsor of *J. B. and Mae*, a nightly dramatic serial which was considered unusual in that the sponsor's



"The Heart of Julia Blake," episode #220. Sponsored by Armstrong's Quaker Rugs. Aired July 28, 1939.

message came in the middle of two short acts, rather than at the beginning and end of the program.

Grandpa Burton's Stories was a late afternoon feature every Monday and Wednesday with personality Bill Barr, who narrated adventures of interest to both youngsters and adults.

The Count of Monte Cristo was an ambitious dramatization of the popular Alexander Dumas story featuring WBBM staff and local freelance radio actors.

CHILD ACTRESS MITZI GREEN appeared in *Happy Landings*, a serial for children; Jerry Sullivan presented a daily program of old songs; and Chicago favorites Eddie and Fanny Cavanaugh were on every weekday at 1 pm, sponsored by *Broadcast Brand Corned Beef Hash*, with a program

of comedy, songs and humorous rhymes submitted by listeners.

These and other local WBBM shows were woven in and around such CBS network offerings as *The Voice of Experience*, an advice program conducted by Dr. Marion Sayle Taylor; *Tito Guizar and his Guitar*; *The Songs of Morton Downey*; *Don Ross, the Pontiac Minstrel*; and commentaries by Boake Carter and Edwin C. Hill. Comedy was provided by George Burns and Gracie Allen; Colonel Stoopnagle and Budd; and Fred Allen with the *Linit Bath Club Revue*, sponsored by *Linit Bath Oil*.

Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll starred as *Amos 'n' Andy*. Singer Jane Froman headed her own musical variety show featuring a group known as the *Snow Queens*, and Dick Powell appeared in a program with *Ted FioRita and his Orchestra*.



Left: Harlow Wilcox.

Below: Boake Carter.



MARIE, THE *LITTLE FRENCH Princess* was heard daily at noon and *Smilin' Ed McConnell* was also a regular weekday feature (before he developed the *Buster Brown Gang* with Froggy the Gremlin, *Midnight the Cat* and *Squeaky the Mouse*).

Comic strips jumped from the funny pages to the mind's eye when CBS presented *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, sponsored by *Cocomalt*.

WBBM created a number of programs for local broadcast that were deemed good enough to be presented on the entire *Columbia* network.

One of these programs was *Skippy*, with Franklin Adams, Jr. in the role created in the comics by Percy Crosby. Another was *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy* in which Jim Ameche starred as the teenager who waved the flag for Hudson High in the adventure show sponsored by *Wheaties*, "Breakfast of Champions."

Myrt and Marge found its way to network exposure via WBBM. Myrtle Vail and Donna Damerel Fick appeared as sisters in show business, one a trouper, the other a newcomer to backstage life. In real life, Donna was actually the daughter of Myrtle.

WRITER GOODMAN ACE AND HIS wife Jane created *Easy Aces* for a local station in Kansas City in 1930, and a year later moved to Chicago where

WBBM became the home for their popular show, heard on the full CBS network for many years.

In 1935, the *Federal Communications Commission* granted permission to WBBM to raise power from 25,000 watts to the maximum allowable 50,000 watts. The following year all CBS operations in Chicago, network sales, network administrative offices, and the offices and studios of WBBM, were consolidated into the first three floors of the *Wrigley Building*. Improvements at the *WBBM Air Theatre*, at a cost of about \$160,000, included a 200-seat auditorium studio on the first floor (where the *Wrigley Building Restaurant* is located today) and main studios on the second floor. There were 12 studios in all.

With the expansion of studio facilities in the late 1930s, WBBM was better able to handle the growing list of locally produced programs. The station was producing 10 quarter-hour programs each weekday and seven nighttime programs each week for the *Columbia* network.

SOUND EFFECTS WERE ESSENTIAL to comedy or dramatic programs and WBBM boasted a fine department devoted to these image-creating devices. Urban Johnson was head of the WBBM Sound Effects Division. One of the first men to organize a sound effects department in Chicago, Johnson was a former drummer and had five other musicians working for him as sound men. It was not necessary to be a musician to become a sound effects man, but

Radio Broadcasting is Not All Play
There's stem business behind the romantic programs you hear. Here are some WBBM workrooms.

Right—Recently a man and a woman... New... and... pages.

Below—One of the new... of radio... WBBM.

Below—Master control... New... and... the... radio... the... WBBM... of the... of... and... All... and... from... programs.

This advanced equipment is responsible for your... and... that they were in the... room.

A sub-control room... that... where... equipment... in... clear....

Below—A busy scene of... one of the... where... programs... are... and... all... is... in....

Below—A sub-control room... that... where... equipment... in... clear....

Below—A sub-control room... that... where... equipment... in... clear....

Below—A sub-control room... that... where... equipment... in... clear....



Fred Allen and Portland Hoffa

Stoopnagle and Budd comedy team.

Johnson felt that musicians possessed an accuracy for cues and the sense of rhythm necessary for that line of work.

For example, to provide an accurate effect of the routine of a chorus tap dance over the air, four sound men, each grasping a pair of ladies' cleated slippers, tapped out the dance from drum notes placed before them. Various horses' hooves effects were produced by rhythmically slapping down a pair of coconut shells on different bases. For a horse traveling over pavement, hard, thick linoleum was used for the "ground." Authentic gravel, placed in boxes, formed the "footing" for that specific type of road. A horse galloping over turf was successfully simulated by using soft rubber pads as the base. The operator's sense of rhythm played an important role in effectively producing those sound effects.

WBBM's basement sound effects laboratory in the *Wrigley Building* resembled an antique shop, with shelves holding everything from pistols to chinaware. Before an effect was built, it had to be carefully planned and clearly out-



Hugh Studebaker, actor in daytime dramas.



*Easy Aces:
Goodman and Jane Ace.*



George Burns and Gracie Allen.

lined. After the contraption to be used was constructed and tested, it was brought to a studio and retested in various positions around the microphone. The sensitive mechanism of the microphone reacted peculiarly to sound effects and sometimes it was necessary to experiment for a long time before a proper registration could be assured.

Among the interesting devices found in the WBBM Sound Effects Department were three "elevator motors" enclosed in box-like compartments and operated by push buttons. Each motor represented a type of building in which the scenes of the drama would take place. A soft purr and whiz signified a modern building. A slow, sluggish sound indicated an antiquated structure, while a coarse, jolting movement represented a freight elevator used in factory or warehouse scenes.

ANOTHER DEVICE PRODUCED THE effect of a horse pulling a wagon over a rough road. The object was 18 inches high and was composed of a toy-like, jolting cart which traveled over a wooden roller when the apparatus was propelled by a hand crank. Two coconut shells at the front of the device produced the clattering of the horses' hooves. The effect of a wagon being pulled over a

smooth-surfaced road merely involved replacing the clumsy cart with a rubber-wheeled doll buggy.

Hundreds of other devices were part of the WBBM sound effects lab. Some were invented in the department while others were authentic articles. There were 60 types of bells, ranging from fire truck gongs to jingle bells; dozens of clocks whose tickings were used to create atmosphere; and 25 auto horns, dating from a 1904 Maxwell to modern dual-blast horns.

The department also had a turkey claw which, when scraped against a wooden surface, reproduced the effect of a dog scratching on a door. An authentic telephone ring was produced by actually ringing a telephone.

Less than half the sounds needed for broadcasts were represented by objects in the laboratory. Two thousand records in another section of the department produced "larger" sounds for broadcast. Some were purchased from firms that manufactured them and others were made by WBBM's portable recording studio which traveled about the city to pick up sounds required by the department. At one time the traveling studio made a trip to the country, setting up its equipment in a farmer's barn to record the cooing of hundreds of pigeons required for a church belfry scene. Another trip was made to Gary, Indiana to record the authentic roar of a blast furnace in a steel mill.

DOZENS OF CHICAGO RADIO ACTORS and actresses found themselves in the studios of the *WBBM Air Theatre*, *Wrigley Building, Chicago*, where writers were grinding out scripts for such daytime dramas as Oxydol's "mother of the air" *Ma Perkins*, starring Virginia Payne, Rita Ascot and Charles Egleston; *Bachelor's Children* with Hugh Studebaker, Olan Soule and Charles Flynn (who succeeded Jim Ameche as *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy*); *Betty and Bob* with Elizabeth Reller and Les Tremayne; *Arnold Grimm's Daughters* featuring Betty Lou Gerson and Ed Prentiss (who was also *Captain Midnight* on WGN-Mutual); *Kitty Keene, Inc.* with Beverly Younger and Bob Bailey (who later became *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar*); and *Kay Fairchild, Stepmother* star-

Creating pictures
with sound effects.

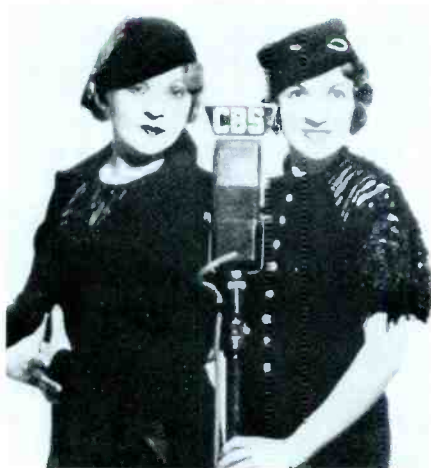




TEXACO STAR THEATRE
COLUMBIA
NETWORK
 COAST-TO-COAST
 9 E.S.T., 8 C.S.T., 7 M.S.T.,
 9 P.S.T.

FRED ALLEN

KENNY BAKER
 PORTLAND HOFFA
 AL GOODMAN'S
 ORCHESTRA
 THE TEXACO WORK-
 SHOP PLAYERS

Above:

*Middle, left: Myrt and Marge.
Myrtle Vail and Donna Damerel Fick.*

*Middle, right: Virginia Payne as "Ma Perkins."
with Murray Forbes and Charles Egelston.*

*Bottom: Sound effects technician in
action on WBBM dramatic program.*

ring Sunda Love, Marvin Miller, Francis X. Bushman (a star of the silent screen) and Willard Waterman (who eventually became the *Great Gildersleeve*); *the Romance of Helen Trent* featuring Virginia Clark as the woman who, "... when real life mocks her, breaks her hopes, dashes her against the rocks of despair ... fights back bravely, successfully, to prove what so many women long to prove in their own lives: that because a women is 35, and more, romance in life need not be over; that romance of youth can extend into middle life, and even beyond..."

Daytime listeners to WBBM were able to hear those Chicago-originated soap operas as well as other network fare from CBS, including *Big Sister*; *Aunt Jenny's Real Life Stories*; *The Goldbergs*; *Our Gal Sunday*; *Road of Life*; and *Valiant Lady*. Plus *Betty Crocker* for *General Mills* (from Chicago) and *Mary Lee Taylor* for *Pet Milk* (from New York) offering "kitchen-tested" recipes for homemakers while *Mary Margaret McBride* conducted interviews with fascinating guests of interest for a large, daytime, audience of women at home.

For local listeners only, WBBM presented *The Musical Clock*, an early morning program; *The Rhymsters* with Eddie and Fanny Cavanaugh; and *Meet The Missus*, an audience participation show. WBBM Music Director Howard Neumiller was at the piano with a late afternoon interlude of musical favorites.

FOR THE NETWORK'S NIGHTTIME schedule, WBBM produced a respectable list of "prime time" programs in its *Wrigley Building* studios. *Skelly Oil Company* sponsored *The Court of Missing Heirs* in an attempt to find the heirs to large and small fortunes. *Wrigley's Gum* presented *Double Everything*, a musical variety show designed to keep the listening audience aware of its Doublemint Gum product. *Wayne King and his Orchestra* appeared weekly on the *Lady Esther Serenade*, and the WBBM/CBS staff orchestra led the way in two more Wrigley-sponsored programs, *Just Entertainment* and *Poetic Melodies*, featuring singer Jack Futon. Most of these nighttime shows were performed before an audience in WBBM's main floor 200-seat Studio A. Some 46 musicians were part of the WBBM staff orchestra.

Prime time hours in the evening brought real meaning to the slogan, *WBBM Air Theatre* as the station carried a marvelous line-up of CBS broadcasts to entertain its listening audience.

On Monday it was the *Lux Radio Theatre* with producer Cecil B. DeMille introducing favorite Hollywood stars in radio adaptations of popular motion pictures. *Amos 'n' Andy* had moved to NBC, so CBS provided *Pick and*

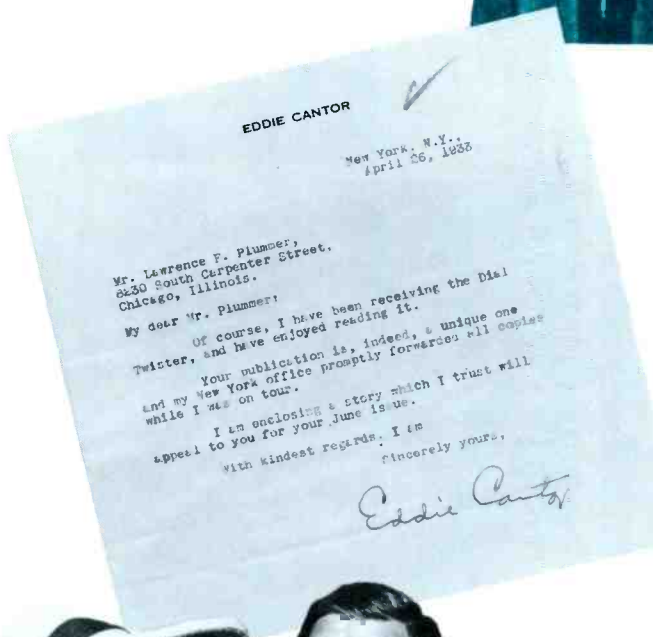
Below (L to R): Ben Bernie. Louella Parsons. Walter Winchell.



Al Jolson.



Bottom, left:
Deanna Durbin with Eddie Cantor.



Pat, Pat Padgett and Pick Malone, who went on the air as minstrel comics for the *Model Tobacco Company*, selling *Dill's Best*.

Tuesday evenings found WBBM's ever-growing audience tuning in and enjoying Edward G. Robinson starring as Steve Wilson, crusading editor of the *Illustrated Press* on *Big Town*, sponsored by *Rinso*; Al Jolson and the *Lifebuoy Show*; *Al Pearce and his Gang* (with Pearce starring as Elmer Blurt, the reluctant salesman: "Nobody home, I hope, I hope"); plus *Jack Oakie's College* and *Benny Goodman's Swing School*, both on the air for *Camel Cigarettes*.

EDDIE CANTOR WAS THE BIG NETWORK headliner on Wednesday nights with his *Texaco Program*, followed by *Gangbusters*, the G-Man show which dramatized closed FBI files (with the permission of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover). *Palmolive Soap* picked up the tab for *Gangbusters*.

The Kate Smith Hour featured the popular singer in a program of music, comedy guests and dramatic sketches every Thursday evening, followed by an hour of amateur talent



Eddie and Fanny Cavanaugh.

Top: Jack Oakie.
 Middle: Dick Powell.
 Bottom: Powell with Frances Langford.

Top: Paul Whiteman,
 the King of Jazz.
 Middle: Louella Parsons
 Bottom: Major Edward Bowes.



OUTSTANDING
 DECCA RECORDS
 by
DICK POWELL
 ★ ★ ★ ★

3266 DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP
 SONG OF THE MARINES

2013 ON WISCONSIN
 THE EYES OF TEXAS ARE
 UPON YOU

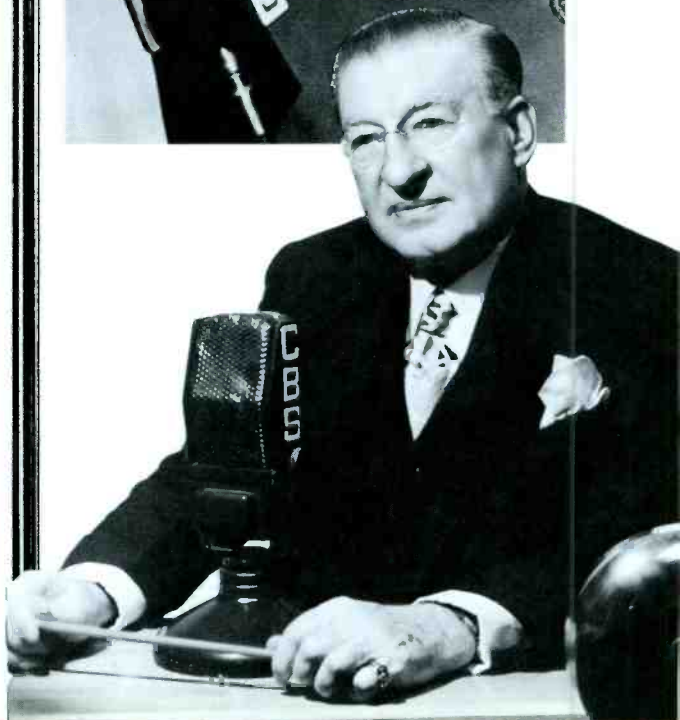
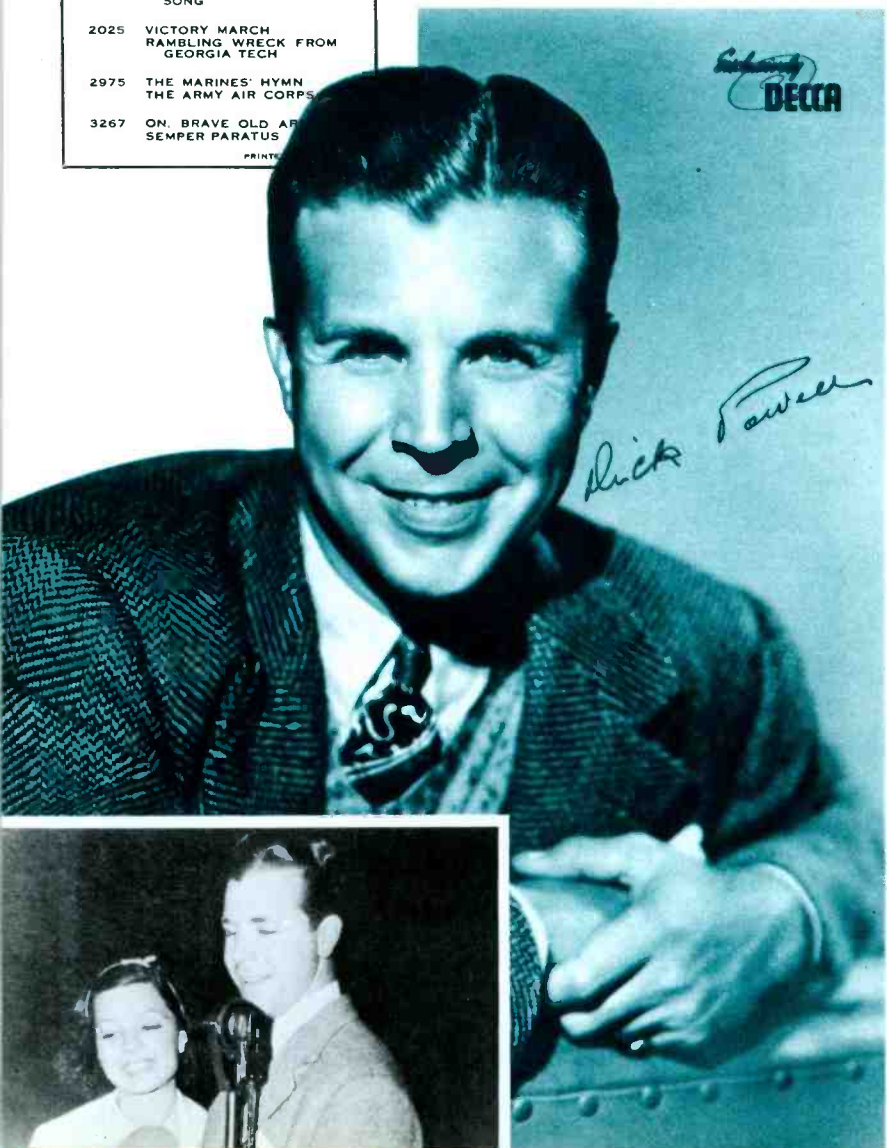
2024 STEIN SONG
 THE ILLINOIS LOYALTY
 SONG

2025 VICTORY MARCH
 RAMBLING WRECK FROM
 GEORGIA TECH

2975 THE MARINES' HYMN
 THE ARMY AIR CORPS

3267 ON, BRAVE OLD AR
 SEMPER PARATUS

PRINTED



gathered before the microphones by Major Edward Bowes who, if he felt an amateur wasn't quite ready for the "big time," would hit a large gong, signaling an abrupt end to the aspiring newcomer's career. *Calumet Baking Powder* was Kate Smith's sponsor and the *Amateur Hour* was the radio showcase for products manufactured by the *Chrysler Corporation*.

On Friday nights, *Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra* performed on the air for *Chesterfield Cigarettes*, and the *Campbell Soup Company* presented *Hollywood Hotel* starring Dick Powell with gossip columnist Louella Parsons and a raft of celebrity guests.

Your Hit Parade, sponsored by *Lucky Strike Cigarettes*, was the big hour on Saturday night, presenting the top tunes in the nation, reflecting "an accurate, authentic tabulation of America's taste in popular music . . . as determined by *Your Hit Parade* survey which checks the best sellers in sheet music and phonograph records, the songs most heard on the air and most played in the automatic coin machines." Another Saturday night feature on WBBM/CBS was *Professor Quiz* as quizmaster Craig Earl and announcer Robert Trout offered one of the first quiz shows on radio.

Major Bowes offered a second program each week, every Sunday morning, featuring the more talented amateurs from his various troupes. The *Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir* was also a regular Sunday morning feature. In the early afternoon listeners heard Jean Hersholt as the kindly *Dr. Christian*, a character based on Dr. Allan Roy DaFoe, who had delivered the famous Dionne Quintuplets. Appropriately, *Dr. Christian* was sponsored by *Vaseline Petroleum Jelly*.

Other Sunday programs featured Guy Lombardo, comedian Joe Penner ("Wanna buy a duck?"), and the *Phil Baker Show* starring ex-vaudevillian Baker in a comedy-variety series for the *Gulf Oil Company*.

IN JANUARY, 1939, A NEW 490-FOOT Blaw-Knox guyed vertical radiating antenna tower was installed at a cost of \$25,000 at WBBM's Glenview transmitting site near Lake and Shermer Avenues. After several months of testing, the antenna was put into operation at the end of March. But in April a spring ice storm engulfed the Midwest and

Pick and Pat comedy team.



Edward G. Robinson.

"Wanna Buy A Duck?"—Joe Penner



WBBM was one of its casualties.

At 9:50 pm on April 13 a guy wire on the new antenna tower snapped and the 490-foot tower collapsed. WBBM went off the air for nearly four hours. CBS network programs were transferred to station WIND (owned and operated by this time by Ralph Atlass). Broadcasting resumed on WBBM at 1:30 am from a temporary tower at the Glenview transmitter.

Next morning, WBBM completed arrangements with the *National Broadcasting Company* to temporarily use the transmitter of WENR, its Blue Network station in Chicago. WBBM programs shifted to the WENR transmitter in Downers Grove, Illinois while impatient WBBM engineers awaited the erection of a replacement tower. In September, a second 490-foot Blaw-Knox tower was in place in Glenview and WBBM was back at its 50,000 watt strength. (During the ice storm that crippled WBBM's transmitter, station WGN also suffered a problem at its transmitter site in Roselle, Illinois. The sleet storm weighed down and snapped an electric wire, throwing WGN off the air for 45 minutes shortly before 10 pm on April 13.)

THROUGHOUT THE LATE 1920s AND all of the '30s, WBBM had been broadcasting on a frequency of 770 kilocycles. But at 3 am, Saturday, March 29, 1941, as a result of the *North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement*, WBBM (and most other radio stations in North America) was obliged to change its frequency. WBBM was assigned to operate hence forth on 780 kilocycles in lieu of the previously authorized 770 kilocycles. The station continued its late-night synchronization of programming with KFAB in Lincoln, Nebraska, which had also been moved to the 780 spot on the dial.

At about this same time WBBM began operating an FM station, and after a period of experimentation, began carrying the regular WBBM-AM programs on WBBM-FM. (This simulcasting of programs would continue until July 20, 1958 when WBBM-FM began completely independent commercial operations.)

On December 7, 1941, listeners who tuned in to the *WBBM Air Theatre* to hear the usual Sunday afternoon broadcast of the *New York Philharmonic Orchestra* over the *Columbia* network were shocked when, in the midst of the program, CBS staff news reporter John Daly broke in to say, "The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor by air, President Roosevelt has just announced. . . ."

Radio in general had not spent much time or money on the dissemination of news until September of 1939 when the French and British governments declared war against Germany. That, of course, was the beginning of World War II and in the following 21 months preceding the "unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan" the nation's radio stations were



Howard K. Smith.



Eric Sevareid.



Charles Collingwood.



Edward R. Murrow in London with (L to R) Paul Manning, John Daly, Bob Trout.



beginning to build news organizations to gather and report unfolding developments around the world to a concerned listening audience.

AT WBBM, CBS VICE PRESIDENT H. Leslie Atlass had appointed J. Oren Weaver the News Editor. Weaver quickly acquainted his announcing staff with the techniques of writing and reporting news. Sports announcer John Harrington assumed the position of on-the-air leadership in the news reporting field at WBBM. Fahey Flynn added expanded news reports to his announcing and sports reporting chores. As an owned and

only to report the news and analyze it, but to provide morale-building entertainment and encourage support of the war effort.

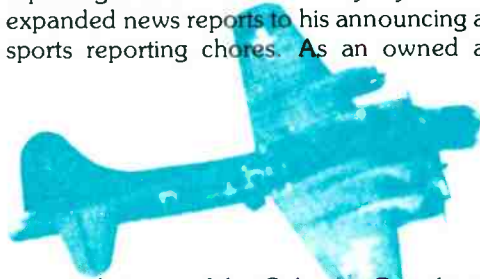
Glenview, Illinois, the site of WBBM's transmitter, was also the home of the *United States Naval Air Station*, and as more and more air traffic was being routed to this location, the Navy Department asked WBBM to move its towers to avoid any hazards to incoming and outgoing aircraft.

WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE from the Navy, WBBM moved its tower and transmitter 11½ miles southwest to its present site near Itasca, Illinois. A new 50,000 watt transmitter was installed and service began from Itasca on May 1, 1942. This transmitter is still in daily use by WBBM.

A typical broadcast day during the war years at WBBM featured a minimum of 14 regularly scheduled five and 15-minute newscasts, in addition to unscheduled news bulletins which might interrupt any of the regularly scheduled programs. Early morning listeners to WBBM heard 15 minutes of CBS network *News of the World* each day at 7 am, followed by another quarter-hour of news reported by John Harrington. During the noon hour actress Bernadine Flynn (she was Sade on the popular

operated station of the *Columbia Broadcasting System*, WBBM had at its disposal the top-flight news staff of CBS News which included Robert Trout, Eric Sevareid, Howard K. Smith, Larry Lesueur, Elmer Davis, Edwin C. Hill, Knox Manning, Charles Collingwood, and Edward R. Murrow (whose nightly *This Is London* reports fascinated and touched the nation). These newsmen reported on all fronts, including the home front, throughout World War II.

WBBM programs were regularly interrupted by network and local newsmen who brought late-breaking news to anxious listeners. Special and regularly scheduled programs were added to both the local and network line-up—not



WBBM transmitter at Itasca, Illinois (in 1951)

General Dwight D. Eisenhower.



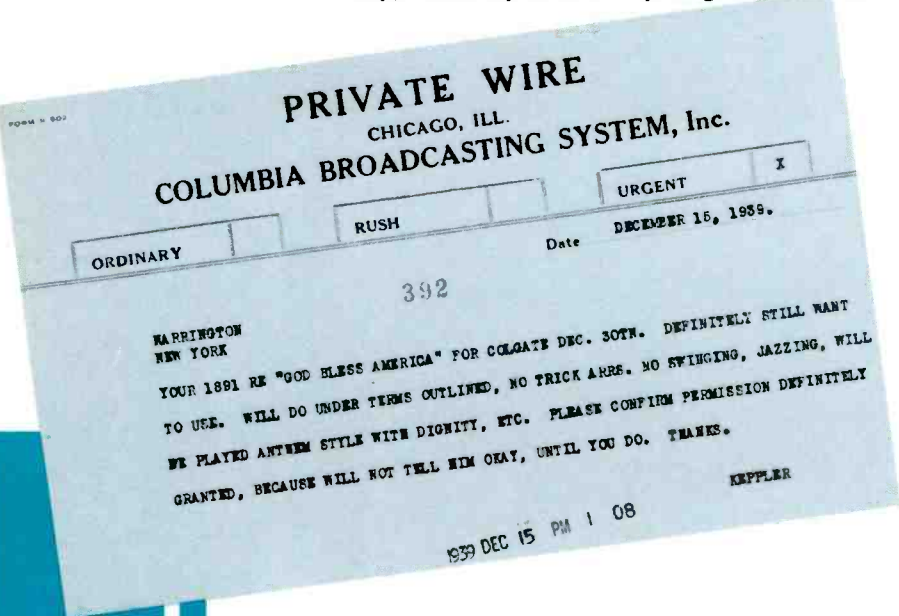
Vic and Sade series) presented a program of news for women (not women's news) sponsored by *Crisco*.

Local programming throughout the early 1940s reflected the country's concern. Typical features on the *WBBM Air Theatre* included *Victory Matinee*, a weekday show with prominent entertainers who were visiting Chicago, plus a member of one of the armed forces talking about his role in maintaining the country's defenses; *The Chicago Hour*, a program of songs focusing on allies of the United States; *Salute to Victory*; and *Navy Community Sing*. There were

aside his peacetime occupation to defend his country. *Fashions In Rations* was a Saturday morning network program aimed at women, demonstrating how to make the most out of various goods and foods that were rationed by the government during wartime.

MANY OF THE MAJOR CBS NETWORK programs (the daytime dramas and the nighttime, prime time shows) featured wartime themes and carried urgent messages to "back the attack, buy more War Bonds" and "bring your used kitchen fats to your grocer today." Listeners were urged to "plant your victory garden now" and "conserve rubber, plan a stay-at-home vacation this year."

The daytime dramas reflected what was happening in real life. Husbands and boyfriends were going off to war while women stayed at home, raised their children, ran the family business and got jobs in defense plants and in other lines of work, thereby releasing men to take up arms and fight for their country. *Ma Perkins'* son John was killed in the war and listeners grieved with Ma as she learned that her only son had been buried in an unmarked grave, "somewhere in Germany."



tory; and *Navy Community Sing*. There were also short dramatic programs, filled with patriotism, such as *War Jobs for Women*; *That Men May Live*; and *The Midwest Mobilizes*.

CBS, too, offered special programs designed to inspire a greater home front effort and to increase the sale of War Bonds and stamps.

The Wrigley Gum Company sponsored three network shows, all produced in WBBM's Chicago studios. They were *First Line of Defense*, promoting the effort of the U.S. Navy; *America In the Air*, a salute to the Army Air Corps; and *Service to the Front*, spotlighting defense plant workers and their efforts to provide the nation's fighting men with the best equipment, supplies and ammunition.

Columbia offered *The Man Behind the Gun*, a profile of the average American who had put



Kate Smith and Babe Ruth.

"The Voice" - Frank Sinatra.

WBBM listeners heard Fred Allen on CBS asking the inhabitants of *Allen's Alley* a question about gas rationing. Kate Smith regularly sang *God Bless America* on her program and Judy Canova dedicated her closing musical number each week to "our boys in the service."

On the quiz show, *Take It Or Leave It*, quizmaster Phil Baker always helped a soldier or sailor contestant answer the big \$64 question with an extra hint or an easy clue. None of the civilian contestants seemed to mind. And when the GI was about to leave with his winnings, Baker asked him one additional question, "What's your rank, sailor?" When the sailor gave the obviously correct reply, Baker doubled his

KEPPLER
MAG WILSON
ZAFFER(2)
CRONIN
WAYNE KING
ANNOUNCER
KIRK
BARTMAN

COLGATE "WAYNE KING" - SATURDAY - D
CBS

THEMES: THE WALTZ YOU SAVED FOR ME
LOVE THEME - FROM "FALL OF

1. OH JOHNNY OH!
2. MELANCHOLY BABY
3. LET'S SAY GOODNIGHT TO THE LADIES
4. CHATTERBOX
5. MY LAST GOODBYE
6. DEAR OLD GIRL

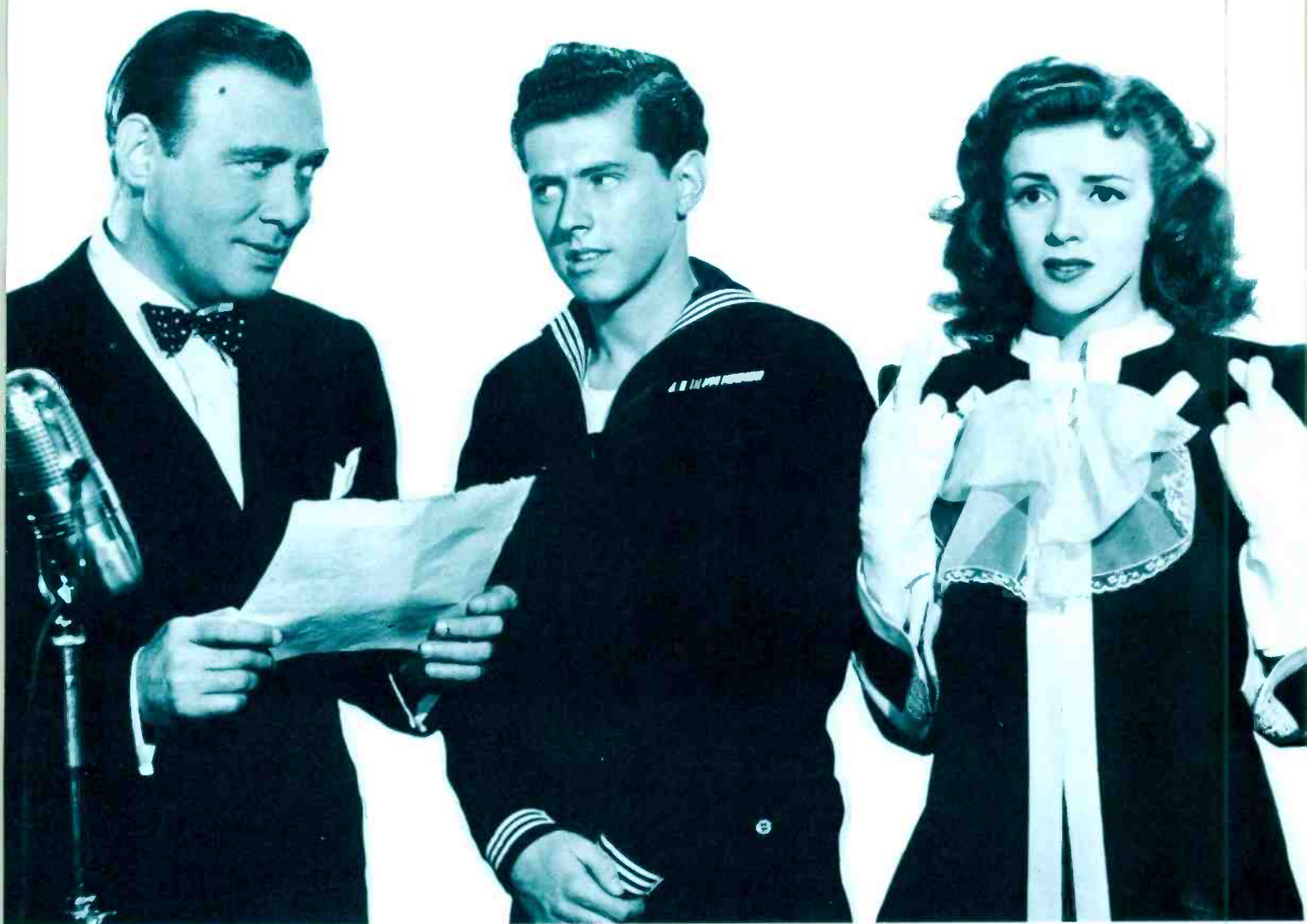
Re-----7. GOD BLESS AMERICA ----- BY SERVING

NOTE: ORIGINAL POEM WILL BE USED USING
ONE OF THE ABOVE CLEAR NUMBERS, 2
BACKGROUND.

Wired 12/8/39.

HK





"Take It or Leave It" emcee Phil Baker recreates the radio show in a scene from the 1944 film based upon the popular quiz program. The sailor is Edward Ryan and his girl is Marjorie Masson.

winnings and the young serviceman went off with \$128 and the warm approval of a cheering studio audience and the folks at home.

The FBI In Peace and War presented dramatizations of espionage and sabotage. Dinah Shore's programs originated from military bases in the United States. *Your Hit Parade* reflected the wartime years as *Mark Warno and the Orchestra* played while Frank Sinatra and Bea Wayne sang such tunes as *Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition*, *Comin' In on a Wing and a Prayer*, *I'll Be Seeing You*, and *I'll Walk Alone*.

LISTENERS WHO TUNED IN TO WBBM heard of the exploits of General Dwight Eisenhower in Europe and General Douglas MacArthur in the Pacific. There was D-

Day in 1944 and the death of President Roosevelt in 1945, emotionally described for CBS listeners by Arthur Godfrey. President Truman's announcement of the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Japan signaled the last days of the war, followed by the broadcast of the Japanese surrender. Finally, the war was over.

A few changes had taken place at WBBM during the war years. On May 31, 1944, the synchronization of nighttime broadcast signals between WBBM and KFAB in Lincoln, Nebraska ended after an 11-year post-sundown association. Also in 1944, J. L. VanVolkenburg, who had been assistant to H. Leslie Atlass, was elevated to the post of WBBM General Manager with Atlass continuing as Vice President of CBS' Chicago operations.

After the war, in 1946, Frank B. Falknor, who joined the station in 1933 and had been Operations Engineer for CBS Central Division and Chief Engineer of WBBM, was named General Manager, while VanVolkenburg became Vice President and Director of Television Operations for the network (reflecting the CBS move towards TV). In September, 1947, a new vertical radiating antenna tower was installed at the Itasca transmitter site.

WBBM's *Wrigley Building* studios were busier than ever in the years following the war. Tommy Bartlett, Cliff Johnson and Jim Conway had joined the announcing staff and were hosting a number of their own programs. (Johnson and his family shared breakfast with morning listeners when a WBBM microphone was placed on the table in the kitchen of the Johnson family home in suburban Oak Park.) Jim Conway went *Shopping with the Missus* and traveled to hundreds of grocery stores in Chicago and suburbs on behalf of *Milnot* ("It Whips!").

CAESAR PETRILLO WAS STILL CONDUCTOR of the WBBM/CBS Chicago staff orchestra. Petrillo had been a trombonist in nightclubs and cafes with Paul Whiteman, Vincent Lopez, Paul Ash and other name bands. For 10 years he was the assistant conductor and member of the house orchestras at *Balaban and Katz' Uptown, Paradise* and *Chicago* theatres in the city. He joined the WBBM orchestra in 1937, became its conductor in 1940 and was elevated to music director in 1943, supervising all live and recorded music on the station.

Following the war, the WBBM/CBS Chicago Staff orchestra, under the baton of Petrillo, was heard regularly in programs that featured singer Billy Leach, the King's Jesters, the Meadowlarks, and Curt Massey.

Julian Bentley had joined the news staff and John Harrington and Fahey Flynn were doubling as sportscasters and newscasters. Flynn visited his share of supermarkets for audience participation programs and even took a few



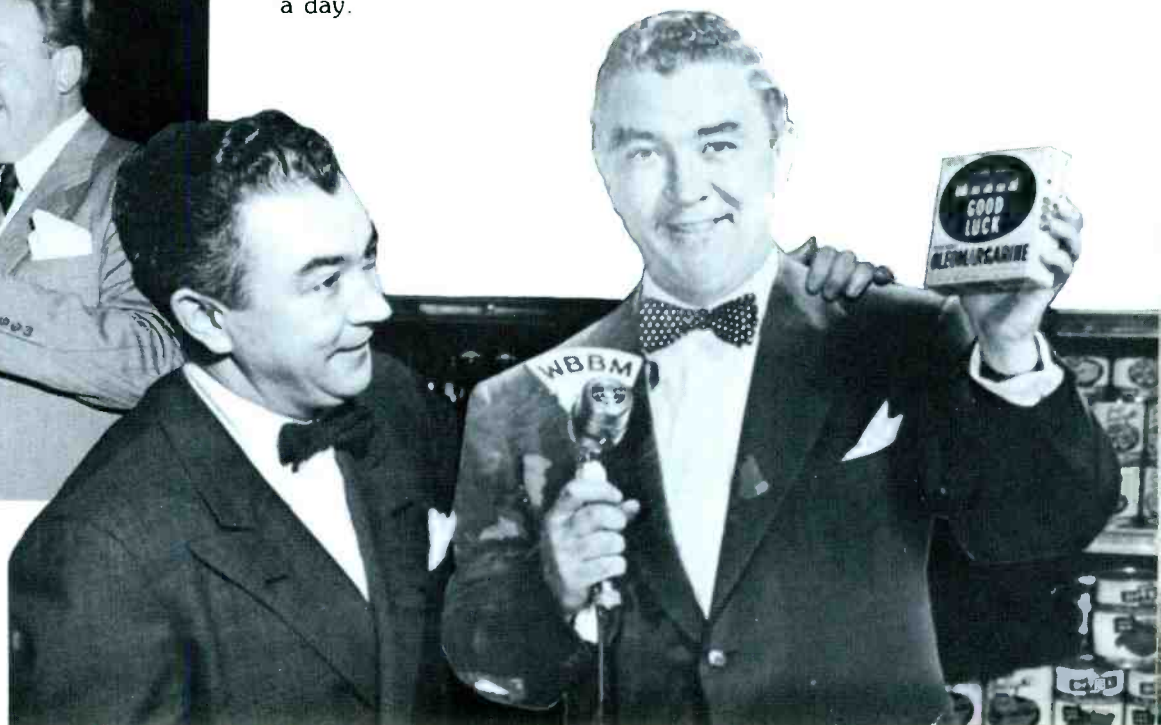
Jim Conway. "Shopping with the Missus."

turns on some of the station's dramatic programs, most notably as a wife-killer on a drama entitled "Brief Pause for Murder" in a 1946 broadcast of *The Whistler*.

Bob Elson had a late night sports show on WBBM, Tony Weitzel offered celebrity interviews and George Watson packed an amazing number of commercials into a 15-minute package of zany comedy and music called *Gold Coast Rhythm*, heard two or three times a day.



Above: Actor David Niven with Tommy Bartlett.



Right: Fahey Flynn with a cardboard cut-out of Fahey Flynn.

Paul Gibson was on the air every morning at 7 with an hour of one-sided conversation. One of radio's great ad-libbers, Gibson sat down in the studio with a note or two in his coat pocket, a newspaper clipping in his hand and a hat on his head. He proceeded to talk for a solid hour on virtually any subject.



A WBBM dramatic show.

Paul Gibson
WBBM - CBS - Chicago

WBBM
 780
 ON YOUR RADIO
 DIAL

advance programs

Sunday, September 4 thru Saturday, September 10, 1940

CBS CHICAGO • 630 NORTH McCLURG COURT • WHITEHALL 4-6000

Paul Gibson

WBBM Chicago's
Showmanship Station

Talking about men
and gods; saints
and sinners —
weekdays and
Saturdays . . .

GIBSON WAS A STOCKY MAN OF medium height with curly graying hair, blue eyes, a moustache, and a barrel chest. He was called radio's conversational crusader against women. He was married five times (once to a radio singer known as Bonnie Blue Eyes) and divorced five times. He was born in 1913 near Beaumont, California and was a high school dropout who went to work as a crime reporter and Latin American correspondent for a newspaper syndicate. Later, he founded a construction company that became the largest builder of private homes in California.

Gibson's radio career began in Los Angeles, continued in San Francisco and flourished in Chicago in the mid-1940s when he joined WBBM for \$75 a week. Soon his salary was in the six-figure bracket and at one time he had more than 90 sponsors. He was a world-wide traveler and a voracious reader. When he died in 1966 at the age of 53, WBBM General Manager E. H. Shomo called Gibson "one of the greats in American broadcasting. His intelligence, his incredible memory, coupled with his great wit and personal warmth, made him the unforgettable Chicago radio personality and salesman of our times."

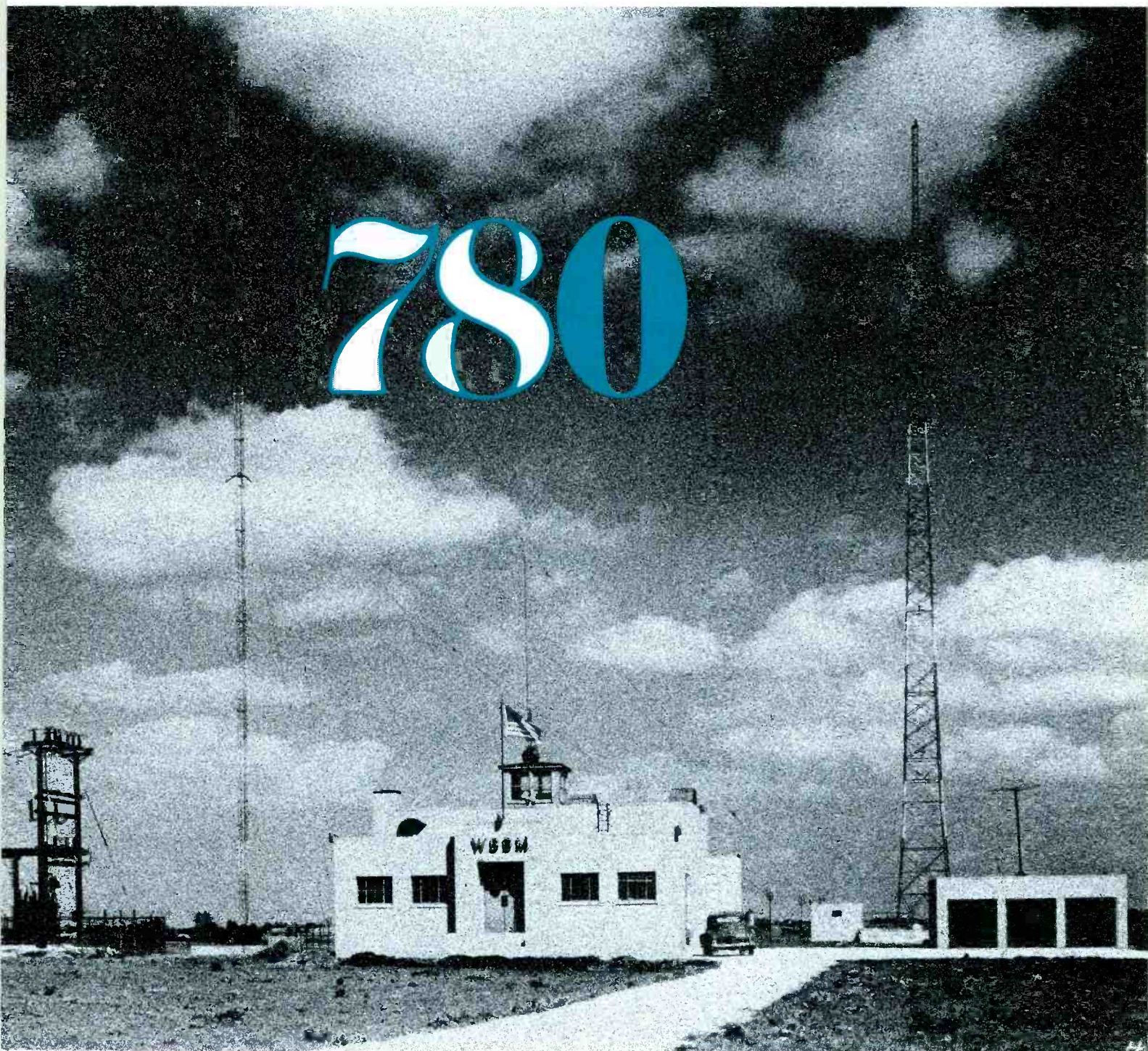
Opinionated and charming, Gibson's popular ad-lib dissertations covered everything from philosophy to fine arts, current books and authors, music and musicians, travel, and his favorite subject, women. He frequently infuriated his female audience as he offered his candid views. Not satisfied with just a single hour in the morning, Gibson popped up in mid-afternoon following a string of soap operas, and later at night after the network shows.

BIG BAND REMOTE BROADCASTS were popular on WBBM as an after 10 pm feature before, during, and after the years of World War II. Most of the station's staff announcers took their turn introducing the sounds of the bands as they broadcast from the *Aragon, Trianon, Milford Ballroom, Edgewater Beach Hotel* and other venues in and around Chicago.

With the increase of popular local entertainment being broadcast, the *WBBM Air Theatre* was gradually becoming known as *Chicago's Showmanship Station*.

The Itasca transmitter site in 1942, shortly after we began transmitting from there.

780



March 29, 1941: WBBM 770 becomes WBBM 780.

Art Thorsen, who was Program Director at WBBM from 1958 until 1962, came to the station as a writer in January, 1950. After a tour in the Air Force, he studied television for a year-and-a-half at the *American Academy*. But at that time TV jobs were paying only \$25 a week and Thorsen felt he couldn't live on that, so he decided to get a job in radio, using his *American Academy* background.

Thorsen recalls his many years at WBBM including the interesting radio personalities, and the challenges of producing entertainment programs at Chicago's *Showmanship Station*.

ART THORSEN REMEMBERS

TIMING IS EVERYTHING. I WALKED into WBBM applying for a job in the writing department an hour after they had fired one of their writers, an Art Hellyer type, you know, one who tells off management! So they treated me like a king. They said, "Can you write a 10-minute comedy sketch right here?" I said I could. I'd have told them I could write anything, whether I could or not. And so I spent about an hour working on a sketch, and they said, "Great! Can you start tomorrow?" So I was in. Then I started writing.

It's hard to believe, but soon I was writing 36 shows a week. You can't really call a lot of them shows because they were just little five minute music things, like *Breakfast With Billy*.

THE FIRST SCRIPT AFTER I WAS hired was for *The Chicagoans*, a big orchestra show. Later, I went into the main studio to watch the show and here they were, saying my words—they were saying my words on the radio! It was a big thrill.

The *Gold Coast Show* with George Watson was another show I wrote for. We had three



*Backstage, opening night at the Lyric Opera.
Art Thorsen, right, with Monte Fassnacht, Stage Manager.*

of them going a day. One in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one in the evening. They were big money makers for the station, with all the commercials they could integrate in the story line. Mort Hall was the originator of the idea. He wrote one, I wrote one, and Bill Bell wrote one. They had a flock of commercials they couldn't put anywhere else. So, the idea was if you could build a story around these commercials, you could get away with using more than you were supposed to. So Mort came up with the idea to write these comedy sketches. They were 10 or 15-minute shows. Normally a 15-minute show would have three 60-second commercials, but there would be maybe eight commercials in the *Gold Coast* time. But you were into the commercial before you realized it because it was part of the dialogue. The first line of the commercial would carry on from the previous speech. It was great fun trying to integrate the commercials into the plot.

I'VE WRITTEN *GOLD COAST* SHOWS with 12 minutes of commercials and three minutes of story! The show lasted for about a dozen years and I think people loved it. We'd get great fan mail. Of course, the secret was in the talent. George Watson was such a talented man and you could write a script with any dialect, any accent, and he'd make you believe it. He could do so much with his delivery and his presence. He was excellent. The *King's Jesters* were the supporting players to Watson and vocalists Jean Williams and Elaine Rogers would take parts every now and then and everybody loved it, 'cause it was different from what they usually did.

The *Gold Coast Show* came out of one of the studios on the main floor of the *Wrigley Building*. George Watson insisted on working

out of those studios down there 'cause they were close to the Wrigley Bar!

BETWEEN SHOWS, AT THE WRIGLEY Restaurant and Bar, there'd be ex-temporaneous shows going on down there, especially with George Watson! George never took off his hat. That was one of his idiosyncrasies—because he was bald. So you'd see him down at the Wrigley Bar with his hat on, or he'd be at the microphone with his hat on. I've seen him at the microphone coming fresh out of the Wrigley Bar, with an announcer under each arm holding him up so that he could do his show. A third announcer held his script and he wouldn't slur a word or anything. He was perfect! George never failed to be on deck no matter what condition he was in. His performance was always good.

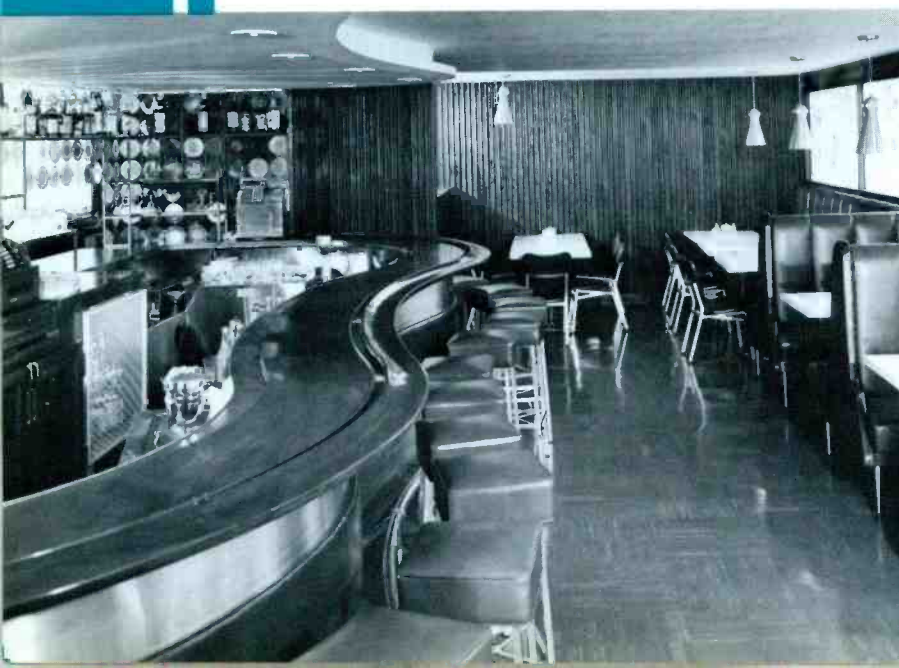


Erwin Shomo. Garry Moore. Bill Connelly. Art Thorsen.

AT WBBM IN THE WRIGLEY BUILDING, the writers worked up on the third floor, where no one could find us, and the newsroom was up there, too. There were four comedy writers, three documentary writers and, of course, all the news writers. We had a lot of writers at the station, each in his own cubbyhole.

The comedy writers would come in during the morning, do about a paragraph of plot and show it to Mort Hall, who was the chief writer. And he'd say, "Yeah, go ahead with it," or "No, that's stupid, don't do that," and you'd have to write a sketch in a couple of hours, because you had a couple of other things you had to do during the day, too. It was the greatest training ground for writers that I could ever imagine. Creativity, plus a deadline and the pressure of getting that stuff out.

The Wrigley bar in the Wrigley Building, circa 1950.



IN ABOUT 1957, AFTER WBBM HAD moved to McClurg Court, I went from writer to Creative Director. It was my job to develop new programs for the sales department to sell. There'd be musical programs like *Luncheon With Billy* and the *Supper Club* with Art Hellyer. Art was incorrigible. He was always getting on bad paper with the manager of the station. You know, if he didn't like a guy, no matter what his rank was, he'd tell him. He was a great guy and I liked him. When I became Program Director I was always going to bat for him in the front office, but management finally ran out of patience. I thought he had talent, but he was only with us for a year or so.

There was another announcer who had a most gorgeous voice, golden pipes if ever there were any. He would have had a good career with 'BBM, but once when he was in a supposedly dead studio he said a naughty word and the pot was open in the control room and it went out coast to coast. He had been talking with someone about another announcer who wasn't doing his bit or something and how he had to cover for him, and then he uttered an obscenity. Unfortunately, it was on a network cut-in.

In those days you couldn't say "hell" or "damn" and he went beyond that. Needless to say, he was immediately fired. The engineer on duty was also fired. I think that one of the other announcers, across the street having coffee, was fired just because he was that close to the building! It was a slaughterhouse that day! Eventually, I think, the union forced the station to take the engineer back, but

everybody else was looking for work. The guy who utters the unacceptable language is the guy who hangs for it, if the engineer accidentally turns on the mike or not. He couldn't get a job again, anywhere in radio. Oh, little teapot stations up in the wilds of Wisconsin or something, but not on a major station. His whole career was shot.

As Creative Director for WBBM, I also developed the *Music Wagon* show and, when I made Program Director, I wanted it to be more structured than it had been. I wanted to put more meat in the shows. Instead of, "Now, so and so will sing such and such," I wanted more conversation, more bits that the host could insert.

THERE WERE SO MANY SHOWS AND so many people. Just going to work was fun. Not many people can say that. I couldn't wait to get to the office every day because of all the different characters there, each more interesting than the other. And working together, like in the writing department, you'd bounce ideas off each other and come up with a better script than if you were doing it alone. Everybody respected everybody else's talent. There were lots of great personalities who were fun to be around. It wasn't like work. It was just a wonderful time every day, with wonderful people.

WBBM had an awful lot of respect from its peers in the radio business. I think anybody who has ever had an opportunity to put WBBM on his resume has got some extra special credentials, because it was and is a very outstanding station.

At the Opera: (L to R) Bill Bell, Lee Phillip, Harriet (Sis) Atlass, Art Thorsen, Jim Conway, Ken Carbonel.



George and Gracie.



1951-1964: THE SHOWMANSHIP STATION

Erwin H. Shomo.



AT THIS TIME, RADIO, IN GENERAL, was beginning to feel the impact of television. Many of the locally produced soap operas were leaving their long-time homes at the WBBM studios in the *Wrigley Building*. Some series ended, others headed for New York City where TV opportunities were beginning to open up for the performers of the radio daytime dramas. Changes were being made in the nighttime broadcast schedule as well. Sponsors of network radio shows were anxious to reach the ever-growing television audience and were beginning to divert their advertising dollars to this new and growing medium.

In the late 1940s, CBS Chairman William Paley decided he wanted his network to become the number one radio network, and he set out to raid the roster of big comedy stars at his arch rival NBC. First to switch to CBS were *Amos 'n' Andy*, who had started their

William S. Paley.



LESLIE ATLASS HAD ASSUMED additional duties as CBS Vice President by 1950. Television was growing by leaps and bounds and Atlass had also become responsible for the network's owned and operated TV station in Chicago, WBBM-TV. In addition, he was reappointed to the post of General Manager of WBBM Radio. To help Atlass with his expanded responsibilities, Erwin H. Shomo was appointed Assistant General Manager of WBBM Radio on October 16, 1950.

Shomo joined the advertising staff of the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Herald-Examiner* in 1925. In 1937 he began working at WBBM in the sales department, eventually becoming Sales Manager. In 1949 he was appointed General Manager of KMOX in St. Louis for a year, after which he returned to WBBM.

careers on network radio with *Columbia* but were currently starring in a weekly half-hour comedy show on NBC. Then, in what was Paley's biggest coup, Jack Benny moved, lock, stock, sponsor and timeslot, to CBS. Following this lead, Burns and Allen, Edgar Bergen, Red Skelton, and Bing Crosby all switched to the "Network of the Stars" and CBS boasted the biggest stable of stars in its history.

Paley achieved this incredible talent raid by offering to purchase their programs from the stars, then hiring them to appear on the programs as employees of CBS. This resulted in a very favorable income tax capital gains deal the entertainers couldn't refuse. This also set the scene for CBS to have an outstanding lineup of talent ready to switch over to television when the time came. And that time would come quickly.

NETWORK RADIO HAD MADE SOME drastic, and interesting, changes by the mid-1950s. Sponsors, listeners, and even the networks were deserting radio for the TV tube. Gone were the big variety shows. Gone were most of the big time comedians (Jack Benny and Edgar Bergen were the last of the CBS stars to have radio shows of their own, and the only other comic on the air was

Bob Hope on NBC). Gone were many of the long-established situation comedy and dramatic programs.

The *Lux Radio Theatre* had become the *Lux Video Theatre* and the *Hallmark Playhouse* had become TV's *Hallmark Hall of Fame*. *Amos 'n' Andy* were playing records over the CBS Radio Network five nights a week. Bing Crosby had a 15-minute show Monday thru

Below, left: Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy and Mortimer Snerd.

The Great Jack Benny.





Bing Crosby.



Friday evenings and *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar*, "America's fabulous free-lance insurance investigator" took five quarter-hours each week to complete cases which previously had been solved in 30 minutes, once a week.

Some popular TV shows were translated to radio as CBS and WBBM carried *My Little Margie*, *December Bride* and *I Love Lucy*.

BUT, AS THE NETWORK TRIED TO economize on its radio offerings (to keep cash available for the new, growing baby, television) many of the mystery and drama shows continued on a sustaining basis without commercial sponsorship. *Suspense*; *Gangbusters*; *Mr. and Mrs. North*; and *Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons*, all played to small, but loyal, audiences. Not entirely abandoning radio, CBS did develop the "adult western," and *Gunsmoke* became a popular favorite, as did *Have Gun, Will Travel* (which actually started as a TV western, then moved to radio for a brief, but welcome two-year run).

TIMES WERE CHANGING IN CHICAGO, too. With the network offering more and more sustaining (non-sponsored) shows, WBBM was not always obliged to carry the CBS products and frequently opted to present locally originated programs.



Amos 'n' Andy.

News was an ever-growing part of WBBM's daily broadcast schedule and John Harrington, Julian Bentley and Fahey Flynn kept listeners up-to-date on local, national and international events. Caesar Petrillo and the WBBM staff orchestra entertained with a quarter-hour of live music, sometimes twice an evening, at 6:30 and again at 9:30 pm. *Gold Coast Rhythm* (with all those commercials) continued two or three times daily. Singers Billy Leach and Curt Massey plus the *King's Jesters*, the *Wilsonaires* and the *Meadowlarks* each had musical shows of their own. Jim Conway was still *Shopping with the Missus* and popular Chicago disc-jockey Howard Miller had a daily 15-minute interview show, sponsored by *Wrigley's Gum*. Miller's program originated from WBBM and was fed to the whole CBS Radio Network. Jay Andres had become host of an all-night recorded music program, *Music 'til Dawn*, sponsored by *American Airlines*.



Billy Leach.

By 1955, Paul Gibson, still one of the outstanding personalities at WBBM, was on the air no less than four times a day, waking up listeners with an hour of chatter at 6 am, returning at 4 pm for 45 minutes, again at 5:30 for a 15-minute chat, and finally, with a late night visit at 10:15 pm.

CBS IN CHICAGO WAS PHYSICALLY located in a variety of places. Radio was in the *Wrigley Building*, TV was at the Garrick Theatre, at the State-Lake Theatre Building and in a few other sites around Chicago's Loop. In 1954, CBS purchased the *Chicago Arena* on the city's near north side,



McClurg Court, home of WBBM.

just a block west of Lake Michigan. The *Arena* was built in 1922 and had originally been known as the *Chicago Riding Club*. More than 500 horses were quartered in the building, which was designed by architect Andrew Rebori who subsequently redesigned the building for CBS. In later years, the *Riding Club* became the *Arena* and was home for ice shows and bowling alleys. This 178,000 square feet of space, located at 630 N. McClurg Court between Ontario and Erie, was to become, by the fall of 1956, the new, centralized home for all *Columbia Broadcasting Company* activities in Chicago.

The original purchase price was \$1,270,000 and another \$5,037,000 was spent over the next two years converting the former sports center into a base for WBBM Radio and WBBM-TV operations. (CBS Chicago also included CBS Television Network Sales, CBS Radio Network Sales, CBS Radio and TV Spot Sales, Columbia Records, Columbia Transcriptions, and CBS Television Film Sales.)

Under the direction of Frank Johnson, who had joined WBBM Radio right after World War II and had become Operations Manager of the entire CBS Chicago organization, the *Chicago Arena* took shape as the most modern radio-TV facility in the country.

WBBM RADIO OCCUPIED MOST OF the second floor of the building. (The ground floor was devoted almost entirely to television.) Seven radio studios were



Jay Andres.

5:30 A
5:35 A
6:00 A
6:25 A
6:30 A
6:45 A
6:55 A
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1:45 P



"I Love Lucy"—Lucille Ball, Vivian Vance, Desi Arnaz, William Frawley.

Wednesday, September 10

is
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 (Glenn Chemical)
 on
 on Show
 rrrington—News
 lis Bros. Coffee)
 News Roundup
 tandard Oil Co.)
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 (Bristol-Myers)
 riety Show
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 ed Airlines, alt.)
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2:30 PM CBS Young Dr. Malone
 (Beechnut)
 2:45 PM Mal Belloirs Show
 3:45 PM Gold Coast Show
 4:00 PM Paul Gibson
 News
 * 4:30 PM Fahey Flynn Sports
 4:35 PM (Schlitz Brewing Co.)
 Shopping With The Missus
 4:45 PM John Harrington—News
 5:00 PM (Stewart-Warner Corp.)
 Be Announced
 by Flynn News
 (United Airlines)
 Carmichael—Sports
 (The Texas Co.)
 All Thomas News
 (United Motors)
 BELL-air Show
 Bell Savings & Loan)
 Bentley—News
 International Nickel Co.)
 enions In Music
 (Morris B. Sachs)
 ward R. Murrow
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 eter Hand Brewing Co.)
 Fred Gage S
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constructed ranging in size from a small an-
 nouncer's booth (accommodating just one or
 two staff announcers) to the large, main studio,
 with more than 700 square feet of space—large
 enough for the CBS Chicago staff orchestra,
 musical talent, announcers, and a small studio
 audience. (With the changing face of radio and
 the decline in big-budget audience shows, there
 was no need to build a large audience studio
 like the one left behind at the *Wrigley Building*.)
 Another five rooms on the second floor were
 so constructed that they could be converted to
 additional studio space if needed.

A MODERN MASTER CONTROL
 room, designed and installed by CBS
 Radio technicians, was the technical
 heart of WBBM Radio at McClurg Court.
 State-of-the-art in every detail, the Master
 Control represented a great stride towards push-
 button control of both network and local
 programming.

From a large semi-circle console, the Master
 Control technician would have full view of four
 of WBBM's studios and he was able to put any
 one, or all of them, on the air at any given mo-
 ment. Each of the larger WBBM studios, in-
 cluding the main, 700 square foot studio, had
 its own separate control room which served as
 the technical center during broadcasts
 originating in those studios.

More than 100 people were responsible for
 WBBM's around-the-clock schedule of broad-
 casting. In addition to the on-the-air talent,

Red Skelton.



Hal Kartun (back row) with his orchestra.



Chicago Arena, shortly after conversion to WBBM-CBS.

there were writers, producers, directors, technicians, people in program operations, scheduling, transcription, and others who worked together to keep Chicago's *Showmanship Station* humming. Some 225 local shows were broadcast each week on WBBM, including about 20 which originated for broadcast over the CBS Radio Network.

MUCH OF WBBM'S PROGRAMMING was still live during this period. The station, under the continuing guidance of H. Leslie Atlass, had not switched totally to records and disc jockeys as had many other stations across the country. WBBM continued to prosper while presenting a variety of live entertainment shows. Mal Bellairs hosted an hour each morning called *Music Wagon* with the singing Boyd Twins, Joan and Jane (who were also known as *The Doublemint Twins* of Wrigley-sponsored programs and commercials), singer Billy Leach, the *King's Jesters*, and Hal Kartun's *Merry Men of Rhythm*.

Later in the afternoon, Mal was back with the *Bellairs Show*, another live musical offering. *The Little Show*, a daily 15-minute program during the noon hour, featured Len Cleary at the organ, Sid Nierman at the piano, the *King's Jesters*, and Billy Leach. *Just Entertainment* was a mid-afternoon quarter-hour with members of the Caesar Petrillo Orchestra and whatever staff vocalist or group was on duty. Larry Taylor and the WBBM staff orchestra,

Music Wagon

The morning carnival of good music and song — all live, to start your day . . . 9-9:55, Mondays thru Fridays

WBBM Chicago's *Showmanship Station*

JANET KERN

Les Atlass Retires— and So Ends an Era

AMIDST ALL THE noisemaking and celebrating which marked the end of 1959, three nights back, a strange silence has covered the almost simultaneous end of a broadcasting and telecasting era.

With the retirement of H. Leslie Atlass as vice president in charge of the local CBS bairiwick, an era is ending, in every sense of the word.

Broadcasting—from its inception thru its maturation and mutation into telecasting—has operated under a system of opposing checks and balances not unlike that which the two political parties maintain over one another. For as long as most of us living in or around broadcasting can recall, it was the networks on one hand and the stations on the other—the latter represented by three thorny, cantankerous, outspoken mavericks who fought like the best and worst of the old time politics.

Those three—the most widely listened-to, widely hated and widely respected spokesmen within broadcasting—were Harry Bannister, of Detroit's WWJ; Walter Damm of Milwaukee's WTMJ, and H. Leslie Atlass of Chicago's WBBM.

AS ONE WHOLE



H. LESLIE ATLASS

But, however good this new man may prove to be; or however needed some of the already announced changes unquestionably are; it seems odd and improper for this network in this city to let loose of a human tradition as venerable as that of H. Leslie Atlass without the least notice.

ATLASS is no saint, no messiah—no one who knows—and so do not know—of the CBS and Atlass himself. But he is one of the most knowledgeable and most proficient broadcasting pioneers.

Les Atlass has reached his compulsory retirement age—and he is being retired compulsorily (and with much less regard for his feelings) than his network would like to suffer

when THEIR 65th birthdays come! Moreover, as so often happens in management changes, CBS is sweeping WBBM and WBBM-TV clean of Atlases from top to middle.

FRANK ATLASS, who has been program manager, and Harriet "Sis" Atlass, who has been head of Public Affairs, are being "retired," too—tho neither will see 65 for many and many a year. This is a clean-sweeping which I firmly believe CBS will come to regret.

Frank Atlass is the most vital, aggressive and creative young programmer on the local TV scene—and among the best of the upcoming program executives on the national scene.

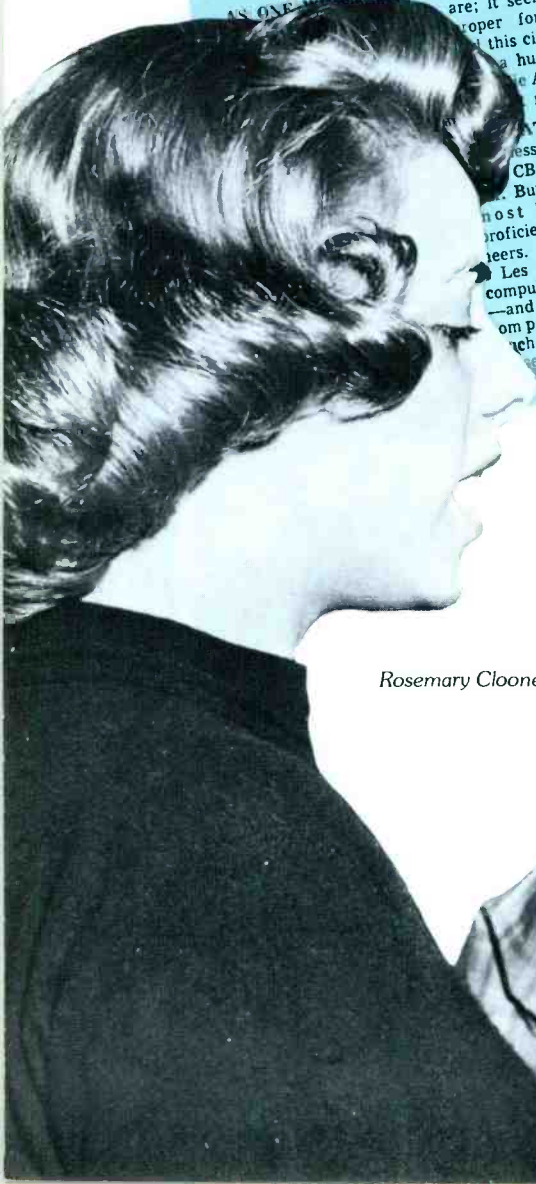
Frank will be a hard man to replace—and "Sis" Atlass will prove downright impossible to replace.

TO PERMIT all the truly notable and worthy achievements of these young executives to be blotted out by the fact that their last name is Atlass is no less a cruelty and stupidity because it is a frequently employed gambit of corporate politicking.

Certainly it would be well and suitable for CBS and the City of Chicago to take due note of the fact that H. Leslie Atlass, his network and his network for 27 years, them proved ably, colorfully, infuriatingly, very, very

was rapidly changing. Daytime soap operas had fallen on hard times as listeners became viewers and TV claimed their attention. The last remaining daytime dramas on WBBM/CBS were broadcast on the day after Thanksgiving, November 26, 1960. *Ma Perkins*, *Right To Happiness*, *Young Doctor Malone*, and *The Second Mrs. Burton* brought to a close an era dedicated to entertaining women at home. At night, the network's programming on WBBM had also changed drastically. CBS presented a few news programs, but no entertainment shows were offered on weeknights. *Suspense*; *Gunsmoke*; *Yours Truly*, *Johnny Dollar*; and *Have Gun, Will Travel* were broadcast on WBBM on Sunday afternoons between 4 and 6 pm.

Other network entertainment shows were fed to WBBM during the daytime hours. Arthur Godfrey reigned supreme each weekday morning at 10, followed by *Art Linkletter's House Party*, the *Garry Moore Show*, and the *Bing Crosby-Rosemary Clooney* program. But mostly, the CBS Radio Network offered news and sports programming to WBBM and other Columbia stations.



Rosemary Clooney and Bing Crosby.



host Mal Bellairs and singer Patty Clark entertained during the dinner hour on *The Supper Club* from 6:30 to 6:45 pm.

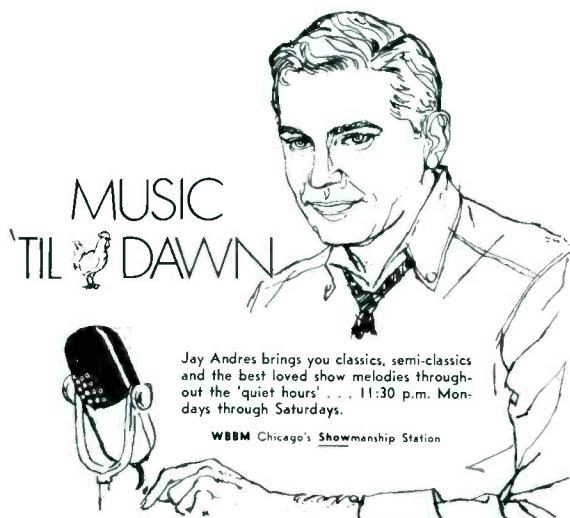
There were some record shows on WBBM, reluctantly permitted by General Manager Atlass, who told people like Bellairs and Josh Brady to add their own personality to the programs, not just sit there and introduce records. Bellairs began a highly popular program on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and Brady selected the records for his weekend morning shows. Franklin MacCormack hosted a program of selected music and poetry readings on

Sunday from midnight to 3 am, and Rudy Orisek presented *Rhythms 'Round the World* Monday thru Friday at 11:30 pm, followed by Jay Andres and his *Music 'til Dawn*.

AFTER 36 YEARS WITH WBBM, H. Leslie Atlass, founder of the station and its longest-term employee, retired in December, 1959 and E. H. Shomo was appointed CBS Vice President and General Manager.

The WBBM *Showmanship Station* format continued into the early 1960s with live programming wrapped around CBS network offerings. However, CBS network programming

Joan and Jane Boyd, the Doublemint Twins.



Franklin MacCormack.





Guns Smoke radio cast: (from left) Howard McNear as Doc Adams; William Conrad as Marshall Matt Dillon; Georgia Ellis as Miss Kitty Russell; Parley Baer as Chester Proudfoot.

Chicago Arena, before conversion to WBBM-CBS, Chicago.





Chicago radio and television personality Mal Bellairs was first introduced to WBBM in 1941 when he auditioned for an announcer's position at the station's *Wrigley Building* studios. His audition was unsuccessful and it wasn't until 1955, after his military service during World War II and jobs at WCFL Radio and in local television, that Bellairs was offered a full-time position at WBBM. Program Director Thomas A. Bland had asked him to do an acting part in an off-the-air sales presentation for the CBS sales force. His performance was good and he was invited to join WBBM as a staff announcer.

During his years at WBBM, Bellairs saw many changes, including format (live and recorded music changed to talk) and location (Wrigley Building to McClurg Court). Below he describes what it was like to be a part of that exciting, changing time.

MAL BELLAIRS REMEMBERS

ON THE FIRST DAY OF MAY, GOOD old May 1, 1955, I became staff announcer—no guarantees, no nothing—doing network cutaways and station breaks while sitting in a dismal little studio in the *Wrigley Building* listening to *Ma Perkins*.

The *Wrigley Building* is my favorite building in the whole world. I loved it! I loved 'BBM!

The *National Boulevard Bank* was on the first floor, and there were studios and control rooms and recording rooms on the lower level, which was actually the basement. That's where all the network programming came in. That's where Lenny Kaye had all the phonograph records. That's where they did the duplication of shows. And by golly, when I was first there they were

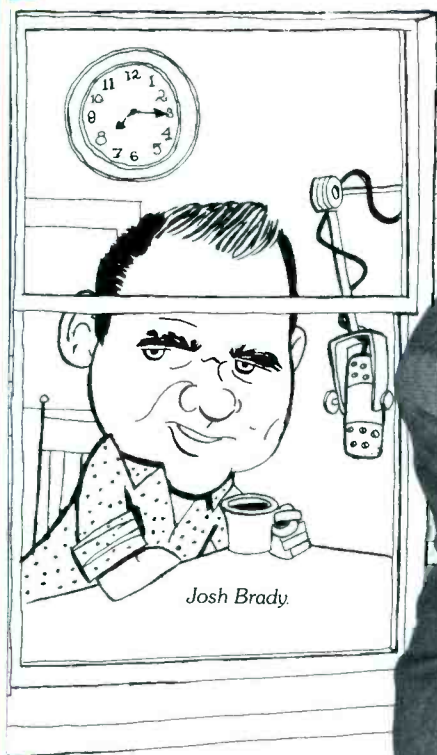


Music technician Lenny Kaye.

doing them on big discs. That was before we had tape recorders, so they were recording on big 16-inch transcriptions.

In 1955, most of the soaps had moved to either New York or Los Angeles so soap opera programming was just carried on the network. But live programs were still being done out of the various studios at WBBM. Jim Conway was a very strong, powerful personality at the time. Josh Brady was also at the station and we worked together for years.

We also had George Watson. We had the *Gold Coast Hour*, which was nothing but a dramatic dialogue that linked together dozens of commercials in a 15-minute program. I used to be amazed at how Mort Hall, the man who wrote that show, would take 8, 10, or 12 com-



Mal with Garry Moore.



mercials and create some sort of corny, crazy, comic scene. Then Watson and the *King's Jesters* would put all this together with different voices. It was unbelievable! It was the top-grossing show on the station. And it was solid commercials!

THERE WAS ALMOST ALWAYS something going on in one studio or another. Nowadays, most radio stations have carved their necessary space down

tremendously, but in those days we had this great luxury. And I maintain there is nothing as exciting as working in the *Wrigley Building* and walking out on that street at Christmas time, or in the middle of summer and being part of Chicago on Michigan Avenue.

Shortly after I started at WBBM, I got my first big break—an interview show called *Lucky Ladies*, from grocery stores for *Thomas J. Webb Coffee*. That was a difficult show to do because shows in grocery stores are always hard to do, whether you have 5,000 women all climbing down your neck or you have nobody, and you still had to do a show. But it gave me good exposure. I would give away coffee and silver dollars, and to this day people walk up to me and say “I still have that same silver dollar you gave me . . .”

I was the first one who was allowed to play records on 'BBM. Les Atlass had been violently opposed to recorded music, but in some high level meeting someone said, “Well, why don't we try it on weekends?” So they gave me two big blocks of time to play records—Saturday and Sunday afternoons from noon to 5 pm.

And then, in the record library, I sat down with Lenny Kaye, the world's greatest technician in music, and I started to listen and build programs. I'd already had some experience with this when I worked at WCFL. I hate the term “disc jockey,” but I suppose that's what I was. Anyway, I put together these two weekend shows and they became very successful. That opened the door, then, to the future use of records, although Mr. Atlass looked down on records as being kind of a third class citizen in broadcasting.



Les Atlass Carol Billy Jerry Gini Hank



Connie Ollie

Bellairs at a Supermarket remote.



Live Broadcast from the Bellairs' home.



CBS STILL HAD A FULL ORCHESTRA. They had musicians coming out of their ears. *The King's Jesters*, and other groups of performers, were doing all kinds of live things. Mr. Atlas never bowed down to the current style of radio that used nothing but recorded music. I respected his opinion and was appreciative of the fact that I got a chance to open the door. So I tried to do more than just play records. I tried to be timely, to relate to people and talk about things that were going on.

From the beginning, my feeling was that I needed to feel free to pick the music. And I insisted on being in charge of my own music and WBBM allowed me that freedom. I played a very wide spectrum of music, and I think I played an important role in launching some careers because Chicago is a wonderful market and 'BBM is a huge voice. I noticed the likes of Harry Belafonte very early. Performers like Harry would come to visit and we would sit and

talk and get to know each other. I also followed the trends in music. I played folk music when it was still developing, and showcased ethnic music like the Irish music of the Clancy Brothers. I didn't like straight rock music and almost never included it in my programs. Certain things you can't exclude, like the *Beatles*, but I never really liked Rock and Roll very much. I expressed my opinions on air and people would call in and we would talk and it became a very nice program. I even started my own Christmas show on WBBM in 1955, *Christmas Around the World*, the music of Christmas in many different countries.

WBBM WAS VERY KIND TO ME. They let me run with my ideas and this was the thing that I most appreciated about WBBM. If they felt you had a creative urge, an idea, there was nobody saying, "Well, you'll get the greatest numbers of audience points . . . we have to do this . . ." It was freedom and I think that's why WBBM has done so very well.



Len Cleary
at the Mighty Wurlitzer.

Rosemary Clooney and Bellairs.



Before WBBM moved from the *Wrigley Building* to the old *Chicago Arena* on McClurg Court, I did the last live show in the *Wrigley Building* one Sunday afternoon. I took my microphone and walked out into the halls, which were filled with nothing but echoes and cardboard boxes piled with files. And I walked up and down the halls, recalling all the wonderful things that had happened in that great building. Whew! That was really incredible. I dearly loved the *Wrigley Building* and I was sorry when we left, because the feeling was different after that. It was economics, of course, that put radio and television together in what had been the old ice skating arena, right across the street from where I had worked as a young announcer at WCFL.

ANYWAY, IT WAS AT McCLURG Court that we got an idea for a live music show. By 1959 I was doing a lot of live stuff with Len Cleary, who played the organ. We'd put together music shows with small groups, doing shows around dinner time.

During this time we got an idea for a live morning show and we called it *The Music Wagon*. We started out early in the morning and we would just go. The orchestra never had the opportunity to do enough rehearsal, so a lot of it was very, very spontaneous. But we had some of the finest musicians I've ever heard. It was all pretty much ad lib. People like Al Hirt and Rosemary Clooney would come to town and perform. Whenever Arthur Godfrey was in Chicago, he'd come to visit and would sing with the band.

We had audiences, too. We didn't advertise for an audience, but we'd have groups that just wanted to see a radio show. We'd have maybe 20 or 30 people.

George Walsh was the producer and we used to have a great time with him, because as a producer-director he was pretty loose and there were no holds barred. The band was a wild bunch. Sometimes Hollywood actresses would come in and they would be difficult but the band would loosen them up. One time Jayne Mansfield came in to be interviewed

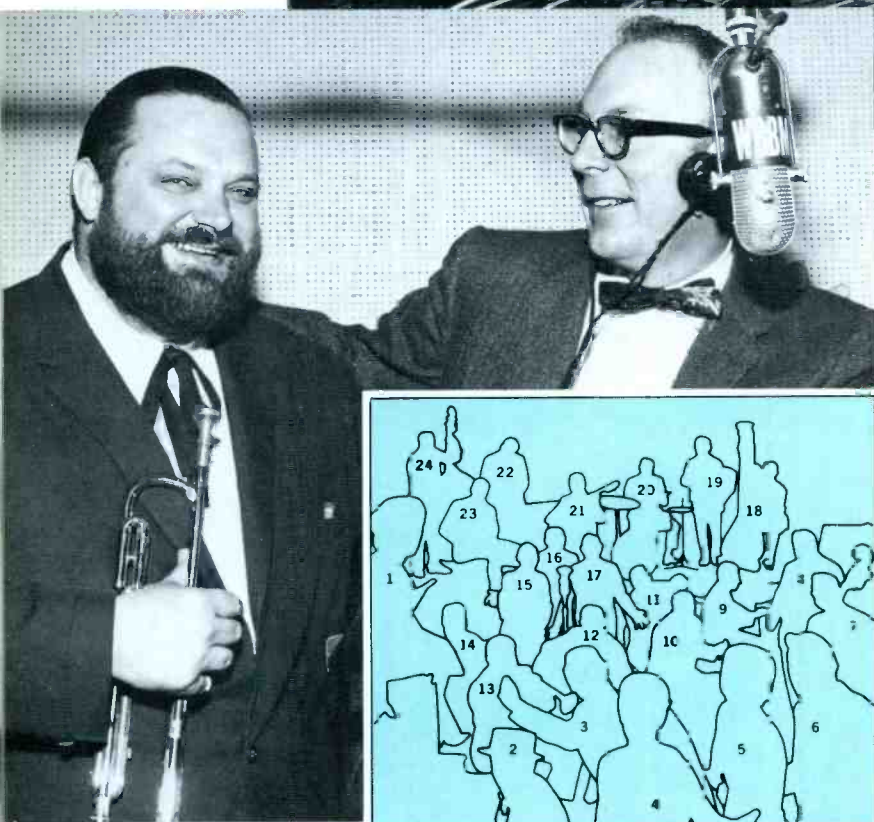
Arthur Godfrey and Bellairs.



The King's Jesters



GOLD COAST SHOW
 Comedy, more comedy
 and just plain fun
 Monday thru Friday,
 8:45-9 a.m. and 3:45-4 p.m.



about some movie she was coming out with. I said to her, "There's one question I want to ask you . . ." She said, "I'll bet there is!" and the band just went up in smoke!

THIS WAS ALL IN THE MORNING, seven to nine. We never heard or used the term "morning drive." We hadn't really been that concerned about ratings or who our audience was. We were only thinking about doing good shows. In fact, I almost never paid attention to the ratings. I knew they were being taken, but they didn't affect us in any way. Nobody ever said to me, "Bellairs, your rating is going down. What are you going to do to hype this thing?" We never had a contest to give away 10 acres on the moon—we never did anything like that. We just never really considered it. Very unsophisticated radio, maybe, but we weren't that much concerned with economics.

We knew that *Music Wagon* was sponsored and that it was going to be sponsored by major companies in 15-minute blocks, and they paid a lot of money. There were countless clients. The main philosophy was, do we get results? Do we deliver more customers? We can prove it, we said. Give us the opportunity. Then we did it.

And it was all done very live. It was live radio! We were probably the only live radio station left in the country at that point.

And it broke our collective hearts when, I think it was in 1965, we finally got caught by the bottom line. The station was having a difficult time with the Musicians' Union. Negotiations were very tough and so I have to assume,

Top: Mal Bellairs and the Music Wagon Musicians.

Middle: Al Hirt and Bellairs.

Bottom, left:

1. Connie Mitchell, 2. Sid Nierman, 3. Billy Leach, 4. Carol March, 5. Gini Patton, 6. Bob Vegas, 7. Skip Nelson, 8. Dick Cunliffe, 9. Joe Vito, 10. Maurie Lishon, 11. Paul Severson, 12. Joe Rumoro, 13. Porky Panico, 14. Don Orlando—(King's Jesters)—15. George Howard, 16. Fritz Bastow, 17. John Ravencroft—18. Russ Crandall, 19. Sam Porfirio, 20. Bobby Tilles, 21. Fred Rundquist, 22. Chuck Calzaretta, 23. Lenny Druss, 24. Herb Knapp.

although I do not know, that the word came down from CBS in New York, to cancel the musicians. So all live musicians were out. This was very hard, and shortly after that time, we went to talk radio.

I HAD NEVER DONE TALK RADIO, BUT I think all the network owned and operated stations were switching to talk radio at about the same time. So we started the talk phase. We had left the music phase, the entertainment phase, now we went into talk. And it has really developed into quite a thing across the country. It began in Chicago at WBBM. They brought in people who were good at talk and some of them were extremely inflammatory in style.

They brought in a young man from Boston named Jerry Williams. I had never heard this kind of radio before and he was the type. They asked me to interview him the first day he came to town. He came to one of my shows and started to take off on the Kennedy family. I mean, he really took off on them. But that was his style and he became very successful at it.

I tried to do a talk show, looking for information—trying to find out what listeners thought. And I was asked to do a show with Dr. Freda Kehm, who was the first psychologist on the air. During the program we took live telephone calls, giving the audience a chance to talk back. That became an important part of the station, and her ratings just went out of sight. Women loved it and a lot of men, too. Listeners were looking for something live,

where people were really talking and communicating. It was more than just talk radio.

THE DR. KEHM PROGRAM WAS ON for a product called *Miracle White*. We took *Miracle White* bleach from a tiny little operation (the man mixed it up in his bathtub on the north side of Chicago) to one that was later sold for seven million dollars! Dr. Kehm was largely responsible for that because she had the power of believability—she was like everybody's grandma. Her advice was mostly on how to raise children. Mainly, the "terrible twos" and the threes, how to treat them when they became four and five, and how to help them in school. And she got into all kinds of sensitive areas of child rearing.

When WBBM went all-news in 1968, I was an anchorman daily from 11 am until 2 pm. That included my show with Dr. Kehm and doing news. It was also at that time that my first wife, Jo, and I developed a program called *Mal And Jo On The Go*, which to this day you can see reflected in the programming on WBBM. We did restaurant and show reviews, demonstrating that radio is a good way to let people know what was happening. We would go to theatres, night club openings, and restaurants, and we would build 10 or 15 segments (each 5 or 10 minutes), and they would be played on the station throughout the week.

Mal Bellairs, Walter Cronkite, and an unidentified woman.



In the beginning, I didn't quite see the potential for an all-news station, but they made a believer out of me. There was a niche for it all across the country. Now as I travel around and hear other stations of the CBS variety, doing all-news, I realize that there were some pretty smart old boys who decided that was the way to go.

And then I got an urge.

IHAD DONE ABOUT EVERYTHING on WBBM that I could do, so I started looking around for a radio station that I could buy, where I could have the fun of running the place. It was also about that same time that WBBM and all of the CBS network stations switched from talk to news. There were many people who thought that I left WBBM because I didn't like the news format. That wasn't true. I was already in negotiations to buy a station, so I could try the one area of radio that I had never experienced. And I think it was a good move, because I don't think that doing news



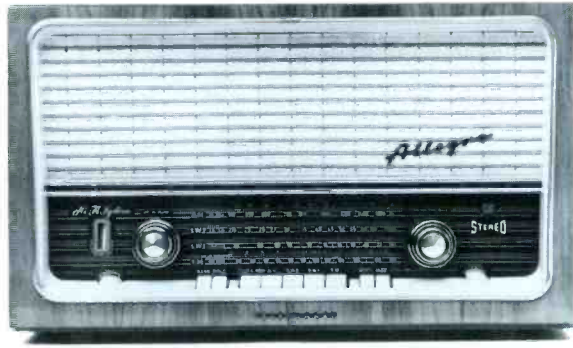
would have satisfied the urge that brought me to WBBM in the first place. I left the station in mid-October, 1969 and opened my station in Crystal Lake, Illinois on November 1st.

By this time, of course, Ernie Shomo, the WBBM General Manager, had died. Ernie had been my good friend, my patron. I never signed a contract with WBBM, never. Ernie and I shook hands. From time to time I would go to him and say, "Ernie, I'm bringing in a lot of dollars, how about a few more for the Bellairs' tribe?" and he'd say, "Okay, what do you need?" I would tell him and he would say okay. That's how we lived.

And I have always looked at H. Leslie Atlas as being probably the smartest man in radio that I have ever met. Absolutely brilliant, but he kept a low profile. He was really tough, but he was also fair. He knew broadcasting and that's how he built WBBM to what it is. He would never come around and give you instructions. He knew what he wanted and he got it and if he didn't get it, out you went. He didn't say, "I give you two weeks notice." Instead, he would say, "Clean out your desk. Goodbye."

IT WAS AN EXCITING TIME AND I LOOK on my days at WBBM as the greatest because they were challenging and exciting. I worked with some wonderful people and I've maintained some very good relationships with 'BBM all through the years. I still do lots of commercials on the station. I left on very good terms. They gave me a nice farewell party that I will never forget.

I have never, ever had anything but the greatest pride in being able to say I was part of WBBM.



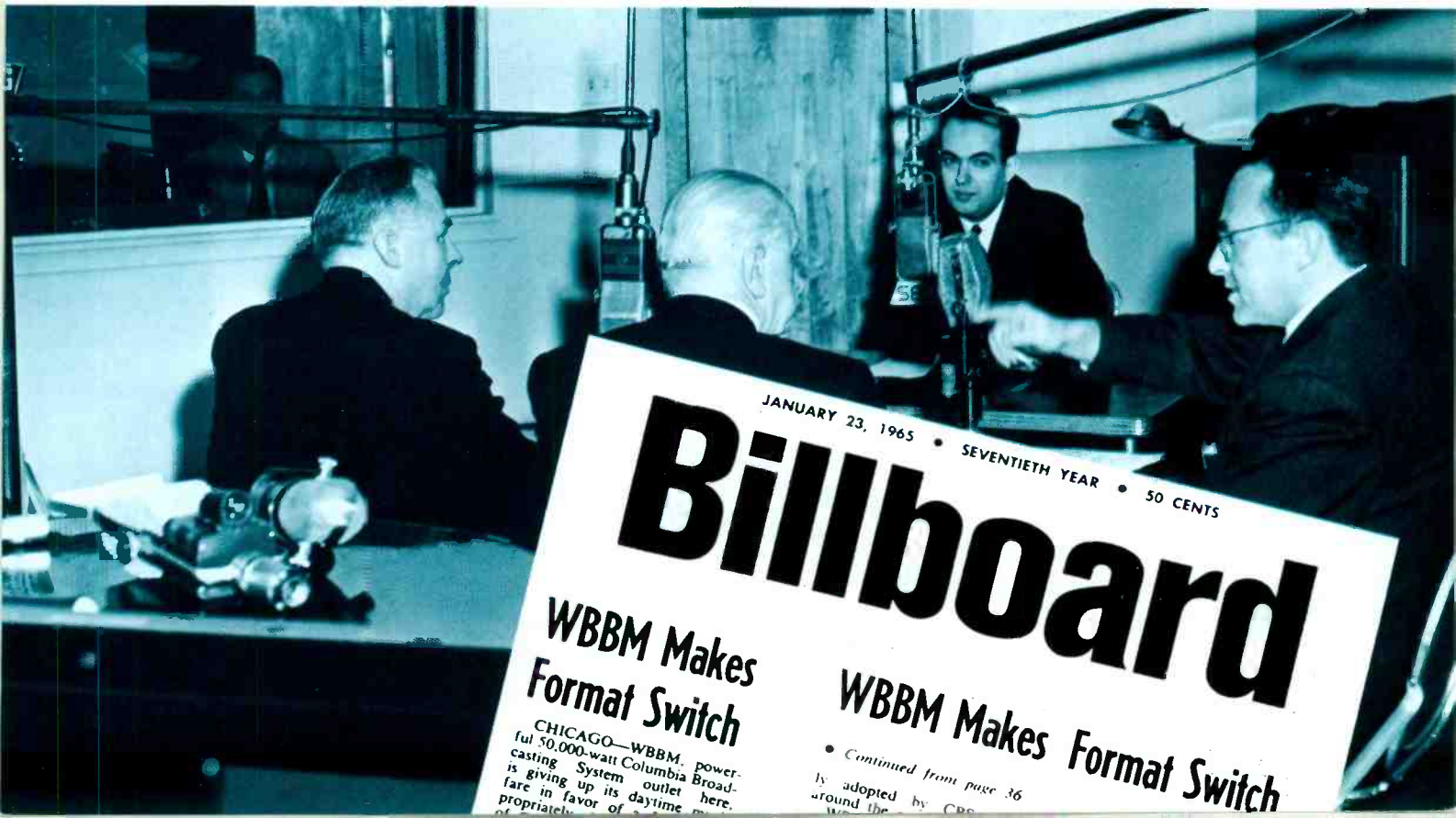
1965-1968: THE TALK OF CHICAGO

AS CBS RADIO NETWORK PROGRAMMING was changing, so was WBBM, and radio, in general. Most stations were feeling the tremendous impact of television. Revenues were dropping and original programming was taking a beating. WBBM had been a long-time holdout against

eliminating its live music and variety programs, but by 1964 the handwriting was on the wall. WBBM could no longer afford the luxury of the staff orchestra, vocalists, writers and others it needed to maintain its *Showmanship* format.

The WBBM sheet music library, used over the years by musicians and singers, had an

WBBM Public Affairs Director John Callaway and guest panel.



JANUARY 23, 1965 • SEVENTIETH YEAR • 50 CENTS
Billboard

**WBBM Makes
Format Switch**

CHICAGO—WBBM, powerful 50,000-watt Columbia Broadcasting System outlet here, is giving up its daytime fare in favor of...
appropriately...

WBBM Makes Format Switch

Continued from page 36
ly adopted by CBS
around the
WBBM

estimated value of over \$150,000 and was considered to be one of the most complete reference musical compilations in the broadcast industry. It had been built up since the early 1930s and included many irreplaceable scores dating back as far as the 1880s that were out of print. The library was donated to the Stateville and Joliet penitentiaries for use by inmates who participated in the band and music staffs of the two institutions.

GENERAL MANAGER ERWIN H. Shomo didn't want WBBM to become just another recorded music station like so many others. He had a fine staff of on-the-air broadcasters (Mal Bellairs, Paul Gibson, Joe Foss, John Harrington, Tom Clark, Bud Kelly) and he knew they could do more than spin discs. Working closely with WBBM Program Director Len Schlosser, Shomo experimented with a talk format for the station. The initial result had WBBM personalities bringing guests into the studio for on-air conversation.

Joe Foss.



Chicago Radio Announcer Insults Women For Pay

By VIRGINIA KACHAN

CHICAGO, Nov. 28 (INS) — In a matter-of-fact voice, Paul Gibson has been telling women off for years and getting paid for it.

Gibson is one of Chicago's most durable radio personalities. For at least an hour a day since 1942, Gibson has been calling wives "useless" and husbands "abused," slipping in commercials and topics ranging from current news to the origin of the calendar and what made George Washington tick.

This radio stint (over station WBBM) nets him an annual income of about \$100,000 and 1,500 to 5,000 letters weekly, Gibson estimated in an interview.

A former newspaperman, Gibson peppers his audience with such jibes:

"Women are educated far beyond housewifely needs. You don't need a diploma to be a vacuum cleaner jockey."

"In the United States, husbands obey wives — this is the only place in the world where husbands are spouse broken."

"No nice person is even vaguely related to your wife."

Gibson, a suavely-mannered man in his 40's, calls his technique "reverse psychology." He said:

"Instead of being bored, women get mad and start to count up what they do accomplish — like running the house, bolstering their husbands' egos, bringing up the kids, cleaning up the neighborhood and the community."

"When a woman begins to boil, she stops feeling sorry for herself and starts thinking," he said.

Gibson can't estimate how many letters he has received over the years from irate housewives. But, he said "usually the gals simmer down by the last paragraph and mention they will keep on listening."

He added that many sponsors on his five-times weekly broadcasts have come up, tell me they are my sponsors," he said.

Gibson calls himself a "victim" of his radio work. He now is resigned to his fate.

"None of my wives would keep from taking me personally. Even though none of my comments are made with any particular mind."

He wound up the interview with a typical Gibson comment: "I never do marry again because I've got to make a woman."

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, MONDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1964

TOWER TICKER

By Herb Lyon

THE MORNING LYON UP: L. B. J. is reportedly paging Matt Culligan, stormy petrel of Curtis Publishing, for an important federal post. . . . It's Sam Tunick's snapper about our South Viet Nam headaches: "Once again we're being Khanh'd out of our money!" . . . The Ticker Gets Around: The other day we noted Drug Exec Lou Zahn's run-down on the unprecedented number of pharmacists elected to state legislative office this year. A circled copy of the column arrived at Lou's office with this message: "Did you read the attached? We druggists are really making progress!" —Signed Hubert H. Humphrey, Vice President-elect! . . . Time sure do fly. Patricia Nixon, 12-year-old daughter of the Richard Nixons, bows tomorrow night at N. Y. City's Metropolitan Opera House, gorgeously gowned and representing the United States. . . . The whole broadcasting industry will be narrowly eyeing WBBM radio's new eight-hour-long "talk" show experiment, teeing off today. Listeners are invited to phone in and yak with the personalities. Chicago's only other all-yak station is WNUS, the 24-hour news deal. [And only a while back, the experts insisted, "Keep putting on more musical records and cut down the gab!"] . . . The Palace has scheduled a daily performance of "My Fair Lady" thru this holiday week. One of the show's U. K. for the whole family, "M. F. L." continues to gross big. . . . Now Broadway Producer Dave Merrick wants Mary Martin to headline a road company of his click, "Hallo Dolly," in the Soviet Union this summer. [In English, match-stk.] The title in Russian would be "Zdrastvooyte, Dolly!" H'ya there, Tovar-



Mary Martin

Radio Station WJJD turned over a check for \$1,000,000 to be distributed by its listeners to Mrs. Joe Cerone and her children. He's the heroic fireman who died in that net Illinois street fire. George Dubnietz, WJJD's new general manager, was the only guy in Chicago to put on a fund-raiser. . . . Both Eddie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds have been invited to perform at L. B. J.'s inaugural gala which means Eddie must end his Vegas Riviera hot gagement early and Debbie, set to follow him there, delay her opening. So Pearlue Mae Bailey signed to sing the few days in between.

Big Best Bet for Tonight: Arthur Miller's talked-up "After the Fall," opening at the Blackstone theater. In Miller's disclaimers, there's little doubt it's a slightly autobiographical version of his days with Marilyn Monroe. . . . Mike Wallace comes back into his own via a new hour weekly CBS radio net work, Mike Wallace at Large of Jan. 4.

MAESTRO CHUCK CAVALLO, darlin' of the social scene, will beat out the music for Postmaster Harry Serfaty at the Jumbo Stadium show, Saturday—Harry's way of saying "hello" to his staff and their families for a holiday job well done. Among the cast of headliners are Cab Calloway and R. D. Tibony with his gorjus "Book-end" gals.

Talented Anne ("Miracle Worker") Bancroft is a no-doubted Oscar nominee again for her she-moting in the new picture, "The Pumpkin Eaters," a doozie. . . . D. J. Bob Larsen checked in to report that among the new, are still Blag Crosby's "White Christmas" or both Schwarzkopf's "Silent Night." Interesting.

Audience response, mail volume, and station research indicated that Shomo and Schlosser were on the right track with this format. It was then decided to add listener response directly to the programs, so arrangements were made between the telephone company and the WBBM technical staff to put listener calls directly on the air.

Conversation radio on WBBM became talk-back radio and the listeners became involved by asking questions directly to guests in the studio, with both sides of the conversation being broadcast.

SPEAKING TO THE PRESS IN ANTICIPATION of the new, and unique to Chicago format, Shomo said, "Every area of service to our community will be explored, with emphasis on health, finance and

WBBM RADIO-780

THE TALK OF CHICAGO

BRINGING THE MIDWEST WITH 50,000 WATTS • CLEAR CHANNEL



WANT TO
talk back
TO
**Paul
Gibson**

turn to **THE NEW
WBBM
RADIO**
SEVENTY EIGHT AM
THE TALK OF CHICAGO 88.3 FM

Dr. Freda Kehm, Ph.D.

FAMILY RELATIONS CONSULTANT
11:10-11:30 AM,
Monday thru Friday

Author, professor, lecturer... Dr. Kehm recognized as one of the world's foremost authorities on child care and family living. Respected by her peers and revered by the tens of thousands of listeners who have benefited from her advice. Dr. Kehm answers listeners' questions with professional candor, tempered with sympathy and understanding.



John Harrington

BROADCASTER AT-LARGE
8:00-8:15 AM, Monday thru Friday
5:10-5:25 PM, Monday thru Friday
8:30-8:45 AM, Saturdays

The "old pro" News-caster, sportscaster, special events reporter, interviewer, master of ceremonies! Name it and John Harrington has done it... successfully! Ask his sponsors of more than a quarter of a century. They'll attest to his effectiveness. Showmanship and sincerity are Harrington's stock-in-trade. Sales results are virtually assured when Harrington puts his experience on the line... for you.



Tom Clark

CO-ANCHORMAN
3-7 PM Monday thru Friday

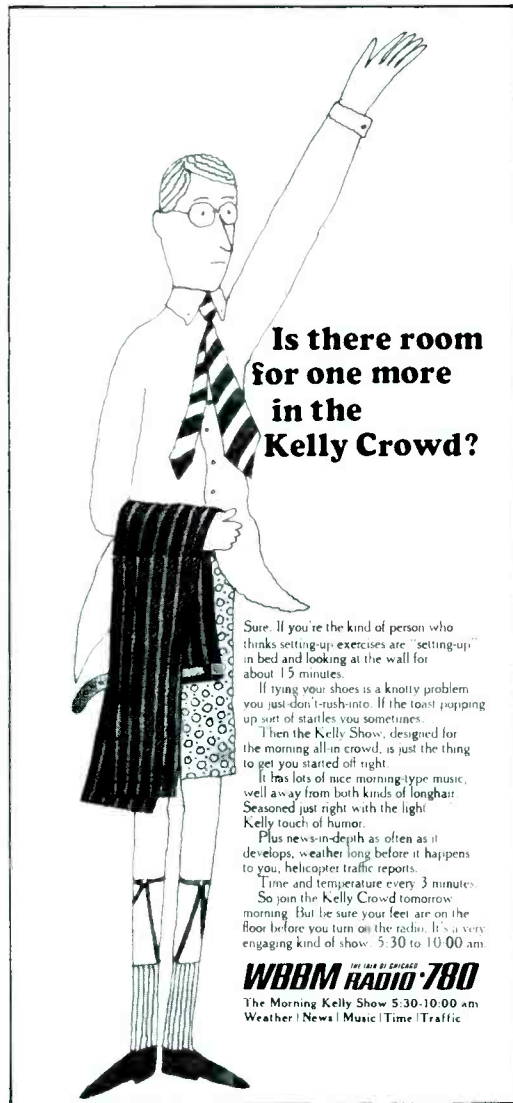
Attable, informed and involved... an experienced writer-reporter-broadcaster with an inquisitive mind and penetrating interviewing skills. Clark's special reports on community affairs, his call outs and comments are gems of reportorial excellence.

Advertisers appreciate the climate of believability Clark generates.



education. WBBM has always appealed to an adult audience and we feel this approach will be appreciated by our listeners. These total information and news programs will enable WBBM listeners to call in to each program and talk directly to the personalities conducting the programs or to their guests, who will include experts in many fields. We hope to be able to be of special service to parents through talks by psychologists, dentists, doctors, marriage counselors, teachers, and others who can help listeners solve their problems."

Schlosser added, "Daytime and early afternoon programming will be directed toward housewives, and to male and female adults during the later hours. With our ability to talk directly to our audience, we can give our listeners what they deserve."



Is there room for one more in the Kelly Crowd?

Sure. If you're the kind of person who thinks setting-up exercises are "setting-up" in bed and looking at the wall for about 15 minutes.

If tying your shoes is a knotty problem you just don't rush into. If the toast popping up just startles you sometimes.

Then the Kelly Show, designed for the morning all-in crowd, is just the thing to get you started off right.

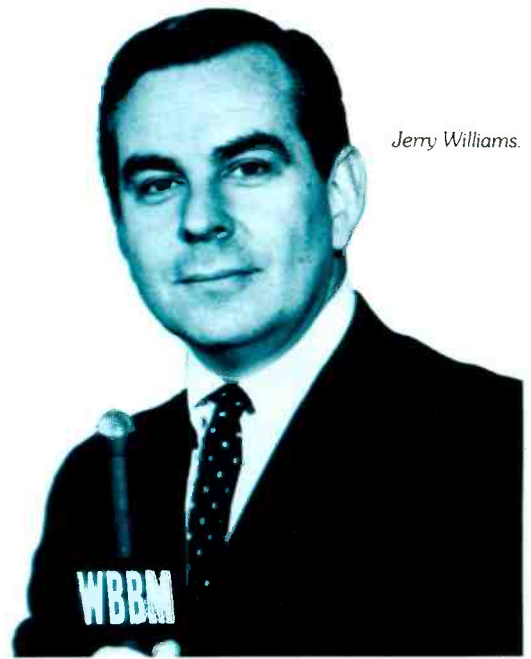
It has lots of nice morning-type music, well away from both kinds of longhair. Seasoned just right with the light Kelly touch of humor.

Plus news-in-depth as often as it develops, weather long before it happens to you, helicopter traffic reports.

Time and temperature every 3 minutes.

So join the Kelly Crowd tomorrow morning. But be sure your feet are on the floor before you turn on the radio. It's a very engaging kind of show. 5:30 to 10:00 am.

WBBM RADIO 780
THE TALK OF CHICAGO
 The Morning Kelly Show 5:30-10:00 am
 Weather | News | Music | Time | Traffic



Jerry Williams.

Jack Stockton was named producer of an eight-and-one-half-hour "talk block" of programming, and on Monday, December 28, 1964, WBBM became "the new WBBM Radio, the *Talk of Chicago*."

LEADING THE TALK PARADE WAS Dr. Freda Kehm at 11:30 am, with advice on child-care problems, followed at noon by Joe Foss with *Current*, a discussion of current and topical news. Paul Gibson held court in the one o'clock hour and listeners were given a chance to "get even" during a "Ladies and the Tiger" portion of his show devoted to telephone call-ins. In the two o'clock hour, Mal Bellairs hosted *Tieline*, featuring family service interviews, and in the next hour, Bellairs presented *Sounding Board*, a verbal clearing house with guests offering opinions on a variety of subjects. Beginning at four, *Newsday*, a news block, featured WBBM's longtime




newscaster John Harrington with a two-and-one-quarter-hour wrap-up of local, national and international news, sports, weather, business, and traffic reports. Tom Clark's *Conference Call* took to the air at 6:15 pm, giving listeners 45 minutes to call in queries to Clark and his newsmaking guests. A final hour of news, sports, and other features from the CBS Radio Network rounded out the eight-and-one-half-hour talk block of the new *Talk of Chicago*.

Woven throughout this talk format were hourly news reports from CBS Radio, eight comprehensive weather reports daily from *Weather Command*, and 21 helicopter traffic reports during morning and afternoon rush hours.


IN ADDITION TO THE TALK BLOCK, WBBM offered listeners recorded music programming with its personable hosts. Bud Kelly was the station's "wake-up man" with music, news, traffic, sports, and weather in the mornings, and Dale McCarren entertained with recorded music in the evenings from 8 to 10:30. *Rhythms 'Round the World* followed and *Music 'til Dawn* continued as the all-night show on WBBM.

Weekends at the *Talk of Chicago* had mostly a musical format, with Mal Bellairs continuing his popular Saturday and Sunday programs. On Sunday nights, however, WBBM Public Affairs Director John Calloway anchored a four-hour package of special programming.

As the *Talk of Chicago* unfolded over the next few months, a few changes were made in the program lineup. In September, 1965, Jerry Williams, the controversial talk show host from Boston, made a quick and dynamic impact on Chicago listeners when three more hours of talk and call-in radio were added to



**MEDI-CARE?
YES OR
NO!**



●● ●●

DISCUSS THE ISSUES
WITH
Dr. Edward Piszczek
PRESIDENT OF ILLINOIS STATE
MEDICAL SOCIETY

TALK UP!

turn to

"CURRENT"

on the new

WBBM RADIO

Seventy-eight AM • 96.3 FM

THE TALK OF CHICAGO

... PRESENTING 'COPTER TRAFFIC REPORTS 21 TIMES DAILY

TODAY AT 12:10 P. M.



Mal Bellairs
with John Carmichael.

WBBM Master Control.



Outdoor Sports Editor
Art Mercier.



the WBBM nightly schedule from 8 to 11 pm.

Williams' "open-air gripe session," often called "the world's largest round-table," became a hot addition to the *Talk of Chicago*.

WILLIAMS, BORN AND RAISED IN New York, went into radio after his military service. He did some television acting in New York, then found a spot as a talk show host in Philadelphia for seven years, and for eight more years at WMEX in Boston before coming to WBBM.

His style was to select controversial guests, research their specialty, and let them go on the air live. He would not talk to a guest before airtime.

Williams called himself a professional provocateur, meaning that he argued a lot. Sometimes he would be the antagonist, sometimes the protagonist. Occasionally, but not very often, he remained neutral.

He did shows on extrasensory perception, civil rights, homosexuality, the Hugh Hefner philosophy of life, and social problems—long

before those topics were considered meat and potatoes for talk show hosts. Williams booked atheist Madelyn Murray and civil rights organizer Saul Alinsky. Illinois Secretary of State Paul Powell took to Williams' show for three hours trying to explain the scandals in his office. During another show, an irate politician crashed into the studio while Williams was on the air and punched him in the nose!

Williams avoided show business guests who wanted to promote themselves and, instead, booked guests who were themselves controversial, guests who would stir up the radio audience and set off a lively, often explosive, exchange.

Within a year Williams was firmly in place as a major part of the WBBM format. Mal Bellairs had added a couple of hours of *Swap Shop* to his three-hour mid-day program, WBBM Sports Director Rick Weaver had a *Sportline* call-in show between 6 and 7 every evening, and WBBM's Outdoor Sports Editor Art Mercier had a daily half hour in the early evening, just prior to the Williams' show.

BELLAIRS EXPANDED HIS WEEKLY Sunday show to encompass a full six hours, from noon to 6 pm every week. Lee Phillip, who was a strong local personality on WBBM's sister station WBBM-TV, came upstairs to the radio studio each day for a "Lady and the Tiger" session with Paul Gibson and he often infuriated her as much as he did his female listeners.

The format was doing well. *Variety* reported that WBBM had gained listeners in every time period from 6 am to midnight. A big factor in the success of the station, according to the trade publication, was its wide use of the telephone for listener participation in the majority of its shows. General Manager Ernie Shomo and Program Director Len Schlosser noted that the telephone talk-back feature had created a king-sized headache for the phone company, which had to install an elaborate phone system exclusively for the *Talk of Chicago*.

WBBM had to double the capacity of its switchboard and had installed a device to count the number of calls that didn't get through when the lines were jammed.

SHOMO SAID, "WE HAVE FOUND that listeners have a proprietary interest in a station that talks to them. They either think it is only polite to ring up someone who seems interested in them or they are riled up about one of the issues we are discussing and want to get their opinion on record."

The *Talk of Chicago* was well-received by listeners, but how did it do from a financial standpoint?

Within five months after the format was established, General Sales Manager Jack Bivens sent a memo to Shomo reporting that the hours between 6 am and 9 pm were "sold out" and Saturday, from 9 am to 6 pm, was "practically full count."



Irv Kupcinet and Lee Phillip.

"I'll buy that!"



HERB-OX BOUILLON

Loaded with flavor . . . a time and work saver! A delicious hot beverage at mealtime, or a perky in-between pick-up! WBBM Radio's Paul Gibson is telling his vast Chicagoland listening audience that HERB-OX BOUILLON has four fine flavors—beef, chicken, vegetarian, and onion. Keep a supply of HERB-OX out front—in 5, 12 and 25 cube containers. Customers will buy it FIRST . . . because they hear it FIRST on WBBM Radio, "THE TALK OF CHICAGO!"



WBBM RADIO-780

Makes shoppers name brand droppers.

1965 Ad in Supermarket News.

John Hultman came to WBBM in February, 1968, a few months before the station became *Newsradio 78*. He eventually served as News and Program Director for the all-news format and is currently co-anchor for the critical morning drive period. Originally from Wilmette, Illinois, Hultman went to New Trier High School and Purdue University. His broadcast experience started in Evanston, Illinois, at station WNMP. He later worked at a television station in Fort Wayne, Indiana, doing a daily children's show and a Saturday night dance show. He was a disc jockey at WWJ in Detroit and when that station changed to all-talk, he switched to the news department and did anchoring, street reporting, and news for both radio and television.

This prepared him for the important role he would play when he joined Chicago's all-news station.

JOHN HULTMAN REMEMBERS

I HAD BEEN LOOKING TO MAKE A move back to Chicago and a friend, Dale McCarren, who had previously worked in Detroit at WJR was working at WBBM so I called him. He knew of an opening for a staff announcer, which is what the position was called before we were all-news. That's the job I got when I came here on February 26, 1968, about two-and-a-half months before we went all-news. I did a little bit of everything for the first month or two, until we made the big change. We weren't the first CBS station to go all-news. WCBS in New York was the first.

At the beginning of April of '68, John Callaway, who was the News Director at the time, was told that WBBM would be going all-news in about a month. It was that quick. He had one month to expand the staff to cover news 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



John Hultman.

Wednesday, April 3, 1968

All-News On Verge of Boom

By STEVE KNOLL

Chicago, April 2.

An increasing number of major market broadcasters are concluding that all-news is good news, and the result may be a significant alteration of the broadcast landscape. Accompanying this latest swing in the format pendulum is a widespread conviction that all-news, to succeed, must be done well or not at all. The name of the game is not monotony but variety within the limits of an informational format.

Ironically, the main thrust of the all-news ferment today comes not from the pioneers of the format but rather the johnnies-comelately who are taking up where their predecessors left off. Most traders have forgotten that all-news radio originated with some misbegotten experiments in the '50s in Portland, Ore. and at the Coast's KMAX. In those early days, an all-news radio station was like a CATV news channel today, only with announcers reading wire copy rather than having the teletype unspool before the camera.

Then along came broadcast innovator Gordon McLendon who felt that, on an all-news station, monotony was a liability. He was the first to do two

The new news orientation of the CBS o&o's marks a distinct departure from the former tradition, in force until recently, that downbeated news and stressed telephone conversation. In fact, Chi's WBBM, now going all-news, not long ago enforced a serious cutback in local news programming and personnel. The Clark George-Sam Cook Digges administration at CBS Radio began the informational upbeat, whose ultimate effects on both the o&o's and network are still not fully apparent.

The broader national picture reveals this anomaly: while most formats benefit from lack of competition, all-news is possibly the exception to the rule. Thus Group W entered Los Angeles happy that

other stations had "prepared" the market to accept the all-news concept. When WCBS went to "Newsradio" in New York, the station held its own in the ratings and even showed some modest though insignificant gains. While WINS initiated

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CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, Thurs., May 16, 1968

IT'S THE MOLLOY WBBM-Radio Happy With The News

By Paul Molloy

WBBM-Radio is off and running with its new all-news format, and the boss is happy with the early reaction. The station switched to near-continuous news coverage May 5, dumping almost all of its previous features except the Arthur Godfrey Till Dawn.

Purely as a matter of personal taste, I am not overly fond of the all-news mold. Perhaps it's because I am accustomed to the traditional coverage—a news summary on the hour and "headlines" on the half-hour. Perhaps, too, it's because I am accustomed to the variety program-ming most stations present—much as I feel a newspaper would be flirting with blandness if it dropped all its variety fare such as comics, crossword puzzle, horoscope, and so on.

set up a "news wheel," or clock, so that listeners will know at about what time they can expect the weather or the traffic report.

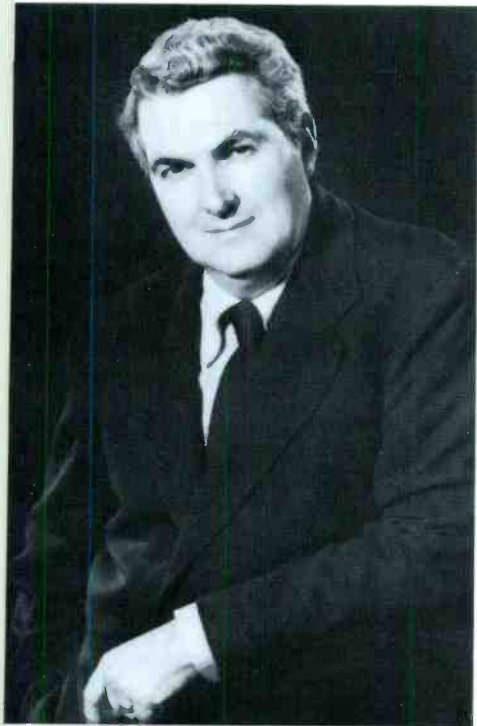
We have some 45 people in our WBBM newsroom. This includes reporters, anchor people, editors, writers, desk assistants, sports people, and traffic reporters. We have the CBS News facilities available to us, but we also subscribe to all the wire services, and to the Associated Press audio reports. We have a lot of different sources.

WHEN WBBM WENT ALL-NEWS IN May of 1968, we certainly didn't have as many people in the newsroom as we have today. At that time there was an editor by the name of Mike Hirsch, a very bright guy with a good news sense. In fact, he has since become a television documentary producer. Anyway, when I came to work on that first day—to start the night shift with John Madigan—Mike was editor that afternoon. He was sitting at the editor's desk surrounded by mountains of wire copy, tapes all over the place, yelling, "We need a phone-out for the next half hour! Quick, who can we call?"

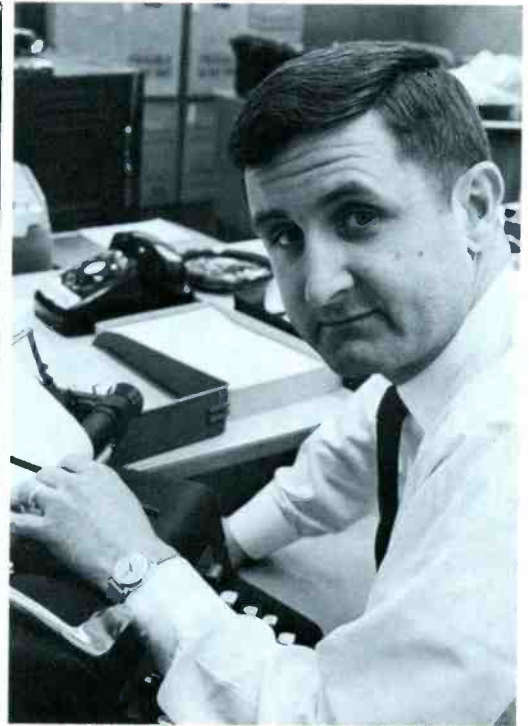
It was just madness, but anything new is going to be like that—the first few days or the first few weeks. No matter how much you plan, there's going to be chaos for a while. And it really was chaos. But it all finally evolved. We decided we couldn't continue to do those unending phone-outs. We had reporters on the street, but we didn't have AP Radio then. We also didn't have all the CBS audio available to us that we do now.

WBBM'S STAFF WAS BEING INCREASED during this time. Bob Crawford, an excellent reporter, first came here as an editor—he wasn't on the air. Donn Pearlman came here not as an on-the-air person, but as an editor. Herb Howard, who later did traffic reporting, was here before we went all-news. He was a producer for some of the talk shows. When reporters came back from their assignments, we debriefed them on the air about what had gone on at the news conference, the robbery, the fire, etcetera. Right on the air. It was interesting, and much more in depth than it is now.

Joe Cummings.



Bob Crawford



WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

Carole Simpson

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT AND SATURDAY ANCHORMAN

■ A general assignment reporter, Carole Simpson scorns the usual "sob sister" role for meatier fare of hard news and documentaries. A talented news personality, Miss Simpson is a reporter to her manicured fingertips, factual, dynamic and sophisticated. When Miss Simpson brings in a story it is a reflection of her reportorial dedication as a former journalism instructor, advisor and stringer correspondent for the Voice of America and the U. S. Information Agency.

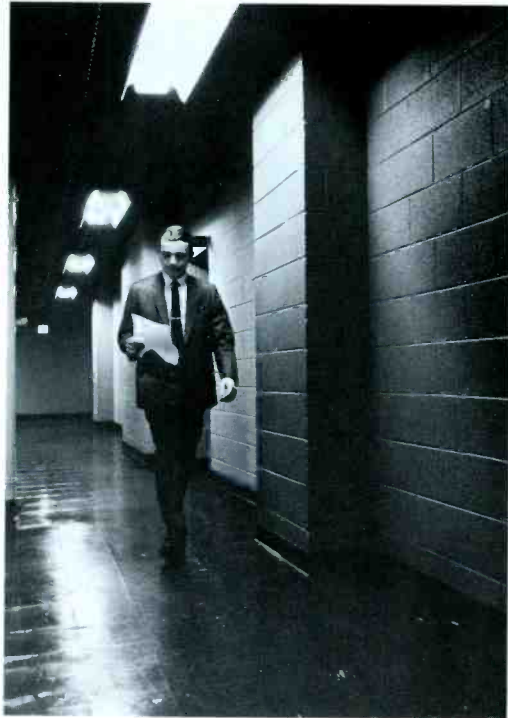


WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

Dick Westerkamp

CHIEF CORRESPONDENT Various times

■ Gifted with an inquiring mind and the ability to sift fact from fiction, Westerkamp is uniquely qualified as Chief Correspondent for WBBM NEWSRADIO 78. A tireless researcher and brilliant writer, Westerkamp's frequent background stories add a colorful in-depth dimension to the factual news broadcasts of his colleagues.



WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

Frank Beaman

CO-ANCHORMAN 3-7 PM, Monday thru Friday

■ Astute analyst of legislative trends, expert in government matters, intimate of politicians, Beaman has made a sparkling career of city, county and state news coverage.

■ His brilliant stories and analyses, his public affairs know-how, his stimulating interviews with newsmakers have resulted in his winning several Associated Press awards for news broadcasting.



Dick Helton
(All photos, late '60s.)

1968-PRESENT: NEWSRADIO 78



WILLIAM C. O'DONNELL SUCCEEDED E. H. Shomo as Vice President and General Manager of WBBM in October, 1967. O'Donnell came to WBBM from St. Louis where, after a sales career with station KMOX, he became Manager of CBS Radio Spot Sales there.

WBBM had been doing well with its infor-

mation and talk format. News had become a very important part of the *Talk of Chicago* and the station had the largest radio news staff in the city. Other CBS owned and operated stations had become all-news outlets, and in Chicago, independent station WNUS had unsuccessfully tried an all-news format, but it consisted mostly of "rip and read" wire service



reports, without much effort at tracking down and developing stories.

THE SUBJECT OF REVAMPING THE *Talk of Chicago* into an all-news station was put on the table. Management level discussions began, casually at first, then more seriously as the pros and cons of what "going all-news" would mean for WBBM. Other stations were picking up on the telephone call-in device that WBBM had pioneered and the *Talk of Chicago* no longer had an exclusive "talk-back" format.

"Would we still do phone-ins?"

"WNUS had tried all-news and wasn't successful. Who wants to listen to news all day long?"

"Is there enough news to fill 24 hours a day?"

"Will people tune out after five minutes?"

"What about Godfrey (who was the biggest star on the CBS Radio Network and could not be replaced by news every morning on WBBM)?"

"How about *Music 'til Dawn* (the all-night show had a firm sponsorship commitment)?"

"How can we go all-news with the staff we have? More people, reporters, writers, and editors will have to be hired."

"What about our current on-air people like Mal Bellairs and Jerry Williams? Can they adapt to an all-news operation?"

Research was done, surveys were conducted. O'Donnell had conversations with other CBS all-news station managers, and the New York brass as well. Finally, the decision was made.

ON MARCH 29, 1968, WBBM RADIO announced that it would "expand its award-winning news coverage to 17 1/2 hours per day" beginning May 6, 1968. Thirty-eight days later, *WBBM Newsradio 78* went on the air with the most comprehensive and thorough radio news operation in mid-America. The news staff was tripled. Ten reporters would be working the streets daily. John Callaway was named News and Program Director for *Newsradio 78*.

Dan Price and Dale McCarren anchored the morning news block from 5:30 to 10 am; Mal Bellairs and Tom Clark were on mid-days, 11 am to 3 pm; Dick Westerkamp (recruited from



The toughest street gang in Chicago. Have they got news for you.

When someone or something makes news, this gang is on the streets covering it. They're reporters from WBBM Newsradio 78. And they make up the largest full-time radio news staff in this town.

That's why no matter what is making news in Chicago you can be sure that a Newsradio 78 reporter will be there. And generally, we'll be there first. At City Hall, it's Bob Crawford; Joe Cummings and Frank Grenard cover crime; Dick Helton is

the specialist at the Federal Building; Alan Crane, the only Chicago radio reporter covering the legislature full time, is at the State Capitol. And you'll find Emery King, Diane Abi, Fred Portido, Len Walter, John Cody, Don Mellama and Donn Pearlman whenever a news story is breaking.

These are the finest radio news reporters in town. For example, Fred Portido and Frank Grenard have just received the Jacob Scher award for investigative reporting. John Cody

and Frank Beaman are past winners of the same award. They give you the facts, they give them to you straight and they give them to you fast. Our street gang. Have they got news for you?

WBBM/CBS Newsradio 78
Those Newspeople.

SPECIALISTS

JOE CUMMINGS BURLLEIGH HINES BOB CRAWFORD

Newsradio doesn't wait for news to come in. We go right to the source — with a team of specialists who, through years of experience, know their fields inside and out.

Like Joe Cummings, Police Reporter. He goes out where the news is — on the beat with first hand reports direct from the scene.

Burlleigh Hines, Urban Affairs Correspondent. He'll tell you what grass-roots Chicago is thinking, doing and fighting for.

Bob Crawford, City Hall Correspondent. His complete, investigative reports tell you what's happening in the Council — or in the mayor's office. You'll hear what's being said in the corridors — and behind closed doors.

Specialists like Cummings, Hines, Crawford and the rest make WBBM more than just all news. They make WBBM NEWSRADIO 78 the most complete, most thorough, most in depth source of broadcast news in Chicago.

WBBM NEWSRADIO 78
That says it all!

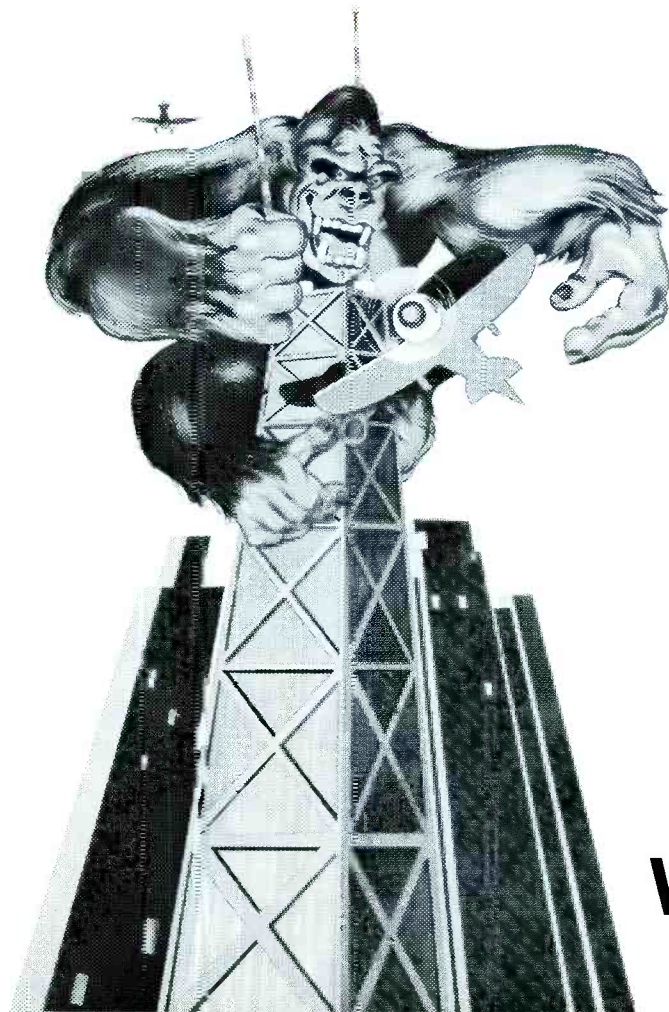
Ads produced in the 1970s.



John Callaway, currently host of "Chicago Tonight" on WTTW-TV



WBBM Advertising & Promotion Staff: (l to r) Mechelle Hughes, Intern; Barbara DiGuido, Dir. of Information Services; Janet Treuhaft, Mgr. of Information Services.



BEAT US TO A NEWS STORY AND WE'LL PUT YOU ON THE AIR.

Those Newspeople give you the news as it happens. Sometimes, though, a story breaks right in your neighborhood and you know about it before we do. So we're making you an offer. If you give us a news story that's news to us, and we put it on the air—we'll put you on the air.

What you do is call 944-7878. Give us your news tip; we'll check it out. What's more, if yours is judged the best News Tip of the Week we'll pay \$78. For the best tip over 78 days, \$780.

So keep your eyes open. You could hear yourself on WBBM Newsradio 78.

WBBM Newsradio 78 Where news is first!

WWJ, Detroit) and Mike Stanley (from WCAU, Philadelphia) reported from 3 to 7 pm; and John Hultman (also from WWJ) and John Madigan were the evening anchors from 8 to 11:30 pm.

MADIGAN BEGAN HIS CAREER AS a newsman in 1937 as a copyboy at the *Chicago Evening American*. He subsequently became a reporter and later was named Political Editor at the *American* and for the *Hearst* newspaper chain. His career moved forward as he joined the Washington Bureau of *Newsweek* magazine and subsequently made regular appearances on television's *Meet the Press* and *Face the Nation*. In 1964 he became News Director for WBBM-TV, Channel 2 in Chicago.

In 1968, when WBBM Radio was making the switch to an all-news format, Madigan was recruited by John Callaway and William O'Donnell to do regular commentaries and news analysis for *Newsradio 78*.

His political knowledge and contacts were invaluable to the station and he became Political Editor for WBBM. His cogent *News and Commentary* and *Views the Press* programs were often controversial, and always elicited discussion among listeners and the press. Madigan's weekly *At Issue* series of probing interviews with prominent newsmakers was added later, and still receives widespread coverage and recognition.

OVER THE YEARS, MADIGAN'S famous on-air sign-off "Newsradio SSsssssseventy-eight" became a well-known signature for the respected and honored newsman.

In the new WBBM newsradio format, CBS Network news and features were scheduled throughout the day. John Callaway's Sunday night public affairs program continued, and he was also assigned to produce a local interview show similar to CBS' *Face the Nation*.


General Manager O'Donnell was convinced the all-news format would work. "There's a greater awareness by people of what's going on," he said at the time, "and we intend to tell them. Radio has the mobility and intimacy that newspapers and TV lack. As the story happens, we can deliver it. This is what radio does best."



Top to bottom: John Madigan with "At Issue" guests Mayor Jane Byrne, Senator Adlai Stevenson, and Mayor Eugene Sawyer.

Early ad promoting Madigan's "News & Commentary."

MADIGAN



John Madigan. A man of experience... 35 years of it as a news journalist... 11 with CBS in Chicago.

John Madigan. A man of insight. When it comes to penetrating analysis of news and political events, there's no one in Chicago like him.

John Madigan. A man who's not afraid to say what he thinks about the issues and personalities that confront us today.

7:55 AM, 12:55
MONDAY THRU FRIDAY


WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

That says it all!

WBBM Staff: (l to r) Maria Munoz, Community Relations Director; Catherine Cahan, Director of Editorials; Janice Nichols, Administrative Asst.; Darlyne Martin, Technical Dept. Asst.; Cherry Howze, Community Relations/Editorial Asst.




YOUR LAST CHANCE



PERCY VS. SIMON

7-8 PM TONIGHT ON WBBM-AM



If you're undecided on the Senate race, listen to the last debate between Senator Charles Percy and Representative Paul Simon tonight on Newsradio 78. John Madigan will moderate the live debate and afterward he and Sue Castorino will ask listeners for their comments. On election night, WBBM-AM's news staff will bring you up-to-the-minute results of all the races.

Turn to us first:
WBBM-AM Newsradio 78.

The debate in November, 1984, between incumbent Senator Charles Percy and Paul Simon.

WBBM NEWSRADIO 78 WAS PUT to the test in its first few months of operation. John Callaway remembers: "Martin Luther King was murdered in the midst of the planning of the new format. Robert F. Kennedy was shot down a month after all-news WBBM was inaugurated. And the violence of the Democratic National Convention of 1968 capped the initiation period of all-news. We were given two months in which to plan the format, create a budget, hire a host of anchor people, reporters, editors, writers. In the beginning, we were heavy on street reporting and phone-out interviews. The format wasn't as tight as it is now and we weren't very slick. But we really cut loose on the big stories."

Among the *Newsradio 78* staff members at the time were Bob Crawford and John Cody.

BOB CRAWFORD JOINED WBBM A couple of weeks before the station went all-news in 1968. He had been working as News Director for the CBS radio and television affiliates in Peoria, Illinois and had covered the Richard Speck murder trial as a "stringer" or free-lancer for WBBM. He joined WBBM as a news editor and, in 1970, was assigned to Chicago's City Hall as a reporter for *Newsradio 78*.

"Mayor Daley was in office when I started," says Crawford. "The years have passed quickly. I've lived through Mayor Daley, Mike Bilandic, Jane Byrne, Harold Washington, and now Eugene Sawyer. The easiest to work with was Mayor Washington. He was a more open type of person who liked the media more than any other mayor did. The toughest was Daley. You knew he had the power to do so many things, but you could never really find out what was going on. The real truth always lay somewhere beneath the news releases that would be handed out on a controlled basis. Trying to find it out was very, very difficult.

"**D**ALEY WAS ALWAYS ON GUARD with the news media. He basically didn't like the press and he didn't like broadcast reporters. Harold Washington genuinely liked reporters and liked doing battle with them because he was confident of his ability to handle himself on his feet."

Mayor Harold Washington, who appeared monthly on WBBM's "Ask the Mayor" program.

Why is John Madigan mad again?

Find out first on
WBBM Newsradio 78.

THE CONVENTION

OUTSIDE AND IN

What happens outside the Democratic Convention is just as important as what happens inside. The convention is in other places like Lincoln Park... scheduled events... and City Hall. Only radio man offers you direct live coverage on both sides of the fence. And only WBBM Newsradio 78 has a 30 man news team assigned to cover key locations all over the city inside... WBBM keeps you up to the moment on speeches and major addresses. And outside, WBBM is on the streets, ready to break in at any time. Add to this the CBS Special Convention coverage and NewsAlert Bulletin.

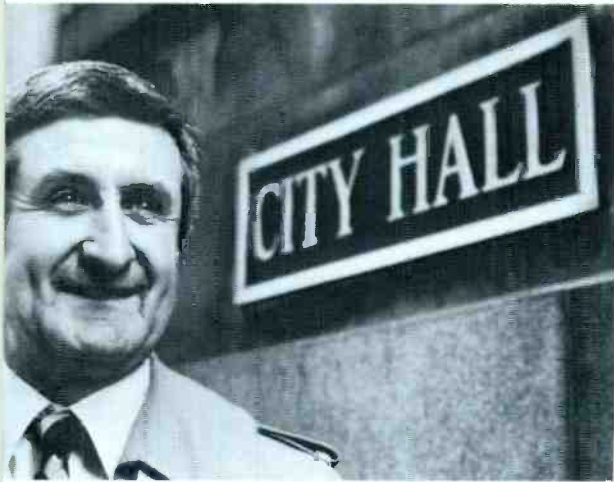
For the line and out of any music meant where else do you turn... but to Chicago's only newsradio station!

WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

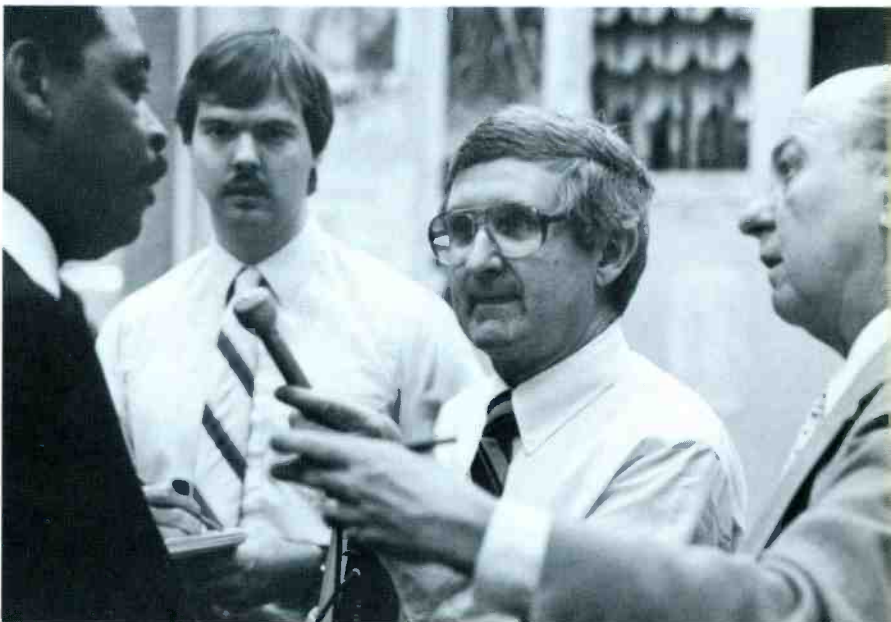
One of the first ads to promote WBBM Newsradio 78 and a major story of 1968.



WBBM City Hall Reporter Bob Crawford.



Mayor Richard J. Daley.



Above: Bob Crawford and his City Hall Press Room colleagues corner Alderman William Beavers.

Left: Part of WBBM's advertising campaign during the tenure of Mayor Jane Byrne (which coincided with the run of "McMillan & Wife" on TV).

Crawford recalls a big City Hall scoop:
“Daley was so proud of the way he managed government. He liked to convey the impression that he was an expert on the budget and that he really knew how to run a sound government. I did an investigative series in which I found something like \$96 million in waste in the budget, tucked away in the nooks and crannies and under obscure, misleading titles and things. He was furious! He got very upset at the whole situation. Finally they cut some of those elements out of the budget, so we ended up saving the taxpayers some money. I am pretty proud of that.”

JOHAN CODY STARTED HIS WBBM career as a news writer in 1967, and in the middle 1970s became a general assignment reporter, covering hard, breaking news and lighter features as well.

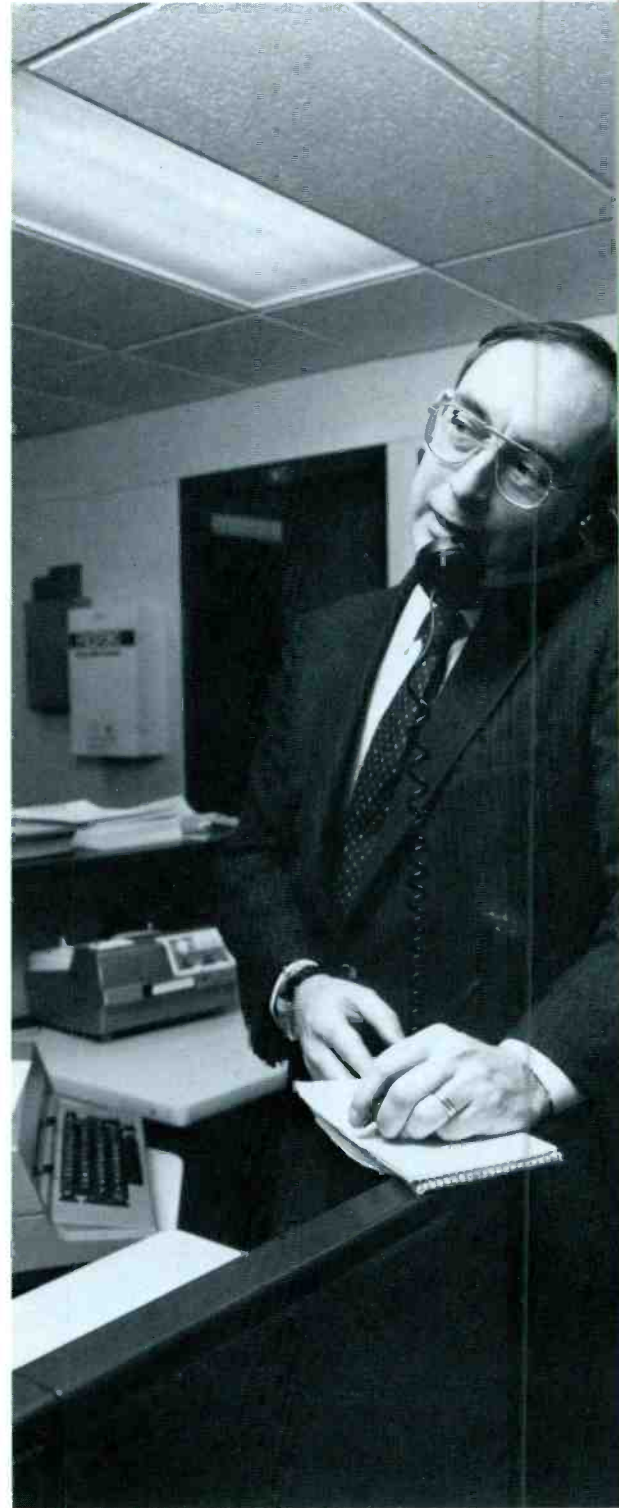
“**I** REMEMBER JUMPING OUT OF AN airplane with a tape recorder in the jumpsuit and the microphone wired to my left hand. I just talked as I fell!

“Once I went to cover a minor fire, where there wasn’t really much to say, and so I interviewed a myna bird! A lady had evacuated the building with her myna bird and I found that the bird actually had more to say than the lady, so I interviewed the bird.

“I’ve seen guys burned to death over at Cook County Jail. I remember the late Richard J. Daley’s funeral, on an extremely cold day, and we had to stand out there for hours, in what seemed to be sub-zero weather with high winds. And I remember a Chicago notable, Jimmy ‘The Bomber’ Catura being assassinated somewhere west of the Loop, and seeing his orange socks sticking out from underneath the blanket the police had used to cover him.”

AS A GENERAL ASSIGNMENT REPORTER, Cody has mastered the technique of gathering facts for a news story.

“You learn both the people to talk to and the type of person you need to talk to in a particular case. You learn the relative rank of people and who is likely to have information that you need and who is likely to have it but won’t give it; and who is likely to give information but wouldn’t know what they are talking about.



Reporter John Cody

Top: John Cody

Middle: Sports Producer John Morales

Bottom: Anchor/Reporter James Rowe reporting from the Federal Building.



WBBM Outdoor Billboard.

What made the Mayor Byrne today?
Find out first on WBBM Newsradio 78.

Newsradio 78: A whole lot more than a whole lot of news.

<p>SPORTS</p> 	<p>WOMEN'S INTEREST</p> 
<p>CONSUMER NEWS</p> 	<p>MOVIES AND ENTERTAINMENT</p> 
<p>COOKING</p> 	<p>OUTDOOR REPORTS</p> 

A 1978 ad.

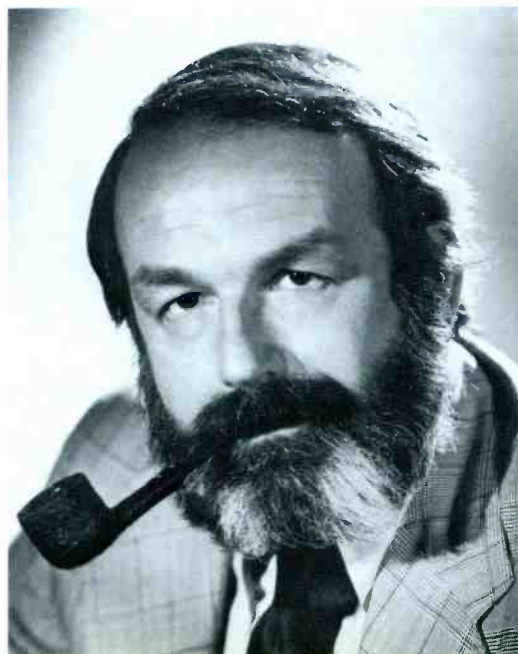
WBBM/CBS Newsradio 78

You learn who you should look for. You learn what a public relations person is likely to say; what a policeman is likely to say and what he is likely not to say; what a corporate official is likely to say or not say; what a bystander is likely to say. You sort of figure out what kind of spin is on the ball so that you can field it.”

OTHER NEWSRADIO 78 STAFF members working at the station at the time the all-news format began were Van Gordon Sauter, Bob Sanders, Alan Crane, Fred Partido, Jim Harry, and Brad Palmer.

Within the first 12 months as an all-news station, Brent Musburger, Frank Beaman, Alan Bickley, Sherman Kaplan, Dick Helton, and Len Walter had joined the *Newsradio 78* staff. Listeners were becoming more and better informed than ever.

Anchor/Reporter Phil Rogers ready to take off in the WBBM news plane.



CBS Sportscaster Brent Musburger during his early days at WBBM Newsradio 78.



DICK HELTON HAD BEEN WORKING for the *Illinois Farm Bureau* in Bloomington, Illinois, broadcasting each morning to 35 stations across the state. He had done stringer work for WBBM and he heard that, with the switch to all-news in 1968, the station was adding more people to its staff. Helton auditioned for a reporter's job, but was offered a position as a writer. He turned it down, electing to wait for an on-air spot which finally opened up in February, 1969.

“It was a very exciting moment for me,” says Helton, “because here I was, a 24-year-old farm kid from downstate Illinois who, while growing up, had listened to people like John Harrington and Lowell Thomas on WBBM and CBS. I was very familiar with this radio station because of the impact it had in this community and in the Midwest for so many years. So, just merely to walk through that front door and see some of these people was extraordinarily exciting. It was a really big moment for me.”

HELTON RECALLS, “THERE WAS A lot of energy in this radio station at the time. Coming out of the '68 Convention, coming out of the election, the time was so good for all-news radio, because there were so many things happening. Van Gordon Sauter, who was the News and Programming Director at the time, looked at me on my first day here and said, very seriously, referring to

Van Gordon Sauter, who later became President of CBS News.



The afternoon co-anchor team: Dick Helton and Kris Kridel.

my young age, 'You realize we're taking a big chance on you.' They were hiring people from Detroit, Boston and Milwaukee—people from major markets who were older than I and who had a track record in a large broadcast facility. I'm still here, so I guess Sauter's 'big chance' worked out."

Helton remembers a night, early in the all-news format, when he was working the overnight shift on the air and a news service report moved him to make a lucky phone call.

"IT WAS ABOUT THREE O'CLOCK IN the morning and a piece of copy came across the wire that said there was an announcement at Apple Records in London that the Beatles were going their separate ways and would no longer perform as a group. I went into one of the studios and got on the phone and called Apple Records in London. Somebody answered and I said, 'This is Dick Helton and I'm with the CBS radio station in Chicago and we've just seen the information that the Beatles are breaking up. Is there anyone there who can give me some additional information about this? I'd like to do an interview.' The guy said, 'Hold on.' About 10 or 15 seconds went by and I heard the phone being picked up and this person says, 'Hello, this is George Harrison.' Just out of the blue! I rolled the tape and we had George Harrison here on the air that morning in Chicago explaining why the Beatles decided to disband.

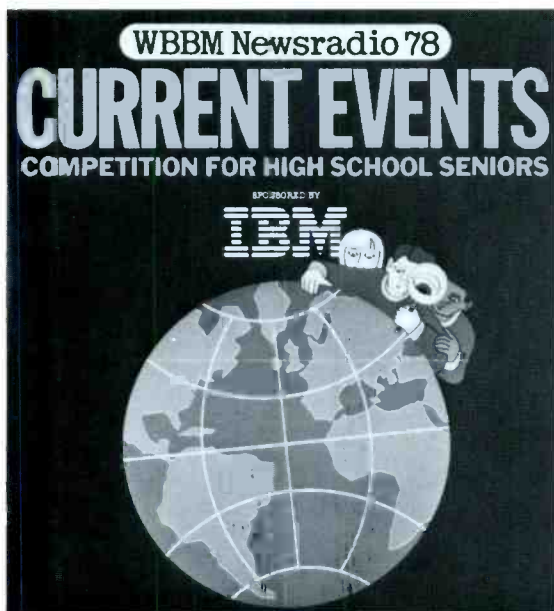
"I REMEMBER ANOTHER OCCASION and probably the most fascinating interview I ever did. Several years ago I had come across the name of Frank Goldsmith. Frank Goldsmith was nine-years-old and was on the *Titanic* when it went down. I found him in Ohio and I called him on one of the anniversaries of the *Titanic* sinking. We did a 15-minute interview in which he told me the story of his night on the *Titanic*. He told how he survived and how his father and one of his best friends stayed behind. His friend was 13-years-old, had just celebrated his birthday and was wearing long trousers for the first time. He refused to go with the women and children because he was a man, and so he stayed behind. Frank Goldsmith gave me this incredible account of the sinking of the *Titanic* in a firsthand story. To this day, as I recall this, it gives me goosebumps."

WBBM News & Programming Director Chris J. Witting, Jr. and Assistant News Director Chris Berry.



WBBM Managing Editor Craig Dellimore and Writer Jim Benes.

In early 1988, WBBM sponsored its first Current Events Competition for High School students.



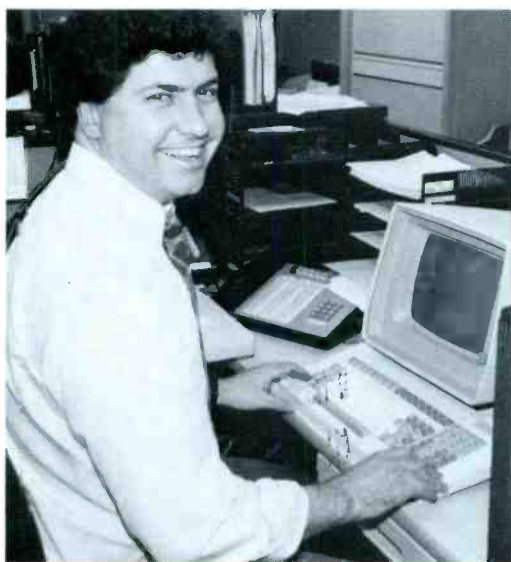
Open to:
 Chicago Public High Schools
 Suburban Public High Schools
 Private High Schools

3 prizes in each school category:
 1st Prize: \$5000 Scholarship
 2nd Prize: \$3000 Scholarship
 3rd Prize: \$1000 Scholarship

Prizes:
 \$15,000 in prizes to be awarded to the winning school. Prizes are awarded to the winning school. Prizes are awarded to the winning school.



Above: WBBM Morning Newsroom Staff: (l to r) Don Mellema, Reporter/Anchor; Valerie Ingram, Assoc. Producer; Penny Vickas, Desk Asst.; Steve Miller, Writer; Abby Polonsky, Production Mgr.; Carleen Mosbach, Senior Producer; Craig Dellimore, Managing Editor; Mary Novak, Writer; Duane Gray, Writer; Jim Benes, Writer.



Writer/Anchor Bernie Tafoya.



Below: WBBM Evening Newsroom Staff: (l to r) David Bakker, Writer; Marilyn Idelman, Writer; Leon Colvin Jr., Writer; Carol Bowdry, Desk Asst.; Robert Margoles, Intern; Rick Strasser, Assoc. Producer; Jane Brouder, Assoc. Producer; Lee Ann Morris, Prod. Asst.; Helen Denham, Desk Asst. (seated, front); Deidra White, Writer (seated, rear).



Anchorman Dale McCaren, Writer Don Schuble.

Len Walter.



LEN WALTER JOINED WBBM IN February, 1969, after a stint at WJR, Detroit as a news reporter and anchorperson, doing a lot of work covering the automobile industry and the unions. WBBM News Director Van Gordon Sauter had been a newspaperman in Detroit and knew of Walter's work on the air and invited him to join the staff of *Newsradio 78*.

I CAME IN AS AN ANCHORPERSON, working afternoons with Alan Bickley who, I think, is one of the finest minds in broadcasting today. Shortly thereafter I was made a general assignment reporter and it seemed like the assignment desk would always give me stories that were business related. I had done a lot of recreational reading in the business field, so I had given myself a little bit of an education in that area. The station did not have a financial desk at that time."

Some years later, in 1982, Walter was asked to start a business news segment on a regular basis and he has since become Business Editor for *Newsradio 78*.

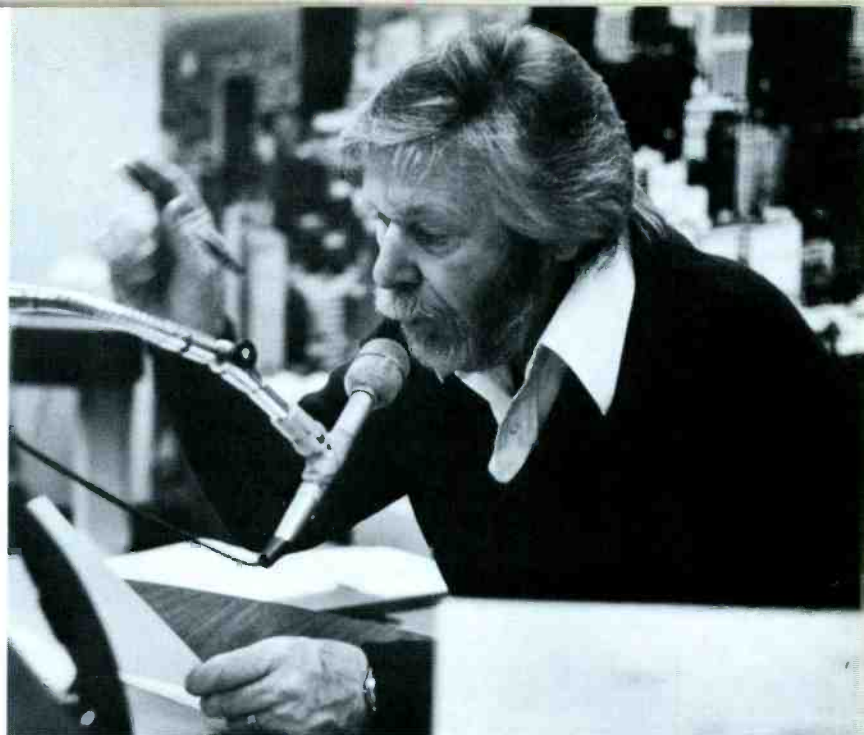
COVERAGE OF BUSINESS NEWS RE-quires just as much news judgment as any other reporting. Walter recalls, "I was watching a pharmaceutical stock one day on the floor of the *Midwest Stock Exchange* and it began to operate very erratically. I started asking some questions among the traders on the floor. They didn't know what was happening. So, I called a friend of mine at the company and, off the record, he told me that a number of people had died as a result of using tainted *Tylenol* products. I was able to confirm that quickly and we broke the story on WBBM, and probably had it on the air an hour-and-a-half or two hours before anybody knew what was going on. And our news desk knew how to handle that. The producer at the time dispatched a reporter to the police department. Another reporter went to the *Food and Drug Administration* offices, another went to some of the largest distributors of the product and, of course, the story just fed on itself after that. So what I was able to do was to give them the lead and carry the ball for an hour or two with regard to what had happened and what was happening to the stock, and what the federal regulatory authorities were doing.

The Board of Trade Building, LaSalle Street.



WBBM Business Breakfast, November 1987:
"The Business of Sports." Moderator, Rich King; Don Grenesko. Chicago Cubs: Michael McCaskey, Chicago Bears: Jerry Reinsdorf, Chicago White Sox/Chicago Bulls: William Wirtz, Chicago Blackhawks.





Top, left: Reporter/Anchor Steve Crocker.

Top, right: Reporter/Anchor Alan Bickley.

Bottom: Len Waiter at The Midwest Stock Exchange.

“**B**UT BASICALLY MY MAIN FUNCTION, as I see it, is to keep people up to date on where the markets are at any one specific time in our broadcast day. It’s about the same as doing a play-by-play ballgame. You are constantly glued to the computers that are connected to all of the Exchanges around the world. The numbers dance and after a while, they tell you their own little story.”

IN 1971, WBBM GENERAL MANAGER William C. O’Donnell was transferred to KNXT in Los Angeles as General Manager of the CBS-owned TV station there. He was replaced by James W. Simon as WBBM Vice President and General Manager, but after a two year absence, O’Donnell returned to the post in January, 1973.

ON ITS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY IN 1973, *WBBM Newsradio 78* was also calling itself “The Electronic Newspaper” and the all-news format had indeed relaxed into a newspaper-style. (The “Electronic Newspaper” tag was later dropped; “Newsradio 78” best described WBBM.) News, of course, was the mainstay of the station, but listeners now could tune in to hear news commentaries and editorials, in-depth interviews with newsmakers, sports, financial news, weather, traffic, and features.

HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM BOB and Betty Sanders brought an extra dimension to mid-day listeners of *Newsradio 78* with special features, guests, interviews and a rare warmth and friendliness.

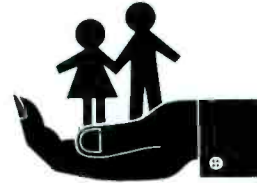
Bob and Betty were down-to-earth radio people who had a large listening audience which identified with them through their mid-day program of news and features, interviews with visiting celebrities, best-selling authors, and other interesting people. They met in St. Louis at a TV station where Bob was a staff announcer and Betty was doing commercials for the *Liberace Show*.

They began working as a husband-wife team on WBBM in 1972 where Bob had been working for some years as an announcer and disc jockey. Bob, incidentally, was the last disc jockey on WBBM before the station switched to the talk and all-news formats.

WBBM

Newsradio 78

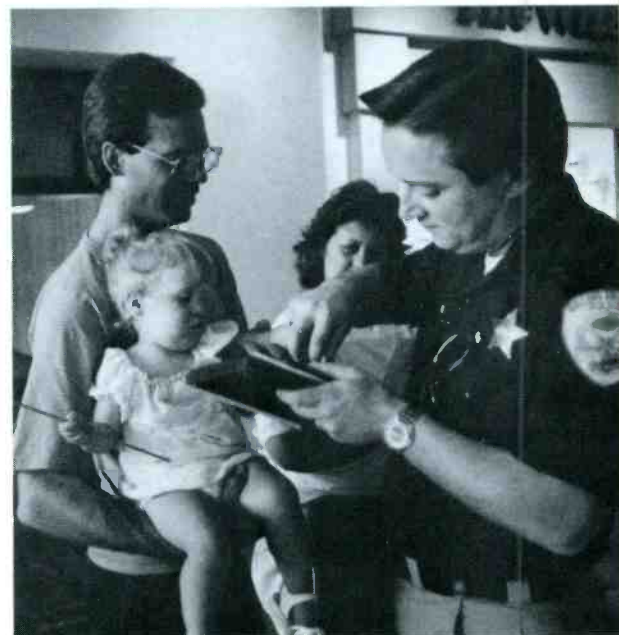
PROJECT SAFE KIDS



DO'S & DON'T'S
FOR PARENTS AND KIDS



HANLEY DAWSON
DEALERSHIP GROUP



WBBM Newsradio 78 worked with the Chicago Police Dept. and the Illinois State Police "I-Search" program for five months in 1987 to fingerprint kids throughout the Chicago area during "Project Safe Kids."

Reporter/Anchor Don Mellema.



Today, people don't keep up with the Joneses, they keep up with Bob and Betty Sanders.

On WBBM Newsradio 78. From 10 AM to 2 PM. People keep up by listening to Bob and Betty. The only husband and wife news radio team.

Their specialty? Knowing what's going on and telling you what you'd like to know. In Chicago, in Illinois, across the nation, throughout the world. They're the couple who give the news a completely new dimension.

They have interviews with interesting people. They'll tell you what the weather is doing and what it's going to do.

They'll tell you where the traffic is moving and where it isn't. They'll tell you what the best buys are and the best place to buy them. They also have special CBS features such as "Mike Roy's Cooking Thing," "Today's Woman," and their own "Family Forum."

In fact, Bob and Betty are the people to listen to when you don't want all music or just plain talk.

And the great thing is it's not difficult to keep up with the Sanderses. All you need is a radio with the dial at 78 between 10 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon from Monday through Friday.

Bob and Betty Sanders were on WBBM together for 10 years. One of their many famous guests was actress Patricia Neal (shown with Bob and Betty and Don Mellema).

WBBM NEWSRADIO 78
Know it all with Those Newspeople.

A special recipe folder encouraging limited alcoholic beverage use during the holiday season. Part of WBBM's "Don't Drink and Drive" campaign.

REGINE SCHLESINGER WAS AMONG the writers, editors, reporters and anchors who were added to the staff as the station's newsgathering expertise grew and was refined.

SCHLESINGER GRADUATED FROM *Northwestern University* in March, 1973, and started making the rounds looking for a job in broadcasting. Much to her amazement, she found her first—and only job thus far—at WBBM. She began as a news writer, did some producing, and after several years became a general assignment reporter and news anchor.

"College is very good academically and theoretically," she says, "but when you get out into the real world, the real experience of a newsroom is something different. It was unlike anything I had really seen. When a big story broke, suddenly the adrenalin started flowing, because I had never been involved in anything like that. Everybody pitched in and started helping. There was a real team spirit and everybody felt they were all working toward the same goal. The people at WBBM are very close to each other and have a very good working relationship.

BEING A GENERAL ASSIGNMENT reporter is wonderful, because there is so much variety. You never get pigeonholed into any particular kind of story. Some stories are tough to try to explain in a brief time because they are so complicated. Other stories are tough because they are constantly changing. And some are tough just because of the emotional heartbreak. Sometimes you see very sad stories. You have to try to distance yourself. It's the same sort of thing that policemen and firemen and doctors do in their situations. You have to separate yourself as a human being and look at it professionally and just try to deal with it as calmly as you can."

IN JANUARY, 1974, WBBM ADDED some pure entertainment with the addition of the *CBS Radio Mystery Theatre*, a network offering hosted by E. G. Marshall, and presented seven nights a week at 10:30 pm.

By the 1980s, after a dozen years of all-news, *WBBM Newsradio 78* was considered

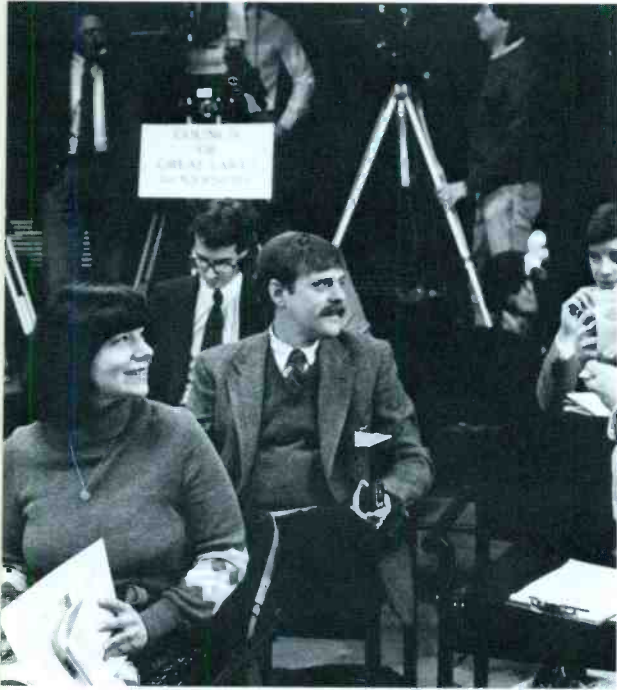


Oh what fun it is to try these delightful non-alcoholic beverage recipes... brought to you by White Hen Pantry, WBBM Newsradio 78 & 7UP.

Reporter/Anchor Regine Schlesinger.



Schlesinger covering a Conference of Midwest Governors in February, 1988.



Turn To Us In The Morning. Newsradio 78.

Plug into the largest radio news staff in town. Learn what happened as you slept. What the weather's doing. If the expressways are express or not. Who won. Who lost. How the



markets are faring. WBBM's wide-awake reporters are right there with the news you'll need to start your day. Plus commentaries from John Madigan and Walter Jacobson. Get smart early.

**Turn tous first.
WBBM
Newsradio 78.**



Early 80's ad promoting morning programming.

Top: WBBM Traffic/Continuity Staff: (l to r) Debbie Mills, Mgr. of Traffic & Continuity; Deborah Parker, Asst. Traffic & Continuity Mgr.; Mary Gorg, Continuity Mgr.

Bottom: Reporter/Anchor Dale McCaren.

“state of the art.” An experienced staff and management team had the knowledge and expertise to present ongoing news and breaking stories in a remarkably comprehensive and concise manner. Chicago tuned to WBBM for news as it was happening, for interpretation of the news, for sports reports and sports events, for features, interviews, and for the personalities and reporters who represented the station.

BY THE EARLY 1980S, THE *NEWS-radio 78* format was so well defined and the audience had grown to be so large and loyal that the format planners back in 1968 need not have worried that listeners would tune out after a few minutes of headlines.

Newsradio 78 had distinguished itself as Chicago’s most honored radio station, earning over 100 awards for excellence in broadcasting and journalism.

And the station was eminently listenable. John Hultman was News Director as well as an on-air anchor-reporter; John Madigan was Political Editor and Media Critic; Alan Bickley, Dale McCarren, Alan Crane, Bob Crawford, John Cody, Millard Hansen, Fred Partido, and Len Walter were anchor-reporters; Brad Palmer was doing sports.

HERB HOWARD REPORTED *NEWS-radio 78*’s computer traffic from the 103rd floor Skydeck of Sears Tower. John Case was the only outdoor reporter in Chicago whose programs were aired seven days a week. Sherman Kaplan’s *Restaurant Reviews*, Don Mellema’s *Entertainment Reports*, John Cody’s *Environment Report* and Keith Bromery’s *Urban Journal* all added to the texture of all-news WBBM.

FRED PARTIDO’S *SPEAKING OF Spanish* program concerned itself with the needs and interests of Chicago’s large Latino population. Steve Crocker was the only radio reporter assigned on a full-time basis to cover the state legislature in Springfield. Dick Helton reported from the Federal Courts and Diane Abt’s beat was education. Joe Cummings was always at the scene of police and fire stories and Donn Pearlman received national recognition for investigative reporting.

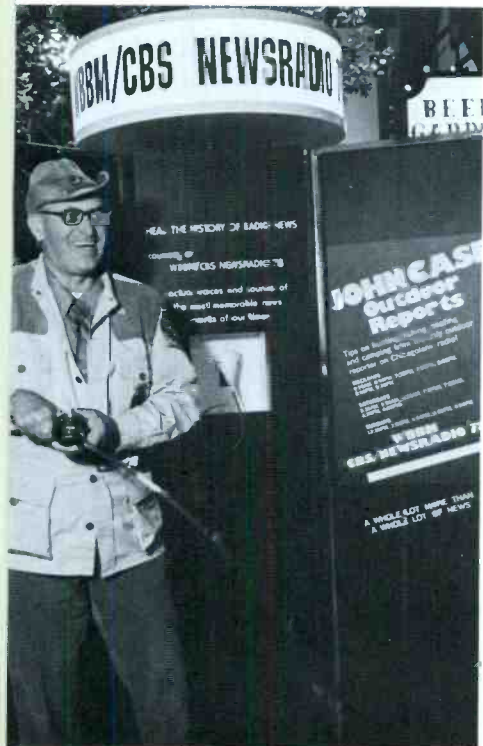
Night Owl Anchorman Millard Hansen.



Reporter Fred Partido.



Above: WBBM's Computer Traffic Control at the Sears Tower Skydeck, and former Traffic Reporter Herb Howard who helped program the traffic reporting system used today.



Outdoor Reporter John T. Case was a familiar voice on WBBM Newsradio 78 for many years.



Each year, WBBM is part of the St. Patrick's Day parade in downtown Chicago.

PEARLMAN JOINED NEWSRADIO 78 in 1970 as a writer-producer. He had been working in Kansas City, Missouri as a stringer for WBBM when the writer's job opened for him. He remembers his first impression of the all-news station in Chicago.

"The newsroom looked like lower Wacker Drive. There's a false ceiling in there now, but then there were girders sticking out. There were, it seemed, 150 people running around the newsroom at the time. We had a lot more writers and management people then. Now, with computerization and a more efficient operation, there are more people out on the street, but fewer inside. The newsradio format was only about two-years-old at the time, but there was an awful lot of excitement, a different kind of excitement than we have today, a wide-eyed innocent excitement. 'Gee, we could probably do this and get someone live on the radio!' Then we'd pick up the phone and call somewhere in the world to get a story. Today, we're not just calling somewhere, we're getting them on the satellite."

Actors Billy Crystal and Gregory Hines after an interview with Donn Pearlman.



Anchor/Reporter Donn Pearlman.

PEARLMAN RECALLS HIS PART IN the coverage of the crash of the DC-10 near O'Hare Field in 1979. "I was one of the first reporters out there. I remember pulling up on Touhy Avenue because they were putting reporters off to the side in their cars. I saw a big, long line of ambulances and I suddenly realized that the attendants were just standing there. There was no one to be attended to. Everyone on the plane had died. It took a couple of seconds for that realization to hit me. I just couldn't move. It hit me that there were apparently no survivors."

AND PEARLMAN REMEMBERS AN embarrassing moment. "It was December of 1976 when Mayor Daley died, and fortunately I was not alone in my embarrassment. I was covering the funeral procession at *Calgary Cemetery* on the far south side. There was a whole group of reporters—radio, television and press people—all lined up outside the cemetery, waiting for the funeral procession with the hearse carrying the Mayor's body.

WBBM Newsradio 78

Chicago's News Station

Former Counsel to the President John Dean talks about his book, "Blind Ambition," following the Watergate scandal.



ALL DAY, EVERY DAY **WBBM Newsradio 78**

WBBM
Newsradio 78

We keep you in touch with Chicago and the Midwest all day, every day with:

- The latest news from WBBM and CBS
- Traffic updates 7 days a week (Mon-Fri 5AM-6PM, Sat-Sun Noon-6PM)
- KQDJ WEATHER reports around the clock
- School & Business closings during bad weather

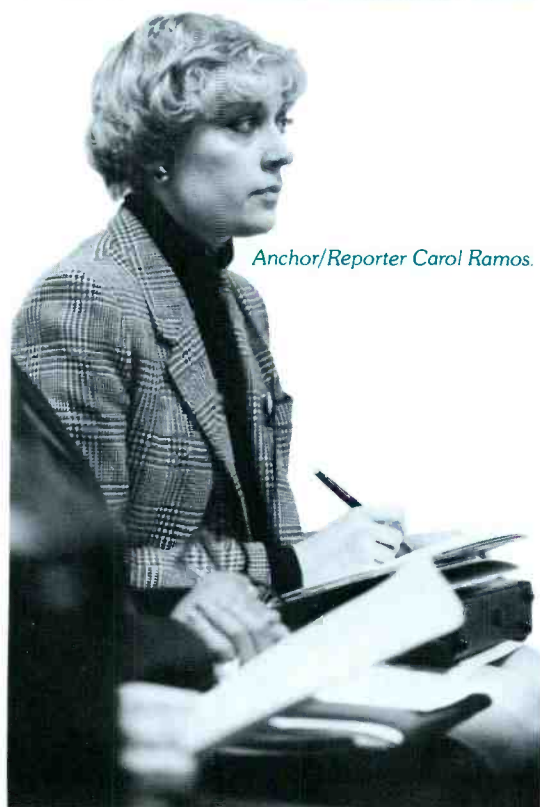
WBBM NEWS TIP HOTLINE
See WBBM, the number to get, call with news, reporting, advice, or help on anything in the Chicago area. It's available for your calls 24 hours a day.

DIRECT LINE
A direct line to your station and office in a radio car. It's available 24 hours a day and is a great way to get the news, report on events, or get help on anything in the Chicago area.

BREATH OF HOPE
See WBBM, the number to get, call with news, reporting, advice, or help on anything in the Chicago area. It's available for your calls 24 hours a day.

WBBM Newsradio 78
In Touch With Chicago

WBBM
Newsradio 78
Chicago's News Station



Anchor/Reporter Carol Ramos.



Carol Ramos covering a public meeting at the Chicago Transit Authority.

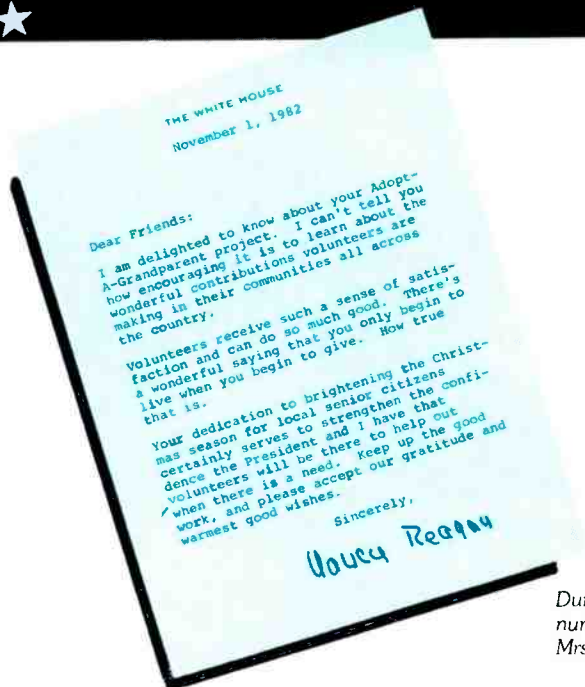
“SUDDENLY A STATE TROOPER yelled, ‘Here they come!’ We looked down the road and there was a hearse and a funeral procession coming. Everyone started to go on the air ‘live.’ All the radio stations geared up and went live and TV started to go live. I’m yelling into the two-way radio, ‘Okay, let’s go!’ They put me on the air and I’m standing on the top of our mobile unit so I could look down the roadway. It’s cold, it’s windy and I’m holding a two-way radio in my frozen hand, describing the funeral procession. It comes closer and suddenly I realize there was no police escort and it was clear that all of us were broadcasting the funeral procession of someone other than Richard J. Daley.

“I tried to get out of it as gracefully as possible, indicating to the listening audience that everyone was doing the same thing. About five minutes later helicopters appeared in the sky, we saw flashing lights and police cars and we realized that, finally, this was the funeral procession we were waiting for.”



WBBM Washington Correspondents Les Woodruff (top) and Wes Vernon.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Will Ronald Reagan ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
be our leading man? ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Find out first on ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
WBBM Newsradio 78. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
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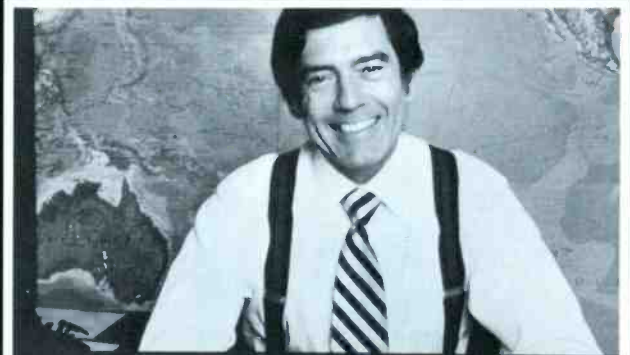
During two holiday seasons, WBBM matched up volunteer visitors with lonely nursing home residents in the "Adopt a Grandparent" public service project. Mrs. Reagan graciously acknowledged WBBM's effort.



CBS RADIO NETWORK



DOUGLAS EDWARDS



DAN RATHER



CHARLES KURALT



JUDY MULLER




BRENT MUSBURGER

*CBS Radio Network's popular
morning newsmen, poet laureate,
author and philosopher,
Charles Osgood.*



Below: WBBM "Sportsline" guest host Ted Albrecht coaches "the offense" during WBBM's Football Clinic for Women Only.

Also below: Papa Bear George Halas and former WBBM Sales Manager John Goodwill at a "Bears Bash" for station clients.

**Bears vs. Packers,
Noon Today
WBBM Newsradio 78.**

Pre-game program starts at 11 AM with the Gale Sayers Show Play-by-play with Joe McConnell & Brad Palmer. Turn to us first. WBBM Newsradio 78.



NFL Monday Night Football games are heard on WBBM Newsradio 78.



AS WBBM GREW, THE *NEWSTIP Hotline* was created. Listeners who had learned of, or were witness to, an important news event were urged to call the station, and *Newsradio 78* obtained many important scoops on big stories. The station's *Direct Line* project was developed to help listeners with personal problems ranging from social service needs to consumer complaints. A Christmastime *Wreath of Hope* fund-raising campaign was initiated to assist thousands of needy Chicagoans during the holiday season.

SPORTS WERE NOT NEGLECTED BY *Newsradio 78*. WBBM carried a variety of local and network sportscasts along with play-by-play coverage of major sporting events. From 1977 to 1984, WBBM was the home of the Chicago Bears broadcasts, and the station aired Chicago White Sox baseball in the '80 and '81 seasons.

"Sweetness" Walter Payton.



Opposite: The White Sox' Bill Veck at the WBBM microphone

Below right: A Baseball Clinic for Women Only at Comiskey Park sponsored by WBBM Newsradio 78 and the Chicago White Sox.



Will Harry Caray the Sox to a win?



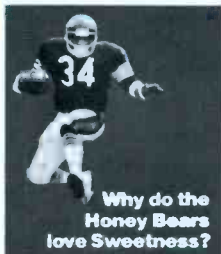
Why does Joe McConnell have so much Sox appeal?



Will Jimmy Piersall come out of left field today?



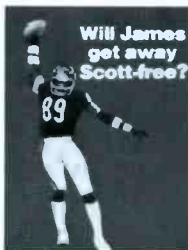
How does a Rich King appraise baseball diamonds?



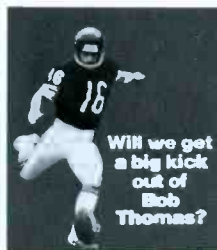
Why do the Honey Bears love Sweetness?



Is Evans In-Vince-able?



Will James get away Scott-free?



Will we get a big kick out of Bob Thomas?

Find out first on WBBM Sportsradio 78.

WBBM Sportsradio 78 is the play-by-play voice of the 1980 Chicago White Sox.

Far left: Former WBBM Sports Director Brad Palmer, now a sportscaster on WLS-TV, Chicago.

Find out first on WBBM Sportsradio 78.

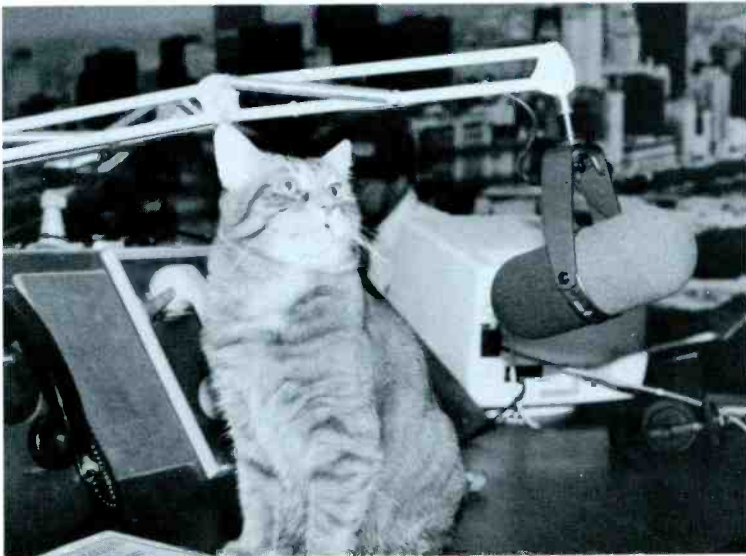
Voice of the 1980 Chicago Bears, featuring Joe McConnell with play-by-play, and Brad Palmer with color.

FELICIA MIDDLEBROOKS WAS THE first woman to co-anchor the morning drive time schedule on WBBM. She had worked at several radio stations in northwest Indiana and had been a desk assistant at Channel 2 News in Chicago. She started her WBBM career in 1983 as a reporter and weekend anchor, and was teamed with John Hultman in the morning drive period in October, 1984.

“IT’S WONDERFUL WORKING ON morning drive,” she says. “Initially, I would go out on stories right after we got off the air, but it became physically debilitating. It was grueling for me to constantly talk on the air for five hours and then go out and cover a story. I miss street reporting, but I try to make up for it by doing special reports throughout the year. I don’t want to lose touch with the people. You stay in touch with them by going out where they are—into the community. I’m committed to a number of organizations and I do side work for them. I’ll go out and address civic and religious groups and spend a lot of time in the school system. When you meet the people, it makes what you’re doing well worth the effort.”

Felicia Middlebrooks

Famous interview guest: Morris the Cat.





Announcing the total dollars collected during WBBM's Wreath of Hope campaign for the benefit of 7 Chicago charities. (l to r) John Hultman, Felicia Middlebrooks, United Airlines' Marie MacDonald and Richard Veatch, Gregg Peterson, United is one of WBBM's Wreath of Hope Corporate Sponsors.

WBBM Direct Line volunteer staff: (l to r) Barbara Stemer, Nathan Feinstein, Marilyn Kaufman, Juan Bustamante, Terry Willis, Coordinator Naomi Hood (holding award), Erica Watts, WBBM General Manager Gregg Peterson, Harry Mazur and Cydelle Rosenberg (many other volunteers not shown).

Morning Drive Anchor Team: John Hultman and Felicia Middlebrooks

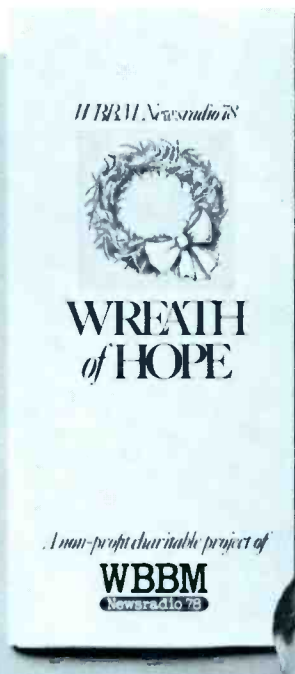




Wreath of Hope volunteers distribute "Twinkleberry Cookies" donated by Entenmann's Bakeries. (l to r) Dayle Morrissey (Ronald McDonald House); Kathey Morrissey; Andrea Berry (McDonald's); Donna Quatrano (McDonald's); Elizabeth Coghlan.

MIDDLEBROOKS HAD BEEN HIRED by Gregg L. Peterson who succeeded William C. O'Donnell as WBBM Vice President and General Manager in 1982. Peterson came to WBBM from KNX, the CBS station in Los Angeles, where he served on the news staff for 13 years, the last three as News Director.

WHEN PETERSON ARRIVED AT WBBM, he found "a great radio station that needed a little fine tuning." Peterson continues: "The station had a pre-eminent position in the marketplace and a tremendous number of talented people on staff. We began modernizing equipment—it had been some time since that had been done—and we greatly expanded the amount of community outreach programs. For example, we reemphasized the *Wreath of Hope*, our holiday charity where money is raised for various agencies around Chicago. We began doing a lot of things that are innovative for an all-news station. We started doing remote broadcasts, originating our *Newsradio 78* programs from the *Chicago Automobile Show* or from the *Taste of Chicago* in Grant Park. We have also broadcast from various suburban shopping malls.



Chicago Bulls Superstar Michael Jordan signs autographs during the Wreath of Hope fundraiser at Yorktown Mall.



WBBM Vice President and General Manager, Gregg Peterson.

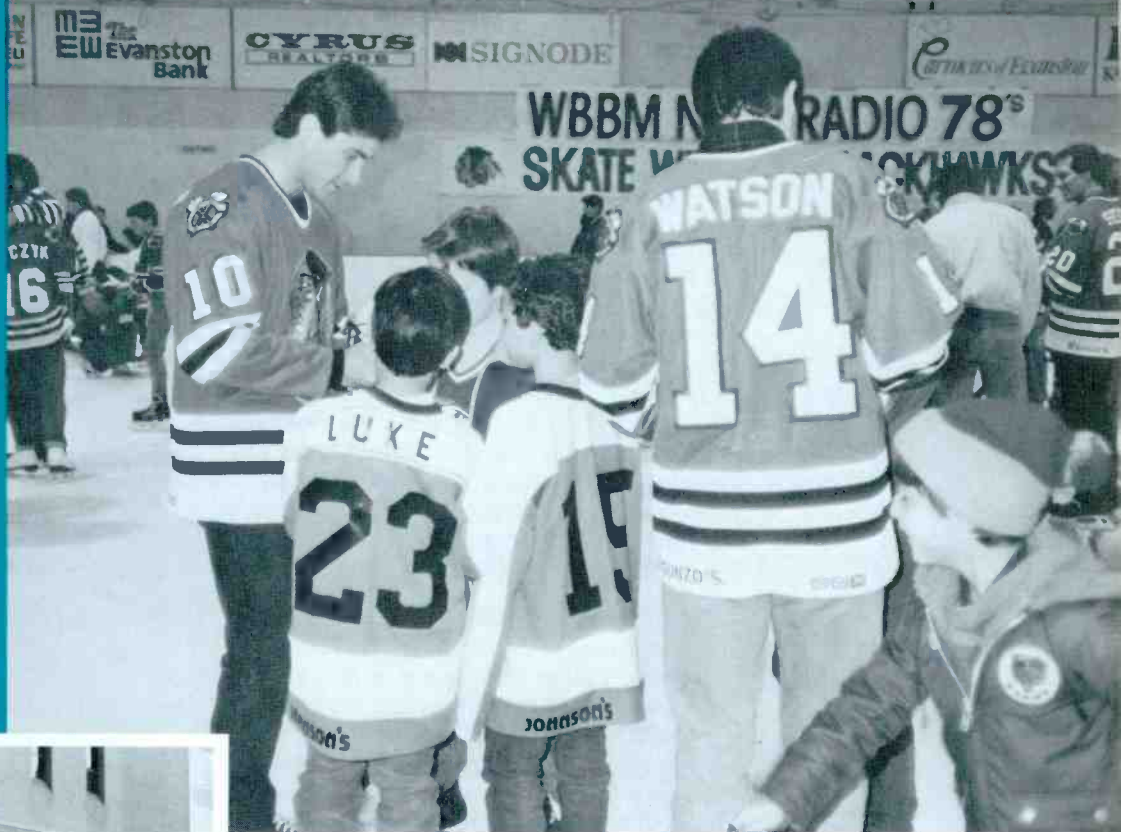
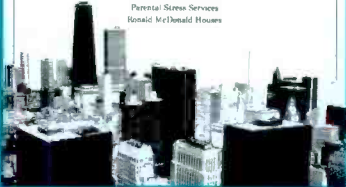
WBBM Newsradio 78

SKYLINE TOUR OF CHICAGO

Sunday, November 15, 1987 10am-4pm

In cooperation with the
Department of Commerce and Community Affairs
Illinois Office of Tourism

To benefit WBBM's 1987 Wreath of Hope recipient agencies:
Catholic Family Services of Gary
Children's Home and Aid Society
Emergency Fund for Needs People
CEIBA Harvey Community Service Center
Oma's Youth Services
Parental Support Services
Ronald McDonald House



Above: Chicago Blackhawk fans join WBBM and the players at WBBM's Skate with the Blackhawks party to benefit Wreath of Hope.

Opposite: WBBM's Skyline Tours give the public a behind-the-scenes peek at corporate and political inner sanctums of power and prestige in Chicago.

Below: Broadcasting "live" from the Chicago Auto Show.



ONCE WE DID A REMOTE FROM THE *Museum of Science and Industry* on a Saturday in February. Normally, the Museum might expect about 15,000 visitors. We had 52,000 people show up—the most who had ever come to the Museum on any February day. We're involved in some community-wide event all the time.

"During a remote broadcast," says Peterson, "the writers, the reporters, the producers, the broadcasters, the technical department, the news sources that we rely on—all of that input still continues, so our programming really isn't changed. The difference is that listeners can see the radio station at work."

"IN THESE TIMES PEOPLE REALLY need news more than ever before. The world is more complex and moves at a faster pace. More and more, the average person needs to know, for example, what is happening internationally and nationally in the business world. This was proven in October, 1987, when the stock market crash touched almost every person in the country, one way or another.

"Young people are more interested in news than ever before. Women have become more actively involved in the marketplace and have a need to know. People still rely on WBBM for basics—traffic, weather, even the time—much more than ever before, they want to know what's happening in other parts of the world."



Evergreen Plaza.

WBBM Free Day at the Museum of Science and Industry.





Top, left: WBBM Sports Director Rich King takes questions from the audience during Sportsline at "Taste of Chicago."

Top, right: In an all-day broadcast, WBBM participates in the opening of the "We the People" exhibit at the Chicago Historical Society.

Middle: WBBM Free Day at Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History.

Bottom: The WBBM Mobile Newsroom setup at Taste of Chicago in Grant Park.



HAVE A FIELD DAY.

Saturday, March 8th, it won't cost a thing to visit the Field Museum, one of the finest natural history museums in the world. WBBM Newsradio 78 is sponsoring a Free Day.

Come see us broadcast live from the main hall between 10am and 5pm. There are exhibits of prehistoric gems, music, parks, sports from the past, even the opening of the "Te Moon" collection from New Zealand!

Even if you can't "Free Day," you can still have a Field Day on us. All you have to do is listen.

WBBM/AM78
NEWSRADIO

WHEN IT COMES TO THE WORLD SERIES, WE'VE GOT THE BASES COVERED.

Call it all of baseball's best - starting this Saturday at 7:00 p.m. with Jack Buck and Sparky Anderson on WBBM. Also during the series, White Sox, Jim Fregosi and Cubs' Gene Michael will be featured on "Ask the Manager" sponsored by Spaulding on Saturday and Sunday beginning at 10:00 p.m.

So this Saturday and all through the series, turn in baseball's greatest hits on WBBM Newsradio 78.

WBBM/AM78
NEWSRADIO

DON'T LET THE NEWS BE NEWS TO YOU.

There's no reason to be in the dark first thing in the morning. Especially when you can get the most up-to-date news, weather, traffic and sports on WBBM AM.

So get your clock radio to Newsradio 78 with Felicia Middlebrooks and John Hulman. And let your ears open your eyes.

**MORNINGS ON
WBBM/AM78**
NEWSRADIO

TONIGHT SOMETHING FRIGHTENING WILL COME OUT OF YOUR RADIO.

Starting at 9:30 pm, WBBM AM presents three live radio dramas adapted from tales by H.P. Lovecraft and H. L. Menckens. Stephen King, William F. Nolan and Richard Matheson.

It'll be an hour and a half of good old scare brought to you only by the best performers: Casey Hyslop, Janet Lockhart, Lynn Anderson, Gary Owens, Casey Kasen and Tom Wood.

So listen to WBBM AM this Halloween night to scare. Only, we recommend you don't listen alone.

WBBM/AM78
NEWSRADIO

THIS SATURDAY, HAVE A BUSINESS LUNCH WITH YOUR KIDS.

It starts at 12 noon on WBBM AM Newsradio 78. The main course? A special edition of "Money Watch," that will help kids from nine to thirteen gain a better understanding of money. How to manage it. Where it comes from. And how America's economic system works.

In this live broadcast from Chicago Savings in Mount Prospect, business editor Len Walter will talk with experts in economics, finance and education. They'll also take phone calls from kids with questions about money - from the annual deficit to a weekly allowance.

So if you want to help your kids learn the value of a dollar, listen to WBBM AM Newsradio 78 this Saturday from noon to 1 p.m. It could be the most profitable hour you've spent together in a long, long time.

**"KIDS & MONEY" ON
WBBM/AM78**
NEWSRADIO

HERE'S WHAT PEOPLE ALL OVER CHICAGO ARE WATCHING WEEKNIGHTS AT 8:00.



Every weeknight at 8:00, WBBM Newsradio 78 takes you back to the days when the sounds of the Lone Ranger, Burns & Allen, Jack Benny, the Green Hornet and many more were your living room.

That's because they're all back again on Radio Classics - a live, live program hosted by Chuck Schudler featuring the most popular shows from the "Golden Age" of radio. It's a great treat for everyone who misses the old shows, and everyone who just plain loves them.

So gather up the family and gather around the radio. Because now, there's something good on that the whole family can watch.

RADIO CLASSICS ON WBBM-AM.

© 1984 WBBM AM. All rights reserved.

LISTEN TO SOME BIG SHOTS TONIGHT.

Turn to WBBM AM Newsradio 78 tonight at 7:45 for the NCAA Championship game live from Houston, Astoria and Dallas.

Veteran NCAA play-by-play announcer Dave Cecil Ledford will be joined by college basketball expert Dave Davitt and CBS sportscastrator Curt Gowdy to bring you all the action. Has speed action.

So listen to WBBM AM Newsradio 78 tonight at 7:45. Art'll host the biggest shoot-out of the year.

**NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP
GAME ON
WBBM/AM78**
NEWSRADIO

WE'VE JUST EXTENDED OUR BUSINESS HOURS.

WBBM Newsradio 78 presents "Money Watch," a new business wrap-up and call-in show, every Tuesday through Friday, from 7pm to 8pm.

"Money Watch," hosted by financial editor Len Walter, recaps the day's stock market and business news activities. Then you can call in with questions for Len and featured guests whose expertise may be in financial planning, real estate, insurance or accounting.

If you're serious about your money, this is one hour you should tune in - after business hours.

**MONEY WATCH ON
WBBM/AM78**
NEWSRADIO

THIS SUNDAY, WE'RE RUNNING THE MARATHON.

This Sunday, join Chicago's only live broadcast of America's Marathon. Chicago Live to WBBM Newsradio 78's complete coverage of the race beginning at 8:30 am.

And if you want to cheer about the 26.2 mile - course, bring your friends to WBBM Newsradio 78.

WBBM/AM78
NEWSRADIO

WE'RE OUT TO RAISE MONEY FOR A GOOD CAUSE.

Everyday this week, WBBM AM is stepping out of the studio mid-days between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to broadcast live from Casper, Alvin Scotty and Whatabash arenas.

It's all part of a major effort by WBBM AM to raise money for our annual "March of Dimes," which this year benefits the worthy organizations that help children in Chicago and Northern Indiana.

So visit the Casper, Alvin Scotty and Whatabash arenas today through Friday. You'll not only get the fun of live sports, you'll also get the chance to look about and contribute to a very good cause.

WBBM/AM78
NEWSRADIO

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THE BLACKHAWKS HAVE MOVED TO A NEWSTATION.

WBBM AM, Chicago's only news station, has become the Blackhawks new station. And that's big news.

So for complete coverage of every Blackhawks game, we announce Pat Foley and Dale Galloway, now just turn to WBBM AM Newsradio 78.

And remember, when it comes to great sports coverage, Blackhawks hockey is just the tip of the iceberg.

WBBM/AM78
NEWSRADIO

TOMORROW MORNING, LISTEN TO CHICAGO'S MOST NEWSWORTHY COUPLE.

They're John Hulman and Felicia Middlebrooks on WBBM. The team that gives you the brightest, most up-to-date news, weather, traffic, sports and a smile here and there.

So tomorrow, do what nearly a million other Chicagoans do first thing in the morning. Turn to WBBM Newsradio 78.

WBBM/AM78
NEWSRADIO

MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA. WE SALUTE YOU AS OUR COMMUNITY OF THE WEEK.

July 6-July 12

Each week WBBM Newsradio 78 honors one unique and important community in our listening area. This week the spotlight is on you. Throughout the week you'll hear interviews, special features and facts about your community. Highlighting your achievements, qualities, history—even sharing your problems. Stay in touch with Chicago and the midwest all day, every day on WBBM Newsradio 78.

WBBM
Newsradio 78

FOLLOW THE BOUNCING BALL

Follow college basketball at its best—the NCAA tournament—exclusively on WBBM Newsradio 78. Excitement begins with live coverage of the Regional Finals today and tomorrow at 12:30. Next Saturday it's the Semi-Finals, then on to Monday's National Championship. Our seasoned announcers make sure you get the inside without the drive!

NCAA PLAYOFFS ON
WBBM
Newsradio 78

INDY 500 ON WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

Sun. 10AM-2:45PM
plus traffic updates & "Kings of Speed" reports

Join WBBM Newsradio 78 this Sunday for the glamour and excitement of Indy 500—the greatest spectacle in racing!

Before the race, we'll warm up with the 15-part "Kings of Speed" special about winning Indy drivers. The reports will air at 20 and 40 past each hour from 7:45AM to 9:45AM.

If you're driving to Indianapolis listen for traffic updates from the Indiana State Police twice an hour on WBBM starting at 4:07AM.

Complete race coverage begins at 10AM with Paul Page, the voice of Indy.

WBBM
Newsradio 78

TRACK THE MARKETS ALL DAY ON NEWSRADIO 78

At 20 before and 20 after the hour, you can track the markets all day on WBBM Newsradio 78. Starting at 9:20am, you'll hear reports from WBBM's Len Walter at the Midwest Stock Exchange and from Dean's Chicago Business, Chicago Sun-Times and CBS News.

After the market's close, tune in for Money Watch, WBBM's personal finance call-in program hosted by Len Walter, Tuesday through Friday at 7pm.

20/20 Business on
WBBM
Newsradio 78

NFL PLAYOFFS & SUPERBOWL ON WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

Starting today at 11:15AM

WBBM Newsradio 78 is your NFL headquarters for the playoffs, divisional championships and Super Bowl! Jack Buck, Hank Stram, Dick Stockton, Pat Haden and Jim Nantz will have the play by play. Brent Musburger presents all pre-game and full-time highlights.

Chicago's News Station
WBBM
Newsradio 78

VOTE STRAIGHT 78 ELECTION DAY

For up-to-the minute coverage and stimulating analysis of the national election vote straight WBBM Newsradio 78 from 7PM to midnight.

WBBM's Political Editor John Madigan and Dick Helton will focus on who's winning and why and what this election means for the future of politics in Chicago. They'll be joined by City Hall reporters Bob Crawford plus John Davy, David Ron and Alan Gickley reporting from the candidates' headquarters.

Get in touch with the election by voting for the station that is in Touch With Chicago!

Election Coverage on
WBBM
Newsradio 78

NOW THE NIGHT HAS A BITE

If you've got an appetite for news that digs deeper than headlines, tune in to Dave Baum tonight at 9PM on WBBM Newsradio 78.

He'll focus on issues in the news—with people making news. People like Jesse Jackson on the presidency, Phyllis Klotz on sexual abstinence for teens, Henry Hyde on Iran-gate.

Whether you agree or disagree, you're invited to call up and join the discussion. The Dave Baum Show, Monday through Friday from 9PM-midnight.

THE DAVE BAUM SHOW ON
WBBM
Newsradio 78

WOODLAWN. WE SALUTE YOU AS OUR COMMUNITY OF THE WEEK.

March 2-March 8

Each week WBBM Newsradio 78 honors one unique and important community in our listening area. This week the spotlight is on you. Throughout the week you'll hear interviews, special features and facts about your community. Highlighting your achievements, qualities, history—even sharing your problems.

Stay in touch with Chicago and the midwest all day, every day on WBBM Newsradio 78.

WBBM
Newsradio 78

THE OFFICIAL STORM CENTER: WBBM NEWSRADIO 78

School & Business closings at 10 and 35 past the hour.

Accu-Weather reports around the clock.

Traffic Updates 7 days a week (every 10 minutes during rush hour).

Stay in touch with Chicago all day, every day on WBBM Newsradio 78.

Chicago's News Station
WBBM
Newsradio 78

WE TOLD YOU SO

All day Monday, WBBM Newsradio 78's Accu-Weather predicted rain, snow, sleet, high winds, lake flooding, lightning and thunder. You know the rest!

We were right on the money because we put our money on 50 expert meteorologists and 70 support people at Accu-Weather. They work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with advanced computer technology to bring you Chicago's most accurate forecasts. WBBM updates these forecasts "round the clock." Steve Decker brings them to you weekday mornings.

Last Monday, WBBM Newsradio 78's Accu-Weather predicted rain, snow, sleet, high winds, lake flooding, lightning and thunder. You know the rest!

Accu-Weather On
WBBM
Newsradio 78

FOLLOW THE PLAY-OFFS LIKE A HAWK.

Blackhawk fans, your time has come! Listen to WBBM Newsradio 78 to catch every play of every high stakes play-off game. With complete coverage from hockey pros Pat Foley and Dale Tallon, you won't miss a shot.

So if you want to follow all the action on the ice, keep your dial set to WBBM Newsradio 78. And hear the most exciting Hawk calls of the year!

BLACKHAWK PLAY-OFFS ON
WBBM
Newsradio 78

OUR NFL COVERAGE KICKS OFF TONIGHT

NFL Monday Night Football is back on WBBM Newsradio 78 starting tonight when the New England Patriots meet the New York Jets.

Join WBBM's Rich King and co-host Neal Anderson for Bear Talk at 7PM, followed by NFL coverage with Jack Buck and Hank Stram at 7:45PM.

And keep coming back to WBBM each week for 18 regular season games plus the playoffs, Super Bowl and Pro Bowl!

NFL Monday Night Football on
WBBM
Newsradio 78

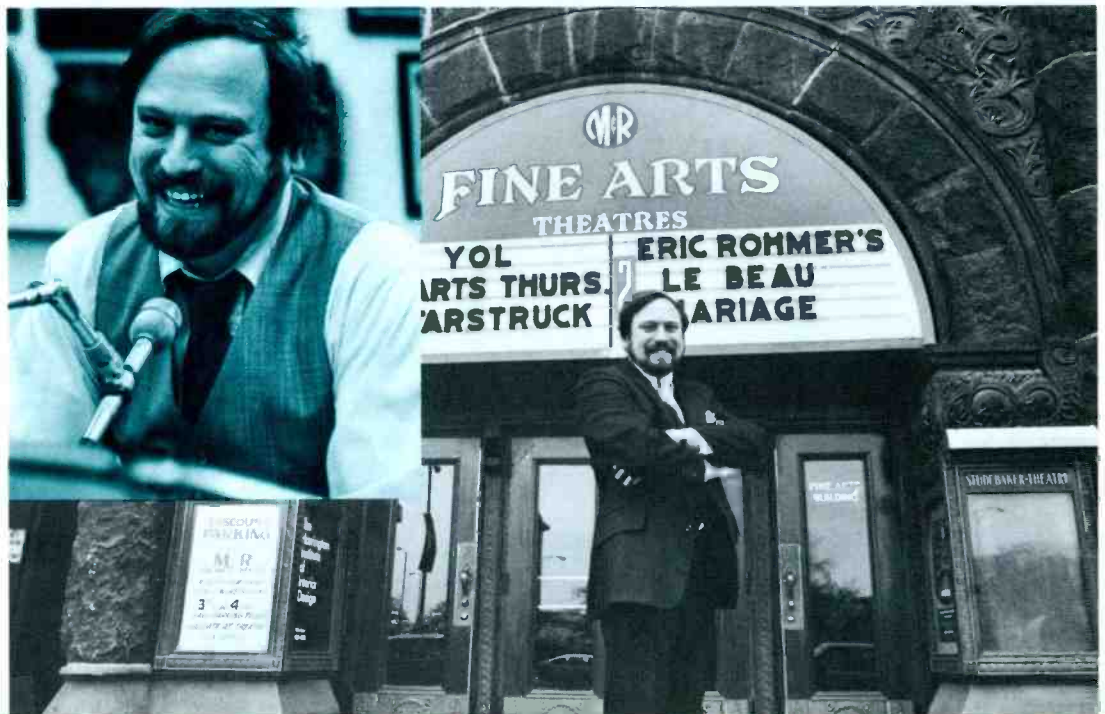
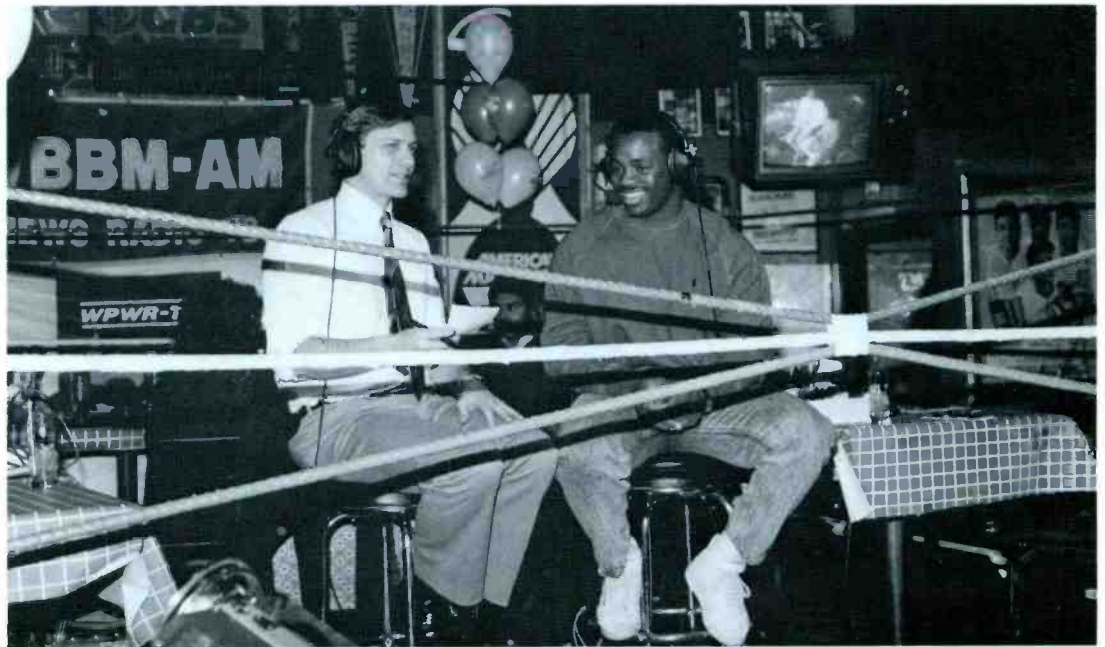
“WE HAVE WORKED VERY HARD to take advantage of what radio does best, which is to provide companionship and become a friend. Radio is a unique medium, much different from television, newspapers or magazines. People really do relate to that person they hear coming over the radio. We look for broadcasters who, in addition to being tremendously professional journalists, are able to project personality and warmth. We have succeeded in doing that. We have a significant edge over many of the other news stations in the United States in that regard.

“THE PERSONALITIES OF OUR news reporters also reflect the personalities of our news writers. We are blessed that many of the writers and broadcasters have been at WBBM for most of the years that we have been in the newsradio format. They really understand radio news and they understand Chicago. They are extremely professional.”

More listeners than ever tune in to hear familiar voices relating the events of the day as they happen.

Top: “Bear Talk” at the Ultimate Sports Bar & Grill with host Rich King and co-host Bears running back Neal Anderson.

Bottom: Anchor/Reporter Sherman Kaplan is also WBBM’s Entertainment Editor.





FOR SCHOOL & BUSINESS CLOSINGS

WBBM Newsradio 78
at :08 and :36 after the hour



Sportscaster Tom Shaer reports from the finish line at America's Marathon Chicago.



Above: WBBM Technical Staff: (l to r) Technical Director Mark Williams, and Technicians Doug Callihan, Alan Rosen, Bob Seaberg, Mario Aceto. (missing: Jann Hendrickson)

Below: WBBM Finance Staff: (l to r) Joyce Kollath, Accounting Admin.; Anita Guerrero, Mgr. of Credit & Collection; Carmen Ortiz, Accounts Pay. Super.; Charles Warner, Dir. of Finance & Admin.; Earl Gutknecht, Accounting Super.; Vikki Vallejo, Mgr. of Gen. Ledger; Anne Culkeen, Accounts Rec. Coor.



Newsmakers: (below, top to bottom) Brooke Shields, Ed Vrdolyak, Julia Child with Sherman Kaplan, and Illinois Governor Jim Thompson.

JOHAN HULTMAN AND FELICIA Middlebrooks report the news to Chicago during what is now known as "morning drive" time, 5 to 10 am. Donn Pearlman, Sherman Kaplan and Walt Hamilton anchor the news and conduct interviews mid-day. Kris Kridel and Dick Helton provide news updates, analysis, and interviews with newsmakers during the afternoon drive period and Millard Hansen keeps overnight listeners up to date.

Throughout the 24-hour broadcast day, *WBBM Newsradio 78* schedules weather and traffic information, business reports, editorials, commentary, sports news and scores, and a wide range of special features with experts answering questions and offering advice.

A NUMBER OF LONGER-FORM PROGRAMS are part of WBBM's schedule in 1988. *Ask The Mayor* brings the Mayor of the City of Chicago to the WBBM microphones each month to take calls from concerned listeners. *Ask The Governor* does the same with the Chief Executive of the State of Illinois and has been the catalyst for new legislation.

Listeners have an opportunity each month to question the Chicago School Board President and the Chicago Superintendent of Schools during *Talk to the Schools*.

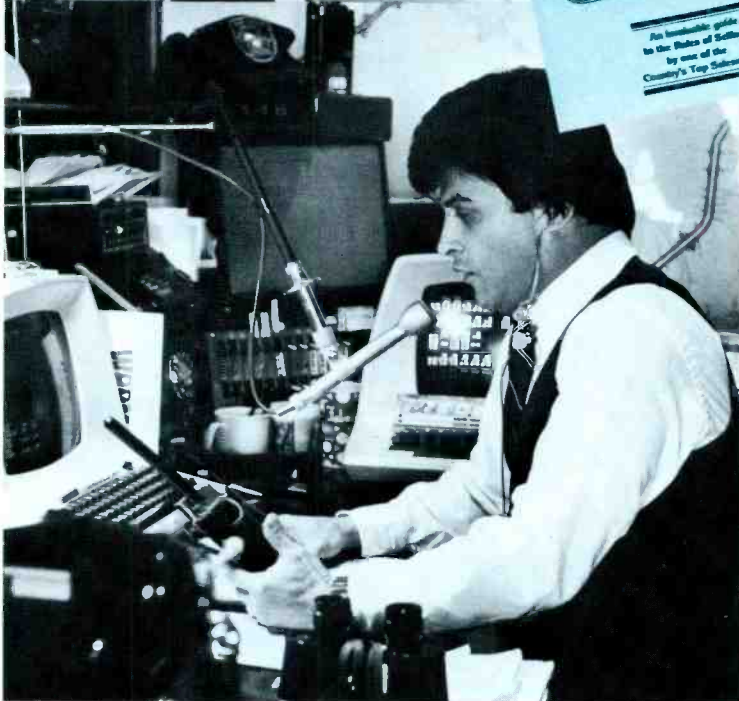
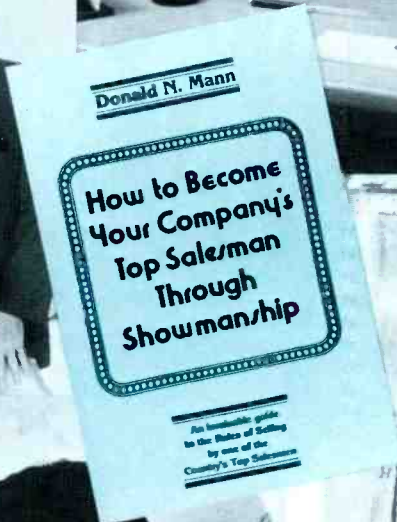


Chicago Superintendent of Schools Dr. Manford Byrd, Jr.

Have you called your Governor lately?

If you want to put a question to Governor Thompson, tune in to WBBM Newsradio 78 at 6:30 p.m. on the last Tuesday of every month. And find out how you can ask your question about the state of the State. The Governor's waiting for your call on March 31st.

WBBM Newsradio 78



Top: WBBM Sales Staff: (l to r) Patrick Joyce, Local Sales Mgr.; Leon Rosenthal, Co-Op Mgr.; Raymond Sheehy, Research Mgr.; Marvin Astrin, Account Executive; Markham Thomas, A.E.; Antoinette Naudziunas, Sales Asst.; Joseph Doubek, A.E.; Marsha Belcher, Natl. Sales Mgr.; Ken Walker, A.E.; Mary Beth Pytell, A.E.; Robert Ramoska, A.E.; Lisa Gerage, A.E.; Anna Rose Palmieri, Sales Asst.; Joan Deloit, A.E.; Erin Rumph, Office Mgr.; (seated) Rod Zimmerman, General Sales Mgr. (missing: Celestine Moore, Sales Asst.; Tim Stevens, A.E.; Deborah McCabe, A.E.)

Middle: The late WBBM Super Salesman Don Mann with Ed Lanctot (l.) of Cotter & Company.

Bottom: Morning Traffic Reporter Barry Edwards.

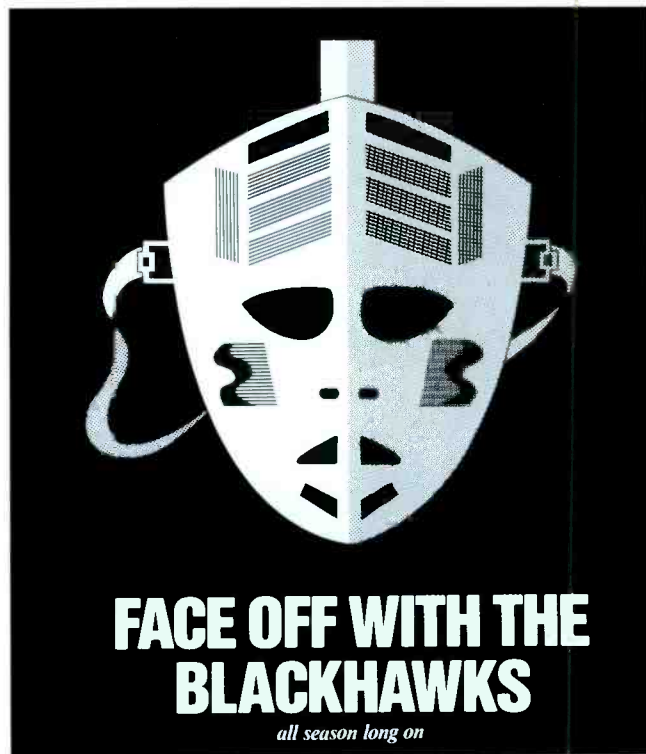
Right: Accu-Weather meteorologist Elliot Abrams.



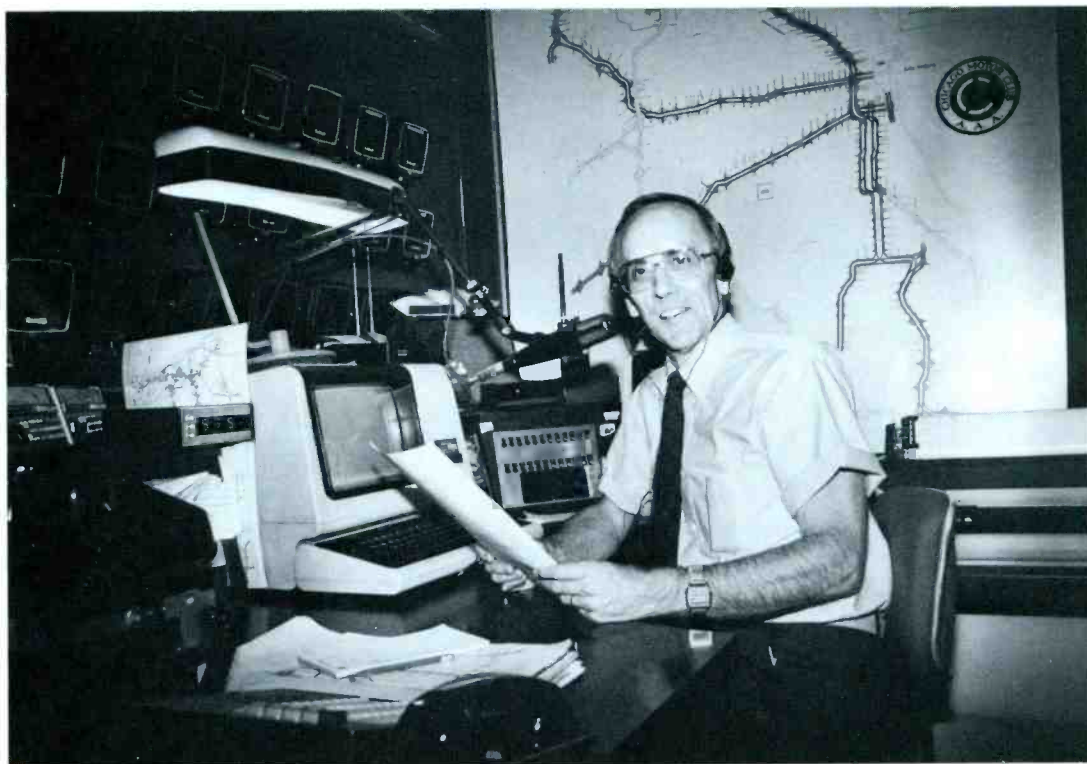
FINANCIAL EDITOR LEN WALTER RE-ports daily from the *Midwest Stock Exchange*. *Sportsline* is a call-in sports show presented Saturday and Sunday evenings. Radio broadcasts of Chicago Blackhawk hockey games are carried exclusively on WBBM. *At Issue* is hosted by John Madigan, who interviews a prominent newsmaker each Sunday.

THE DAVE BAUM SHOW, MONDAY thru Friday evenings, explores the stories behind the headlines with guests in the studio and on the phone. Listeners can call in and question Baum and his guests. Chuck Schaden recalls the glory days of the *WBBM Air Theatre* and the golden days of radio with rebroadcasts of vintage radio comedy, drama, and adventure programs weeknights on *Radio Classics*.

On its 65th anniversary, November 14, 1988, WBBM can pause to reflect on its past laurels. But if the history of the station tells us anything, it will not rest on those laurels.



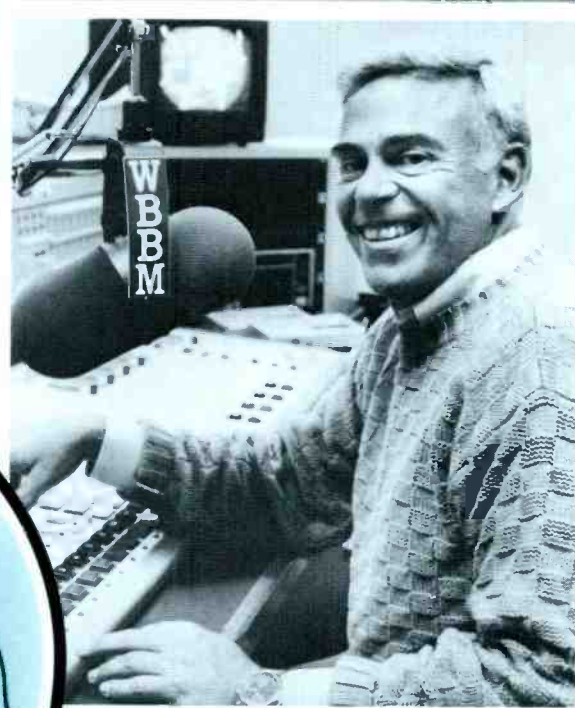
WBBM
Newsradio 78



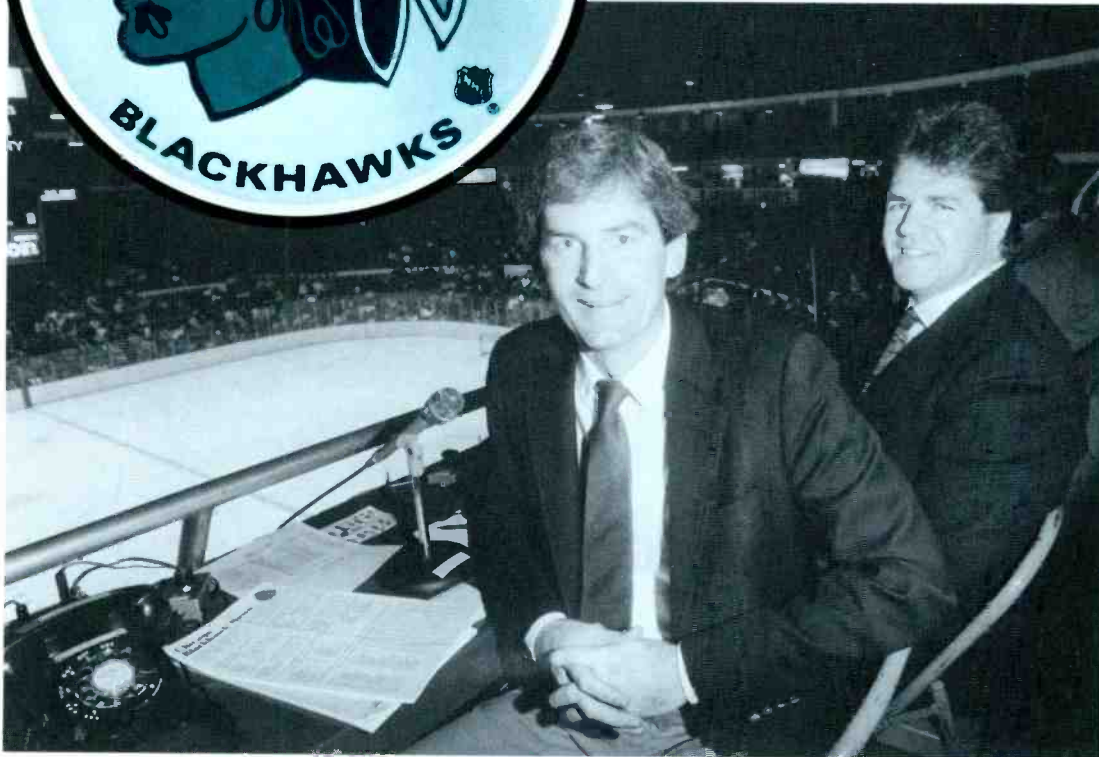
Anchor/Reporter Walt Hamilton.



November 12, 1987: A special Dave Baum program focusing on school decentralization. (l to r) Dave Baum, Michael Bakalis, Richard Newhouse, John Kotsakis and George Munoz.



Dave Baum.



Chicago Blackhawk Hockey play-by-play team: Pat Foley and Dale Tallon.

WBBM WILL CONTINUE TO ASSESS the needs of the community and through its programming, reflect the changing tastes and appetites of its audience.

At age 65, WBBM is not yet ready for retirement.

Mr. Atlas would be proud.

WBBM Newsradio 78
Chicago's
News Station

WHITE
EAGLE
LUMBER



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Howard D. Simmons (for the cover photograph).

Mrs. H. Leslie Atlass.

Mrs. Harriet "Sis" Atlass Kaplan.

Dr. Ralph Muchow, Curator, *Muchow's Historical Radio Museum*, Elgin, Illinois.

Museum of Broadcast Communications, Chicago, Illinois.

Beth Harding, Director, *Lincoln, Illinois Chamber of Commerce*.

Allan Kurman.

Milt Placko.

Marty Silverstein, Director of Photography, *CBS Inc.*

Linda Hanrath, *Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company*.

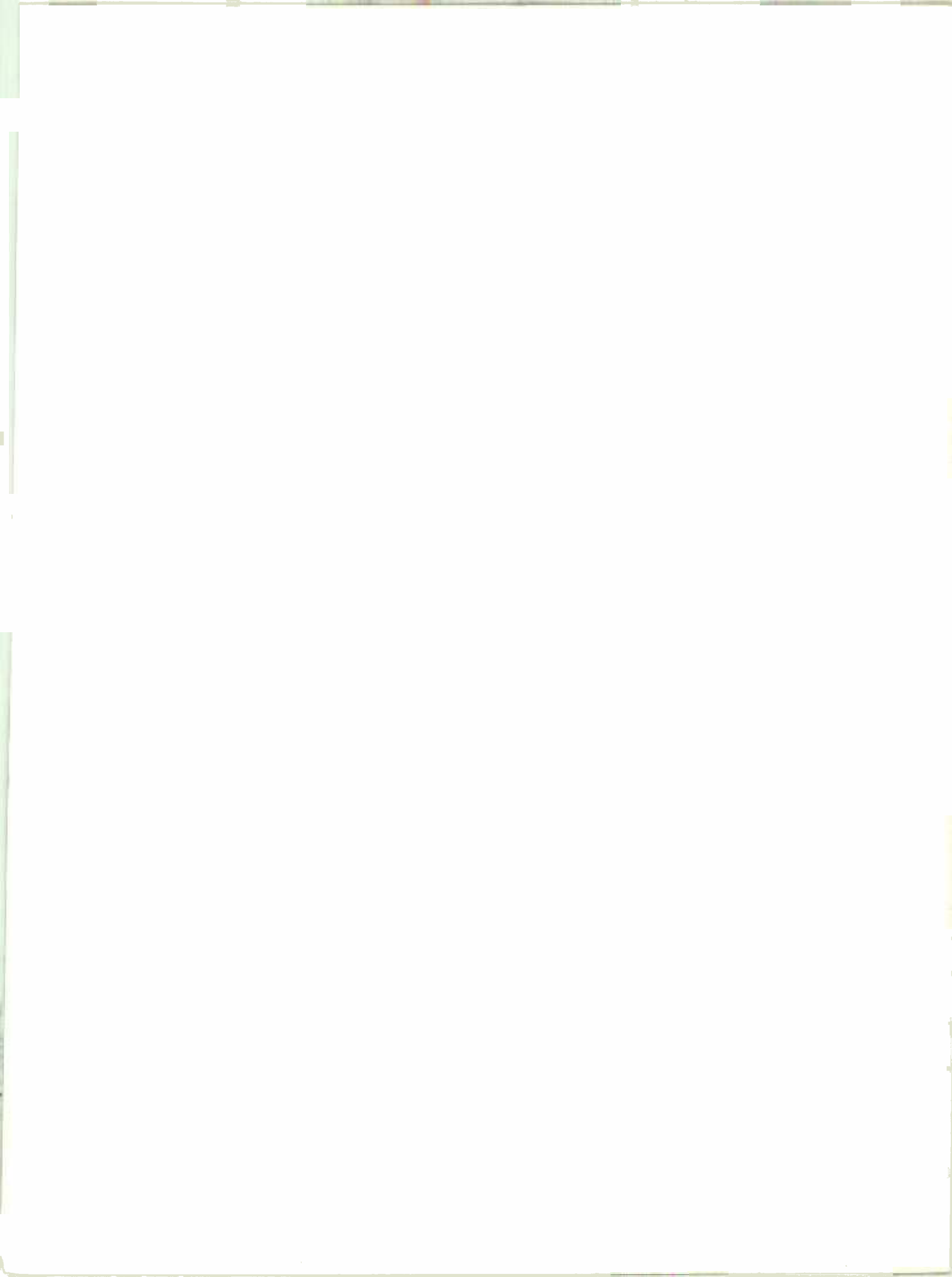
Jeffrey Feldman, *Yellow Cab Company*.

Debbie Segal, *The Quaker Oats Company*.

Selma Kessler & Bess Brock, *Campbell Museum, Campbell Soup Company*.

Joe Olcott, *Booklet Publishing Company*, Elk Grove Village, Illinois.

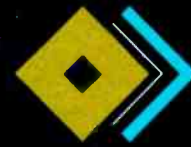
And: Todd Nebel, Jeff Weigel, Kathy Garafalo, Mary Little, Louis Beese.





WBBM RADIO

Yesterday & Today



Chuck Schaden

This is the story of WBBM Radio, Chicago.

It's a story that starts in 1911 in a small town in the center of Illinois where two brothers, Les and Ralph Atlass, began operating an amateur spark station.

It's the story of how, in 1923, they converted their amateur equipment to a commercial broadcasting station which was assigned the call letters, WBBM.

... the story of WBBM's early days in Chicago's Broadmoor Hotel and the move to the Wrigley Building and finally to the station's present home on McClurg Court.

... the story of radio broadcast lines that crisscrossed the city to bring listeners exciting band remotes from dozens of hotels and ballrooms in the area.

... the story of soap operas and dramatic shows emanating from the *WBBM Air Theatre* in the 30s and 40s, the story of live musical entertainment on the *Showmanship Station* in the 50s and the story of the *Talk of Chicago* in the 60s.

... the story of WBBM Newsradio 78 and the dedicated people who have kept a constant newswatch over the city, state, country, and the world, 24 hours a day, seven days a week since 1968.

It's the story of people, too. People who made WBBM what it was and what it is.

WBBM Radio, Yesterday and Today, is the fascinating story of the birth, growth and development of one of the country's truly great radio stations.

THE AUTHOR

Chuck Schaden, host of WBBM's *Radio Classics*, has been broadcasting classic programs from the "golden age" of radio—the 1930s, 40s and 50s—since 1970, and

has been nationally recognized for his efforts.

A former newspaper editor and marketing executive, Schaden turned his hobby into a vocation and draws on his collection of more than 48,000 vintage broadcasts to prepare his programs.

A founding member of the Board of Directors of Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communications, radio historian Schaden is a resource for the Chicago Public Library system and has taught college courses on the history of radio programming.



Published by WBBM Newsradio 78, Chicago, Illinois

Book design by George DiGuido